Adorned Identities: An Archaeological Perspective on Race and Self-Presentation in 18th-Century Virginia

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Johanna Hope Smith entitled "Adorned Identities: An Archaeological Perspective on Race and Self-Presentation in 18th-Century Virginia." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Anthropology.

Barbara J. Heath, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Gerald F. Schroedl, Bertin M. Louis Jr., Derek Alderman, Matthew Reeves

Accepted for the Council:

Dixie L. Thompson

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)
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ABSTRACT

Institutionalized slavery helped to create the concept of race in the American mind and forced people into new social categories based on superficial bodily characteristics. These new social categories resulted in the formation of identities that were continuously negotiated, reinforced or challenged through daily bodily practices of self-presentation that included ways of dress, adornment, and physical action. Because slavery was defined on the body, an embodiment approach to plantation archaeology can shed new light on the construction of racial identities. This historical archaeology project combines an archaeological analysis of personal adornment artifacts with a close reading of travel sketches, mass-produced satirical illustrations, and runaway advertisements. Through these textual, visual and material sources this project traces the daily practices of presentation of self in 18th-century rural Virginia, revealing how plantation members of both races negotiated multiple identities within the confines of this system.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Project Overview

New World slavery fundamentally altered existing social relations and their expression, redefining some people as chattel and giving others the power of life or death over members of their workforce. Identities of all the people involved in this system, both enslaved and free, had to be re-invented to meet these new circumstances. People used a variety of objects to communicate identity in a silent language that reinforced or challenged their place within the social hierarchy. Because of the communicative nature of material culture, archaeologists study objects to infer meaning about race, gender, and self-perception which relate to the broader construction of identity. Approaches to the archaeological record that use artifacts as purely quantitative data can miss the subtle messages from the past that they communicate (Cochran and Beaudry 2006). One theoretical approach that can bridge the gap between artifacts and abstractions relies on the concept of embodiment: the physicality of inhabiting the material world. Embodiment is a situational product of interconnected factors relating to identity that include social status, societal expectations, self- and group perceptions, and personal desires (Joyce 2004). In the study of plantations, embodied practices can reveal the complicated interplay between institutionalized slavery and identity.

People use objects of personal adornment and presentation of self to express embodied identities. As defined here, the category of personal adornment includes any

1
object used by a person to construct appearance, including fabrics, thread and other perishable materials that do not usually survive archaeologically, and more durable objects such as buttons and jewelry. Items used for holding clothing together like pins and eye hooks, despite being hidden, are vital to the overall construction and appearance of some clothing, and accessories like thimbles and tobacco pipes also help people communicate their sense of self. Adornment serves an important function: whether intentionally or not, objects worn on the body actively communicate information about the wearer to others (White 2005).

This dissertation is a part of the growing conversation about the creation and maintenance of identity in systems of institutionalized slavery. Its unique contribution is its focus on the role of the body in the interplay of race and class within the plantation community. By pulling together a wide array of primary sources and archaeological artifacts that have not been examined through an embodiment framework, this study increases the understanding of the role that the material culture of self-presentation played in negotiations of identity between enslaved and free individuals in plantation economies.

This project is also aligned with the burgeoning field of Digital Humanities, by contributing substantive data to an online, collaborative database of archaeological sites associated with slavery. I conducted my initial dissertation work by making archaeological data from Mount Pleasant, an under-utilized curated collection, accessible for research through the Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery (DAACS), a collaborative online cataloging project. This site contributes to an expanding
archive of archaeologically-recovered data relating to New World slavery, which enables both fine-grained, site-specific study and broader comparative analysis. In addition to my used of DAACS, I also make extensive use of the products of a wide variety of Digital Humanities efforts that are now available online, through databases of primary visual and written documents.

**Historical and Theoretical Context**

A system of slavery based on the notion of race took some time to emerge in the Americas. Its development was closely tied to colonialism and the drive to make a profit for the colonial empire. As colonial subjects strove to find ways to profit from the resources of the New World, they quickly realized that large-scale monoculture of cash crops would be the most effective way to exploit the broad expanses of productive land and the warm climate that the southern region had to offer. In Virginia and Maryland, tobacco, which was extremely labor-intensive, was the crop of choice (Kulikoff 1986; Walsh 1989; Breen 2009). Cheap labor was essential if the planter hoped to make a profit. In the first half of the 17th century, indentured servants—immigrants from Britain who agreed to work for a certain amount of time in exchange for passage and the right to land—supplied plantation labor. As the century progressed, the flow of servants slowed to a trickle, and the system became less and less cost effective (Hatfield 2004:142). The wealthiest, most influential planters had from the start looked for an alternative and put some of their resources into the acquisition of enslaved Africans (Coombs 2011). After about 1670, elite planters had agreed that the forced importation of Africans was the
cheaper, more viable option, and after 1698, even ordinary planters embraced slave labor (Kulikoff 1985; Coombs 2011). By mid-century, laws were passed that laid out the parameters of slavery and began to severely curtail the rights of people of African descent (Billings 2007). These laws helped codify a developing binary system of race where the smallest amount of (maternal) African ancestry was enough to classify a person as a slave (Breen 1973).

Although historical archaeologists have studied plantations since the beginning of the field, an explicit focus on the identity of enslaved people has emerged over the last twenty years. The first dedicated archaeological study of slavery was conducted by Charles Fairbanks on plantations in Florida and Georgia in the 1960s (Singleton 1995:119). Many of the early plantation studies were broad in approach, using quantitative methods to look at landscape and spatial patterning (Pogue 1988). Some of these approaches are still being used and help situate the overall landscape of slavery (Fesler 2006; Neiman 2008). In recent years, archaeologists who study plantation slavery and the African Diaspora have become increasingly interested in identity, using a wide array of approaches to bridge the gap between artifacts and abstractions. Approaches have included searching for ethnic markers in the archaeological record (Ascher and Fairbanks 1972; Ferguson 1978; Fairbanks 1984; Stine et al. 1996; Ogundiran and Saunders 2014) or using artifacts to infer meaning about spirituality and ideology (Ferguson 1992; Wilkie 1995; Leone 1999; Fennell 2000, 2007; Gundaker 2011). Other approaches have added a focus on issues of power and material culture through lenses such as Marxism (Orser 1988; Delle 1998; Mullins 1999; Epperson 2004; Sayers 2012)
or through evolutionary frameworks (Neiman 2008; Galle 2010). One theoretical approach that has been under-utilized and that has the potential to meld issues of race, class, and identity into a single framework is the concept of embodiment: the physicality of inhabiting the material world. In the study of plantation slavery, embodiment can reveal the complicated ways in which the institution affected identity.

Embodiment as an anthropological framework is a convergence of several lines of thought, including practice theory, phenomenology, gender theory and feminist theory. Broadly, it is both a critique and offshoot of practice theory; an offshoot because it makes use of the idea that repeated, everyday activities structure and shape the actions of individuals, and a critique because it accuses this approach of creating disembodied, generalized “actors,” rather than physically embodied people who use objects and space to structure the world around them (Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1984; Joyce 2004:85).

Gender and queer theories also inform this approach, particularly through Judith Butler’s work, Gender Trouble, in which she argues that gender is an embodied performance (Butler 1990; Joyce 2004:84). Embodiment also grows out of theories of phenomenology that emphasize the importance of the sensory experience of the space around us as shaping our impression of the world (Merleau-Ponty 1945; Tilley 1994), and out of feminist theory that explores how the body itself is used as a locus of empowerment or subjugation. Classical western thought has traditionally created a dichotomy between mind and body that goes along with other types of dualistic thinking such as men versus women and culture versus nature (Grosz 1994). To emphasize sensory experience, a theory of embodiment must highlight the unity and culturally-constructed nature of body
and mind. Such a holistic approach becomes especially important when applying this perspective to the archaeological record: objects, ideas and bodies are not intrinsically distinct categories, but intertwined elements of the culture from which they originated.

Archaeologists have taken on embodiment in a variety of ways. In the early 1990s, the theory was mostly used by bioarchaeologists—practitioners who worked with literal bodies. Eventually, archaeologists began to realize that human physical remains are not the only way to understand the cultural implications of being a body in space (Joyce 2004:88). Rosemary Joyce is the key proponent of embodiment, using it to interpret personal adornment artifacts and representations of the body in Aztec society (Joyce 2000, 2004). Her work has explored the possibilities and limitations of the approach. One critique she raises is that embodiment tends to be over-used for studying the “other” (women’s bodies, non-standard genders and sexualities) to the exclusion of dominant genders and sexualities. Joyce identifies this practice as an oversight that must be corrected: “Rather than seek ever more extreme examples of alternative genders of queer sexualities, we might use an archaeology of embodied personhood to consistently ask questions about how human beings in the past may have experienced their world through the body” (Joyce 2004:92). My dissertation will address Joyce’s critique by helping to shed light on the embodied personhood of multiple categories of people in plantation society, enslaved and free.

A theory of embodiment has a deep relevance to the study of racialized slavery because of the way race is constructed on the body. Being perceived as “black” or “white” had enormous social and physical consequences during the period of slavery
The black body was literally used as a unit of labor. Plantation owners measured the amount of labor that various tasks required in “hands,” the number of enslaved people it would take to accomplish a task (Joseph 1993:66; Morgan 1998; Hudson 2010:3). African Americans experienced exploitation through the body in many different ways, but especially through being denied ownership over their own labor and reproduction. The body could also be the locus of resistance for the enslaved, through running away, through altering clothing and appearance in ways that were not authorized or approved by the slaveholder, or by moving through space in ways unfamiliar to, or deemed inappropriate, by whites (Upton 1988; Waldstreicher 1999; Orser and Funari 2001; Ellis and Ginsburg 2010).

Archaeologists have recognized the usefulness of embodiment for studying race, and have used it in a variety of ways. Diana DiPaolo Loren (2012) uses it to examine European impressions of Native Americans during the colonial era. Barbara Voss also examines race and embodiment, often through the lens of sexuality, in her work on Spanish/Native interactions at El Presidio (2008) and overseas Chinese communities in San Francisco (2012). In the context of slavery, Dell Upton (1988) has taken on the different ways in which enslaved and free people perceived the landscape through which they moved. Another embodied approach comes from Brian and Larissa Thomas, who use the idea that gender is an embodied performance to explore the many layers of costume worn by enslaved people at the Hermitage plantation in Tennessee. They see clothing and adornment as theatrical props and costumes worn and used for various audiences, from charms and talismans worn for oneself and intimates to livery and field
clothes worn for the slaveholder, to dress clothes worn for the community (Thomas and Thomas 2004). My dissertation expands on their approach by employing nine comparative contexts from five plantations dating to the mid-to-late 18th century, by contextualizing material sources with the documentary and visual sources, and by addressing both enslaved and lower class white members of the plantation.

The plantation in the late-18th century was a site of continuous negotiations of identity and power between the enslaver and the enslaved. Slaveholders did their best to exhibit mastery over every aspect of the bodies of the people they held captive, from work to dress to health and reproduction. In writing and images they expressed their perceptions of how a “good” slave should look and act, and they expressed their disapproval and disgust when enslaved people stepped outside of these boundaries. The plantation owner’s control was not complete, however. Despite overwhelming exploitation and oppression, enslaved people found subtle ways of transgressing and mocking the expectations of the slaveholding elite. Where whites saw unsophisticated attempts to emulate mainstream fashion, enslaved Africans and African Americans recreated fashion to suit their own needs and in some cases subtly challenge the people who claimed to own them. To survive enslavement, Africans and African Americans had to learn how to negotiate constantly-changing roles for a varied audience by using dress, adornment, and ways of moving through the world to switch from role to role like a performer changing costumes for an audience (Thomas and Thomas 2005).
Questions, Materials and Methods

My study asks a number of interrelated questions about the ways self-expression can be understood through artifacts of personal adornment. How did the experience of institutionalized slavery shape the materially-expressed identities of both enslaved black and lower class white members of Virginia society in the 18th century? How did the modes of expressing these identities vary from plantation to plantation in rural Virginia? How did the different social positions of the people who made up a plantation affect the way they interacted with mainstream trends in fashion? Did they adopt ways of dress and display unquestioningly, or did they refashion them to create their own identities and critique these expectations? How did race, class, and gender play into these negotiations? How did these personal adornment artifacts end up in the archaeological record, and what can they tell us about the lived experiences of overseers and the enslaved?

I answer these questions with mass produced satirical prints that dealt directly with fashion and the embodiment of race, class, and gender; with the travel sketches of Benjamin Latrobe that observed and commented on the dress and behavior of 18th century Virginians, with runaway advertisements that described the appearance of both enslaved black and lower-class white people, and with adornment artifacts (clothing fasteners, jewelry and accessories) from nine distinct cultural contexts on five mid-to-late 18th century plantations around rural Virginia. The plantations are George Washington’s home of Mount Vernon; Thomas Jefferson’s two plantations of Monticello and Poplar Forest; Montpelier, which was owned by the father of President James Madison during the period of this study; and Accotink a quarter farm associated with a planter of more
modest means. I interpret documents such as runaway slave advertisements, satirical
prints, and travel sketches both as descriptive information about how enslaved and free
people dressed and as evidence of the ways in which Virginians were racialized in this
period. Because the category of “black” cannot be understood in isolation from the
category of “white;” I compare data from deposits and documents associated with both
enslaved and poor white Virginians.

Archaeologists engaging in questions dealing with race that compare sites
associated with both enslaved black and free white people have tended to compare white
elites with enslaved Africans and African Americans. Making these types of comparisons
has been useful, but studying what it means to be racialized as “white” by focusing purely
on elites misses the key fact that white elites were separated by a gulf from their poor,
non-elite counterparts. The differences between the material culture of the enslaved and
the elite are obvious, but it is less clear which social factors are most relevant in creating
these differences: was race, class, or simply wealth itself the quality that set the elites
apart from the enslaved? Andrew Wilkins (2017) addresses these questions by comparing
the spatial construction of race not with white elites, but between white overseers and
enslaved Africans and African Americans. In a similar way, I have chosen to compare
enslaved people not with white elites, but with the white overseers who lived and worked
in close proximity to the enslaved men and women over whom they were placed.

Enslaved black men and women and lower class white people had some
similarities in social station that makes comparing their material culture a worthwhile
task. Both groups were viewed unfavorably by elites, and both had much more limited
access to resources and social mobility than did elites. Race was the rigid, overarching constant that separated white and black, even if the material circumstances of their lives were sometimes similar. There were also class differences between these groups, even among members of enslaved communities. Enslaved field laborers were treated differently by slaveholders and had access to different resources than enslaved house servants and craft workers who were in closer proximity to the slaveholder. To draw out differences and similarities in the way these groups used artifacts of clothing and adornment, I chose contexts associated with three different groups on the plantation: those associated with enslaved field laborers, contexts associated with enslaved men and women who worked in close contact with the slaveholder, and those associated with free white overseers.

To address how the expression of identity varied by social position, I compare how artifacts of adornment vary between and within plantations. If the ways of expressing identity through artifacts of personal adornment do vary by class or race, then I expect to see differences in the percentages and types of artifacts recovered between each context. There is a potential to see differences not just between plantations, but within the plantations as well. If social position had a large influence on how people expressed themselves, then I expect to see this variability in artifacts of adornment between different stations of people on the same plantation, and possibly similarities between people of similar social stations on different plantations. For example, if social position made more of a difference, then I expect to see the residents of the House for Families and the residents of Mulberry Row to have discarded very similar artifacts of
adornment, since the people occupying these spaces held similar positions within their respective plantations. However, if modes of self-expression vary more on a plantation or a household level, then I expect these two contexts to be quite different. This question of variation is also tied to racial identity. If being considered white or black has more influence on identity as expressed through objects of adornment, then I expect the greatest variability to be visible between the white overseers and all of the enslaved people. The runaway advertisements also help me answer this question as it applies to race and enslaved or free status. If there is a distinctive difference in dress between black and white, I expect to see that reflected in the advertisements. If there is a way of dressing like a free person, then that will also be evident.

To understand how the different social positions of the people who made up a plantation affected the way people interacted with mainstream fashion, I first need to understand the clothing and fashions of the period. There is a large secondary literature to help me with this question, but satirical prints provide my main primary source of information because of the way these images both reported, commented on, and influenced mainstream fashion. All of my sources of data, archaeological, textual, and visual, help me understand the way social position influenced interaction with mainstream fashion. The runway advertisements frequently used the clothing a fugitive wore as an identifier, and the types of garments described and the textiles used indicate how well an individual fit in with mainstream fashion. The artifacts of adornment recovered archaeologically may not be able to reveal directly what individuals wore or how they interacted with fashion, but because each context has been dated using other
artifacts, such as ceramics, I can determine how well the artifacts of adornment fit in with the norms of clothing and adornment for the period of occupation for each household.

The question of whether men and women adopted ways of dress without question is likely one that I can only answer in the most general of terms, pointing to clues in the archaeological and historical record that might indicate how people used clothing and adornment. Evidence of adaptation and refashioning might come in the form of artifacts of adornment that may be out of place, whether those are items that show signs of post manufacture modification or artifacts that do not fit with the prevailing narrative about bodies and appropriate clothing. Other pieces of evidence may come in the form of prints and sketches that depict real men and women using artifacts of adornment in ways that either conform to or counter prevailing norms of embodied practice.

Understanding how the artifacts of adornment entered the archaeological record is essential to answering these previous questions. One complicating factor that must be addressed is the fact that my archaeological definition of a household does not necessarily match up with the true households of people who lived together in the past. In the context of enslavement, husbands, wives, and children may have considered themselves a discrete household even when they were not able to live together. Unless excellent historical documentation exists that points to who lived on specific parts of a site for particular periods of time, it is generally not possible to analyze households in this manner. Instead, for this study, my households are defined as distinct collections of features or concentrations of artifacts that appear to be associated with a definable time and place of occupation: My archaeological households will not match perfectly with the
family units or domestic partnerships of the actual people who lived on these sites. For example, the House for Families was occupied by as many as 50 people and the Negro Quarter was likely a barracks-style housing unit, not to mention the fact that all of the dwellings analyzed in this study may have been home to a succession of people. This is not a challenge unique to this project, however, and even with these slightly artificial household divisions, I expect to be able to draw comparisons within and between sites.

**Primary Sources**

The documentary record is essential for understanding the context in which these material goods were bought, traded, worn and discarded. The documentary record adds three new layers of information to this project. First, it reveals the expectations placed on people to behave or dress in ways appropriate to their class, gender or race. Satirical prints are particularly good for this purpose: the subjects of their wit are often people behaving in ways not entirely appropriate to their social station. Runaway advertisements can also be used to understand class and gender expectations, as they may contain subtle clues about the (elite white) writer’s opinions about the dress and behavior of the advertisement’s (enslaved black or lower class white) subject. Second, primary sources provide information about what people actually wore and how they carried their bodies. Travel accounts and sketches provide me with another layer of information specific to Virginia: how Virginians of all classes and races dressed and carried themselves. Secondary sources also provide considerable information, especially for understanding mainstream trends in fashion and the meanings of different styles of dress and types of fabric.
Analysis of advertisements for escaped slaves and bound white laborers in Virginia enables me assess broad trends as well as understand how individuals presented themselves. I chose to rely on these advertisements partly because visual representations of African Americans tended to be so stereotyped and racist in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century that, while they can provide valuable insight into mainstream attitudes about race, they are not reliable sources of information about real people. The racism in the runaway advertisements is still evident, but their writers at least had motivation to convey clothing and appearance with some accuracy. These advertisements do not only advertise for enslaved fugitives: white apprentices and indentured servants also ran away, allowing me to compare racial differences in both the way the advertisers represents the fugitive and the clothing and comportment off the runaway him- or herself. Runaway advertisements from Virginia are available in a well-organized, searchable online database, the Geography of Slavery project. I compiled a catalog of key terms from a sample of the advertisements dating from 1760 until 1800 using Microsoft Access. This catalog allows me to see how individuals used clothing and adornment to embody an identity or to take on a new identity, as well as to make broad comparisons of trends in appearance across time and space. Although these advertisements tend to be fairly general when they mention the types of material culture that are likely to be recovered archaeologically (such as buckles, buttons and beads), they provide a wealth of information about the variety of clothing options lower class white and enslaved black people actually wore, how these people may have carried themselves and interacted with those around them, and how they were viewed by white elites. These documents are not free from problems:
more men than women managed to run away, so there is better representation for males than females in the database, and runaways may have tried to wear different clothes to disguise themselves or to pass as free people (Heath 1999:53). Also, the documents reveal just as much about the white Virginians’ assumptions and stereotypes about enslaved people as they do about clothing and dress. Despite these weaknesses, they are one of the few sources that provide direct observations about how a particular group of men and women presented themselves.

Visual sources also play a key role in my dissertation. Clothing and adornment are primarily visual media, and one of the best ways to become familiar with what is being communicated in the way the body is clothed and carried is through visual representation. Satirical prints and travel sketches provide different angles through which to understand the visual meaning of embodied practice. Satirical prints provide an interesting way to approach this practice because of their role in mocking or shaming groups of people who were perceived as having transgressed British norms in some way, such as through intemperance or dressing above one’s station. My main source of these data come from the Lewis Walpole Library, a collection of 17th- through 19th-century British satirical prints, political cartoons, broadsides and other ephemera curated online through Yale University (Yale 2008). These images may not originate in America, but during this period Americans looked to Britain for material culture, style, and manners, so it is appropriate to use this source. For a more American perspective, travel sketches produced in Benjamin Latrobe’s late 18th-century travel journals are useful.
My methodology for analyzing these visual sources relies on a close, contextualized “reading” of the images. I do not expect these images to provide me with a universal idea of how people of dressed and carried themselves all over the English Atlantic. However, these representations played an important role in shaping white understandings of race and class all across the English-speaking world. Cartoons and satirical prints depicting non-whites were part of a wider 18th-century conversation about the “science” of race, and they were yet another building block in the structure of inequality and oppression (Kriz 2008). Satirical prints also help me understand the construction of class by showing people transgressing the ideal of temperate, white, upper class manhood. Visual satire during this period had a moral tone to its humor, even when it was crass and slapstick: it “aimed to correct folly and vice” (Donald 1996:33). To the 18th-century person, humor depended upon incongruity, so my main task is to identify what was meant to be humorous about these depictions of race, class or gender (Kriz 2008:74). I searched for prints that deal directly with subject matter of appropriate dress and adornment: representations of dandies, overdressed servants, prostitutes and dissolute gentry.

I examine each image with a number of specific questions in mind. First, who made it and who was the audience? How is the scene arranged? Who are the actors? How are they represented? Are they “stock” characters that show up in many different works, or are they individualized? If it is a satirical print, what is the incongruity that makes the joke? What aspects of the characters’ clothing and physical appearance are the artists highlighting? What is being glossed over? What has the artist omitted from the picture?
Archaeological Data

The contexts associated with enslaved field laborers come from Monticello, Poplar Forest, and Accotink. At Monticello I use Site 8, an outlying quarter on Monticello Mountain that consisted of multiple houses that was occupied from about 1770 until about 1800 (Bon-Harper 2006). Monticello archaeologists divided the site into three possible separate structures, allowing me to analyze differences in adornment practices at the household level. The field quarter sites of Wingo’s and North Hill at Thomas Jefferson’s Poplar Forest plantation, provide additional data. Wingo’s was likely occupied for a few years during the period from the early 1770s to about 1790 and North Hill was occupied from the early 1770s to about 1800 (Heath et al. 2015:6-11; Heath 2012:108). My final field quarter site, the Accotink quarter, contains far fewer artifacts, but it offers a rare chance to compare an overseer’s quarter and a quarter for enslaved field laborers on the same plantation that were excavated at the same time. Seriation data suggest that most of the deposits recovered from this site date to the 1760s (Sipe et al. 2013).

Contexts associated with enslaved house servants and craft workers are quarters from Mulberry Row at Monticello and the House for Families at Mount Vernon. Mulberry Row was a row of dwellings and service buildings adjacent to Monticello mansion. These data come from buildings S and T, plus deposits associated with an earlier quarter known as the “Negro Quarter” All three of these dwellings have large numbers of adornment-related artifacts and were occupied by enslaved people whose daily work kept them in close contact with the slaveholding family (Hill 2003). These
houses were occupied well into the 19th century, but I specifically focus on their earliest phases of occupation, dating to around 1795, shortly after they were constructed. The House for Families at Mount Vernon is located near the Mount Vernon mansion and is associated with enslaved individuals whose duties required them to remain in close contact with the Washington family. The cellar was partially excavated by a contracting firm in 1985 and then completed by Mount Vernon archaeology staff in 1990. It consists of a cellar feature with deposits dating from 1759 to 1793 (Pogue 2003; Breen 2014).

The site of Mount Pleasant at Montpelier and the overseer’s house at Accotink are the two contexts associated with white overseers. Both consist of cellar features with bulkhead entrances. The Accotink overseer’s house was presumably constructed specifically for an overseer, but the house at Mount Pleasant is likely a repurposed kitchen. Mount Pleasant served as the core of the Madison family plantation until circa 1760, when enslaved and free laborers working for James Madison, Sr. built the new mansion. At that point the main dwelling was intentionally burned and the Madisons changed their residence. The site then became an outlying quarter, and an overseer’s household took up residence in the kitchen building, using the burned-out cellar of the main dwelling as a trash dump. These people occupied the kitchen until some point in the 1790s, when the structure caught fire and burned to the ground, an incident that meant that the entire contents of this dwelling have been preserved in a well-stratified context for archaeologists (Reeves and Fogle 2007:4). For this project, I focus on the phase of occupation between when the Madison family moved out and the structure caught fire.
One of the challenges of using a wide variety of disparate data from different excavations is that recovery techniques vary widely from site to site. The Mount Pleasant kitchen was excavated using dry ¼ in. screens and judgmental waterscreen samples, while the Mulberry Row excavations were conducted using trowel recovery only, and excavation strategies at Mount Vernon varied between different principal investigators, with some contexts being put through ¼ in. screens only, and others being floated and waterscreened. This means that not all comparative approaches are appropriate for every site. I pay careful attention to excavation techniques for all of these sites and compare like with like. Measures of frequency are only useful for intra-site comparisons and cross-site comparisons between sites that were excavated using similar techniques. This does not mean that sites that were excavated with older techniques should be ignored. They can undergo intra-site comparisons, as well as detailed stylistic analysis.

I focus on artifacts of personal adornment from these sites: these are any artifacts used for daily self-expression by the wearer or carrier. They include objects used to fasten clothing; jewelry and other decorative objects; and accessories carried day-to-day on the person. The category of fasteners includes buttons, straight pins, hooks-and-eyes and buckles. Jewelry includes any item whose purpose is mainly decorative such as beads, decorative chains, and sleeve links (today called cufflinks). Accessories are a catchall category that includes small items that may have been carried on the person day-to-day and were intimately associated with gendered work activities or could have been used as performative props with the outfit. They include thimbles and other small portable needlework supplies, clasp knives, tobacco pipes, and fans. I do not use objects
that are too fragmented to provide minimum measurements (such as the tips of straight pins or button shanks with no corresponding button).

Each of these artifact types has their own strengths and weaknesses for analysis, and the way I investigate these materials varies according to the artifact type and what type of information can easily be obtained from it. Each form of analysis points back to my primary questions: what are the differences in style or fashion across sites, races and social classes? Can these differences be understood as the result of personal choices? Or is some other factor at play?

Buttons, being the least expensive and the most numerous adornment artifact on most sites associated with slavery, have the greatest amount of data to impart. Buttons vary in color, size, material, motif and size. Comparing relative frequencies of material types is one way archaeologists have addressed the question of whether buttons were purchased by enslaved people themselves or were provisioned by the slaveholder (Heath 1999:62). By the mid-18th century, plain cast pewter buttons were cheap and undesirable: large numbers of these on sites may be one indication of provisioned clothing (White 2005). Material also relates to stylistic aspects of buttons. Pewter, white metal, yellow metal, bone, fabric and glass could all be used as button materials, and each had its own particular decorative properties. Comparing variations in button sizes within and across sites can also help answer questions about the function of buttons, because button sizes correspond closely with the garment to which they were attached (Hinks 1988; Heath 1999; Galle 2010). Size is also determined by changes in fashion, so button size can help answer questions about whether their wearers were trying to emulate or ignore prevailing
fashion trends. On the theme of fashion, comparing decorative motifs on buttons across sites, as well as comparing decorative motifs to other decorated personal items may bring some insights into trends and variations in motifs across plantations in rural Virginia.

The category of jewelry includes beads, cufflinks (the two most common jewelry-related artifacts) and any other small, decorative item worn on the body without being permanently attached to an article of clothing. Items of adornment that are not present in large numbers or represented on every site include a brooch, a cowrie shell, decorative chains, watch charms and a watch key. I am including cufflinks in this category because their high degree of decoration and variability makes them more similar to jewelry than buttons for comparative purposes. Cufflinks also fit my working definition of jewelry because they are not permanently attached to the shirt and can be moved from outfit to outfit. I calculate presence/absence and frequency of these artifacts within and across sites and investigate the meaning behind their stylistic variation. Out of the jewelry category, beads occur in the highest concentrations and lend themselves most easily to quantitative comparisons in terms of size, color and shape. However, beads are also sensitive to differences in recovery methods across sites, so I take recovery method into account for comparative purposes. For the other artifact types, stylistic comparisons of shapes and motifs are more appropriate.

Accessories are the most difficult category to analyze and compare across sites because of their variability. As with jewelry, presence/absence and frequency are a useful measure. What artifacts tend to appear across all sites? Which are unique to only one site or type of site? Do decorated items have any stylistic motifs in common?
Methodological and Comparative Concerns

The contexts included in my project have considerable variation in excavation techniques, site formation processes, and post-depositional disturbance. Some (such as Mount Pleasant) are virtually undisturbed features that record years of occupation. Others are plowed sites with few intact features. Likewise, because these sites were not all excavated with the same goals by the same archaeologists, recovery methods vary from site to site. Some were meticulously waterscreened, while others were simply trowel-sorted. This does not mean I cannot compare across sites: if that were the case then any reanalysis of curated collections would be pointless. However, it does mean that I need to keep these differences in recovery techniques in mind when comparing multiple collections, and it means that some collections are not be appropriate for certain levels of analysis.

Institutional slavery was defined by declaring certain bodies as inherently better than others. It placed people in different social stations and restricted them to certain ways of inhabiting the world that were reinforced daily through mundane practices. By tacking back and forth between textual, visual, and material sources, I treat these sources as different voices from the past, coming together to tell a more complete story than any one source alone could tell.

Organization of Dissertation

The next chapter deals with the history of identity in archaeology, covering how the term is defined more generally, then discussing the history of the archaeology of identity. I then explore the history and use of the theoretical perspective of embodiment,
before a brief history of identity in plantation archaeology and an explanation of how my work fits into this theoretical and disciplinary context.

Chapter Three deals with the historical context for this project, covering the rise of tobacco agriculture in Virginia, the development of racialized chattel slavery and the changes in household structure that accompanied it, then connecting enslavement with the origins of racism and “scientific” racism.

Chapter Four provides cultural and historical context for how the body was understood in the 18th century. In it I explore the development of understandings of bodily difference in terms of gender and race and the ways in which the body was structured. I then move from the fabric of the body itself to the way the body was clothed, covering basic articles of clothing and the cultural meaning of fashion in the period of this study.

The rest of the dissertation consists of my data and primary source analysis and conclusions. Chapter Five deals with my historical sources, exploring satirical prints and travel sketches and detailing my analysis of the runaway advertisements. Chapter Six details the history and excavation of the sites, while Chapter Seven presents my analysis of the archaeological data. Finally, in Chapter Eight I present my conclusions.
CHAPTER TWO

IDENTITY IN ARCHAEOLOGY

Definitions and History

What is identity? Archaeologists Margarita Diaz-Andreu and Sam Lucy define it as “individuals’ identification with broader groups on the basis of differences socially sanctioned as significant” (Diaz-Andreu and Lucy 2005:1). Social scientists today tend to view identity not as a static category, but as a dynamic process of identification and belonging in which individuals are actively involved, and a process that can be both voluntary and forced by others (White and Beaudry 2009:210). The individual does not create his or her identity in isolation: the process of creating identity is “socially-mediated” and a part of a wider cultural and historical context (Diaz-Andreu and Lucy 2005:2; White and Beaudry 2009). Archaeologists researching identity must be aware of its historically-situated nature: our current-day categories cannot be uncritically placed over the past. In fact, our modern, western concept of individual identity is often inappropriate for past cultures, which may have prioritized social or group identity over individual identity (Insoll 2007:3). The concept of identity has been used by archaeologists to refer to both individuals and to groups, which can make defining what exactly we mean by the term more difficult (Diaz Andreu and Lucy 2005:1). Finally, identities are not necessarily self-chosen (Insoll 2007:4). This is an especially important point to remember when doing the archaeology of race and slavery. The identity of
“slave” is not one that the enslaved person willingly chooses, even if that person accepts or internalizes that identity.

The question of identity is one of the major topics of research for historical archaeologists today, who pursue questions that revolve around some combination of ethnicity, gender, sex, sexuality, race, class and religion (Delle et al. 2000; Orser 2001; White and Beaudry 2009; Voss and Casella 2012). Although historical archaeologists’ explicitly-stated focus on identity is relatively new, using material culture to understand how people sort themselves into groups is almost as old as the formal discipline of archaeology itself (Insoll 2007:1).

The first practitioners to investigate how material culture conveys group identity were the culture historians. These late 19th- and early 20-century archaeologists were keenly interested in the diffusion of cultural traits, which were roughly analogous to aspects of ethnic identity. The primary aim of this approach was to classify artifacts by external traits such as form or decoration, then to use these classifications as stand-ins for cultural traits. These archaeologists would not have called their enterprise the archaeology of identity, but by classifying people into unique groups on the basis of their material remains, that is in effect what they were doing. Anthropologists such as V. Gordon Childe believed that each ancient cultural group had its own unchanging templates for how objects were to be formed and decorated that were passed down through the generations (Jones 2007:45). This way of analyzing material culture creates an understanding of identity as being “objective, inherent, and primordial” (Diaz-Andreu and Lucy 2005:2). The individual was of little concern to these archaeologists, because
the culture, not the individual, was all they believed they could accessed archaeologically. Memberships within these cultures was static and fixed, and culture change could only happen through diffusion and contact with other cultures (Dunnell 1986:35). This was not the archaeology of individual self-identification, but of static cultural groups.

While prehistoric archaeologists of the early 20th century were focused on a topic that might be broadly categorized as identity (even if they did not term it this way themselves), historical archaeologists were a different matter. For the most part, historical archaeology served as a “handmaiden to history,” useful for reconstructing the homes of great men and other important places, but not a separate discipline in its own right (Noël Hume 1964). However, even at this early date, there were some practitioners who were growing dissatisfied with the auxiliary status of historical archaeology and wanted to imbue it with a more anthropological focus (Little 2009:367-368).

The way archaeology was practiced changed radically with the introduction of the New Archaeology in the 1960s. Simply documenting cultures and culture change by their artifact traits was no longer enough. Archaeologists now wanted to explain culture change, and to do so in a way that could be objectively tested and replicated (Dunnell 1986:37). These New Archaeologists infused the discipline with the scientific method, and introduced a degree of accuracy and precision that had not been present before. In terms of the archaeology of identity, however, fairly little had changed since the culture-history era. The group was still important above all: “The individual was very much part and parcel of the group, passive and obedient to its norms and pressures” (Diaz-Andreu
and Lucy 2005:2). However, the shift to a greater focus on “the processes involved in the construction of group boundaries, and the interrelationships between socio-cultural groups” did lead to more concern with ethnicity as a category of identity (Jones 2007:47).

Historical archaeology first began to separate as a field in its own right during this era, with the formation of the Society for Historical Archaeology in 1967 (Schuyler 1993:35). Historical archaeologists debated about whether the field would be more closely aligned with history or anthropology, the humanities or the sciences (Binford 1977; Cleland and Fitting 1978; Harrington 1978; Noel Hume 1978). The eventual consensus was that we are both history and anthropology (Deagan 1988). Historical archaeologists who aligned themselves more with anthropology looked for patterns and signatures in the archaeological record, and this included looking for patterns of identity. These studies mostly focused on patterns of ethnicity and class, although there was also some interest in race on plantations (Schuyler 1980; Otto 1984; White and Beaudry 2009:210). Another use of processualism for the study of identity was the study of acculturation through looking at sites associated with European and Native American contact (Deagan 1982:163). Despite the fact that archaeologists like Robert Schuyler and John Solomon Otto pursued topics related to identity, it was generally not the primary focus of historical archaeology during this period.

A shift towards an explicit archaeological focus on identity was made possible by the emergence of the post-processual critique in the 1980s, when archaeologists first started to question the idea that human culture is a purely adaptive mechanism. Several new ideas in particular would facilitate a greater focus on identity: a new emphasis on
culture change through the actions of the individual, and a critique of the way the identity of the researcher can shape knowledge production. Taking inspiration from the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens, post-processual archaeologists maintained that culture is shaped and transformed not through environmental pressures and evolutionary processes, but through the mundane, everyday actions of individuals (Bourdieu 1994). In this viewpoint, culture change is the result of the give-and-take of many different individuals with their own needs and motivations who may behave in ways that appear irrational or at odds with the principles of environmental adaptation (Ortner 1994:393). These individual actors were people of all ages, genders and social positions (Tringham 1991).

The post-processual critique was not merely a criticism of how archaeologists understood culture change. The very nature of the scientific process and the production of knowledge was being challenged. Post-colonial and feminist scholars argued that Western anthropologists had for too long tried to take a “neutral” and “objective” stance when observing the Other (Blakey 1997). They maintained that “neutral” and “objective” are impossible positions to sustain, and that these terms really just serve as code words for “white” and “male” (Haraway 1988). All archaeologists have some form of bias, making objective neutrality an unachievable goal. The solution is to acknowledge and address these biases head-on, not to maintain a non-existent neutrality (Hodder 1991).

One result of this critique was that the identity of the archaeologist herself became a part of archaeological work, an important way to acknowledge and problematize biases.
These factors: a new understanding of how culture is created and maintained based on Giddens’ and Bourdieu’s concepts of structure, agency and habitus; a search for humans in the past who are individuals and active agents, and a critique of the way structures of power affect the creation of knowledge ushered in an era that continues to this day where “identity” is a buzzword. There are a number of theoretical approaches to the study of identity, although not all scholars who study this topic take an explicit theoretical stance or stick to a single interpretive lens. Proponents of different theoretical positions may tend to have their own preferred topics, such as Marxists investigating class and power relations, but there is considerable overlap, especially in recent years as an understanding of the intersection of all of the different components of identity has entered the conversation.

Ethnicity, the aspect of identity that was of first importance to archaeologists, continued to be important into the post-processual era. But rather than grouping people into etic archaeological “cultures” based on shared artifact traits in the manner of culture historians, archaeologists today are more concerned with ethnicity as a way for individuals to identify themselves as part of a wider group (Orser 2004:7). One reason for the change is the fact that archaeologists realized that archaeological cultures are not static, bounded entities. Certain material culture types, such as ceramic styles or projectile point types, do not neatly link up with corresponding cultures, and even if they did, people themselves do not always sort themselves neatly into ethnic groups (Orser 2004:8). Recent social scientists have argued “that ethnic groups are more of an idea than a thing; if ‘they’ are characterized by anything, it is that their members choose to do
(some) things in similar ways to each other, and in different ways to other people” (Lucy 2005:86).

Historical archaeologists have shown considerable interest in the concept of ethnicity, although some approaches have been more successful than others. Finding material correlates of identity archaeologically can be a difficult task, especially with a facet of identity as fluid and often self-identified as ethnicity. The result can be an unfortunate reliance on what Paul Mullins termed “the strange and unusual”: objects that serve as stand-ins for the ethnic Other because they are different from the assemblage of artifacts associated with dominant Anglo-American society (Mullins 2008). These stereotyped “ethnic markers” appear in studies as stand-ins for many different ethnic groups (Orser 1999:662). For example, Roberta Greenwood used opium pipes and tea cups to represent a 19th-century Chinese community in Ventura, California, and blue beads became media for inferring African ethnicity on American plantation sites (Greenwood 1980; Stine et al. 1996). Archaeologists might also look for patterns of ethnicity in the material remains of food consumption or through the layout and construction of landscape and the built environment (McGuire 1982:163). The tendency to look for an ethnic pattern or an ethnic marker is still present in historical archaeology, as exemplified by Stephen Brighton’s (2011) attempt to see changes in ceramic usage as Irish immigrants in the Northeast acculturated to American middle-class ideologies. Another recent example of this type of approach comes from Terrance and Claire Fuller Martin (2010), who used patterns of faunal remains to explore differences in in food
consumption that might point to differences in ethnicity and regional origin at the town of New Philadelphia, Illinois (Martin and Martin 2010).

Searching for evidence of African ethnic identity was one of the main goals of the archaeologists who first began to focus on the archaeology of enslaved African Americans, and some archaeologists have continued to wrestle with the question of how much African ethnic identity survived the Middle Passage (Fairbanks 1984; Ferguson 1992; Fennell 2003). However, in recent years there has been a move away from studies of ethnicity towards a greater interest in the question of race, which is now believed to be the dominant aspect of identity that affected the material lives of enslaved people (Orser 1998; Heath 1999; Franklin and McKee 2004:3-4). Ethnic identity can be fluid and hard to pin down to specific artifact types or patterns, but race in the slaveholding south was a rigid category imposed from the top down that affected every aspect of the material lives of people living in that system, making race (and racism) potentially more visible in the archaeological record than ethnicity (Orser 1998: 662-663). I will return to the development of the archaeology of race at the end of this chapter.

Class is a topic that has received considerable attention in recent years (Wall 1999; Baugher 2010; Brighton 2011; Gadsby 2011). Most historical archaeologists who engage with the topic of class use theoretical approaches based on Marx and Weber (Paynter 1999). One primary goal of Marxist historical archaeology is to lay bare the “masking ideologies” that justified exploitation in the past and continue to create inequality today (Leone 1995:253). It is a form of knowledge production that aims to create change in the present world (Trigger 1993:180). Marxism is grounded in historical
materialism: the idea that society is based around economic production. Those who control the modes and the means of production (the base) create and maintain ideologies and social structures (the superstructure) to keep control over the means of production (Trigger 1993:163). Although understanding identity is not the goal of all of its practitioners, the Marxist approach provides considerable insight into the structure of power relationships that create identity.

Class, according to Louann Wurst, is not an objective category, but a process: “a set of relations that are historically constituted, fluid, and constantly changing” (Wurst 1999:9). Analyzing class through Wurst’s framework involves examining the relations of production that are in place at a historical moment. Class categories are historically and geographically contingent because they are based on the specific modes and relations of production in a particular time and place. Therefore it is counterproductive to apply today’s class categories on the past or to begin a study with the assumption these relations are already known (Wurst 1999:11). Wurst cautions historical archaeologists to take the possibility of class differences into account when excavating households, even in cases where it seems all of the members of the household might belong to the same class. She uses an example of three households excavated in downtown Binghamton, New York. Although all three households were headed by well-to-do merchants who were also involved in local politics, elites were not the only household members. Live-in domestic servants are present in the documentary record for the house, and other more temporary laborers were likely a part of the households as well (Wurst 1999:15). So in analyzing
these households, Wurst could not simply approach them as sites associated with “elites,” but as sites that had many different components and class relations (Wurst 1999:16).

Many archaeologists interested in class have focused on class relations between white Americans in the 19th-century industrial Northeast. Stephen Mrozowski and Mary Beaudry led a team who investigated the materiality of class differences at Boott Mill in 19th-century Lowell, Massachusetts (Beaudry and Mrosowski 1988; Mrozowski et al. 1996). Randall McGuire (1988) explored how changes in ideology affected class-based commemoration of the dead in cemeteries in New York. David Gadsby (2011) used the archaeological record of a mid-19th-century “paternalistic manufacturing village” in the northern suburbs of Baltimore to understand how working class people used material culture to fit into the evolving system of class of the period. LouAnn Wurst (2011) looked at the class dimensions of tourism at Niagara Falls, and Sherene Baugher (2010) investigated the power dynamics between the middle-class managers and the working-class inmates at the Sailor’s Snug Harbor in New York City. But there has also been a recent archaeological interest in the complex ways that class can intersect with race. Margaret Wood (2012) studied the ways in which free people of color could complicate the system of race and class in the Danish West Indies. Paul Mullins and Lewis Jones (2011) investigated a 20th-century neighborhood in Indianapolis to understand how class-based and racial inequality were perpetuated by urban renewal and stereotypes of slum life, and how activist archaeologists can resurrect the memory of these places that have been intentionally destroyed and forgotten by those in power. Charles Orser (2011) took a different approach to race and class in his article about New York City’s notorious Five
Points slum during America’s Gilded Age, arguing that poverty is a more salient factor in the process of racialization than ethnicity.

Gender is another key component of the archaeology of identity. In recent years, third-wave feminism has had a tremendous influence upon the way gender is approached in anthropology and archaeology. Third-wave feminism was largely a reaction to the way second-wave feminism had tended to set up the gender dynamics that they studied as a series of binary oppositions, the primary of which was a monolithic “woman” standing in opposition to “man” (Stockett and Gellar 2006:6-7). This new wave of feminism was also a reaction to the way white, Western, middle- and upper-class women had dominated the goals of the movement from the 1960s to the 1980s, a lack of diversity that heightened the tendency of feminist scholars to think in terms of monolithic, binary categories (Franklin 2001:110). With the rise of widely diverse social movements that fought against all forms of social discrimination, from the gay rights movement to the worldwide post-colonial movement, a greater range of voices began to contribute to feminism (Stockett and Geller 2006:10-11). The concept of intersectionality became a core component of third-wave feminism. The term was coined by lawyer and scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw as a way of describing how people can be affected by “overlapping systems of subordination” (Berger and Guidroz 2010:65). Intersectionality is a shorthand term for the idea that all aspects of a person’s identity merge together in such a way that any one of these facets of identity is nearly impossible to address in isolation.

A rejection of dichotomies also became a core component of third-wave feminist thought. Where “sex” and “gender” have previously been understood as a biological
reality and a social construct, respectively, the two are now seen as being in many ways both constructs and both biologically based (Stockett and Geller 2006:8). Biological sex is a bit messier than our categories of “male” and “female” would make it appear, but the notion of gender also has more basis in biology than we had initially thought (Joyce 2008:44). Another dichotomy that was rejected was the idea of male and female as black-and-white categories. Gender today is seen more as a spectrum, with a considerable amount of variation beyond simple male or female. Queer theorists have had a lot to contribute to this aspect of the conversation, reminding us that sex, gender and sexuality should always be understood contextually and in relation to each other (Joyce 2008).

In archaeology, third-wave feminism generated a rising interest in the highly contextual nature of gender, sex and sexuality. Studies have attempted to go beyond simplistic assumptions and equations of certain artifact types with certain genders. Including other aspects of identity, such as race, class, ethnicity, and even age as factors in gender has also been an important element to the third-wave approach. Carol Nickolai (2003) examined how the use of space on a farm in Michigan could reflect ideas about class and gender, while Diana Wall (1999) used ceramic usage patterns to investigate the intersection of class and gender in 19th-century New York. Archaeologists have also examined the intersection of ethnic identity and gender identity, for example by investigating how masculinity and Chinese identity interact among Chinese immigrants in 19th-century California (Williams 2008) Adding in age as a variable has highlighted the fact that people are gendered in sometimes radically different ways throughout the
life cycle (Gilchrist 2004). Studying the interaction of sex, gender and sexuality has also been fruitful (Loren 2008; Voss 2008; Weiss 2008).

The intersection of gender with race is particularly relevant to my project. One of the primary theoretical perspectives in historical archaeology that merges race and gender is Black Feminist Archaeology. Originally put forth by Maria Franklin, the perspective has also been taken up by Whitney Battle-Baptiste (Franklin 2001; Battle-Baptiste 2011). Franklin critiques her own previous work for not adequately engaging with the ways in which gender may have structured the household and activity areas at her dissertation site, Rich Neck Plantation (Franklin 2001:). The approach is a strong critique of the ways in which feminism has failed the black community. Battle-Baptiste notes that there has been little room made for African American women in history, where the category of woman is assumed to be white by default and the category of black is male by default (Battle-Baptiste 2011). Battle-Baptiste has engaged in household archaeology at the W.E.B. DuBois home site, as well as trying to see the social production of space and community at the Hermitage (Battle-Baptiste 2007; 2011).

**Embodyment**

It was in the context of third-wave feminism, with its focus on the diversity of human experience and its efforts to transcend dichotomous thinking, that embodiment emerged as theoretical framework. Embodiment in archaeology grew out of a frustration with the way archaeologists failed to meaningfully engage with the material record and their tendency to privilege discourse over materiality (Crossland 2010:391). Despite their often bitter differences, both processualist and post-processualist archaeologists had a
habit of creating a dichotomy between the material world and the world of ideas. The processualists openly argued that only aspects of life that were sufficiently material, like subsistence strategies or social organization, could be studied with any accuracy. But even though the post-processualists believed it was possible to access the world of ideas through objects, they still treated material culture as a stand-in for the “reality” of the world of ideas (Moreland 2001). One of the primary areas where archaeologists failed to transcend this dichotomy was in trying to operationalize the concept of agency in archaeology. Although archaeologists who used practice theory started with the idea that repeated, everyday activities structure and shape the actions of individuals, there was surprisingly little emphasis on the physicality of these actors, who were disembodied and generalized (Bourdieu 1977; Giddens 1984; Joyce 2004:85). Zoe Crossland sees the burgeoning interest in embodiment in archaeology as a reflection of “a broader questioning within the humanities and social sciences of previously unanalyzed and naturalized understandings of human bodies . . . the conception of ‘the body’ as a natural and trans-historical entity has been broadly critiqued by these perspectives, which attempt to take account of both the corporeality and sociality of human life, viewing ‘the body’ as historically contingent and in flux” (Crossland 2010:288).

Embodiment as a theoretical perspective has arisen from so many streams of thought, such as phenomenology, practice theory, feminism and even psychoanalytic theory that there has been some inconsistency within the perspective (Crossland 2010:389). Two primary influences on the anthropological application of embodiment are Judith Butler’s philosophical work which interprets identity (especially gender identity).
as an embodied performance, and Christopher Tilley’s adaptation of Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s philosophy of phenomenology to an archaeological context (Crossland 2010:389).

Phenomenology emerged around the same time as practice theory and it offers similar explanations of how the material world structures human action. Merleau-Ponty argued that the body is the “only possible starting point for perception:” the body is not separate from perception or a vessel through which a disembodied mind perceives the world, but a physical part of the world it perceives (Crossland 2010:289). The phenomenological approach has mostly been used in landscape archaeology, and it has been criticized for creating an implied universal body that is physically able, male and modern (Crossland 2010:289).

Social scientists who appreciated the emphasis on experience and materiality that phenomenology offered but who felt the perspective was too limited in its approach to the body found a solution in the work of Judith Butler. She emphasizes the way that identity is created through the body. In her influential book Gender Trouble, (1990) Butler argues that gender is created through bodily performance and external social discourse. There is no “interior and organizing gender core” to a person’s identity; rather identity is created by a combination of societal expectations and the individual’s embodied actions (Butler 1999:186). In the same book she argues against the idea that there are innate gender categories of masculine and feminine in which people can be grouped, or that there was perhaps another, more true but still universal way of defining gender. Instead, she argues
that her goal “was to open up the field of possibility for gender without dictating which kinds of possibilities ought to be realized” (Butler 1999:viii).

This idea that a person’s acts and gestures create identity is central to the theory of embodiment. Rosemary Joyce argues that “the concept of an easily defined body “surface” at the boundary between an interiorized person and an exteriorized society is problematic” (Joyce 2005:142). Not only is a person’s identity created through physical actions, but archaeologists have also begun to recognize that representations of the body and the objects placed on the body are a part of the same process of embodying identity (Joyce 2005:145). The artifacts shape the body, and the representations shape how the body is viewed and experienced.

If gender and sexuality are aspects of identity that are created through the body, what about the category of race? Although Judith Butler’s primary focus in her first work was how gender and sexuality are created with the body as a performance, she does later argue that race can also be interpreted through the framework of performativity and that gender and race are not created in isolation from each other (Butler 1993). Despite paying lip service to the idea, though, Butler does not address the issue of racialization as effectively as she does the notion of gender (Salih 2007:64). But the experience of being placed into a social category because of one’s body was being discussed by black and anti-colonial philosophers and activists long before Butler laid out her argument.

One of these early anti-colonial scholars was Frantz Fanon, a philosopher and psychiatrist from Martinique who is often cited in the context of race and embodiment (Mills 2014). His seminal work Black Skin, White Masks, (first published as Peau Noire,
Masques Blancs, 1952) discusses how colonialism and racism affect the psychology of the people who are colonized. One chapter in particular, originally translated as “The Fact of Blackness,” but translated more aptly by Richard Philcox (2008) as “The Lived Experience of the Black Man” describes in scathing, visceral detail the experience of inhabiting a racialized, colonized body in a white-dominated society (Fassin 2011:422). Despite the seemingly external, superficial nature of race (being identified by external characteristics), the embodiment of race goes far beyond the external. The everyday experience of being racialized builds up over time in thousands of experiences: Didier Fassin argues that “embodiment does not proceed from isolated external events: it is their accumulation and their internalization over time that give a sense of discrimination. . . , one could say that the recognition of discrimination derives alternately from the flow of time and from moments of revelation: the ordinary experience gets crystallized in specific events” (Fassin 2011:427). The construction of race goes beyond appearance in other ways as well. Mark M. Smith, discussing how white southerners perceived race, maintains that racial discrimination originated from, and is perpetuated through, visceral, sensory impressions. This sensory impression of race allowed white southerners to perceive black bodies as totally and inherently different from their own (Smith 2006).

There has been an explosion of interest in the body since the 1990s for two rather different reasons. The first is that the post-processual critique has sparked an interest in aspects of identity such as race and gender that are constructed through the body. The other reason is that there has been an increase in the study of the physical body through bioarchaeology (Joyce 2005:140). Both types of studies have become more explicitly
theoretical in recent years. Historically, there have been two approaches to studying the
body archaeologically: either by investigating the body itself in terms of diet, disease or
other aspects of life that are recorded on human remains, or by looking at burial practices,
adornment and representations of the body in terms of ideology and identity (Crossland
2010:386). This dichotomy between a study of the physical body and a study of the
ideologies of adornment and representation is a remnant of the Enlightenment division
between mind and body (Crossland 2010:387). The archaeology of gender and sexuality
that arose out of third-wave feminism was where the study of body first became
important, bringing together bioarchaeologists and practitioners of material culture
studies, but there was still a tendency to see the body as the “stable biological ground
from which gender was elaborated” (Crossland 2010:388). This dichotomy between sex
and gender would be criticized by archaeologists like Benjamin Alberti, who, in language
that echoed Judith Butler, argued that “there is no atemporal, fixed ‘core’ to a person’s
identity . . . outside the acts and gestures that constitute it” (Alberti 2001:190).

A handful of historical archaeologists deal with the subject of race from an
embodiment perspective. There seem to be two ways of approaching the topic: one takes
a more phenomenological tack, seeing how people move through space and landscapes in
ways that reinforce or challenge racial constructs, while the other explores how the body
itself is racialized through representation and adornment. Scholars who take this first
approach do so by examining the arrangement of landscape and space to understand how
people in power designed landscapes for the purpose of controlling the bodies of the
people they subjugated. But although the landscapes were designed with control in mind,
colonized or enslaved people consistently used them in ways that resisted those in power. Jane Lydon (2009) used this approach in her analysis of how Moravian missionaries attempted to use space to teach Aboriginal Australians how to behave like Europeans, and Dell Upton (1988) used it to understand how enslaved Africans and African Americans perceived and used spaces on plantations. The other angle, examining the racialized body itself, has been used most effectively by Diana DiPaolo Loren in two different areas of research. Loren’s primary area of focus is colonial Louisiana. In one area of research, she has used artifacts of adornment to study how Natchez women and French colonial men understood each others’ bodies in the context of intimate relationships and trade relationships (Loren 2012). Loren deals with the sensuality of bodily adornment and the role glass trade beads had in the interplay between Native women and European colonists, with the beads serving as a material stand-in for a whole suite of bodily movement and perception. Her other area of research deals with visual culture by examining Spanish colonial casta paintings to see how people of different races were represented (Loren 2007).

Identity in Plantation Archaeology and the Archaeology of Race

Plantations were one of the earliest focal points of historical archaeology in America. The nascent historic preservation movement was concerned with saving the homes of America’s most important men, and this included many plantation owners. George Washington’s Mount Vernon, first excavated in 1931, was one of the first plantations to be studied archaeologically (Singleton 1990:70). This kicked off what Theresa Singleton has called the “exploratory phase” of plantation archaeology, where
archaeologists excavated Virginia plantations such as Mount Vernon, Monticello and Gunston Hall to delineate the landscape, buildings, and activity areas (Singleton 1990:71). Singleton defines the next phase of plantation archaeology as “historically oriented”: studies that were meant to supplement the historical record and lacked standalone research questions. Most of these historical studies focused not on the enslaved inhabitants of the plantation, but on the plantation owners (Singleton 1990:71).

The first study that focused on enslaved people and incorporated a more anthropological research question was conducted by Charles Fairbanks at Kingsley Plantation in northern Florida. Fairbanks and his colleague Robert Ascher, a cultural anthropologist, looked for evidence of ”Africanisms:“ any artifact that could be said to have African cultural origins. One reason this made sense for this project was that the enslaved people who lived at Kingsley Plantation were direct transplants from West Africa who were given an unusual degree of freedom to continue their cultural traditions (Fairbanks 1984:2). John Otto expanded on this new focus on the non-elite members of the plantation with his study of Cannon’s Point Plantation. He saw his own work as continuation of the work that Fairbanks had started. Otto introduced a distinctly processual methodology, looking for “status patterning” of whites and blacks on an antebellum Sea Island cotton plantation in Georgia (Otto 1984). He saw archaeology as a new, unbiased way to learn about the experiences of the enslaved. However, Otto realized that it wasn’t enough to focus purely on the black experience, or just on the planter: to understand patterns relating to race and caste, it was necessary to understand all of the members of the plantation, no matter their race or status (Otto 1984:8). Otto’s focus on
“status patterning” helped set the stage for “new ways of looking at the emergence of racism, class struggle, and the relations of domination which characterized plantation society” (Singleton 1990:73). Charles Orser credits Otto with being the first plantation archaeologist to explicitly foreground race as an important factor in the structure of plantation society (Orser 2004:16-17).

Although Otto emphasized the topic of race early on, most historical archaeologists of the time saw studying ethnicity as a more fruitful topic in plantation archaeology (Ascher and Fairbanks 1972; Ferguson 1978; Fairbanks 1984). One of the first studies of ethnicity came from Leland Ferguson, who explored African identity through the production of colonoware. This coarse, hand-built pottery is often created to replicate European vessel forms or molded into vessel forms that are not seen in Native American pottery traditions. The vessels tend to turn up frequently on sites associated with enslavement. Leland Ferguson believed that these vessels showed African influence and searched for evidence of this (Ferguson 1978). In the Chesapeake region, Eric Klingelhofer (1987) interpreted objects, such as decorated pewter spoons, lithic tools, and modified glass and ceramic items at Garrison Plantation, Maryland, as potential evidence of African American ethnic identity.

Many historical archaeologists continued on this theme of looking for evidence of African ethnicity into the 1990s and early 2000s. Some studies of ethnicity have focused on material culture that is seen as having religious or symbolic meaning. For example, Chris Fennell has looked for evidence of the use of Bakongo cosmograms: symbols that are important within West African religious practice (Fennell 2003). He maintains that
people of a Bakongo ethnicity, although they only made up a small percentage of the ethnic groups who were forcibly moved to the Americas, had a disproportionate effect on the spiritual practices of the enslaved population. Mark Leone is also interested in this aspect of West African ethnic identity, looking at what he interprets as intentionally-buried spirit bundles in Annapolis (Leone and Fry 1999). Other archaeologists who are looking for evidence of ethnicity have turned to artifacts of personal adornment: beads, particularly blue beads, and cowry shells have been interpreted as signifiers of ethnicity or of African spirituality (Wilkie 1995; Stine et al. 1996; Young 1996; Handler 1997). Many of these types of studies have been criticized as being overly-simplistic and reductionist (Heath 1999; Heath and Breen 2009). It isn’t necessarily wrong or incorrect to look for material evidence for ethnic identity, but there are so many possibilities for wrong interpretation that studies like these must be nuanced and context-specific (Heath 1999:48). Another risk in searching for ethnic markers is that by rigidly defining a group by its artifacts, archaeologists may miss the reality of the back and forth exchanges, interactions and appropriations between different groups (Singleton and Bograd 2000:8-9).

Recent work has been generally more concerned with the process of racialization (Orser 2007). It is becoming more apparent that we cannot simply look to the archaeological record for ethnic markers, as the experience of race quickly became dominant in the lives of captive Africans, superseding ethnic identity (Orser 1998). The shift to a focus on race is also important because it is one of the fundamental issues that anthropologists are tackling in the 21st century (Franklin and McKee 2004). How can we
move on from the legacy of slavery, racism and colonialism, and how can our understanding of the constructed nature of race aid in this effort (Delle et al. 2000)?

Tracing race back to its origins and dealing with how it was constructed in the material world are issues we can tackle as historical archaeologists. Historical archaeologists are also recognizing that racialization is a complex process that is not merely a matter of people being categorized as black or white. Charles Orser has pointed out that the waves of immigration America experienced in the 19th and 20th centuries raised the question of who could and could not be white: for example, the Irish and Chinese were also racialized (Orser 2007). Another important factor to explore is the fact that the black-and-white definition of race that developed in the English colonies of Americas did not apply to slaveholding colonies of other nations (Loren 2007; Voss 2008b; White 2012; Agbe-Davies 2015).

**Where does my work fit in?**

Surprisingly little archaeological work has been completed that deals explicitly with how race becomes embodied in the context of plantation slavery. The work that has been conducted either focuses on different aspects of race, such as the racialization of Native Americans or aboriginal Australians, or it focuses more on performativity and individual identity than the development and negotiation of racial identity (Thomas and Thomas 2004; Loren 2007; Voss 2008a; Lydon 2009). Discussions of embodiment and race are not limited to archaeology: authors in disciplines such as philosophy and history have also delved into the topic (Miller 2009; Smith 2011; Lee 2014). Embodiment theory is a popular approach for studies of material culture examining the role of dress and
adornment in fashioning identity, so in this regard my work fits right into the prevailing archaeological approaches to this topic (White 2004; 2005; 2008; Beaudry 2006; Loren 2010). However, two elements make my work unique: it focuses on the way adornment helped to structure and embody the emerging concept of race in the colonial era, and it is built on an interdisciplinary treatment of images, artifacts, and written documents as intertwined threads of the same cultural milieu.

The unity of representations, bodies, and objects is what makes my study feasible. The paintings and satirical prints, the runaway advertisements, and the objects of personal adornment all worked together to create identities of black and white, slave and free. The paintings and satirical prints of the 18th century showed people how they were meant to dress and move their bodies. The runaway advertisements observed and implicitly judged how enslaved people dressed and moved. And the artifacts themselves shaped the bodies and either reinforced or countered the representations. These multiple media served to create, reinforce and comment on bodily practice.
CHAPTER THREE
HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Introduction

Explaining the origins of slavery and racism in colonial America involves untangling a knot of underlying causes. These intertwined threads include such disparate topics as ancient ideas about slavery, English attitudes towards the poor, impressions of foreigners, biblical beliefs about the development of humanity, the Enlightenment, the economics of cash crop production, and even beliefs about the meaning of the colors of black and white. David Davis (2006) argues that “the ultimate choice of black Africans and the related evolution of anti-black racism were not the results of a simple linear progression of events” (Davis 2006:50). Rather than attempting to trace the history of the entire institution of New World slavery, this chapter will focus specifically on how slavery and racism became institutionalized in Virginia, beginning with the development of tobacco agriculture and ending with the emergence of “scientific” racism

Tobacco

The institutionalization of slavery in Virginia was closely tied to the development of tobacco agriculture. To explain why slavery became the preferred form of labor in this region, it is important to understand the nature of tobacco culture and the changes that occurred in its production during the 17th and 18th centuries. Land was Virginia’s one abundant resource, but without a high-value cash crop, it had little worth and could not coax colonists to risk their lives in the new world. Tobacco was that cash crop that made
Virginia viable as a colony. When John Rolfe proved in 1614 that a marketable variety of tobacco could be grown in the colony, he created an incentive for colonization (Billings 2007:209).

Tobacco was a labor-intensive crop that required a significant amount of effort all year round: there was little downtime after harvest (Isaac 1982:24). From shortly after Christmas to March, laborers were occupied planting tobacco seedlings in carefully-protected seed beds (Breen 1985:46; Walsh 2011:155). April and May were taken up with creating hills about four feet apart for the seedlings in the most fertile soil on the plantation and transplanting the young tobacco plants. From June until July, the plants had to be maintained by being topped and suckered (removing any extra growth that would take energy away from growing large leaves) as well as weeding, removing worms, and hoeing. By August (in Virginia), the crop was ready for harvesting and putting up in tobacco houses to cure; this process needed to be completed before the first frost (Breen 1985:49; Walsh 2011:155-157). The timing of the next step in the process of tobacco production depended on the decision of the planter and the cooperation of the weather. The tobacco needed to be stripped from the stalk and packed into hogsheads when it was fully cured: this needed to be done on a day that was humid so the leaves would be supple enough to be handled without crumbling. In Virginia, this moment occurred sometime between October and November (Walsh 2011:158). However, this was not yet the end of the cycle. The hogsheads would not be transported to Europe until the merchant ships arrived to ship the finished tobacco, any time between November and the following spring (Breen 1985:53; Walsh 2011:158).
Planters and workers could not live on tobacco alone: they required an easy-to-grow subsistence crop for livestock and people that was compatible with the growth cycle of tobacco (Walsh 2011:145). Corn was a good choice because it could be quickly sown directly into prepared hills at a convenient point between March and June while the tobacco seedlings were growing (Walsh 2011:156-157). During the summer months, when tobacco required a tremendous amount of labor in weeding, suckering, and worming, corn could be left to grow with very little work (Carr and Walsh 1988:149). The green corn was eaten as soon as it was ripe in summer, and the mature corn could be harvested after the tobacco harvest in the fall. The timing of corn cultivation required much less precision than that of tobacco, so many stages in corn production could be timed to occur after critical moments in the tobacco cycle (Walsh 2011:158).

Although tobacco did not take highly skilled labor to grow, it was difficult to improve the efficiency of the process: planters could achieve some increase in the number of plants workers were required to tend, but larger yields still required more land (Walsh 2011:183). A plot of land could only support tobacco for four years. One or two more years of corn could be eked out of the land before it was exhausted and had to be allowed to lie fallow for 20 years before it could be productive again. This meant that planters had to regularly shift to new tobacco fields, requiring their enslaved workers to spend any time not dedicated to growing tobacco on clearing new land (Carr and Walsh 1988:151).

In the 1640s, a new strain of tobacco was developed. This sweet-scented tobacco fetched a better price in the English market than the older Oronoco strain, but it could
only be grown in the rich soils of the floodplains of coastal Virginia’s rivers. After sweet-scented tobacco was introduced, the economies of different parts of the Chesapeake began to diverge according to the types of export materials that were produced (Walsh 2011:147). Areas with the best soils grew sweet-scented tobacco, while regions with average soils grew Oronoco, and planters who were dealing with the most marginal soils placed a heavier emphasis on livestock to produce meat and other provisions for the Caribbean market. The region that grew Oronoco tobacco was made up of the upper Rappahannock, Potomac and Patuxent River basins up to Annapolis and into the northern part of the Delmarva Peninsula, as well as the Piedmont region. The sweet-scented region encompassed the lower Rappahannock, the York and the Upper James River basins. Finally, the provisioning region was located in a peripheral area of the lower James basin and lower Delmarva Peninsula (Walsh 1999:59).

To make a profit, planters had to tailor their plantation strategies to the type of tobacco they grew. Oronoco growers aimed for quantity, while sweet-scented growers put their efforts into quality. When the workforce in Virginia switched from indentured labor to enslaved labor, the Oronoco growers found that enslaved workers gave them an advantage over the planters of sweet-scented tobacco. Enslaved Africans already knew how to grow tobacco, and they were experts in the hoe agriculture employed in the region. They did not need to be taught how to grow the crop, and they could be coerced to do the fairly straightforward work of growing and processing a large amount of lower-quality tobacco. Planters in the sweet-scented region, on the other hand, were at a bit of a disadvantage with an enslaved workforce: their crop required careful handling, which is
considerably harder to coerce out of a person. Oronoco dominated the Chesapeake economy because it was more widespread and easily cultivated, but the men who traded in sweet-scented tobacco were often able to amass more money from their crop, and in turn secure more political power (Walsh 1999:68-69).

One primary challenge that tobacco presented was that its value was volatile. Despite the efforts of England to control the trade and ensure value through regulation, “tobacco prices fluctuated to such an extent that planters rode the roller coaster of boom and bust for much of the [17th] century” (Billings 2007:211). Tobacco was profitable in the 1630s, prompting planters to grow larger crops, which resulted in a saturation of the market leading to lower prices. By 1650, tobacco values had plummeted (Morgan 1975:185). The situation did not improve as the century progressed, and many planters only got by because of their creditors (Billings 2002:211). From 1680 to 1710, sweet-scented tobacco prices fell still further, leading to a slowing of the tobacco industry and forcing planters to look for other sources of profits (Menard 1980). Plantations began to diversify their economic activities during this time, although at first only wealthy planters had the resources to make this change (Carr and Walsh 1988:146). By the mid-18th century, many planters had switched to growing corn and wheat to export to the West Indies (Carr and Walsh 1988:147).

Lorena Walsh (1999:69) sees the early eighteenth century as a “turning point” in the Chesapeake economy. By 1700, the majority of the white colonists were native-born, creating a larger ratio of children to productive adult workers. This shift in age ratios made local goods and services important. At the same time, the Oronoco region went
through a brief slump, but after 1710, the Oronoco industry was dominating. After the Revolutionary War, wheat would come to be the export crop that dominated Virginia’s economy. Before the war, tobacco made up 72% of the export market, with wheat products at 14% and corn at only 5%. After the war, tobacco had dropped to only 50% of the market, with wheat at 40% and corn making up the remaining 10% (Walsh 1999:79-80). Regionally, planters and small-scale farmers in the Piedmont (like Jefferson and Madison) were more likely to make the switch to plow-grain agriculture than were the planters of the Tidewater (Walsh 1999:83).

Not all historians agree with this assessment of the Chesapeake economy. Douglas Bradburn and John Coombs (2006) believe that Russell Menard’s (1980) influential thesis that there was a 30-year depression in tobacco profits from 1680 to 1710 is flawed because it generalized information about Maryland onto the entire Chesapeake region and focused primarily on sweet-scented tobacco. Bradburn and Coombs believe that Virginia and Maryland’s economies were far more complex and varied than Menard would have us believe, and that if scholars would disaggregate the data by region and look beyond the trade in sweet-scented tobacco, a new picture would begin to emerge. First, although sweet-scented tobacco went down in price, Oronoco became more profitable during the same period. Second, the trade in provisions of livestock products with the Caribbean and other colonies was more extensive than historians have led us to believe: it was an industry that went beyond the periphery. Third, Menard and other members of the “Chesapeake school” failed to take into account artisan industries such as house carpentry and shipbuilding. Finally, trade with Native Americans may have been a
significant contributor to local economies. All in all, Bradburn and Coombs see evidence of a more diverse economy and far greater integration with the wider Atlantic world, trends that would indicate a lively and robust economy in the Chesapeake during the very period that Menard argues was a time of stagnation (Bradburn and Coombs 2006).

Scholars who allied themselves with the Chesapeake School reacted in various ways to this new reading of the history of the Chesapeake economy and development of slavery. Lorena Walsh was looking at the Chesapeake as a diverse collection of subregions before this critique came out, a fact that Bradburn and Coombs acknowledge and build upon (Walsh 1999; Bradburn and Coombs 2006:137-138). Peter Coclanis disagrees with the idea that there was no economic stagnation in the Chesapeake during the last decades of the eighteenth century: he argues that while the economic situation may not have been bad enough to be labelled a depression, it was “not sufficiently cheery” to induce planters to invest in slavery in a large-scale manner (Coclanis 2011:402).

The period of focus for this study (1760-1800) coincides with a time when many more plantations were shifting from a tobacco-and-corn to a wheat-and-livestock-based agricultural model. This mode of production relied on plowed fields rather than the older hoe-based method of creating hills for corn and tobacco in roughly-cleared, stump-filled fields. The change to wheat and livestock had a few consequences for enslaved people. Mainly, the switch meant that there was a greater diversity of work to be done on the plantation, and slaveholders began assigning different jobs to their enslaved workforces and differentiating between field laborers and craftsmen (Carr and Walsh 1988:166). This
created (at least in the eyes of the slaveholders) different classes of enslaved individuals on Virginia plantations. The switch to European grains and plow agriculture also caused a change in the sexual division of labor among enslaved laborers. When crops were tended with the hoe, both men and women worked in the fields at the same tasks. Plow agriculture, however, required a bit more strength and skill, and women were moved onto unskilled field tasks (Carr and Walsh 1988:176).

**From Indentured Servitude to Chattel Slavery**

Because tobacco was so land- and labor-intensive, 17th-century planters required an inexpensive, reliable source of labor. The solution was bound labor: first indentured white workers, then later enslaved black workers. The transition from bound white labor to racialized chattel slavery was complex and had multiple factors that historians have spent years debating (Jordan 1968; Kulikoff 1986; Parent 2006; Coombs 2011). Despite differing about the specifics, most historians agree that the development of chattel slavery is inextricably linked with the emergence of racism, the rise of the British Empire, and the development of capitalism. Two primary models to explain the conversion have emerged out of this debate. The older model calls racialized slavery an “unthinking decision” on the part of the planter class, who fell into the system out of necessity as the pool of indentured servants dried up in the mid-to-late 17th century (Jordan 1968; Kulikoff 1986). The newer model incriminates the planter class, positing that the labor switch was a calculated decision on the part of the richest, most influential planters (Parent 2006; Coombs 2011).
Historians writing in the 1960s to the 1980s tied the development of the slave trade directly with diminishing amounts of labor and land. Initially, the promise of abundant, cheap land gave white indentured servants an incentive to move to Virginia. Those who survived their terms of indenture stood a relatively good chance of acquiring fertile land and making money as planters (Jordan 1968:47; Carr and Menard 1979). This promise became a hollow one by the late 17th century, when the best land had already been taken, and a class of plantation-owning elites had become entrenched, making social mobility more difficult for freed servants (Morgan 1972; Menard 1973). The lack of indentured servants caused planters to search for new labor sources, and they turned to the forced importation of Africans to solve their labor problem. By the 1680s, chattel slavery of Africans, primarily from West and Central Africa, had been institutionalized (Jordan 1968; Kulikoff 1986:4-5).

Allan Kulikoff (1986) points to changes in the tobacco market as a primary impetus for the switch from indentured to enslaved labor. Falling tobacco prices led to a decrease in immigration and an increase in native-born whites who wanted to work for their own benefit, not the benefit of an elite planter. After 1680, tobacco profits had declined too much to make up for the cost of production, and there was little opportunity for freed servants to buy land. The introduction of slavery not only allowed the planters a cheap source of labor, the creation of a racial caste improved the status of poor whites (Kulikoff 1986:4). This new racial caste system reduced conflict between elite planters and poor whites: “At the same time that the growth of large plantations accentuated differences between wealthy and poor planters, the spread of slavery, reinforced by the
return of prosperity, muted social conflict among whites, who, whatever their differences, were consolidating their position as the master race” (Morgan 1975; Kulikoff 1986:6-7).

More recent scholars believe that this explanation underplays how rigid the class structures of 17th-century Virginia could be. From the very beginning of the colony, there were a number of elites who had connections to the wider Atlantic world and access to resources and ideas unavailable to people of lesser means (Hatfield 2004a:139-145). As early as 1630, these men were turning away from indentured servitude in favor of slavery. Although laws governing slavery may have been nebulous between the years when the first few planters acquired slaves and when the system of slavery became fully institutionalized, it is more accurate to consider these men and women slaves, not indentured servants (Coombs 2011).

Anthony Parent (2003) is one of the primary proponents of the newer explanation that implicates the planters themselves, not neutral economic processes, in the development of slavery. According to Parent, the switch from indentured servitude to slavery was neither inevitable nor an accident; rather, it was a calculated decision made by the men he terms the “great planters” of Virginia: the wealthiest planters who were able to wrest control of land from the very beginning of the colony (Parent 2003:2). Parent argues that the gentry themselves were the primary cause of Virginia’s labor shortage. The person who funded a colonist’s passage to Virginia earned a headright in the form of 50 acres of land. If the person was wealthy enough to fund his own trip, he received this headright for himself, but headrights for indentured servants went to the planter or the merchant who funded the servant’s voyage (Hatfield 2004a:56; Billings
2007:145). The headright system and the system of importing indentured servants were originally meant to ensure that the land would be improved and put into production, but the great planters’ greed prevented this from happening. These men obtained more land than they could afford to develop by taking advantage of headrights. Although laws required the planters to improve their land, they stretched the meaning of “improvement” or simply ignored the laws entirely. Sometimes they rented out this land to freed servants, but they also frequently held on to it as real estate speculation. Unlike their neighbors in Maryland, freed servants in Virginia were not given land at the end of their indenture. In the initial years of the colony, land was cheap and plentiful enough that a freed servant could simply save up some money and buy a plot of land, but as the gentry amassed larger and larger estates, land became scarcer and more expensive. Saving up money to buy land ceased to be a viable option for indentured servants. Thus, one of the major incentives for white indentured servants to immigrate to Virginia was removed, not by an overpopulation of freed servants, but by the gentry (Parent 2003:35-38).

Although Parent lays the blame for the labor shortage at the feet of the great planters, he does not contradict earlier scholars who pointed to improving conditions in England and the slowing of the tobacco market as additional causes of the shortage in bound white labor (Morgan 1975; Kulikoff 1986). Strong disincentives for emigrating from England developed in the 1660s. First, there was the reputation of the colony. Rumors of the horrors of Virginia began to travel back to Britain: servants told of terrible working conditions, of being forced to work alongside the growing numbers of enslaved Africans, and of being treated no differently from them. Second, working conditions in
England were changing as well, creating a more productive environment for laborers. This period saw a decreasing birth rate, decreased population because of a plague, and increasing job opportunities. There was no longer much incentive to emigrate. The planters, in turn, found indentured servants more of a problem than a benefit. Once servants gained their freedom they became competition in the tobacco business. They were also expensive to keep importing, only to be lost after seven years. Finally, the large tracts of land that these men controlled needed a large, consistent labor force to be productively exploited (Parent 2003:56-58). When the mortality rate was high, a consistent labor force was not achievable. During a period when people who were transplanted to the new world were unlikely to survive the first few years of “seasoning,” there was little value in owning a person for life. As the survival rate improved, owning bodies, not labor, became more feasible (Morgan 1975:297).

The great planters had always shown interest in the idea of African slaves, but there were a number of factors that kept them from being able to bring the idea to fruition. John Coombs argues that the dearth of slaves at the beginning of the colony had to do with access, not with a preference for indentured servants (Coombs 2011:347). Though there were few enslaved Africans in the colony in the early years (only 32 in 1620 and 23 in 1625), “their sparse numbers did not stem from a lack of interest in acquiring them” (Coombs 2011:338). Because of a combination of foreign policy issues and debates about the purpose of the colony, a slave trade to the Virginia colony had not yet developed. The few slaves who arrived were stolen by privateers from Spanish ships, but colonial officials debated whether Virginia should serve as a base for privateers,
causing most of these captive men and women to be directed to Bermuda. These debates were resolved after 1625, but the establishment of colonies in the West Indies and the subsequent sugar boom there meant that slaves were sent to the West Indies, not Virginia (Hatfield 2004a:147-148; Coombs 2011:341). Office-holding elites with enough wealth and the right connections were able to access a small part of this market, but more ordinary planters had no way to break in. “The numbers reaching the colony remained small, of course, both in absolute terms and as a proportion of its total inhabitants. But this dearth was more a product of timing and the limited capacity of the still-developing English slave trade than any cost-benefit analysis that convinced Virginians that servants were the better investment” (Coombs 2011:344).

Coombs identified four stages in a long process of conversion to enslaved labor in Virginia in the 17th century. During the first stage, which lasted from initial settlement until 1650, only planters with “the right connections” were able to acquire enslaved labor (Coombs 2011:360). During the second phase, which lasted from 1650 until 1670, there was an increase in both slave trade between the colonies and directly from Africa, meaning that the lower rank of gentry who held county-level (rather than colony-level) positions could also have workforces consisting of mostly enslaved people. The third stage, from 1670 until 1700 was the period that saw the “emergence of the colony’s first large fully enslaved labor forces and the extension of slaveholding to a sizable percentage of non-elite Virginians for the first time” (Coombs 2011:360). The final phase, after 1698, was when the conversion was complete, and “the mass of ordinary, labor-owning planters” owned slaves (Coombs 2011:360).
Coombs argues that “there was no trigger cause for conversion” (Coombs 2011:360). Rather than an economically depressed colony plagued by diminishing opportunities for ordinary people, late-17-century Virginia was a lively and flourishing place with strong connections to the Europe, the Caribbean, and other American colonies. The switch to slavery was not an abrupt decision made by desperate planters, but a logical and gradual move toward greater cultural and economic integration with an Atlantic world that had already embraced plantation slavery (Bradburn and Coombs 2006:150).

Regional differences complicated the conversion to slavery. Although elite planters in every region were able to access enslaved labor more easily than ordinary planters, access for everyone was limited by the economic focus and trade connections unique to each region. The sweet-scented region was home to elite planters who had strong connections to London tobacco merchants and the Atlantic world. This was the area that received the most direct trade shipments, and the planters here were among the first to commit to chattel slavery (Coombs 2011:356). It was not only the elites who adopted slavery early in the sweet-scented region: by the last decades of the 17th century, about half of the ordinary planters in the sweet-scented region owned slaves. Ordinary planters in the Oronoco region were slower to convert to slavery, probably because of their weaker connections with the London tobacco importers who served as middlemen in the slave trade (Coombs 2011:355). In the provisioning region, a diverse economy and strong trade connections with Barbados meant that planters had early access to slaves through the Caribbean market (Coombs 2011:358).
If Virginia planters were simply tapping in to an already-established system of African enslavement, how had the rest of the Atlantic world come to embrace such an institution? Medieval Arab traders were the first to enslave large numbers of sub-Saharan Africans, but the first example of Western Europeans using slavery for plantation agriculture was on the Iberian-controlled islands of Madeira and the Canaries off the northern coast of Africa. By the last decades of the 15th century, plantations on these islands were producing sugar with enslaved African labor (Davis 2006:86). The Portuguese were the first Europeans to establish slave trading outposts on the West African coast, and in these early years slaves were sent to Portuguese plantations off the coast of Africa or to metropolitan centers on the Iberian Peninsula (Davis 2006:93). With this precedent set, by the late 1500s, enslaved African labor began to replace forced Indian labor in Spanish and Portuguese colonies in Brazil and the Caribbean (Davis 2006:100). As in the Chesapeake, British plantations in Barbados and the Leeward Islands initially took advantage of indentured labor, but enslaved African men and women were present from the very beginning of these colonies (Beckles and Downes 1985:2-3; Handler 2016:3). Although they dealt with the same political constraints that prevented the British from becoming involved in the slave trade in a large-scale manner before the 1650s, the status of Africans that planters were able to acquire was not ambiguous (Beckles and Downes 1985:2; Handler 2016:6). Neighboring Spanish and Portuguese colonies had already established African slavery, and West Indian planters looked to Iberian custom to define the status of the Africans who were forcibly taken to the Caribbean (Hatfield 2004b:12; Handler 2016:6). When tobacco planters in the
Chesapeake turned to chattel slavery, they were not doing so in a vacuum; rather, they were following a precedent set first by the Spanish and Portuguese and Anglicized by planters in the British West Indies.

As the system of chattel slavery became solidified in Virginia, laws began to change to reflect the new status of people of African descent (Rose 1976:16-22; Billings 2007). Before 1640, the legal status of black Virginians was unclear. During this period, the distinction between black and white was less important than the distinction between Christian and non-Christian. One example of this distinction comes from a court case in 1624, the first legal record of the use of the term “Negro.” A man named John Phillip was allowed to testify in a court case dealing with an illegally seized Spanish ship. Phillip was allowed to testify despite his African heritage because he had been christened (Parent 2003:107). The first instance of race-specific legislation in Virginia came in 1640 when the General Assembly made it illegal for non-whites who were not freeholders to bear arms (Parent 2003:108). Changes in the way blacks and whites were seen before the law began to increase after this point, where punishments meted out for the same crimes began to be differentiated by race. There was still uncertainty, however, about how religion affected race. Did baptism automatically mean a person could not be enslaved? The answer to this question became no in 1667, when the General Assembly of Virginia ruled that baptism would not result in freedom for enslaved individuals. In the words of the act “the conferring of baptism doth not alter the condition of the person as to his bondage or Freedome; that diverse masters, Freed from this doubt, may more carefully endeavor the propagation of christianity. . .” (Billings 2007:204). Warren Billings sees
the year 1660 as a “turning point in English attitudes toward slavery.” After 1660, white colonists began to crack down on the rights they had initially allowed blacks and “wrote the peculiar institution into Virginia law” (Billings 2007:178). Billings attributes this change to a combination of an increasing African population and an effort to make the written laws reflect the reality of the status of black Virginians. The passage of these laws eliminated any potential legal loopholes for escaping enslavement, and they helped to solidify a racial binary where bodily characteristics, not religion, classified a person as a slave (Billings 2007:178).

The presence of enslaved Indians in Virginia complicated the issue of race. The English observed the enslavement of indigenous people in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies to the south and found the notion of enslaving Indians attractive, but ultimately not practical. In the first few years of the Virginia colony, the English lacked the military force to effectively subjugate the Indians, let alone enslave them (Allen 1994:36). The situation turned in favor of the English after the Powhatans lost a war against the English and a treaty was signed in 1646. The English began to acquire Indian prisoners of war as slaves. However, Indian slavery never reached the scale of either white indentured servitude or African slavery. A sharp decline in the native population from European diseases combined the inability of plantation owners to control enslaved Indians and the frequency with which they escaped were all factors that kept Indian slavery from becoming institutionalized (Allen 1994:37). A small number of enslaved Indians were imported from North Carolina into Virginia. Their status began to be merged with that of enslaved Africans, which was reflected in a 1682 law that declared “all imported non-
Christian servants” slaves for life (Morgan 1975:329). In this case “imported” referred to both enslaved Africans and Indians who were brought into Virginia from other colonies. Rather than complicating the emerging concept of race, Edmund Morgan (1975) believes that the presence of enslaved Indians in Virginia helped to solidify a binary racial system. If both Indians and Africans were slaves, “and only they were slaves,” then both slaveholders and white indentured servants would have easily thought of both groups together “in a lowest common denominator of racist hatred and contempt” (Morgan 1975:330). This reality is relevant to the way I have structured my work. Race has not always been constructed as a binary of black and white, and the presence of people of mixed ancestry in Virginia can be seen as complicating race. However, the fact that in 18th-century Virginia the tiniest amount of maternal African ancestry could classify a person as a slave meant that race was experienced as a binary of black and white for most, if not all, of the people I study in this dissertation.

**Changes in Household Structure**

One of the results of the switch to slavery was that the household structure became rigidly patriarchal (Kulikoff 1986:8). In the 1720s and 1730s, the great planters were beset with challenges from all sides “as they became weaker in their dealings with the crown, more dependent on English merchants, more anxious about their women and children, less masterful over small and middling planters, and more threatened by blacks” (Parent 2003:198). They needed a way to justify their place at the top of the social hierarchy, an ideology that could guide their dealings with the many classes of people they saw as beneath them. “Patriarchism” was the great planters’ ideological answer to
these threats to their power. The term “patriarchism” was seen in print for the first time in 1666; it “can be defined as an organizational belief system in which society is structured around the supremacy of the patriarch, or father” (Parent 2003:1999) The planters modeled themselves on the patriarchs of the Bible, men who ruled over wives, children, slaves, and employees. Although this mode of social order was being preached in Britain as a counter to the social disruption and the breakdown in feudal relations, Anthony Parent believes that the planters’ embrace of patriarchy was a uniquely American phenomenon. Great planters like William Byrd II “contrasted images of an idyllic Virginia invigorated by patriarchs, bondsmen, and tradesmen with images of a depraved England vitiated by beggars, housebreakers, and highwaymen. . . .This self-conscious plantation pastoralism was a cultural innovation of the great planters, not a mimicking of the English aristocracy” (Parent 2003:207).

The beginnings of domestic patriarchy could be seen in the passage of new laws regulating women’s work in colonial Virginia. Before 1729, laws were passed forbidding white women from tending tobacco (Kulikoff 1986:165). These laws were an attempt to raise the price of tobacco, but they also reflected the institutionalization of a gender and racial hierarchy where a person’s race played into the way he or she was gendered. By the early 18th century, patriarchism was the household ideal: husbands ruled over their wives and controlled the distribution of resources and inheritances to their children. These planters were under no illusions that the people they subjugated were happy with their lot: “Patriarchs did not expect their slaves to be content or submissive: the myth of the happy and docile slave was not an 18th-century invention” (Morgan 1998:278).
Parent argues that the system of patriarchy was uniquely American, an anachronistic throwback to an imaginary ideal that was not being practiced by the English. However, a number of historians see patriarchy developing in Britain during the second half of the 17th century. Masculinity, particularly for elite men, was defined by a man having control over the members of his household, especially in controlling his own sexuality and that of the women for whom he was responsible (Harvey 2005:298). To Philip Morgan patriarchy was an ideal with ancient roots in English society that allowed slavery to be adopted in Virginia with little moral ambiguity. The patriarch was at the center of a British American society that was marked by “a deep respect for rank and hierarchy” (Morgan 1998:274). Allan Kulikoff argues that the system may have been more pronounced in Virginia, but it was certainly not unique. Demographic improvements in Virginia allowed planters to switch back to the old social order: decreasing mortality rates led to longer marriages and more children, while the switch to slavery solved the labor problem, allowing elites to return to their preferred social order. The system also depended on scarce, expensive land and consolidated wealth: patriarchs could only control their adult children if the threat of disinheritance would seriously affect their ability to acquire land. Poor families and families who lived on the western frontier did not participate in the system (Kulikoff 1986:167).

Some historians see a change in the social order beginning in the mid-to-late 18th century. Patriarchism began to be replaced by a new social arrangement: paternalism. This approach to plantation rule was characterized by a softening in slave laws, an increase in feelings of sentiment and even love expressed by planters toward their slaves,
and a growing tendency to see traits of “submissiveness” and “docility” in enslaved men and women (Morgan 1998:284). Philip Morgan points to the rise of “a more affectionate family environment, the rise of evangelicalism, romanticism, and humanitarianism and a growing emphasis on private property rights” as explanations for the shift to paternalism (Morgan 1998:284). The Revolutionary War also helped to spark the change to a softer form of family rule because of the risk that slaves would run away to join the British. Many enslaved people did escape during the war, and slaveholders could not threaten them to stay. Instead, they were reduced to pleading with their slaves not to flee, leading to possibility of negotiation in the master-slave relationship. Planters whose slaves stayed on the plantation took this as evidence of their loyalty. The notion of the contented, submissive slave ceased to seem so farfetched. Ruling their household in a more benevolent, paternalistic manner was one way planters attempted to foster loyalty in their enslaved workforce (Morgan 1998:284).

The trend towards paternalism may also have been caused in part by the maturation of black society in Virginia. By the mid-18th century, some enslaved families had been working for the same white family for multiple generations, leading to a sense of connection and kinship. Cultural shifts also contributed to the growth of paternalism: in the late 18th century there was a “shift toward romantic sentimentalism” in English society (Morgan 1998:187). Additionally, the influence of Evangelicalism encouraged a “softening” of slaveholders toward the people they enslaved. Runaway slave advertisements during this period reflect this shift: slaveholders begin noting how much they cared for the runaways (Morgan 1998:190). Baird (2006) argues that paternalism
was a way of making slavery more acceptable to late-18th-century mores and to hide the
fact that slaveholders did not have a close, trusting relationships with the people they
enslaved (Baird 2006:151). Planters created a myth of themselves as the loving fathers at
the head of large families of black and white “children” who loved and depended on
them, a myth that was belied by the slaves’ eagerness to run away.

Not all historians believe that paternalism was a new phenomenon, or that it was
an antithesis to patriarchy. James Oakes (1996) sees paternalism and patriarchy as going
hand-in-hand. In the 17th century, the patriarchal ideals that many historians have
interpreted as rigidly hierarchical were softened by an idea of a heavenly Father who
“served as the supreme model for the ‘munificent’ early father” (Oakes 1996:4). A
hierarchical order to society was natural and God-given, and each member of society had
certain rights and obligations to one another. A good patriarch would naturally treat those
beneath them in the manner of a firm, loving father. To Oakes, the particular way it was
implemented may have changed over the years, but “the essentials of paternalistic dogma
remained” (Oakes 1996:4). Although Oakes’ raises an important point that both
patriarchism and paternalism are variants of the same basic schema of white male
domination, the changing attitudes about race, the emergence of ideals of “sentiment,”
and the increase in paternalistic language that Morgan and Baird see in the mid-to-late
18th century have significant implications for this study.

In the late 18th and early 19th century, a slave revolution in Haiti and a number of
other slave uprisings struck fear in the hearts of slaveholders everywhere for two reasons.
Most obviously, slaveholders feared rebellion, but they also feared that the tide of public
sentiment would turn toward abolition. To avoid rebellions and entrench their institution in a society that was becoming increasingly uncomfortable with human bondage, slaveholders and abolitionists proposed a gradual process of amelioration: of treating slaves in a more “progressive”, “humane” manner with the possibility that some time in the future slavery might be abolished (Davis 1984; Dierksheide 2014:12). Amelioration and paternalism went hand-in-hand. Rather than responding to the threat of rebellion with overt violence, plantation owners worked to create an illusion of love, family and mutual obligation between slaveholder and enslaved. Historians have noted that amelioration had effect of making the institution of enslavement more palatable to abolitionists and slaveholders alike, further entrenching the system and assuring its continuation (Jordan 1968:368; Dierksheide 2014:14).

The overseer played an important role in the system of race-based slavery. By taking on the task of forcing enslaved men and women to work against their will day in and day out, overseers allowed slaveholders to maintain some psychological distance from the realities of a system of forced labor (Genovese 1972) James Baird (2005) argues that overseers were especially important to maintaining the illusion of paternalism in the late 18th-century Virginia Piedmont as planters increased production and profits in grain and tobacco agriculture. By projecting all of the brutality of maintaining the institution onto the overseer, the slaveholder was able to cast himself as the benevolent father figure of the plantation, even as his relationship with his enslaved human property became increasingly distant and exploitative (Baird 2005:151). Overseers were caught between two worlds: their association with enslaved people and the brutality of their profession
made white elites despise them, while their task of ensuring that the plantation remained productive and their role as proxy for the slaveholder caused the enslaved community to fear and distrust them.

Not all overseers were white and free. William Wiethoff (2006) argues that enslaved overseers were much more common than most historians have realized: participants in the WPA slave narratives, where we get much of our information about the dynamics of plantation life, were careful to differentiate between enslaved foremen or “overlookers” and white overseers, but that functionally the tasks they completed were the same (Wiethoff 2006:436). Montpelier, Monticello, and Poplar Forest all had an enslaved overseer at some point. James Madison, Sr. made use of a trusted enslaved man named Sawney to run one of his four quarter farms: this quarter even became known as “Sawney’s Quarter” (Chambers 2005:144). Thomas Jefferson preferred white overseers, but when a newly-hired white overseer failed to show up in the winter of 1796, he assigned the position to an enslaved man named George Granger instead (Stanton 2012:121). The fact that overseers competed with enslaved men for work “merely heightened perceptions of overseers as contemptable” in the eyes of elites (Wiethoff 2006:433). Planters viewed black and white overseers differently: white overseers were scum, but enslaved overseers often occupied a privileged place in the plantation hierarchy. The competition for work between the two groups also kept white overseers’ wages fairly low (Wiethoff 2006:445).

With such a reputation as shiftless, low-class men, one might expect overseers to have all been unmarried and transient, but they often had wives and families. One of the
overseers at Accotink who appears in the historical record had a wife, and correspondence between James Madison and James Monroe in the early 19th century mentions an overseer with a wife and three children: both of the overseer’s houses at Accotink and Mount Pleasant could easily have been occupied by an entire family, and the archaeological record at these sites seems to support such an idea (Madison 1820; Sipe et al. 2013). The wives and children of overseers are barely mentioned in the documentary record. Elites had little interest in their lives, and most were not literate enough to record their own lives, but they are mentioned often enough to indicate their important role on the plantation. Although a few planters believed that overseers with families were more trouble than they were worth, most preferred a married overseer, since the overseer’s wife could fulfil many of the female-gendered tasks that were essential to the plantation’s productivity (Sandy 2012:474-477).

Overseers’ wives and other lower-class white women contributed a great deal to the plantation economy. In addition to managing their own households, they engaged in spinning, weaving, sewing, dairying, and poultry raising for the plantation. They also served as overseers for female slaves in these same activities. Overseeing spinning and weaving was such a necessary task that some planters employed women as overseers in their own right: George Washington and Robert Carter both employed women to supervise their spinning operations. The archaeological record for both of the overseers’ houses included in this study contains an unusually large number of textile production artifacts, supporting the idea that both sites housed overseers with wives who contributed to the economy of the plantation. Additionally, a letter from James Madison, Sr. about the
accidental burning of an overseer’s house that is likely the Mount Pleasant structure mentions that a large quantity of spun thread was also lost in the fire (Madison.1796) Is it possible that the thread was stored here because the overseer’s wife oversaw Montpelier’s enslaved spinners?

Overseers’ wives took part in the same informal economic networks that enslaved men and women engaged in, selling excess produce, eggs, and craft products to the planter’s household or in local markets. The overseer and his wife also procured their consumer goods from the same local merchants and often competed for the same work (Sandy 2012; Wiethoff 2006). With such similarities in material circumstances, it is not surprising that it can often be so difficult to tell the difference between sites associated with enslaved people and sites associated with white overseers.

**Slavery and the Origins of Racism**

Historians have debated about how racism and slavery are interrelated: did racism fuel slavery or vice versa? Or, was there “no intrinsic relationship between the two institutions” as Audrey and Brian Smedley (2012:98) argue? The idea that slavery led to racism was put forward as early as 1830 by Alexis de Toqueville (Smedley and Smedley 2012:98). Other historians, like Winthrop Jordan (1969), have argued that a racialized hatred of Africans was present from their very first contact. Jordan argued that blackness and darkness connoted evil, dirtiness, and baseness to the English, and that they projected these notions onto dark-skinned people (Jordan 1968:6; Smedley and Smedley 2012:99). Unlike the people of Mediterranean nations, who had connections with North Africa and the Arab world for hundreds of years, the English were insular and cut off, creating a
higher degree of suspicion of people who looked different. Jordan believed that slavery and racism created a dynamic feedback loop: the two phenomena were co-occurring and cannot be separated (Jordan 1968:80). Other historians argued that English racism and exceptionalism had their beginnings not with African slavery or even with the colonial conquest of the Americas, but with England’s colonization of Ireland in the 16th century. Theodore Allen (1994) sees similarities between the way the Irish were racialized during colonization and the way enslaved Africans were racialized. The English passed laws forbidding marriage or trade between English colonists and Irish natives, and they even forbade any Irish cultural activities such as poetry, music, and dance that might prove too seductive to the English and cause them to abandon their own culture (Smedley and Smedley 2012:53). These debating viewpoints prove the complexity and interrelated nature of the factors that led to the emergence of the concept of race.

The development of racism and slavery are also closely tied to the emergence of capitalism and the weakening of medieval English social institutions. In medieval England, a man’s worth was measured by his family connections and his ties either to his own land or to gentry who owned land. The conversion of public grazing lands into fenced-in private property for the wealthy, a phenomenon known as enclosure, set off a breakdown in traditional English society, weakening the ties that bound commoners to the nobility and introducing a new way of measuring social status. Rather than relying on land or family for social standing, men measured status based on possessions and money (Smedley and Smedley 2012:45-47; Genovese and Fox-Genovese 1983:273-275). The new social order had an unexpected consequence: a large underclass of mobile
“masterless men” who posed a threat to social stability (Smedley and Smedley 2012:51; Morgan 1975). English gentry on both sides of the Atlantic worried about how to deal with these men, and some spoke longingly of some sort of system of enslavement to forcibly control them (Morgan 1975:324). In the New World, nascent capitalism led to plantation agriculture producing cash crops, creating an unprecedented system of indentured servitude and the “chattelization of English plantation labor” that served as the “precondition” for racialized chattel slavery (Allen 1997:300).

The institution of chattel slavery may have been a uniquely new world phenomenon, but the ideology that helped create it was by no means unique. Edmond Morgan (1975) argues that the English viewed poverty and class in a way that meshed quite well with the ideology of slavery, even if they lacked the resources to implement their views as social policy. Elites in England saw the poor as a problem to be dealt with, but they did not see poverty itself as an issue that needed to be resolved. English elites believed that there were certain inherent classes of people, making the poor a class of people who were inferior in their very bodies. No amount of money or education could better the poor: the only solution was to introduce forced discipline in the form of workhouses or servitude (Morgan 1975:324). Colonial elites took this mindset one step further by creating a slave class who did look different from whites. Race was a way to get poor whites on the side of the landholding elites and reduce class conflict: all white people could be unified against non-whites, even while some whites were, due to class and gender identities, seen as intrinsically more worthy.
“Scientific” Racism

The term race appears to have come from Romance words that are used for breeding lines, bringing implications of keeping a breeding line pure. With these origins, “race” has always carried along with it a sense of “innateness” and “inbred nature” (Smedley and Smedley 2012:38). The word began to show up in English usage around the 16th century. In the 17th century, “race” was used to denote people or things that shared meaningful traits in common (a “race of bishops” or the “race of women”) (Smedley and Smedley 2012:36). During this same period the term also began to have a meaning that referred to national or ethnic origin without the rigidity of the modern notion of race; however, by the end of the 18th century, the term would begin to develop its modern-day meaning, hardening into a biological category (Augstein 1996:ix; Gissis 2011:42).

Medieval thinkers organized the world into the Great Chain of being, which placed all living things in a ranked system, from the smallest insect, to the angels, and finally to God. The traditional chain of being placed all humankind, regardless of origin, at the top of the earthly beings, just below the angels (Jordan 1968:219). This idea that all of human kind occupied the same position in the Great Chain of Being was influenced by the Biblical story of the creation of Adam: all of humanity descended from Adam. However, medieval thinkers still wanted to explain the diversity that they saw in humankind. Their explanation was that such diversity arose after Noah’s sons scattered around the world after the Flood. Shem gave rise to the Semitic people, Japheth was the father of Europeans, and Ham’s descendants became the dark-skinned people of the
world. Ham was cursed for mocking his naked, drunk father, a curse that would eventually be used to justify the enslavement of Africans. Thus, even though all men were technically just below the angels, some groups were cursed by their ancestor’s actions, making them dark-skinned and immoral (Davis 2006:64-66). This way of ordering the world: the idea that all men were related and placed just below the angels, would continue to influence Enlightenment thinkers as they began to observe and classify the world around them. Far from rejecting the idea of the Great Chain of Being, many 18th-century thinkers were responsible for making it a widely-accepted, mainstream concept (Lovejoy 1936:183). But the fact that Europeans seemed to be at the top of the world in terms of technology and dominance, and the need to justify empires built on enslavement, required these men to invent a reason to explain why, if humans all descended from Adam, some humans seemed to be better than others (Baum 2006:61).

During the Enlightenment, Europeans became obsessed with description and classification of all manner of things: plants, rocks, animals, and people. As they classified the world around them, these men continued to adhere to the idea of an innate, God-given hierarchy within nature. When Carolus Linnaeus created his groundbreaking classification system for all of nature, his system was based on this unchangeable “order of nature” (Eze 1997:10). When he classified humanity, he placed them into five different sub groups. The first was a “wild man” who walked on all fours, but the next four groups are classed by race:
2 Copper-coloured, choleric, erect. American.

Hair black, straight, thick; nostrils wide; face harsh; beard scanty; obstinate, content, free. Paints himself with fine red lines. Regulated by customs.

2 Fair, sanguine, brawny. European.

Hair yellow, brown, flowing; eyes blue; gentle, acute, inventive. Covered with close vestments. Governed by laws.

3 Sooty, melancholy, rigid.

Hair black; eyes dark; severe, haughty, covetous. Covered with loose garments. Governed by opinions.

5 Black, phlegmatic, relaxed.

Hair black, frizzled; skin silky; nose flat; lips tumid; crafty indolent, negligent. Anoints himself with grease. Governed by caprice (Linné 1806; reprinted in Eze 1997:13)

Linnaeus’ groups had cultural as well as physical traits that he believed were inbred, but he did not think of them as separate species. It is interesting to note that he had specific ideas about not just the shape of the bodies themselves, but the way these different groups adorned and covered themselves, making the adornment a part of the racial classification.

After Linnaeus, a number of 18th-century thinkers tried their hands at sorting humankind into groups. In the 1770s, a German medical professor named Johann Blumenbach used cranial characteristics to divide humanity into four groups: Caucasian, Mongolian, Ethiopian, and Malay. He used his favorite skull, that of a woman from the
Caucasus Mountains in Georgia, as his type for the Caucasian race. He believed this skull was the most perfect and least-degraded human type, the closest in appearance to that of the first humans (Baum 2006:76-77). During this period, most people still subscribed to some version of the biblical explanation of the origin of humanity. The differences between humans could be explained by variations in climate and environment. This “theory of climate” as it was known, explained that harsh environments coarsened bodies and darkened skin (Augstein 1996:xv). Thus all non-white people were degraded from the original, perfect Caucasian form by environment into less-perfect, degraded forms (Smedley and Smedley 2012:221). Eighteenth-century Europeans rationalized this theory with the biblical flood story, explaining that Noah’s ark must have landed in the Caucasus Mountains, and from there his sons spread out into the world, their descendants growing further and further from perfection because of the harsh climates they encountered (Baum 2006:82). However, to some 18th-century thinkers, the differences between the races were far too great to be explained by differences in climate. These men required another explanation.

To these thinkers, it was clear that all of humanity was not equally developed. They saw the differences in the races as so extreme that each must have had separate origins (Baum 2006:74). The Scottish Enlightenment thinker, Henry Home, Lord Kames, disagreed with the Linnaean classification system and mixed a theory of separate origins with the theory of climate. In his Sketches on the History of Mankind, first published in 1774, he postulated that the world varied so much in climate that different races of humans must have been created separately for each climate (Augstein 1996:xiv). Lord
Kames argued: “That were all men of one species, there never could have existed, without a miracle, different kinds, such as exist at present” (Kames 1774, reprinted in Augstein 1996:21). In the same year, a West Indian planter named Edward Long published one of the most popular explanations of the multiple origins idea in his treatise on slavery in Jamaica, which would be used extensively as a rationalization for the institution. Long argued that people of African origin were not even human: they were a separate species, halfway between the orangutan and the white man. He bolstered his argument by describing “their physical differences in terms that made them appear closer to beasts than to humans. Instead of hair, they have a head covering of wool, ‘like the bestial fleece’” (Smedley and Smedley 2012:169). Not only were they beast-like in appearance, Long argued that their mental faculties were inferior and that they were consumed with lasciviousness.

Although most whites still held to the idea of a single origin of humanity, and philosophers like Lord Kames experienced considerable backlash from Enlightenment thinkers, polygenetic arguments were not exactly fringe beliefs (Augstein 1996 xviii). Even such an esteemed intellectual as Voltaire subscribed to the idea that Africans and Europeans emerged separately, as two different species. Thomas Jefferson may not have held such extreme views, but he also discussed the differences between whites and blacks as deeply rooted and physical, describing the ways that people of African descent were inferior and more animalistic than those of European descent. He claimed the differences went from their skin to their organs, their need for sleep, their intellectual and moral abilities. To Jefferson, the differences between white and black were so ingrained that
freeing the slaves and incorporating them into American society would cause a level of strife “which will probably never end but in the extermination of the one or the other race” (Jefferson 1787:138). Colonialism was one reason why polygenetic explanations and rigid racial categories were beginning to take hold. As people moved to new climates, colonial elites could see for themselves that removing a person from one climate and placing them in another did not result in that person or his or her children changing physical characteristics (Augstein 1996 xviii-xix). Audrey and Brian Smedley argue that all of these speculations about the significance of the differences between the races were a part of an intensification of racism in the second half of the 18th century: “One perceives during the mid-to late 18th century a tremendous acceleration in the thrust to magnify the differences between blacks and whites” (Smedley and Smedley 2012:170).

**Conclusion**

Several changes in the Anglo-American attitude towards race and slavery occurred during the time period of this study that would affect the way people understood the raced body. This was a period where there was a marked increase in the intensity of racism. “Scientific” racism, which in its more extreme forms argued that people of African descent were a different species from Europeans became solidified at this time. And as racism ramped up, planters changed their approach to managing their workforce. They began to see enslaved people as less threatening, more childlike, and in some ways less human than they had previously. Planters became more paternalistic in their treatment of their enslaved workers. These changes in attitudes toward race and the body
would have had an effect on how both slaveholders and the enslaved perceived their embodied identities during this period. When the dominant culture declares a group of people to be not just less than perfect humans, but entirely sub-human, how would people respond to this message? How would people treat their bodies in response to such an idea? In the next chapter, I will explore 18th-century ideas of bodily difference and the ways in which gender, race, and class affected how the body was perceived, structured, and represented.
CHAPTER FOUR
THE 18TH-CENTURY BODY

The 18th century was a period that saw the rise of revolutions, the dominance of consumerism, and the birth of the Enlightenment. All three of these trends had an effect on the way people perceived and manipulated both their own bodies and those of others. The Enlightenment influenced the way bodily difference was understood, consumerism provided people with new ways to clothe themselves and new motivations for doing so, and revolutionary sentiments influenced both how bodies were conceptualized and how they were clothed. This chapter details the cultural context for the ways bodies were shaped, covered, and discussed in the second half of the 18th century.

Bodily Difference: Gender and Race

Notions of inherent bodily difference were becoming solidified in the late 18th century. Up until recently, most historians have argued that these ideas extended beyond the emerging belief in the existence of race and into a new understanding of sex as inherent and located within the body (Withey 2016:43). The argument that the scientific understanding of sex and gender changed with the Enlightenment can be traced back to the tremendously influential work of Thomas Laqueur (1990). Laqueur argues that “in or about the late eighteenth century” medical thinkers changed the way they conceptualized the human body, switching from a model that viewed men and women as single sex with two genders, in which male and female are different roles in a hierarchy, to a model that argues that there are two separate sexes (Laquer 1990:5; Harvey 2002:900).
According to Laqueur, when the one-sex model reigned supreme: women were “but men turned outside in” (King 2013:10). Both males and females possessed the same genitals, but depending on the level of heat in the body, the genitals could either be turned inward to create a female or extend outward to create a male. Sexual difference was a matter of degrees of variation of bodily humors that had qualities of wetness and dryness or heat and cold: too many wet and cold humors turned a body female, while hot, dry humors turned a body male (Cleminson 2013:80). This idea comes from the Roman physician Galen, whom Europeans considered a medical authority into the 19th century (King 2013:9). In the one-sex model, the important difference between men and women was not a difference inherent to physical bodies (since all bodies had the potential to be either male or female) but a unique place in the social world and the gender hierarchy. But by the end of the 18th century, “anatomical differences were stressed and [male and female] bodies came to be regarded as qualitatively distinct” (Harvey 2002:901).

Laqueur argues that this shift occurred not because of better scientific understandings of the human body (breakthroughs that would not occur until the 19th century), but because of politics: the culmination of the shift is tied to the age of revolutions. By categorizing male and female as innate, unchangeable biological categories, 18th-century thinkers were able to neatly sidestep the issue of women’s political enfranchisement in the new democracies (Laqueur 1990:11; Harvey 2002:902). This argument is the gender equivalent of the explanation for the scientific racism that was emerging at the same time. In an age where equality between different sorts of people became possible, white men needed to add caveats to their ideals to ensure that
women and people of color were not included. “Science mediated a political debate over people’s rights, demonstrating that there were indissoluble differences within the human race which justified inequitable access to power” (Harvey 2002:902). This thesis is appealing as a neat framework for my project since it meshes nicely with the development of the concept of race during the same period. Unfortunately, it appears that the reality was a good deal messier than Laqueur’s neat framework makes it appear. A number of scholars have convincingly questioned whether the idea of sex and gender actually changed in such a clear, linear way during the long 18th century.

The first problem with the one-sex to two-sex model is with the timing of the shift. Laqueur himself is “maddeningly vague” about precisely when it occurred (McClaren 1993:832). Some historians building on Laqueur’s work saw the change as occurring over a very long 18th century, from the 1670s to the 1820s (King 2013:3). Michael Stolberg (2003) argues that physicians were subscribing to a two-sex model as early as 1600. Although Helen King disagrees with Laqueur’s neat transition from a one-sex to a two-sex model, arguing that both have existed side-by-side along with other models since at least the Greeks, she sees the two-sex model gaining ground earlier still, in the 16th century (King 2013:67). If there was a clear shift in models of sex at all, there is very little consensus about precisely when it took place, and less evidence still to tie the rise of the two-sex model to the Enlightenment and the age of revolutions (Stolberg 2003).

Another major argument against the one-sex to two-sex model is that by focusing purely on elite medical texts, Laqueur creates the impression that there was a kind of sea
change in ideas of bodily difference that affected all levels of society in the English-speaking world (Harvey 2002). Karen Harvey believes that Laqueur places far too much emphasis on elite medical texts while ignoring more “non-professional” evidence in the form of “pornography, cheap medical treatises and court depositions” (Harvey 2002:913). Additionally, ordinary people never seemed to adhere to the so-called one-sex model: “In everyday language quite different terms were used for male and female genitalia, and this was at a time when scientific and medical writings had not yet developed a distinct nomenclature for the female body,” indicating that “male and female bodies were considered structurally, functionally, and morally distinct.” (Harvey 2002:913).

Finally, Helen King argues that the one-sex to two-sex model creates a “basic two-stage narrative” that oversimplifies the complicated “and thus more difficult to grasp” history of how people have understood sexual difference (King 2013:14). By focusing too much on selected passages from Galen, proponents of a neat shift in sex models have missed the wide array of other sources, from the Greeks to the Renaissance, which show the existence of other models of sex. Medieval and Renaissance writers also followed Hippocrates, who argued that males and females were so different in the very substance of their bodies that they required different types of treatment. The over-emphasis on Galen also misses other dominant models of sex that place bodily difference not in the genitals, but in blood, semen, and body hair. This model of sex even continued to some degree into the 18th century, when a man’s beard was still considered a product of excess semen (Withey 2016:45). Medical scholars from the Greeks onward were also very concerned with the womb and childbirth, which they considered uniquely female
traits with no male analogue. King’s final conclusion is “that the ‘two-sex’ body is not a
modern development, tied to specific changes in the 18th century.” Both models, plus
“other ways of understanding the body” have been present in Western thought since
Hippocrates (King 2013:223).

There may not have been a clear-cut, linear shift in the way the sexed and
gendered body was defined during the 18th century, but the period certainly did see an
increase in interest in studying, dissecting, and classifying the raced and gendered body.
The development that does seem to set Enlightenment-era thinkers apart from their
Renaissance counterparts was the way they wanted to sort the whole world into
naturalized categories. This classificatory urge solidified gradations of human difference
into natural, inherent, and unchangeable categories. The period was also an era of
contradictions in the ways in which gender and sex were understood. Karen O’Brien
notes this paradox: “On the one hand, the period . . . witnessed the development of a
medical science which emphasized the enormous extent of physiological and
psychological difference between men and women. On the other hand, Enlightenment
sociologists dwelled upon the greater social and intellectual convergence between the
sexes brought about by historical progress” (O’Brien 2005:3). The 18th-century
obsession with observation, classification, and science led to an understanding of sex that
was presented as “the fruit of unbiased, scientific observation [that] served to conceal the
social conditions that had underscored those differences in the first place” (Cleminson
2013:78).
The understanding of the difference between male and female extended beyond medicine and anatomy to become “a device for the understanding of . . . human social arrangements in general” (Cleminson 2013:77). Enlightenment-era thinkers firmly believed that they, as modern Europeans, were the culmination of a historical process of the development of civilization. One of the ways European men proved their superiority and progress was through the status of their women. Philosophers like David Hume saw the progress of civilization as a beneficial feminization of society. Women were an essential part of the refinement of society that was so important to genteel Europeans: their skills at conversation, their manners, and their values had a softening, gentling effect on the rough, rigorous male intellect. This healthy feminine influence was only possible because the women of Europe were treated as companions, not property: to elite European men, the modern age represented a time when (white) women were finally free from subjugation and mistreatment. “Savage,” underdeveloped societies treated their women as property and as beasts of burden, while enlightened, civilized societies treated women as “companions to the male sex” (Sebastianai 2005:75). But the civilizing effect of women could go too far. Too much feminine company would result in men (and societies) that were weak and effeminate. To benefit from the complementary differences between male and female, men and women needed to keep to their separate spheres. White women were weak, delicate and sensitive, making them ideally suited to the sphere of the home and caring for her husband and family (Sebastiani 2005:80).

Historian Londa Scheibinger (1993:118) emphasizes the “interplay” between sex and race in the Enlightenment. During this period, medical scientists combined ideas they
had received from the ancients and the Bible with new information on bodily difference
gleaned from slaveholders, colonists and explorers, and from collections of specimens.
These men “sought to make sense of this mass of often contradictory information by
sorting humankind into distinct types” (Scheibinger 1993:117). During a time when
equality and the rights of men were being emphasized: “The body - stripped clean of
history and culture as it was of clothes and often skin - became the touchstone of political
rights and social privileges” (Scheibinger 1993:118). Innate physical difference, rather
than a God-ordained hierarchy, became the justification for keeping land-owning, white
males in control. People who did not fit this category – women, people of color, landless
men – hoped that the inclusive language of the era’s revolutionary documents meant they
would be included in the new ideal of equality for all. “Within this revolutionary
republican framework, an appeal to natural rights could be countered only by proof of
natural inequalities” (Scheibinger 1993:143). Scientists who were for the most part elite
European men had an incentive to prove that all bodies were not equal, and they rose to
the challenge by creating “radical misreadings of the human body” to justify their
position on top (Scheibinger 1993:144).

The 18th-century understanding of the difference between white bodies and black
bodies was more than skin-deep. Mark Smith (2006) argues that racist thought defines
black and white as perceptibly different with all of the senses. These racial Others
smelled, sounded, and felt different and inferior to white bodies. Not only did whites
perceive black bodies as different, they believed people of African descent had powers of
perception that were different from those of Europeans. Africans were supposedly
governed by their senses and bodily desires while (male) whites were governed by reason and the mind. “According to elite whites, then, not only was blackness sensorily distinctive, but blacks themselves sensed differently, relying more on the putatively lower senses of smell, sound, and touch, and less on the rational, refined, enlightened perspective of the eye” (Smith 2006:11). In keeping with the Enlightenment way of privileging the mind over the body, white elites liked to stress the embodied nature of blacks as a contrast to their own rarified intellectual nature. So while people of African descent were believed to be inferior mentally, their animal senses were imagined to be more acute. It would be logical to conclude that this idea that black bodies were more perceptive led Europeans to believe they felt pain more acutely, but, conveniently, the notion of their supposed sensory superiority did not extend to ability to feel pain. Whites believed black skin was “thick and insensitive,” clumsy and animalistic, and lacking delicacy and a refined sense of touch (Smith 2006:18). This animalistic toughness meant that they had skin that was “wholly suited to the demands of outdoor manual labor and tough enough to take an especially hard beating” (Smith 2006:18).

The difference between black and white went down to the bones. Elites believed black bodies were constructed entirely differently than white bodies. Their skeletal features, especially their skulls, were coarse and animalistic. Students of the “science” of physiognomy traced the lines of the faces of animals and peoples: the straighter the line, the more refined the face. According to the Dutch anatomist Petrus Camper in 1794 the most harmonious lines of facial beauty belonged to the Classical statue of the Apollo Belvidere, while the most unattractive belonged to dogs and apes. Unsurprisingly, when
he arranged representations of the faces and skulls of the various races of humankind as a guide to help artists create more “accurate” images of human variation, he placed African skulls closest to the animals and European skulls closest to the Greek god. By ordering the faces in the manner, Camper was using a scientific convention of the day that allowed the viewer to compare the similarities and differences within a collection of specimens. Through this arrangement, Camper asked his audience “to question where the line between human and non-human should be drawn at a moment when the relationship between Africans and animals had become a topic of debate for aestheticians, politicians, and natural historians” (Kriz 2008:82-83).

**Structuring the Body**

The 18th century witnessed a widespread change in attitudes about the body. Before this time, the body was “God’s work, and beyond the hand of man” (Withey 2016:1). Altering the body and appearance were previously considered works of vanity, but new Enlightenment ideals of improving and mastering the self made “conquering the body a noble and justifiable endeavor” (Withey 2016:2). All aspects of the body needed to be improved, from its shape to the “bodily surfaces” of the hands and the face, which were seen as reflections of inward traits (Withey 2016:2). These ideas about mastering the body were wrapped up in the 18th-century ideal of “politeness”. This term had a slightly different connotation than it does today. Eighteenth-century “politeness” did include today’s concept of correct behavior, but it also carried with it a connotation of performativity. Although it was most closely associated with elites, ordinary people who aspired to a genteel lifestyle could master the codes of politeness if they put in the time
and the money to learn the appropriate words and gestures and buy the correct props (Klein 2002:872). “Gentility” was a characteristic a person was born into, but “politeness” could be learned and bought (Klein 2002:873). This was the era that birthed the idea that a man or woman could act like a lady or a gentleman without actually being born into nobility. All one needed were the traits of agreeableness, sociability, and correct form (Klein 2002).

Alun Withey (2016:8) argues that the concept of politeness went beyond words, actions, and material culture to include “the very fabric of the body itself.” The polite body was at once artificially constructed and natural. The body could be shaped and changed, especially if it were perceived as malformed, into a pleasing “natural” form that was symmetrical and well-proportioned (Withey 2016:22-23). Withey believes that a new type of material culture encouraged these ideas: cast steel, a springier, more durable steel that could be used for making devices to alter imperfect bodies. Cast steel was used for making all manner of “technologies of the body”: from medical devices that supported and shaped imperfect bodies to sharper, more durable razors and nail clippers. The new type of steel could even be used to make more attractive spectacles: it was during this period that they became an item of adornment in their own right (Withey 2016:5). Perhaps in part because of the idea that people should not change their bodies in ways that were out of line with nature, cast steel would not be used for the ultimate body-shaping device, the corset, until the 19th century.

The ideal 18th-century body looked quite different than that of today: for both men and women, sloping shoulders and straight, narrow backs were desirable (Baumgarten
Both boys and girls were placed in stays (the structured, supportive undergarment now more commonly known as a corset) to train them in this posture. These were not the constricting, s-shaped corsets of the late-19th century. Eighteenth-century stays straightened the back and molded the waist into a cone, but they did not twist the spine out of shape or radically reduce the waist (Summers 2001:13; Baumgarten 2002:26). White women generally wore stays their entire lives, as it was inappropriate to appear in public without them (Baumgarten 1988:30). The garment provided support for both the breasts and the back and allowed outer garments to fit correctly and modestly. While men did not wear stays past childhood, the cut of their clothes and the social expectations of how a white gentleman moved through space served to constrain his posture and movement. A polite lady or gentleman carried his or her body like a dancer with a “free and easy” posture that was neither slumping nor stiff (Withey 2016:23). Dancing-masters taught young men and women how to achieve the fashionable posture, and by the end of the century they were teaching a stance that was stiffer and more upright than what was promoted in the middle of century (Withey 2016:23). Through material culture and physical activity, the 18th-century polite body was literally molded by fashion and class expectations.

Men and women of all races who performed manual labor in their day-to-day lives were at a disadvantage if they wanted to achieve a polite body. Work clothes for men and women needed to be loose enough to allow a range of motion, and the repetitive actions of daily work must have built muscles and created postures that betrayed them as coarse and unrefined in the eyes of their “betters.” Despite the demands of physical work,
working-class white women in England still wore some type of foundation garment, which might be stays made from leather or reinforced with reeds or wood rather than pricy whalebone, or a looser, lightly boned sleeveless jacket called “jumps” (Steele 2001:27). But these garments could not hide the truth of physical work. By the mid-19th century, new technologies that incorporated tough steel reinforcements and fasteners in undergarments like corsets and hoop skirts enabled women of all classes to wrestle their bodies into submission to create a more refined, fashionable look, but the foundation garments of the 18th century, with their more forgiving whalebone and laces, did not have this kind of body-changing power (Lynn 2010:128). Still, lower-class white men and women at least had the advantage of possessing bodies that were not viewed as inferior by their very nature. People of African descent were seen as so different from whites that the most basic requirements of modesty were considered unnecessary. While a white woman would be mortified to appear in public without the proper foundation garments, enslaved women (especially those laboring in the field) were not given stays (Baumgarten 1988:29). There was no way for them to develop the appropriate posture or contain their bodies in the same way that white women did. This imposed difference helped to further naturalize the inferiority of the black body in the eyes of whites. The sheer physicality of labor also ensured that enslaved people had bodies that were, by 18th-century standards, “uncivilized.”

Not all enslaved women were denied foundation garments, however, and not all enslaved men did heavy physical labor. Just as labor must have shaped the bodies of working class whites, labor divisions among the enslaved must have been visibly written
on the shape of the body. Planters or their wives gave enslaved ladies’ maids and house
servants fashionable clothing and appropriate foundation garments (Baumgarten
1988:38). Enslaved butlers and other household servants were sometimes dressed in
livery, finely-cut suits decorated with contrasting colors. Although cut fashionably, livery
was still a clear signal of servitude (Baumgarten 1988:35). The lighter duties of labor,
and the closely-fitted suits for men and foundation garments for women constrained the
body and movement in such a way that clearly differentiated them from people who
worked in the field.

**Clothing from the Inside Out: 1760-1799**

In order to understand the changes in fashion and the debates about the meaning
of clothing in the 18th century, it is important to be familiar with the types of clothing that
were the norm for white men and women to wear every day. The garment that was
closest to the body was the shift or chemise for women and the shirt for men. The shirt
and shift were constructed very similarly for both men and women as a t-shaped garment
with long sleeves that came down to the knees (Staples and Shaw 2013:424). Women’s
shifts generally fastened at the neck and wrist with drawstrings or ties, while men’s shirts
buttoned at the collar and wrist. Shirts and shifts were commonly made from linen or
cotton, and the coarseness of the fabric and fineness of construction and embellishment
determined how expensive they were. The shift protected women’s skin from being
chafed by their stays, and it protected outer layers of clothing from being soiled. Being
made of sturdy white plant-based fibers, it could withstand harsh laundering methods
such as boiling and beating, so the shirt and shift protected the more delicate wools, silks,
and dyed fabrics that made up outer layers of clothing (Brown 2009:26). Shirts and shifts began to change toward the end of the 18th century to accommodate changing styles. Shift sleeves became shorter and narrower, and their necklines became lower (Wass and Fandrich 2010:72). By the 1790s it became the fashion for men to wear their shirt collars stiff and upright, fastened with knotted-thread buttons, and sleeve cuffs became longer and were fastened with sewn-on buttons, rather than the sleeve links that had been popular earlier (Wass and Fandrich 2010:145). Men and women both also wore stockings, which could be knitted or sewn and made of a variety of materials such as silk, wool, and cotton. For both genders, stockings came up above the knee and could be held in place with garters made of ribbon (for both genders) or leather (for men) that buckled or tied (Staples and Shaw 2013).

Shirts and shifts were underwear, and men and women did not appear in public without at least a waistcoat, jacket or gown over top (Wass and Fandrich 2010:142). For women, what garment came above her stays depended on class and fashion. All women wore a petticoat, a simple gathered skirt, but there was considerable variety in what could be worn above it. For more formal wear, the article of clothing worn above the petticoat was a gown or robe of some kind. These garments had a fitted bodice and sleeves, with skirts that could either be closed to fully conceal the petticoat or cut away or pinned up to reveal a contrasting or matching petticoat below (Staples and Shaw 2013:257). Quality and quantity mattered the most when it came to clothing: rich women could afford elaborate gowns that required more than a dozen yards of fine silk or cotton fabric (Staples and Shaw 2013:168). Working women wore short gowns or bed gowns. These
articles of clothing could be loose or fitted, but they had much shorter skirts than the more formal gowns and revealed more of the petticoat. Working women might also wear various types of jackets which were fitted and sleeved, often with a short skirt (today called a peplum) extending to the top of the hips (Staples and Shaw 2013:272). Jackets fastened closed with hooks-and-eyes, straight pins or with laces. The evolution of fashion in the last half of the 18th century saw necklines change from low and square to low and rounded, waistlines evolve from a simple cone shape to a more naturalistic curve at the waist, and sleeves lengthen from elbow to wrist length (Staples and Shaw 2013:269-270). During the last decade of the 18th century, lightweight white cotton gowns with wide sashes, similar to the gowns children wore, became the height of fashion for women who could afford them (Wass and Fandrich 2010:65).

Women also required a few additional garments for modesty. Eighteenth-century women were still expected to keep their heads covered. White women usually wore some type of cap made of white linen or cotton, while African and African American women might instead choose to wear a head wrap or scarf. Turbans became a fashionable choice for everyone by the turn of the 19th century (Wass and Fandrich 2010:83). Necklines were quite low throughout the 18th century, so women generally filled in their necklines with a cotton or linen kerchief, again usually white to make washing easier. These could be made of simple, coarse fabric or they could be made of fine material and elaborately trimmed (Staples and Shaw 2013:276).

Men’s clothing displayed slightly less variety. The standard outfit was the three piece suit: breeches or trousers, waistcoat and coat. In the mid-18th century, men wore
breeches that buttoned or buckled right at the knee (Staples and Shaw 2013:343). By the end of the 18th century, breeches in fashionable wear were being replaced by trousers, which had originally been a working man’s garment. The waistcoat was sleeveless and fitted, and its length and waist became shorter and higher by the end of the century. The coat could be very tight and fitted for more formal wear, or a man might wear a less fitted version with a draped collar called a frock coat (Staples and Shaw 2013:344). The frock coat was also popular among working men. Working men might abandon the coat and vest entirely and instead opt to wear a shorter version called a jacket, which resembled a waistcoat with sleeves. This could be worn under a coat for extra warmth, or it could be worn by itself (Staples and Shaw 2013:343). Men also might wear different types of garments specific to their trade. Class could be seen in the quality of the fit and cut, the expense of the materials, and the level of decoration. In the mid-1700s, elaborately embroidered suits fastened and decorated with beautifully embroidered or knotted buttons were in style. By the late 18th century, the fashion had become less exuberant, and large silver and gold buttons became the way to dress up the suit. (White 2005:58-59).

Footwear carried class and gender connotations. Fashions for footwear were influenced by changes in urban space. When British urban centers first introduced spaces for pedestrians in the mid-18th century, it sparked a change in how people inhabited public space. Prior to these improvements, the city street was a place to be avoided, and walking was an activity done out of necessity by the poor and working class. People who could not avoid the street wore clogs and pattens to elevate themselves above the filth. When pedestrian space and urban pleasure gardens were introduced in 18th-century
European cities, walking became an activity for the elite and the street became a space to see and be seen (McNeil and Riello 2005). Men’s and women’s shoes began to diverge in style during this period. Fashionable women’s shoes were flimsy and made of fabric, while men’s shoes were sturdier and made from leather. Of course, only women whose daily work did not require them to be outdoors could afford to follow this particular fashion, so different types of shoes carried strong class connotations (McNeil and Riello 2005:180).

**Changing Culture, Changing Fashions: 1760-1800**

The time period of this study saw the beginning of a shift in the way people were expected to comport themselves, which in turn helped to change the class and race implications of how people dressed. During the first half of the 18th century, “politeness” was the norm. In the mid-18th century, however, the ideal of “sensibility” began to emerge in opposition to politeness as the rule for correct dress and behavior. Sensibility did not replace politeness during the 18th century; instead, the two ideals existed side by-side (Withey 2016:10). Sensibility was an ideal that ran counter to politeness: it “emphasized authenticity rather than display, sincerity of emotion rather than performance, rustic simplicity rather than metropolitan polish” (Styles 2007:182). Where politeness could be masculine and required a manly mastery over the body, sensibility depended on the softening influence of refined women (Sebastiani 2005:77). As part of the new code of sensibility, simple, restrained clothing became fashionable, and trend-setters were inspired by romanticized versions of the everyday dress worn by the working class (Styles 2007:189). But the working class did not always comply with this vision of
rustic simplicity. While their social superiors were championing simplicity and authenticity, working-class people were taking advantage of all the flashy goods the consumer revolution had made available to them.

Nowhere was the tension between sensibility and politeness more clear than in the changing meanings of men’s fashion. During the second half of the 18th century there were ongoing debates among elites about what constituted appropriate dress. The consumer revolution democratized fashion: ordinary, even poor, men and women had access to stylish clothing that had never been available to them in the past. The elaborate, showy French court clothing began to trickle down to the lower classes, resulting in the phenomenon of the “macaroni” that emerged in the 1760s. A macaroni was a man who dressed in an exaggerated, showy manner, wearing clothing that referenced European formal court dress. Macaronis wore large, elaborate wigs (18th-century symbols of virility) and dressed with “a sense of burlesque and admixture” (McNeil 2000:380). The first macaronis were wealthy young men who traveled to Europe on the Grand Tour and brought continental dress back with them. They had a reputation for gambling and womanizing, although by the late 18th century their showy dress and excessive interest in fashion was beginning to be seen as effeminate. If macaronis had merely been dissolute young gentlemen, they might not have elicited such censure from elites. What enraged elites the most was the fact that the explosion in consumer goods allowed non-elite men to appropriate courtly fashion and become macaronis as well. The courtly dress the macaroni imitated had previously been for the aristocracy, and conservative
commentators were furious that ordinary men would wear them in “a jaunty and insouciant manner that complicated the sartorial hierarchy” (McNeil 2000:388).

The macaroni phenomenon also disturbed the racial hierarchy. The most famous black macaroni was Julius Soubise, a formerly enslaved Caribbean man who was the protégé of Catherine Douglas, the Duchess of Queensbury. Soubise was employed by the Duchess as a fencing master and became known for his ostentatious dress and his womanizing (Miller 2009). Caricature makers mocked him in print as: “a foppish upstart whose outfits and entertainments, financed by the Duchess of Queensbury, affronted both racial and social expectations of an African male” (McNeil 2000:386). In America, white commentators observed enslaved men inverting the social order in ways that call to mind the macaroni. They wore the same basic pieces of clothing as white slaveholders, but to very different effect. Shane White (1989:32) compares this practice to creolized languages where, “the vocabulary, or individual piece of clothing, may have been similar, but the grammar was different.” For example, a man in New York in 1796 is described as wearing a fine coat and rough boots together “to a fairly grotesque appearance” (White 1989:32). Just as non-elite men wearing macaroni fashions made aristocrats nervous because of the way court fashion had been appropriated, whites were made uncomfortable by enslaved and free people of color reworking the language of clothing to communicate in unfamiliar ways: it “represented an inversion of the natural order, with all the attendant dire consequences” (McNeil 1989:35).

Class transgressions through dress made Anglo elites almost as nervous as did race transgressions. English servants in particular were accused of “sartorial
extravagance” (Styles 2007:277). Eighteenth-century elites spilled a great deal of ink detailing servants’ excess attention to clothing. These attacks generally centered around three issues. First, elites worried that servants would blur the lines between classes by “dressing above their station.” Second, all the money servants spent on clothing might prevent them from saving and cause them to demand higher wages. And finally, they worried that by dressing well, servants would cause the rest of the working class to follow their example, thus spreading “the contagion of luxury and idleness among the lower ranks of people” (Stles 2007:277). Most historians have accepted 18th-century elites’ belief that servants were responsible for spreading fashion and consumerism into the working class, but John Styles believes this was not the case, because servants’ consumption was often involuntary. Styles’ argument about servants is also applicable to the spread of clothing and adornment among enslaved people on the plantation. How much influence did the enslaved people who worked directly for the slaveholding family have over the types of personal adornment the rest of the plantation found desirable?

What do we know about how enslaved Africans and African Americans used clothing and adornment? European fabrics and clothing would not have been foreign to newly-enslaved Africans. By the mid-17th century, West African elites had adopted some aspects of European dress as symbols of status (White and White 1998:9). For most Africans, clothing varied according to social station and ethnic background: woven robes, skirts, sarongs, and breechcloths were some of the types of garments that could be worn (Handler 2009:2). One of the first degradations experienced by captive Africans was being stripped of these clothes and forced to endure transport and sale naked or nearly so.
Historical evidence suggests that even small bodily adornments like amulets and beads may not have survived the Middle Passage, although slavers did sometimes distribute beads and tobacco pipes on the slave ship in an attempt to alleviate boredom (Handler 2009:6-9).

When Africans arrived in America, they were faced with learning a new sartorial language. The clothing they were given was meant to set them apart and reinforce their low status. Eighteenth-century courtesy books laid out how a genteel person should look. Whether a person subscribed to the code of politeness or sensibility, clothes needed to be well-fitted, clean, and made from smooth, finished textiles (White and White 1998:9). The tightly-fitted coats that were popular in various forms throughout the 18th century made physical labor impossible, so loose clothing carried a connotation of manual labor. “In such a schema it was clearly intended that slaves would wear loose-fitting garments of the coarsest available cloth” (White and White 1998:10). Enslaved people, however, refused to be limited to these assigned garments. They “bought, sold, bartered and traded garments in an underground economy that easily and quietly absorbed items of questionable origin” (White and White 1998:15). And just as in England, where elites worried about the way servants followed fashion, slaveholders in America were concerned about how easily enslaved women and men, especially in cities, were able to follow fashion (White and White 1998:16). However, they often put the various elements of their clothing together in ways that whites found odd or even amusing. Enslaved and free people of color often created outfits with little concern for the white rules that dictated which colors and styles matched. Despite their amusement, “whites were
probably unable entirely to dismiss the suggestion that their own behavior was being held up to gentle (albeit often very public) ridicule” (White and White 1998:17)

The historical record indicates that enslaved people were provisioned with clothing by slaveholders, and that the quality of the clothes depended on the enslaved man or woman’s station within the plantation. House servants received higher quality, more fashionable outfits than those who worked in the field (Baumgarten 1988:38). Men and women laboring in the field could expect to receive one winter and one summer suit a year. For men, this usually consisted of a shirt, stockings, breeches, a jacket, and shoes. For women, this could mean a shift, petticoat and jacket or gown. During the summer, men received a lighter pair of breeches and women received a lighter petticoat. These outfits were frequently imported ready-made, but planters might also buy the fabric and have it made up into outfits by enslaved seamstresses (Baumgarten 1988:40). The fabric that they used was intentionally coarse and cheap. Shirts, shifts, and lighter-weight outerwear were often made from a fabric called osnaburg, a coarse linen imported from Europe. Jackets and petticoats were made from different coarse wool fabric imported from Britain. Higher quality stockings might be knitted, but field slaves usually received shapeless sewn stockings (Baumgarten 1988:43). The overall effect of these provisioned clothes was coarse and uniform, and wearing them was probably a humiliating daily reminder of the slaveholder’s claim over one’s own body.

But archaeological and documentary evidence indicates that, although the planter did his best to use provisioned clothing to remind the people he controlled of their low status and dependence on him, his control was never complete. By looking at
shopkeepers’ day books, runaway slave advertisements, and the archaeological record, archaeologists have shown that enslaved people took advantage of opportunities to procure consumer goods for themselves, goods that included items of personal adornment (Heath 1997, 1999, 2004; Martin 2008; Galle 2010; Lee 2016). Despite a dehumanizing environment and a grueling workload, enslaved people still managed to find ways of expressing individuality and identity through their material world.

In America, debates about fashion, consumerism, gender, and class were intensified by the growth of revolutionary sentiments. Imported, urbane, royalist fashions were contrasted negatively with “country” values of masculinity and patriotism (Haulman 2011:82). Some elite Anglo-Americans tried to encourage their peers to embrace a wardrobe of simplicity and understatement. This sensibility was supposed to be accepted by both men and women: genteel women were to be “simple in address and appearance and cultivated in mind but not artificial in manner” (Haulman 2011:84). As a flood of consumer goods swept across the Atlantic and the lower class could afford to take part in fashion for the first time, American gentry tried to move the bar of sophistication by changing the rules. Understated, high quality clothing, and a decorous, controlled way of moving the body became the markers of elite class. For upper class women, much of the concern about the artifice of fashion was tied into the worry that if she used artifice, rather than virtue and domesticity, to attract a mate, she would either ruin a good man through excessive spending or she would allow an unsuitable fop to marry into wealth and power (Haulman 2011:85). During the years leading up to the Revolution, Benjamin Franklin and his peers tried to create a new fashion of sober masculinity and domestic
femininity tied to homespun and the creation of non-imported goods, but it was a hard sell to the rest of the colonies. The documentary record shows that most Americans continued to be obsessed with European fashion. In fact, high style of the late 1760s and early 1770s seems to be a reaction to the “Whig insistence on sacrifice and asceticism,” as fashions became extremely ornate and stylized (Haulman 2011:131).

**Documentary Evidence for Clothing on the Sites in this Study**

It is in this historical context that the overseers and enslaved men and women who lived on the sites in this study clothed themselves. How did these men and women access clothing? What items were provided by the slaveholder? What evidence do we have for what how the overseers dressed?

Men and women in the 18th century had a range of options for acquiring goods, depending on class and wealth. The wealthiest planters had direct access to trade with England through tobacco merchant factors, who offered credit based on tobacco crops to be delivered (Breen 1985). George Washington participated extensively in this system (Breen 2013). Lower ranks of people, as well as some of the wealthy, bought their goods indirectly from merchants who set up stores around Virginia; white men of means used credit at these stores, while white women and enslaved people used cash or trade (Smart Martin 2006). Enslaved men and women acquired cash or items for trade by making craft items, growing produce, and raising poultry or doing extra work for cash. Slaveholders were required by law to provision their enslaved workforce with food and clothing, but these items were often extremely inadequate, and enslaved people supplemented their meager allotments with additional goods whenever they could (Heath 2004).
We have good records for how Thomas Jefferson provisioned his enslaved workforce at Monticello and Poplar Forest. Jefferson recorded the clothing he provisioned for his enslaved workforce in 1794: everyone received an outfit for the summer and the winter yearly, and shoes were given to everyone over the age of ten, plus occasional hats and stockings. Blankets were only distributed every three years (Stanton 2012:61; 114). Jefferson allotted clothing to his enslaved field workers in the form of yards of fabric, and he allocated the fabric based on the individual’s size and role on the plantation: young children received but a yard, “common sized men or women” who did not labor in the mansion received seven, and people of larger stature were given eight (Stanton 2012:123). This is barely enough material for a single outfit, and certainly not enough to outfit a man or a woman in extra layers or garments more elaborate than a simple jacket and petticoat or trousers. Jefferson had fabric for the use of the plantation spun and woven at Monticello, bringing the cotton in from Richmond on bateaux up the James River. The operation was originally carried out by hand, but in the early 19th century Jefferson mechanized production with spinning jennies and flying shuttles (Bear 1969:69).

Some of the men who served Jefferson personally were outfitted with livery, a uniform that was made of quality materials but meant to be eye-catching and to broadcast the power of the man being served. White servants associated livery so closely with debasement and servitude that many servants in England refused to wear it (Styles 2007:300). Jefferson employed liveried servants during his tenure in the White House, but all but one of these men were free and white. Jefferson’s livery did not use colors
derived from his family crest, instead they had a blue and red theme that was fairly standard for livery in both Britain and America (Stanton 2012:43). It is unclear whether Jefferson used livery at all in his own home, but the clothing allocated to his enslaved personal servants makes it clear that they were clothed in a way that set them apart from people who served in less elevated roles. Jupiter, Jefferson’s personal servant who had grown up with him at his father’s farm at Shadwell, received the best clothing items. Jefferson recorded Jupiter receiving 10 ½ yards of Irish linen (much finer and whiter than the coarse local linen), as well as a coat, waistcoat, and breeches made from “cloth,” (a shorthand for broadcloth, a high quality wool fabric used for men’s suits and not generally distributed to field laborers: for a more in-depth discussion of 18th-century textiles, see chapter 5) (Stanton 2000:19). Two men listed just below Jupiter in Jefferson’s hierarchical list, James and Peter, received similar allotments, although they wore overalls rather than breeches. Overalls were a working man’s garment, but a late-18th century fashion for casual, rustic simplicity meant that these items could also be seen as stylish (Wass and Fandrich 2010 156-157). The women who worked in Jefferson’s household received, in addition to the same amount of fine linen, 11 yards of calamanco each, a finely-woven wool textile with a glossy finish. This was three yards more fabric than the enslaved field laborers, were allotted but still not enough for a particularly elaborate gown. A formal woman’s gown required about 30 yards of fabric, so it is likely these women were not clothed in formal high fashion, but in casual but stylish working wear (Waugh 1968:76). They also received 3 ½ yards of flannel, enough for a jacket or short gown. The men and women who worked in the house also received
several pairs each of worsted and cotton knit stockings: better quality than the fabric hose
given to field laborers (Jefferson 1794:41; Wilson 1999).

The enslaved men and women who lived on Mulberry Row and worked at other
tasks in and around the mansion were provisioned with materials somewhere in between
the high quality garments worn by the most privileged enslaved men and women and
those worn by the field laborers: yardage of linen and broadcloth, skeins of thread,
stockings, and shoes (Jefferson 1794:41). Jefferson could also use clothing as an
incentive: Isaac Granger, who was assigned to the nailery on Mulberry row as a boy,
reminisced that the youths who worked the hardest were awarded a “suit of red or blue”
which “encouraged them mightily” (Stanton 2012:79). A suit of brightly colored fabric
must have been considerably more desirable than the drab suits of coarse linen and wool
that were assigned to field laborers.

At Mount Vernon, George Washington also provisioned clothing for his enslaved
workforce: like at Monticello, this was a mix of imported and plantation-made fabric
along with a few ready-made imported items. Enslaved workers received one suit of
clothes a year: men and women both received two undergarments (shirt or shift), a jacket,
a pair of shoes and stockings, and either breeches or a petticoat. These items were made
from coarse linen and wool. In 1792, he called into question whether the gardener’s wife
was making trousers for the men instead of breeches: he objected to what he saw as a
waste of fabric. Trousers were not only useful men’s working wear, in this period they
were more in keeping with current trends. Was the gardener’s wife responding to a
preference stated by the enslaved men? The men and women who lived in the House for
Families would have worn clothing that reflected their duties. As there were a large number of people living in the House for Families, there may have been a mixture of types of provisioned clothing (Breen 2013; Mount Vernon 2017). Men who worked as personal servants and footmen wore livery. Washington had livery made up in the colors of his family crest: red and white. Orders made by Washington from the 1760s to the 1780s indicate that these men wore suits of red shagg (a velvet-like wool material) lined with shalloon (a glazed worsted fabric) in the same color, trimmed with red and white livery lace, with hats trimmed in silver lace (Baumgarten 131). The enslaved ladies’ maids that served Martha and the other white women of the household wore fashionable gowns of calico with aprons of fine linen.

What about overseers’ relationships with clothing? As with most other aspects of poor white people’s lives, the clothing choices made by overseers make scant appearances in the documentary record. Overseers were closely involved in the production and distribution of provisioned clothing for the enslaved workers under their command, and overseers’ female family members were often tasked with sewing the provided fabric into suits for the workforce. The “spun stuff” that was lost in the fire at Mount Pleasant is one indication that the overseer and his family there were a part of managing the textile production for the plantation.

At Accotink, the only record we have of the provisioning of clothing is from accounts at John Glassford’s Colchester store. A man named Free Jack is recorded as making purchases on Abraham Barnes’ account at the store. It is unclear what Free Jack’s role on the plantation was that of overseer, servant, or slave, or, indeed, whether he was
even a different person than John Marvill. Free Jack made purchases in 1765 that included indigo dye and a pair of men’s shoes (Sipe et al 2013:72). In the next few years, John Marvill also made purchases on Barnes’ account, including checked Holland fabric, six yards of twill sacking, a yard of plaiding and one of oznaburg, a pair of men’s shoes, a pen knife, and six dozen tobacco pipes (Sipe et al. 2013:73). The amounts of fabric are not enough for more than a single garment, so the bulk of the fabric for the quarter must have come from some other source. The Holland fabric, a high quality linen, is an intriguing item to be on the plantation account. For whom was it purchased?

From the purchases made on his own account, it appears that Marvill and his family dressed in keeping with their class and race. Over the years he made a wide range of purchases on his own account that included many types of fabric and accessories. Fabrics he purchased included coarse osnaburg, linen, plain and printed cotton, calico, and multiple skeins of thread. Textile accessories included a black silk neck cloth, and several different types of handkerchiefs. He bought six men’s and boys’ hats through the years, a pair of women’s shoes, and three pairs of men’s shoes. Marvill invested in only a dozen buttons, bought half a dozen at a time. One group is not specified, while the other half dozen is mentioned as being gilt. Finally, Marvill also bought three buckles (Sipe et al. 2013:75). The fabrics he purchased are in keeping with what was worn by most non-elites in Virginia. The runaway advertisements I cataloged for this project describe white men and women and enslaved people endeavoring to “pass” as free wearing this same mix of high and low-quality fabrics: osnaburgs mixes with linen and calico and fine accessories. Interestingly, there is no mention here of the types of woolen fabric used in
men’s suits: the calicos and printed cottons are more associated with women’s clothing. This leads me to believe that there must have been another source for the majority of the textiles used at the quarter farm.

Conflict and paradox seem to be overarching themes of the cultural context for clothing and the body in the 18th century. The period saw the birth of democracy and the idea that all men were created equal, but it also saw a hardening of innate bodily categories gender, sex, and race. The period also saw conflicts over how people were expected to use their bodies: were sincerity and nature, or performance and artifice preferable? By shaping and adorning their bodies, 18th-century men and women made statements about how they fit into these conflicting cultural ideals. In the next chapter, I analyze primary sources in the form of satirical prints, travel sketches, and runaway advertisements to offer a better cultural context for how men and women of the 18th century understood how identity could be embodied, and how individuals used clothing and adornment to suit their specific needs and identities.
CHAPTER FIVE
HISTORICAL SOURCES

Introduction

Archaeologically-recovered artifacts of adornment, as detailed in Chapter Six, are divorced from their most important context: the clothing and bodies that they originally structured and decorated. These artifacts also carried subtle and ever-changing meanings that are lost to us today. To help recover some of these lost meanings and give a cultural context to artifacts of adornment, archaeologists frequently turn to images and descriptions of people wearing these items. Rather than use historical evidence as simple context for the archaeological data, I have chosen to focus on documents and images as evidence in their own right. I use runaway advertisements and historical images as two more layers of information to answer my questions about identity in 18\textsuperscript{th}-century Virginia.

Images

I searched for images that both provide specific information about how people dressed and carried themselves in Virginia in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century and contribute to a broader cultural context for mainstream expectations for dress and comportment in the white, English-speaking world. To reveal popular understandings of fashion and appropriate dress and embodiment, I used mass-produced satirical prints that circulated in Britain and America from the 1770s to 1800. I found a trove of images and information about Virginia in the journals and travel sketches of architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe,
particularly his journals from his 1797 trip through Virginia. My methodology for analyzing the images involved first researching any background information available about the image and its creator. Who made the image, and what were the circumstances of its creation? Who was the intended audience? Is it meant to be a serious or accurate representation of a group or a scene, or is it satirical or tongue-in-cheek—or is it possibly some combination of the two? Is there any text associated with the image? Then I looked at the image itself, paying close attention to the arrangement of the scene and how the characters are using their bodies. What details of the character’s physical appearance and clothing are being highlighted, exaggerated, glossed over, or omitted? I analyzed some images in careful detail, while others I scanned relatively quickly, trying to get a sense of how a particular series of images might be alike or dissimilar.

**Satirical Prints in the 18th Century**

Satirical prints were part of a body of consumable printed ephemera that became widely available in the 18th century. Tens of thousands of these prints survive in collections, and their sheer numbers seem to indicate that the images had some influence on popular culture in the 18th century. At the very least, they provide a context for how tastemakers viewed bodies and fashion during the period. At the most, these images may have been widely-consumed items of popular culture that influenced how ordinary people viewed their own bodies and developed a personal fashion sense. Historians are not certain which of these scenarios is more likely, or how much influence satirical prints had on ordinary men and women (Donald 1996; Chrisman-Campbell 2013). I will be operating on the assumption (that is at least somewhat supported) that satirical prints did
have some influence on ordinary men and women in America, as many were printed with American subjects and the prints themselves were available in the colonies.

The 18th century has been called the “Age of Caricature.” The term “caricature” originally had a technical, artistic meaning, referring to a sketched character study of an individual, but in the 18th century, it became synonymous with satirical illustrations and political cartoons (Donald 1996:15). The period saw an explosion of mass-produced printed illustrations of all kinds, from expensive, high quality hand-tinted prints, to cheap copies, woodcuts, and even items like fans and transfer-printed ceramics (Donald 1996:1). A few factors allowed for the dominance of caricature. Most simply, the technology to produce the prints became available, with advances in printing making the process more economical to the extent that print culture of all kinds permeated 18th century life (Chrisman-Campbell 2013:132). A changing political climate also made the prints feasible. After the English Civil War, the English worked to build a new era of reunification and civility. Humor, particularly satire, was seen as an important protector against the intolerance and sectarianism that had led to the Civil War. Ridicule was a better way to punish transgressors than censorship or invective, because it was good-natured and community-driven (Donald 1996:31). Politicians and aristocrats learned to tolerate this form of free speech: “Satire was therefore to be universally tolerated, even by the powerful, since the errors arising from bigotry were not confined to one side” (Donald 1996:31). Politicians accepted this new arrangement by courting their constituents and warring with their opponents with the weapon of satire.
All levels of society were touched by this cultural phenomenon. It was “neither an aristocratic preserve nor a branch of folk art like the simple colored woodcuts of other European countries. It moved freely between levels of allusion and signification, drawing its imagery both from classic history painting and popular lore, and corresponding in this way to the social range and fluidity of the audience” (Donald 1996:2). Caricature prints were just one of many different types of printed illustrations available to 18th-century consumers. At the top of the scale were mass produced copies of great artistic works. Caricature prints were lower on the scale, but they catered to a diverse array of classes and tastes. There were a few famous caricaturists, but most publishers acquired their stock piecemeal from freelancers, though trade with other publishers, from imported Continental designs, or by outright piracy of popular artists’ work. The images were printed on a single sheet of paper, meant to be bought individually, although they were also occasionally printed in magazines or books of collected illustrations. The whole business reached its height in the 1790s with the international political furor caused by the French Revolution. Every class of people got involved. The wealthy participated by buying high quality prints, by going to exhibitions put on by the most fashionable printers, and even by producing amateur caricatures themselves. The working class participated by buying prints from cut rate shops that produced poorer-quality prints from worn plates on thin paper that were then sloppily hand colored. Those who could not afford to purchase could enjoy the jokes displayed on the printmaker’s storefront. A few satirical prints show throngs of the poor and lame crowded around shop windows to view the prints displayed there (Donald 1996:2-7).
Images like these are invaluable for understanding the cultural context of the use of these images. Despite the large numbers of prints that survive, relatively little contemporary writing about the meaning and use of caricatures survives. These images were true ephemera, ubiquitous but too lowbrow to warrant much comment: 18th century writers rarely put forth any opinions of satirical prints. Historians have had to conjecture about the images’ significance based on oblique allusions and the evidence provided by the illustrations themselves. Upper class men hid the prints away in portfolios and albums: they were not meant for public display. Aristocratic women were not meant to enjoy the prints at all, as humor and wit (particularly the off-color variety so often on display in these prints) were considered showy and unfeminine. However, this stricture did not prevent women from participating in the print trade at all levels as consumers, sellers, and even producers. It is unclear exactly how the lower classes participated in print culture, but there is some evidence that the images were used for display in exclusively male spaces like billiards rooms, taverns, barber’s shops, and privies (Donald 1996:15-20).

How much influence did satirical prints have on popular culture? Twentieth-century historians tended to assume that they were the domain of “the wealthy and articulate nobility and middle orders of London,” but historian Jennifer Donald (1996:19) disagrees. She argues that this assumption ignores the cheaper versions of the prints that tend to not survive, and that it misinterprets the level of connection London had with the rest of the world. It is much more likely that the prints were just one more type of good made available by the consumer revolution. Prints were exported to continental Europe
and America, and paper was not the only medium for the images. Popular designs also showed up on fans, playing cards, printed handkerchiefs, and transfer printed ceramics: they were just as current and easily accessible as any other fashionable consumable (Donald 1996:20-21).

Few scholars have studied the spread of satirical prints in America, so I can only offer conjecture about their influence on the understanding of race and embodiment in America. A few references to prints show up in Virginia Gazettes during the period of this study. In Northumberland county in 1766, a man advertised a collection of 100 prints “in the hieroglyphic or caricature manner, with the most severe and entertaining satires on some” (*Virginia Gazette* Purdie and Dixon 1766:4). Other prints for sale are described as “elegant:” presumably these are high-quality facsimiles of works of art meant for display (*Virginia Gazette* Dixon and Nicholson 1779:1). One reference to prints appears in Alexander Henderson’s scheme of goods for sale in his stores: he lists one “doz. Prints of Ladys for Rooms, Fram'd” (*Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association* 2012). The fact that these prints are framed and the list specifies that they were “for Rooms” indicates that these were artistic prints, not satirical illustrations.

With so little historical evidence, we cannot say for certain how much influence satirical prints had on ordinary Americans. It is possible that they were too rare to contribute much to people’s perceptions of clothing and bodies. However, I believe there is a likelihood that the images did form a part of a cultural milieu with which most people would have been at least somewhat familiar. The images appear to have been as pervasive throughout Britain as any other consumer good, and we know that other mass-
produced English goods permeated every level of society in America (Breen 2004). I will conduct my analysis based on the assumption that images like these (though likely not these specific prints) did play a part in shaping American perceptions of the body in the mid-to-late-18th century.

Fashion was a particularly popular topic for satirical prints. As a visual medium, clothing was used in satire as shorthand for the faults and character flaws that were the fodder of 18th-century jokes, failings such as: “false gravity and fanaticism, cowardice, avarice and sensuality, together with the follies of pedantry and pretension” (Donald 1996:32). There was also an affinity between caricature and fashion because they both relied “on innovation, contrasts, and extremes” (Chrisman-Campbell 2013:132). Fashion plates and fashion magazines were also becoming more widely available during this period, and satirical prints became like “anti-fashion plates” that illustrated fashion sins (Chrisman-Campbell 2013:133). Considering the fact that satirical prints could be acquired more cheaply and easily than fashion plates, Donald (1996:80) suggests that ordinary people may have seen the prints as examples of “fascinating metropolitan chic” to be emulated. One contemporary noted, half in jest, that people could use the prints “either for the sake of still more deterring those who have any antipathy to it [extreme fashion], or to furnish an example for their equipment to those who have an ambition to render themselves as ludicrous” (Donald 1996:80).

Determining what specific fashion is being mocked or exaggerated in the prints is a difficult endeavor, since 18th-century fashions were so extreme that they sometimes looked like caricatures even when they were faithfully rendered. England was a
particularly fertile ground for sartorial mockery because its fashion was not set by the royal court as it was in other European countries. There were fewer class distinctions in clothing, and all levels of society were engaged in the same fashions. Because of the satirists’ keen eyes for behavior that struck them as ludicrous or inappropriate, caricatures should not be taken as straight evidence for the spread of a particular mode of dress: caricatures “are more indicative of a style’s notoriety than its popularity” (Chrisman-Campbell 2013:133).

A specific series of prints published in six groups of 24 prints each from 1771 to 1773 sparked the fashion satire phenomenon. The images, published by London printmakers James Bretherton and Matthew and Mary Darly, depicted various types of “macaronis,” fashionable young men who had been dangerously corrupted by effeminate European court fashion with its tall hair and tight pants. The Darlys’ series was wildly popular in London, inspiring many imitations. The macaroni cut a striking, slightly absurd figure, so he was a perfect subject for the satirists’ mockery. The prints were a visual representation of a late-18th-century conflict between two different ideals of masculinity that were available to men of any class. The two modes were of sober, thrifty and natural sensibility, or of flamboyant, spendthrift, and artificial politeness. Historian Amelia Rauser has argued that: “. . . on one hand, that those men who adopted the macaroni style were probably interested in rejecting the growing hegemony of the sober and virtuous masculine ideal. On the other hand, the sober and virtuous man saw the macaroni as a parasitic and conspicuous consumer, instead of an industrious producer” (Rauser 2004:108). The macaroni was an inherently self-made man who adopted or
affected the manner and dress of the continental elite, prompting anxieties about inauthenticity, effeminacy, and un-Britishness. The macaroni caricature served as both a “cautionary tale” and a “secret exemplar” to social climbers (Rauser 2004:103). Besides their obvious relevance to this study as examples of dress and adornment, macaroni caricatures also served an integral part of the 18th-century “fascination with character and the modern self” (Rauser 2004:103). The prints are a small window into what some people during this period thought about the body and selfhood.

As it grew in popularity, the macaroni print began to change meanings, first from a mockery of a very specific subculture, then to a mockery of anyone who followed fashion excessively, and finally to a visual puzzle poking fun at famous men. A magazine devoted to all things macaroni that debuted in 1772 explained: "the word Macaroni then changed its meaning to that of a person who exceeded the ordinary bounds of fashion; and is now justly used as a term of reproach to all ranks of people, indifferently, who fall into this absurdity" (Rauser 2004:101). The satire spread into the middling classes and “took on a life of its own in the print media, becoming a phenomenon that far outstripped the effect of the relatively few macaroni men who actually strode the streets of London” (Rauser 2004:102). One of the critical elements of the macaroni was “the blurring of class identity” (Rauser 2004:111). The initial purpose of macaroni prints as cautionary tales backfired for two reasons: because they celebrated character and individuality and because they represented up-to-date styles. The people represented in the prints were often real individuals, some of whom had no connection whatsoever to the macaroni phenomenon. For example, a caricature of “A Fly-Catching Macaroni” depicted the real
naturalist Joseph Banks who voyaged with Captain Cook. Prints like these were clever visual puzzles that “compliment the viewer, suggesting he or she is a kind of insider, well-versed enough in the contemporary world to read the clues and make the accurate guess of identity” (Rauser 2004:112).

In looking through these prints, a few themes in the way macaronis are represented emerge. Hair appears to be one of the most essential aspects of the macaroni figure, or the part that struck the satirists as the most laughable. Headdresses are exaggerated with towering poufs, gathered into giant silk bags at the back, tied into stiff queues reaching all the way down the back, or rolled into a massive “club” at the back of the neck. For example, one image of “a Law Macaroni” mocks a lawyer, who presumably ought to be more soberly dressed, for wearing a wig brushed into a high peak at the top and gathered into a huge roll in the back (Figure 5-1). The man’s somber black legal robe billows back as he minces forward, feet turned out in a dancer-like manner. His extremely pale face and rosy cheeks suggest powder and rouge. The joke here seems to be the absurdity of a man whose professional uniform would normally give him an air of gravitas styling his hair and moving his body in such a way as to completely undo this demeanor.

Some images show macaronis getting into trouble because of their hair. One man is shown in a market, caught by his long, carrot-shaped queue by an old vegetable seller identified as “Irish Peg.” The macaroni has angered the woman somehow, and she demands that he “Make good the Damage you Dog, or I’ll cut away your PARSNIP” Going by the words alone, “parsnip” seems to refer to the macaroni’s manhood, but
Figure 5-1: Print by M. Darly, 1772 (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT)
the ribbon-wrapped queue the vegetable seller has by her hand is so clearly parsnip-shaped that she must be threatening his hair (Figure 5-2). This is recurring joke: the macaroni whose masculinity is mixed up in his hair. Another image puts the joke more bluntly, with an amorous macaroni embracing a woman, his long queue of hair erect behind him. According to Amelia Rauser, the use of hair as a stand-in for sex is not coincidental: “Wigs had always had barely latent sexual meanings; hair had long been associated with sexuality, and because wigs were made from women's hair, gender confusion was always possible.” The wig had also been traditionally a part of an elite man’s public wardrobe, and the absurd macaroni subverted the traditional “sober public virtue” of the male wig into something grotesque and sexualized (Rauser 2004:103).

Posture was another defining characteristic of the macaroni. Image after image shows men who are slight of frame and light on their feet, with their toes turned out like dancers. The bodily characteristics of the macaroni included a mincing gate and upright posture, and a supercilious expression with pursed lips. The main entertainment in most of these prints seemed to be showing the most incongruous characters possible embodying this fashion: serious professionals like lawyers, aldermen and Cambridge scholars; tradesmen like bun sellers and apothecaries; and servants like waiters and liverymen. Some professionals are so ludicrous in elaborate, pristine dress that the joke is clear even to a 21st-century viewer: bricklayers and butchers are not meant to wear tight pants and enormous wigs. Some of the jokes rely on men who are too provincial to really grasp macaroni fashion: for example, “The Farmer Macaroni” shows a solidly-built man with the requisite large wig and walking stick, but the stick is a bent and knobby branch
Figure 5-2: Print by Carington Bowles, 1773 (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT)
of briar with a shepherd’s crook at the end, not the delicate ornamented stick carried by
more cosmopolitan macaronis. Other jokes show men who have gotten the clothes right,
but failed with their bodies by being too fat or too short or not walking with a light
dancer’s gait. Being a macaroni was an endeavor that required the whole body to pull off.

Among this vast array of macaronis, there is a single depiction of a black man in
the Darlys’ print series (Figure 5-3). Unlike the great majority of mass-market print
depictions of people of color, this image, though satirical, depicts its subject realistically
and humanely, not as a broad racist stereotype. Eighteenth-century viewers familiar with
London celebrity gossip would have immediately recognized this man as Julius Soubise,
companion to the notorious fashionable eccentric Catherine Hyde Douglass, Duchess of
Queensberry. Born in St. Kitts, Soubise was brought to England as a slave to a ship’s
captain at age ten. The captain’s cousin, the Duchess of Queensberry, was so taken with
the boy that she begged to have him manumitted, named him Julius Soubise, and treated
him as something between an adopted son and a fashion accessory. Soubise grew up with
all of the privileges but none of the rights of the English aristocracy, and as an adult he
made a living through the typical macaroni occupations of dancing and riding master
(Miller 2009:57-64).

The title of the Darly print of Soubise contained another clever reference: he was
“A Mungo Macaroni.” Contemporary viewers on both sides of the Atlantic would have
known to connect this label to a central character in the comic opera, *The Padlock*. “A
sassy, back-talking, physically comic slave, Mungo debuted a startling look and a new
voice for blacks in British theater” (Miller 2009:28). The character wore an ostentatious
Figure 5-3: Print by M. Darly, 1772 (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT)
striped silk suit and talked in an identifiable West Indian accent. *The Padlock* was so popular that it was exported to the colonies in 1769 and enjoyed even more success than in London, with many productions put on up until the turn of the century from New York to Philadelphia, Richmond, Charleston, and many cities in between. Print versions of the play were produced, and songs from the play published. In short, the character of Mungo would have been familiar to people of many different walks of life in America (Miller 2009:74-75). His name became synonymous with African and slave, but, oddly, at the same time it also became a synonym for “a person of position, a swell” (Miller 2009:30). Monica Miller argues that these two seemingly incompatible meanings of this word reflect the emergence “of the first black dandies, captured and, later, free Africans who learned to use dress, style, gesture, and wit to redesign the roles assigned to them. . . . Soubise in Mungo’s clothing signals the potential for a black character to constitute identity by actually and figuratively talking back, taking control of his own self-presentation and look” (Miller 2009:30).

What does the presence of Soubise in the macaroni prints mean for the embodiment of black masculine identity in America? Soubise was a privileged person occupying a liminal space in London high society. Not exactly a slave and not exactly free, he experienced a level of freedom of expression unavailable to enslaved men across the Atlantic. Soubise represents one possibility for black masculinity in the 18th century. The fact that *The Padlock* was so pervasive in American popular culture means that people had a mental image of a flamboyant black man. Without more information about how much access ordinary people in America had to these facets of cosmopolitan culture,
there is no way to know how much influence the characters of Soubise and Mungo had on the embodiment of race and identity in America. Monica Miller (2009) argues that they were a central part of the beginnings of “black diasporic identity.” Even if we lack direct examples of enslaved African Americans taking their fashion cues from satirical prints, Julius Soubise does open up the possibility of a black man being celebrated for fashioning his own identity.

Women were not exempt from mockery through visual satire, although they did not have their own genre of prints the way the macaronis did. Jokes poking fun at women seemed to rely on the perils of using artifice to replace natural youth or beauty. Images of haggard, bald women transforming themselves into youthful beauties abound. One such print depicts a “young miss of Three score and Ten” (Figure 5-4) requiring the aid of two servants to put on a wig dressed with flowers and massive feathers that is the same size as her body. Historian Amelia Rauser (2004) notes that while wigs for men were symbols of virility and male authority, women were expected to wear their own hair. Proper women could augment their hairstyles with padding and hairpieces, but resorting to a wig was unfeminine: women were supposed to be natural and free from artifice (Rauser 2004:103). It seems that by the turn of the 19th century, tastemakers may have wished for a bit more artifice in women’s fashion. Many of the satirical prints from this period lampooned the way women had given up on their foundation garments for new diaphanous dresses that showed every bodily flaw. Women of the late 18th century had to walk a precarious line between too much artifice and not enough.
Figure 5-4: Print by Philip Dawe, 1770 (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT)
The proper or improper embodiment of gender is a theme that implicitly underpins the humor in many satirical prints. In one case, this theme is made the explicit subject of a satirical print. In “A MORNING FROLIC, or the TRANSMUTATION of SEXES” (Figure 5-5), a man and a woman have some fun trying out the performance props of each other’s gender. The choice of items the artist uses to encapsulate gender is telling. He has not chosen to depict the couple completely cross dressing, but trying on a few items that are loaded with gendered meaning. The couple is in the process of getting dressed for the day: the man is still in slippers and has not yet fastened the legs of his breeches, and the woman has not yet pinned her gown and kerchief in place. The couple has traded headwear and accessories: she wears her companion’s cocked hat and his sword, while he wears her tall, flounced cap and flutters her fan. Their body language indicates that the two are not just borrowing props: they are also trying to use body language to imitate each other’s gender. The woman stands upright, her toes turned out in a manner reminiscent of a macaroni and her hands on her hips: an authoritative and masculine stance. The man is seated, his ankles properly together and his hands demurely crossed in his lap. On the floor, a copy of Ovid’s *Metamorphases* lies open, a work that deals with transformations of all types, including transmutations of sex. The punchline of the piece is lost on us today. Is some sort of sexual perversion being hinted at? Was gender so fluid that borrowing a fan or a hat was all it took to morph into the other sex? Or are we simply meant to be amused by the silliness of the characters? Whatever the original meaning of the print, it speaks volumes about the performativity of gender, which in the 18th century was communicated in ways that are not readily apparent to us.
Figure 5-5: Print by Carrington Bowles, 1780 (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT)
today through gender-specific accessories and through dimorphic ways of carrying the body.

The visual satirists loved to mock various types of boundary crossing, but these are not the only topics with which they dealt. While macaroni and other fashion satires mocked class and gender transgressions, other prints offered a patronizing admiration for men and women who stayed solidly within the parameters of their social station. One such image depicts simple country people in a way that seems equal parts mockery and admiration. A tinted print by Thomas Rowlandson from 1798 titled “Country Lovers” shows a man and woman in laboring dress (Figure 5-6). The accompanying text is a rhyme where the woman praises her companion, followed by an admonition to the viewer that though the couple “live by the sweat of their brows/ they yet may be constant and true/ though divested of curt’sseys and bows.” Some of the humor in the image may rest in the way the couple seems to be mismatched. The woman is stocky and solidly built (not desirable traits in an era beginning to idolize lithe youthfulness) but is still more attractive than her haggard and snub-nosed companion (Porter 2004:240-243). They both wear typical English working dress. The woman is in a petticoat and gown, topped with an apron, with a large kerchief tucked into her bodice. Her only adornments are a ribbon around her neck and a stylish hat. Her hair beneath the hat is loose and not styled. The man appears to be a coach driver, based on the whip he carries and the woman’s verse extolling his skills with handling a variety of conveyances. He wears a long smock, a kerchief around his neck, shoes with blue cloth gaiters, and a shapeless top hat. He too wears his hair loose and unstyled. With the exception of the smock (which no fugitive
Figure 5-6: Print by Hooper and Wigstead, 1798 (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT)
slaves or servants in Virginia are recorded as wearing), this couple’s dress looks exactly like the type of laboring dress worn by enslaved and indentured runaways of middling means.

The humor of this print of “country lovers” is obscure to today’s viewer, but it seems clear that we are meant to admire the lovers’ ardor and their acceptance of their lot in life. These are “good” poor people who know their station and do not try to act outside of it. This proscriptive undercurrent is present throughout most satirical prints: the images provided examples of how to act and dress to remain respectable in all sorts of situations. But at the same time, it is a little unclear how we are meant to take these proscriptions. The macaronis may be silly and extreme, but they are also fun and highly individualistic. The “country lovers” seem rather bland in comparison.

Together, the satirical prints help us visualize a Georgian ideal of embodiment. The ideal person moved and dressed according to his or her social station and did not blur the lines between genders. He or she was moderate in all things, not chasing every absurd style or consuming too much. He or she did not rely too heavily on artifice, but at the same time, did not allow nature free reign over his or her body. The fact that the satirists had subjects to mock indicates that not everyone took these admonitions to heart. Some people must have found satisfaction in crossing social lines through flamboyant over-consumption, while others did not possess the means or desire to alter their bodies to fit a fashionable ideal.
Travel Sketches

Satirical prints show the world exaggerated or idealized, so they can only be taken as evidence of how people understood and represented bodies, not how bodies were used in real life. Luckily, other forms of visual representation survive from the period that offer a more true-to-life glimpse at real people. Travel sketches are a particularly rich source of information. Drawn by an outsider recording scenes he or she found to be puzzling, amusing, or noteworthy, travel sketches give us, outsiders separated by time, a window into the past. For this project, I used the travel sketches of Benjamin Henry Latrobe to provide me with this type of information. Latrobe was an English-born architect and engineer who lived from 1764 to 1820. In 1795, having lost his wife, Latrobe traveled to America to claim a piece of family land in Pennsylvania and begin a new life there as an architect and engineer. His career took him around the newly-formed country, from New Jersey to Louisiana. Latrobe had a great interest in natural history and enjoyed sketching the environment he encountered as he traveled. He also recorded amusing anecdotes and scenes from his travels, and his travel journals and sketchbooks serve as an incredible glimpse into daily life at the turn of the nineteenth century. He traveled through Virginia on several occasions, from about 1795 to about 1798 (Carter 1985:3-7).

Although Latrobe’s drawings provide a rare look into daily life in Virginia, “it is a mistake to take Latrobe’s drawings too literally as representations of what he saw” (Brownell 1985:25). Latrobe was influenced by the Neoclassical movement, and he appreciated picturesque scenes: his pictures are often laid out with an eye toward
symbolism or pleasing arrangements, not accuracy. Some of his compositions of elite
white people idealize and simplify the figures in a way that mimics Neoclassical
sculptural compositions, while his images of white lower-class and enslaved black people
seem to aim more at illustrating a story or showing a humorous scene (Brownell
1985:29). Latrobe saw the humor in many of the situations he encountered, and his
illustrations are often drawn to highlight absurdities. Despite these limitations, Latrobe’s
travel sketches offer a more candid snapshot into daily life in Virginia than other forms of
artistic representation.

Some of Latrobe’s sketches highlight aspects of Virginia culture that struck him
as odd. He seemed to be particularly attuned to scenes that exemplified the ways in which
class and race were embodied differently in Virginia than they were in England. An
image he sketched titled “Nondescripts . . . near the Oaks, Virginia” (Figure 5-7)
illustrates how he saw class and race played out in Virginia. Latrobe sketched the scene
near The Oaks, the Piedmont plantation of Edmund Harrison while he was in the area
working as an engineering consultant for several projects on the Appomattox River. His
work brought him back to the region multiple times from 1796 to 1797, so it is unclear
when he sketched the undated scene (Carter et al. 1985:78). According to his notes below
the image, it shows “A family of poor White children observed from the Stage carrying
peaches to a neighboring Barbecue for sale.” In the scene, a grown woman, two little
girls, and one boy are trudging through the woods carrying baskets of peaches. All four
wear ludicrously large bonnets that completely hide their faces from view, hence the
Figure 5-7: Sketch by Benjamin Latrobe, 1797 (Carter et al 1985:78, Maryland Historical Society)
“nondescripts” in the title. The children’s bonnets are identical, with large forward-jutting brims, closely fitted caps, and little ruffles at the necks. The mother has decorated her bonnet with two bows in the back, exacerbating the outlandish effect of her headwear. The boy heads up the group, which picks its way single file through a barely-clear area beside the road. In the background, roughly-sketched trees give a sense of untamed forest. The group has just passed a large fallen tree, and the boy in front is leaping over an erosion ditch. Despite the rough terrain, the family is barefoot. The mother’s outfit is patched, but its high-waisted cut is modern for the period. She is covered from the sun as much as possible, with a large kerchief draped over her shoulders. Despite the great care she has taken to shade the rest of her body, her sleeves only fall to the elbow, leaving her forearms bare. The jungle-like woods indicate that it is summer, so the bare arms might be a compromise: sacrifice pale skin for a little relief from the heat. The girls both wear short dresses typical of children’s clothing of the period, and the boy is also typically clothed in trousers and a short waistcoat. Latrobe represents the group exactly as he describes them: nondescript. There is no individuality in the characters beyond age and gender. The one person who faces the viewer, the little girl at the back of the group, has a roughly-sketched, cartoonish face. If their headwear had not struck Latrobe as outlandish, it seems likely that he would never have even noticed the family, let alone sketched them.

Was the headwear of the “nondescripts” really so unusual? According to Isaac Weld, an Irish travel writer who recorded his travels in Virginia during the same years as Latrobe, these bonnets were frequently worn by poor white Virginians. Isaac Weld
observed that the “common people in the lower parts of Virginia have very sallow complexions, owing to the burning rays of the sun in the summer, and the bilious complaints to which they are subject during the fall of the year” (Weld 1799:89; Carter et al. 1985:78) To combat the skin-darkening effects of the sun, the women covered themselves completely in dresses that made them “still more ugly than nature has made them.” To further shield themselves from the sun, they wore enormous bonnets “made with a caul, fitting close on the back and a front stiffened with small pieces of cane, which projects nearly two feet from the head in a horizontal direction” (Weld 1799:89).

Weld’s description of Tidewater Virginia’s women almost perfectly matches the characters in Latrobe’s sketch. These pieces of evidence indicate that for poor white women, ensuring that their skin remained white and their racial status unquestioned was more important than looking attractive. Interestingly, Isaac Weld saw a regional character to the clothing and bodies of white Virginia women that Latrobe did not note. In contrast to “the pale, sickly, debilitated beings” of the Tidewater, women of the Piedmont, particularly the region of the Southwest Mountains where both Montpelier and Monticello are located, were “charming” in their “shapes and complexions.” Weld also commented on the clothing of the Piedmont women, who were clothed in what he saw as an appealing carelessness, in “little more, in common, than a simple bodice and petticoat” (Weld 1799:117-118).

As Latrobe continued to sketch his way around the state, he happened upon another scene that emphasized to him the rough-and-tumble nature of rural Virginia. In 1797, he traveled with a friend to Hanover Town, a small tobacco trading center near
Richmond. When they visited, the town had been far eclipsed by Richmond, and Latrobe was struck by how depressed it appeared, with only 23 white and 52 black residents. He described them thus: “though it seems invidious to condemn a town in the lump with so few exceptions, yet I think justice would not be done, if any commendation for industry, sobriety, understanding or good temper were conferred upon them.” The chief proof of the town’s fallen nature was its two billiard tables, and the fact the town’s citizens were too well-acquainted with each other to bother with the niceties of “ceremony” and “politeness.” The exceptions in this town full of undesirables were four gentlemen of Latrobe’s acquaintance. He particularly admired the ability of Mr. Bathurst Jones, a politician, to interact with these townsmen on their level, despite his clear “superiority . . . in intellect, in sentiment, and in habitual gentlemanly conduct” to members of the “rabble” (Carter 1977:328 [emphasis in original]).

The sketch Latrobe made of men playing billiards at Hanover Town may have been intended to illustrate Jones’ ability as a “man of the rabble” (Figure 5-8). The scene is set inside a tavern at a large billiards table. Four men are playing at the table: two in the foreground and two behind the table, while two men watch in the background on a bench behind the table. The two men in the foreground are the easiest to make out, and they are clearly meant to provide a strong contrast to each other. The man on the right may be Mr. Jones. He stands in a relaxed manner, with his arms crossed, but his back is still very upright, as befits a gentleman. He wears a full suit, made of a dark cloth, with long tails, buttons at the back, breeches buttoned and buckled at the knee, and buckled shoes. His light-colored hair, which looks to be his own, is tied in a loose queue. The man on the
Figure 5-8: Sketch by Benjamin Latrobe, 1797 (Carter 1977:328. Maryland Historical Society)
left, who leans over to take a shot at the ball, shows a striking contrast Mr. Jones. This man is dressed in all light-colored fabric, possibly locally produced material or a coarse, unbleached imported linen such as “rolls” or “sheeting” (Montgomery 1984:333) His trousers are the “overalls” typically worn by working men: loose and baggy in the inseam and tapered down to the ankle, with a slit up the side of the leg that was meant to be tied or buttoned (Wass and Fandrich 2010:156-157). He wears a short, loose-fitting, light-colored waistcoat. Short waistcoats were in style in 1797, but without a coat to cover his baggy overalls seat, the effect is somewhat ludicrous (Wass and Fandrich 2010:136-137). His shirt sleeves are rolled up to the elbow. His natural hair is closely cropped. Most strikingly, however, is the fact that the man is barefoot. All of the other figures in the room wear shoes or boots. The white man in bare feet and working dress seems to represent a member of the lazy white rabble of the town. Latrobe clearly thinks that Mr. Jones is slumming a bit by participating in this scene, yet despite his ragged clothing, the poor man’s race allows him to occupy the same space as the gentleman.

Latrobe sketched another scene from his stay at the Hanover Town tavern: a portrait of Mr. Jones’ enslaved personal servant, Alic. The image is titled “a humourous and faithful old servant:” it shows an older enslaved man standing at a bowl of punch with a utensil, either preparing or serving it (Figure 5-9). Alic’s clothing provides another counterpoint to that of the white men of the town. Like Mr. Jones, Alic is correctly attired in a well fitted suit, with a ruffled cravat and shirt sleeves, buttoned breeches, and boots folded in contrasting colors. He wears his own hair in a pouf at the
Figure 5-9: Watercolor by Benjamin Latrobe, 1797 (Maryland Historical Society)
top and tied into a queue in the back: a style that echoes the fashionable macaroni wigs of the 1770s. Historians Shane and Graham White (1998:45) interpret this image as evidence of an enslaved man fashioning his hair in a distinctively African American manner, and that this style was what struck Latrobe as “humourous.” I disagree with this interpretation: the hairstyle may indeed have struck Latrobe as amusing, but not because it was distinctly African. Alic’s hair is styled in the manner of fashionable men of an earlier era: the 1770s macaroni prints show men wearing their hair or wigs dressed with similar tall bouffant and stiff queue. Did Latrobe see this as an unsophisticated attempt to emulate a mainstream fashion of the man’s younger years? Was it odd to him to see an enslaved man’s hair styled in this manner? Or was he simply amused by the antiquated style? If we cannot know Latrobe’s motivations in capturing this image, Alic’s own motivations are even more obscure to us today. Was the style his own choice? If so, did he choose it because it seemed correct and dignified, as befitting his status as the personal servant to a man of importance? Or was there some other motivation at work?

Other bodily characteristics beyond those of race help clue the viewer into the lowly status of the subject of Latrobe’s sketch. Alic’s body language contrasts with the upright, easy posture of Mr. Jones. Alic is hunched over, intently focused on the bowl of punch, a slight smile on his lips as if something has amused him. Alic’s well-dressed appearance matches that of Mr. Jones, and he must have stood out as better dressed than most of the white occupants of the tavern. Yet because of the characteristics of his body, the barefoot man at the billiards table could share a kind of equality with the gentleman politician that was inaccessible to Alic, despite his correct clothing and good humor.
Through this pair of sketches, a truth of life in Virginia emerges: clothing and posture separated the white gentleman from the “rabble,” but the fabric of the body itself separated enslaved black man from free white man.

One of Latrobe’s sketches shows enslaved men styling themselves for their own time. The sketch is “Preparations for the enjoyment of a fine Sunday among the Blacks of Norfolk” (Figure 5-10). The scene depicts five men helping each other wash, shave, and dress their hair. Latrobe notes that the scene is “accurately copied from the upper room” of a Norfolk tavern, but this notation makes little sense with the actual arrangement of the image, which is framed at the bottom by the top of a picket fence. The perspective of the viewer is as if one is peering voyeuristically over the top of the fence: this is not a scene that Latrobe was meant to see. The environment is urban: a few shops and buildings are sketched in at a distance, but this private scene we are spying on takes place in the enclosed yard of an outbuilding. One man sits on a barrel while another combs out his hair with a long-toothed comb. Down on the ground, a man in a knit cap leans over a seated man, carefully shaving his face with a straight razor. In the background, another figure leans over a wash bucket. Latrobe explains in his notes that the men take turns helping each other shave their faces and dress their hair. All of the men wear laboring clothes of various colors. The man on the barrel is clothed all in blue, with blue trousers. The man dressing his hair wears a dull red jacket with a white shirt peeking through. The man with the razor is dressed in a manner that a fashionable white man would have found odd. He wears a red and white striped knit cap, a mustard-colored short jacket, and green trousers or breeches. Unlike Alic’s style, the hairstyles these men are busy constructing
Figure 5-10: Watercolor by Benjamin Latrobe, 1797 (Maryland Historical Society)
cannot be interpreted as riffs on mainstream fashion. The man with the comb wears his hair short on top, with two braided tails coming off the back. The man on the barrel appears to have his hair cut in a similar manner, and he seems to be preparing to have his hair styled in the same fashion. If this is a common hairstyle for enslaved men, slaveholders rarely mentioned it: only one runaway in the database I have compiled is described wearing his hair in almost exactly this same fashion. Interestingly, this man was also in Norfolk when he escaped, although he was originally from Antigua. The advertisement describes his hair “tied in tails, which are about four inches long” (Norfolk Herald, Willett and O’Connor, 6 Sep, 1800). Did the men in Norfolk, a port city, have access to a wider world of black style than the men who lived in rural areas?

Latrobe made one last sketch that casts light on the varied meanings given to black and white bodies in Virginia. He sketched “an Overseer Doing his Duty” based off of a scene he encountered outside of Fredericksburg, Virginia in March 1798 (Figure 5-11). Set in a fenced-in field that has just recently been cleared by a slashing and burning it depicts a white overseer watching two enslaved women hoe the ground around the smoldering stumps. The positioning of the actors in the scene clearly delineates who holds the power. The overseer stands on a stump, his legs crossed, leaning against a long stick and smoking a cigar with a satisfied smile. He stares into the distance, not really paying attention to the two enslaved women who work the ground in front of him. In, contrast, the women are both hunched over as they swing their hoes through the air. One woman, who faces the viewer, shifts her eyes anxiously back toward the overseer as she keeps her head focused towards her work. The women are clothed almost identically in
Figure 5-11: Watercolor, Benjamin Latrobe, 1797 (Maryland Historical Society)
blue petticoats and fitted, skirted jackets. One woman has rolled her sleeves up a bit, revealing her shift underneath. The other woman’s sleeves are rolled down, with a slit on the side of the arm that is not fastened. Both women are barefoot (Latrobe has rendered their toes and ankles), and their hair is either closely cropped or plaited against their heads. The overseer’s stylish dress contrasts sharply with that of the enslaved women. His suit is up to date with the trends of the 1790s: a fitted frock coat cut away in the front, with a waistcoat and cravat, long fitted trousers, and boots. His hair is cut fashionably short underneath his top hat (Wass and Fandrich 2010:154).

Although Latrobe claims to have sketched this scene “from life,” there are a few clues to indicate that the overseer may be a stock character, and that this scene is something of a morality play. The appearance and outfit of the overseer are almost identical to that of a young man sketched for a group of characters in an illustration of Mount Vernon. Rather than a real character, the figure of the overseer may simply be Latrobe’s visual shorthand for “fashionable young man.” Charles Brownell and the other editors of a volume of Latrobe’s sketches argue that Latrobe drew inspiration from other artists to arrange the scene in a symbolic manner (Carter et al. 1985). The figure of the overseer closely mimics the figure of the hero Paris in an illustration of the Iliad dawn by Neoclassical artist John Flaxman. Latrobe admired and emulated Flaxman’s work, and figures that call to mind Flaxman’s Paris appear elsewhere in Latobe’s sketches. Brownell believes that the similarity was intentional: the Flaxman illustration was of Hector admonishing Paris for choosing to stay at home rather than join the fight against the Greeks. Thus, “both pictures revolve around duty and the unmanly indolence of a
male.” Paris neglected his duty by refusing to fight, while: “The overseer does perform his duty, but it is the strange one of lounging while women labor” (Carter et al. 1985:132). Although the composition echoes other works, the scene itself must have been real enough to convince Latrobe to commit it to paper. He seems to have been struck by the way the overseer was dressed for leisure, not manual labor, while the women he watched were pitifully underdressed for the work they are doing, walking barefoot among the burning stumps. The sketch was drawn at a time when Latrobe was trying to formulate his opinions about the institution of slavery (Carter et al. 1985:132). The sarcastic title, contrasted with the image of an indolent, cigar-smoking overseer looming over two anxious enslaved women, reflect Latrobe’s growing negative feelings about the institution.

The travel sketches of Benjamin Latrobe show how people in the specific cultural context of Virginia embodied race, class, and gender identity, but the images show some echoes of the mores represented by the satirical prints. Like the satirists, Latrobe takes a dim view of men who choose stylishness over sober masculinity. But he also sees scenes that are jarring to him and for which he must have had very little context. In some cases, the enslaved and poor people of Virginia dressed their bodies in ways that seemed to run counter to typical English dress for any class.

**Runaway Advertisements**

Satirical prints give some context for expectations about dress and behavior, and Latrobe’s travel sketches show how the people he saw in Virginia used their bodies.
Runaway advertisements provide yet one more layer of information about how bound laborers of all races embodied identity. Slaveholders and masters of apprentices, indentured servants, and other bound labor put out advertisements in various newspapers in an attempt to get back their escaped workers. These advertisements read like wanted posters, with some containing detailed descriptions of the fugitives’ appearances, personalities, and mannerisms. The advertisements provide a rich, if biased, window on how individuals dressed and carried themselves (Heath 1999).

For this project, I used the online Geography of Slavery database to compile my data, supplemented with data from the Virginia Gazette (Costa 2005; Colonial Williamsburg Foundation 2017). The Geography of Slavery is an NEH-funded project headed by Tom Costa of the University of Virginia that transcribed and published all of the available newspaper advertisements for runaway slaves and servants taken from Virginia and Maryland newspapers from 1736 to 1803. To date, the database contains over 4000 entries. The site does not have the capacity for analysis more complex than a simple text search, which returns links to full entries that contain the search term, making it impossible to summarize or quantify trends in the data. To work around this limitation, I chose to catalog a sample of runaways from the years 1760 to 1800 into a Microsoft Access database that included categories for the various aspects of bodily appearance I wanted to analyze. I divided each advertisement into categories such as location, race, gender, age, height, clothing worn, clothing carried, skills, speech, and objects that could be recovered archaeologically, plus bibliographic information like date and publisher. I cataloged all of the runaway advertisements for both black and white bound labor from
the entire first year of each decade: this resulted in 349 individual entries. These data form the backbone of my analysis, providing demographic information and trends in how labor-owning whites interpreted the bodies and clothing of enslaved and indentured men and women.

The demographics of the people who escaped bondage from 1760 to 1800 are strongly skewed toward men and boys. Of the 349 runways, 206 (59%) are black males, 51 (14%) are white males, and 52 are identified as “mulatto” males, all but six of whom are enslaved. Women and girls make up a far smaller percentage of the total numbers, with 38 black (11%), 8 mulatto (2%) and only 3 white (1%) female fugitives. Ages range from 11 (a white apprentice boy) to 60 (an enslaved black man) with an average age of 26 for the whole group. This average stayed more or less constant for different demographics within the group, the only exception being the three white women, one of whose age was not recorded, and the other two who were near 30. The data are also skewed by the availability of advertisements. The years 1770 and 1800 are overrepresented, each with over 100 entries, while the year 1760 has the fewest, with only two. The years 1780 and 1790 had 56 entries each (Table 5-1).

Table 5-1: Runaway advertisements by race and year

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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>1780</th>
<th>1790</th>
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<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>132</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The runaway advertisements are illuminating in both what characteristics the advertisers chose to describe about each individual and what they chose to exclude. Race and gender were the only characteristics that were recorded in every single instance, but some other qualities also tend to have been recorded consistently. The location from which the fugitive ran away was usually mentioned, as was the name of the slaveholder, although sometimes the advertiser was an executor of an estate or was otherwise not the slaveholder. Except in two cases where large groups of enslaved men and women escaped together, the name of the enslaved or indentured person was always recorded. Age in years was estimated for 77% of all the individuals, and of the rest, 15 individuals’ ages were estimated using adjectives like “young” or “middle aged.” The advertisers frequently estimated the height of the runaways as precisely as possible, in feet and inches: 71% of the advertisements I cataloged include a height measurement. Bodily descriptions are, of course, also extremely common, including characteristics like skin color, body type, shape of features, as well as scars, missing teeth, and mutilations. Sixteen advertisements identify their subjects only by scars and other flaws. Surprisingly, 16 other advertisers did not consider it necessary to include any bodily description at all. Over half (64%) described the clothing the fugitives wore when they escaped. Skills or occupations were noted in 40% of the advertisements. One characteristic that was described by a surprising number of advertisers was the way the runaway spoke or interacted with authority figures: a quarter of the advertisements included such descriptions.
I was curious to see how many of the artifacts that archaeologists rely on so heavily for information about self-presentation were mentioned in the advertisements. The buttons, buckles, accessories, and jewelry that are our only archaeological source of information about how people adorned themselves were far less important to the 18th-century advertisers as defining characteristics of individuals. Out of the 349 advertisements, only 37 mention the types of objects recovered by archaeologists. Even this low number is generous, since I included any mention of these items at all, even when they may have been delicate objects like textile or horn buttons that only survive under ideal circumstances. Of these items, buckles were the most likely to be mentioned (N=21), followed by buttons (N=14). Only three entries described jewelry (detailed below) and four included accessories. This lack of potential archaeological artifacts highlights the biases we receive from the archaeological record. We place outsized emphasis on sturdy objects like metal buttons, when in reality these items were but a small part of an individual’s self-presentation.

**Bodies**

The advertisements provide a glimpse into the way labor-owning whites saw the bodies of the men and women who were beneath them socially or who they owned outright. As with visual sources, these descriptions cannot be taken as objective information: the identifying features of the bodies of these men and women that were recorded were those which the slaveholders believed were important in facilitating the return of their “property.” We can only guess which features were important to the
individuals themselves or to their families or communities. The advertisers did their best to describe the bodies of almost every fugitive, regardless of race, but they were more likely to focus only on bodies, to the exclusion of clothing, for the black fugitives. Only 10% of the advertisements for white fugitives completely left out any description of clothing. This number jumped to 23% for escapees identified as “mulatto,” and it jumped even higher for enslaved people defined as “negro”: 32% of these advertisements do not mention clothing at all.

How did advertisers describe the bodies of the men and women they tried to reclaim? For fugitives of African descent, skin color was the characteristic that was most commonly noted, with 128 advertisements describing the complexion of enslaved black fugitives. These people’s complexions were described as “black” (46: 21 of this group are “very black”), “yellowish” (57) or “light” (2). Twenty-six individuals were described as “dark:” for five people this was a qualifier used with other words such as “dark yellow” and even “dark tawny” and “dark copper.” The skin color of fourteen people who were identified as “mulatto” was described: six were “bright,” five were “light,” and three were “dark.” It is a bit unclear what motivated the advertisers to identify a person as “mulatto.” This term did not seem to serve as a distinct racial category per se, as a few individuals were described as “mulatto negroes.” Some descriptions made it clear that the fugitive was fair-skinned enough to “pass” as white, such as an enslaved man named Jack who had gray eyes, light brown hair and who could “easily pass for a white man” (Virginia Gazette, Purdie and Dixon, 27 Sep., 1770). Almost all of the men and women identified in this manner were enslaved. For a handful of the advertisements, the mixed-

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race individual’s status was unclear, but only six people who were described as mulatto were explicitly identified as indentured or apprenticed, not enslaved. Two brothers named Simon and Samuel Howell must have had a white mother, because they were both serving out a 31-year term of indenture, as a 1705 law required of the children of a free mother and enslaved father (Virginia Gazette, Purdie and Dixon, 16 Aug, 1770; Morgan 1975:335). One light skinned man named John who fled from Orange County (the Piedmont county where Montpelier was located) tried to use this law to his advantage, by claiming his mother was white. The man who held him captive disagreed, explaining: “he will tell you that his mother was a white woman, but she was a negro” (Virginia Herald and Fredericksburg Advertiser, Timothy Green and Co., 15 July, 1790). Windley (1995:52) observed that 63 percent of the 1,276 Virginia runaway advertisements he analyzed described people as “mulatto” “yellow” or “light:” he interpreted these distinctions as an indication that enslaved people with some white ancestry had an advantage in running away. Descriptions of skin color were not limited to fugitives with African ancestry: white runaways were also described by their skin color with “fresh,” “fair,” and “ruddy” complexions, but also “swarthy,” “yellow,” and “dark” complexions.

One disturbing aspect of the runaway advertisements is the frank way in which the slaveholders described the enslaved fugitives using the same terms they used for livestock. In one instance, an enslaved man and the horse he stole were described in the same advertisement as “likely” (Norfolk Herald, Willet and O’Connor, 26 June 1800). Advertisements for the sale of horses described the animals as “likely,” and “well made” (Virginia Gazette Purdie and Dixon, 14 July, 1775; Virginia Gazette, Dixon and Hunter 5
Dec., 1777). These exact terms show up continually in the advertisements for both fugitives and for the sale of slaves. Only one white runaway, a 16-year old, is described in this way, as “well made” (Virginia Gazette, Rind, 15 March 1770). In contrast, “well made” and “likely” were fairly common descriptions of black and mulatto fugitives with 86 individuals described in these terms. The terms might seem to refer to health or freedom from defect, but 24 of these “likely” and “well-made” individuals had serious physical problems, ranging from smallpox scars to missing teeth and limbs. Rather than a description meant to convey identifying features (how would one recognize a person who was simply described as “well made?”), I believe these terms were meant to convey the monetary value of the enslaved person to the reader, to emphasize the need for the return of the self-stolen “property.”

The way an individual spoke and interacted was another embodied characteristic that the advertisers thought worth mentioning. Generally the advertisement did not refer to how an individual interacted in his or her day-to-day life, but how he or she responded to stressful personal interactions. The presumed reader must be white, male, and in the position to detain and question the fugitive. Not all of the people described in this manner were enslaved: nine white indentured servants or apprentices were also described in this way. Some people responded fearfully, stuttering, mumbling, or talking quickly. Others were “smooth tongued” or “insinuating.” Some people changed their manner depending on the situation, like an enslaved woman named Patty who was normally quite talkative and “impertinent” with a “shrill voice,” but who could “assume the appearance of perfect humility” (Norfolk Herald, Willett and O’Connor, 2 Dec., 1800). Another man, Anthony,
showed how an enslaved person’s entire demeanor could change in different contexts. Anthony was making his way from the Piedmont town of Fredericksburg to Pennsylvania to find asylum with a group known as the “Friends to Liberty.” The slaveholder who advertised for his return noted that Anthony tended to stammer when he was questioned, but that he was also known as a preacher (Virginia Gazette and General Advertiser, Davis, 1 Dec. 1790).

Hair was another strongly racialized bodily characteristic, but the advertisers focused far less on the hair of enslaved Africans and African Americans than I expected. Interestingly, it was the white and mixed-race fugitives whose hair was described much more consistently. Only 21 (9%) advertisements for black fugitives mentioned hair. A higher percentage of the mixed-race fugitives’ hair was described (18 individuals or 35% of all of the mulatto runaways). White runaways, on the other hand, were described by their hair much more frequently: 76% of the advertisements for white servants and apprentices mentioned hair. It seems that the majority of slaveholders failed to notice the hair of the people they held captive. The advertisers occasionally explained that the hair of a black fugitive was different in some way from what they consider typical: for example, two men were described as having “very long hair for a negro” and “longer than negroes usually wear it.” Does this mean, in Virginia at least, that there was a “typical” way for enslaved men and women to style their hair? Or, as some scholars have argued, was hair one of the few areas where enslaved people were allowed to express themselves with little oversight from slaveholders (Parker 1994; White and White 1995:49; Heath 1999:54)? If hair was an area of relative liberty, then the advertisers may not mention it.
because they failed to truly see it. Heath (1999:55) calls hair “a battleground of wills” between the enslaver and the enslaved, with slaveholders shaving heads to humiliate and punish, and runaways using hairstyles to disguise themselves as free.

The few black hairstyles that were described give us a picture of how some enslaved men and women wore their hair, but there is no way to know whether these represent typical styles or styles that were unusual enough to warrant description. Only four enslaved women were described by their hair: two women had long hair (one woman’s hair was noticed as “pretty”), one woman’s hair was plaited, and the other had short curly hair. Among the men, seven had long hair that was tied back. One man had “short knotty hair” that had been “lengthened a little by tying” (Norfolk Herald, Willett and O’Connor, 24 Dec., 1800). The man whose hair was “very long for a negro” styled his hair in a manner reminiscent of a macaroni wig: “queued behind and twisted at the sides” (Norfolk Herald, Willett and O’Connor, 27 Sep. 1800). Two men were described as having very short hair. Three advertisements referred to the men’s hair using the dehumanizing term “wool”, and all three of these men had hairstyles that seem out of step with Anglo-American fashion. One man let his hair grow “below his temples;” another combed it “up very nice before;” and the third man wore his hair in a manner similar to the men Latrobe saw dressing their hair in Norfolk: “tied in tails, which are about four inches long” (Virginia Gazette, Dixon & Nicolson, 26 July, 1780; Virginia Gazette (Dixon & Nicolson 25 Oct., 1780; Norfolk Herald, Willett and O’Connor, 6 Sep, 1800)

In the case of the people described as “mulatto”, the advertisers frequently used hair as the tell-tale sign that the fugitive was not white. Many of these people were quite
fair skinned, with light eyes; their hair may have been the only racial giveaway. This distinction was made explicit in the case of a fair-skinned teenage boy who had short curly hair, “by which he may be distinguished from a white man” (Virginia Gazette, Dixon & Nicolson, 14 June, 1780). The racially-charged word “wool” showed up twice in describing fugitives who had been identified as mulatto, both times to explain that the men in question were more black than white in appearance. One enslaved woman who escaped from Norfolk had fair skin, sandy blonde hair, and blue eyes. The way she styled her hair may have been an important clue to her non-white status: she wore it “constantly platted” (Norfolk Herald, Willett and O'Connor, 8 May, 1800). The idea that hairstyle could indicate race or enslaved status is hinted at again in an advertisement for an enslaved African American woman named Rachel who escaped in Chesterfield County, near Richmond. The advertisers explained that Rachel: “combs her Hair long, endeavouring to impose herself on the Publick for a free Woman” (Virginia Gazette Purdie & Dixon, 10 February, 1774) Here, long, combed-out hair appears to have been an important element to a disguise as a free woman. This association seems to be confirmed in period illustrations as well, where enslaved women were depicted with hair that was either short or plaited close to the head.

The advertisers appear to have considered hair a more important identifier for white fugitives. Color, cut, style, and hair texture were all often mentioned, although not always at the same time. Infrequently, advertisements mentioned that a white male runaway wore his “own hair,” raising the possibility that some of these descriptions are actually of wigs. However, only one man, an English convict who escaped in Staunton in
1770, was explicitly described as wearing a wig, which was red in color (Virginia Gazette, Rind, 18 Oct., 1770). The only other mention of wigs in all of the advertisements I analyzed was to a white man who escaped with a light brown wig: the wording of the notice did not make it clear whether this item belonged to the fugitive or if it was stolen (Virginia Gazette, Rind, 26 Jul, 1770). As wigs were expensive items in the 18th century, it is possible they were out of reach for unfree men of any race.

Clothing

Clothing was an important identifying characteristic in a large number of the advertisements. It can be difficult to determine whether the items of clothing described were a person’s everyday apparel or whether they were meant to be a disguise to help the fugitive blend in, but the advertisements themselves usually offer clues to differentiate between the two. The advertisers tended to differentiate between clothing a fugitive had on when he or she escaped and clothing they “took away” with them. It is usually unclear what the advertiser meant by the phrase “took away;” were these items stolen, or was the fugitive carrying the rest of his or her own wardrobe? On occasion, the advertisers helpfully noted whether items were stolen or were owned by the individual, but in the majority of cases it is unclear. Unless specifically noted (e.g. the advertiser explained that the fugitive had chosen clothing to help him or her appear free), I have assumed that the apparel the advertiser remembered the runaway wearing around the time of escape was his or her own clothing.
Judging by how consistently they were mentioned, fabric type and quality appear to be some of the most important aspects of a person’s physical appearance in this period. The careful attention given to describing exactly what type of fabric the fugitives wore leads me to believe that textiles were seen as a way for the reader to instantly place the person being described into a social category. Once I became familiar with the uses and qualities of the types of fabrics being described, it became easier to “see” how a person may have been perceived. To quantify this impression somewhat, I coded the clothing worn by the runaways according to quality, paying attention to the types of fabrics that were worn and the general impression given by the runaway. When classing each person by his or her clothing, I noted the quality of fabric and the types of garments worn.

Lightweight, coarse hemp or linen fabrics included sheeting, rolls, osnabrug, Ticklenburg, and crocus were used for shirts, shifts, and summer suits for lower class and enslaved people. Heavier weight, cheap woolen fabrics used for suits for enslaved men and women included plains, Negro cotton, and Kendal cotton. Another class of textiles were wool fabrics that were thick, warm, and hard-wearing and still relatively cheap: these were used on all types of winter work clothing. These fabrics included bearskin (also called dreadnaught or fearnothing), duffel, Kersey, and baize. Then there were woolen fabrics that were of higher quality and varying weights, used on men’s and women’s outerwear: drab, fustian, cassimere, swanskin and buckskin, shag, duroy, lasting (or everlasting), durant, broadcloth, serge, tammy, and calamanco. Fine cotton fabrics included Manchester velvet and thickset (both velvet-like fabrics), nankeen, gingham, calico, and dimity (Montgomery 1984; Baumgarten 1988).
Using the fabric type and clothing style of the outfits people wore when they escaped, I grouped the runaways into several categories (Table 5-2).

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Mulatto</th>
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<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Count</td>
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Individuals who wore only jackets and breeches, trousers or petticoats made from coarse locally-made or imported fabrics were put into the “field” group. The “middling” group was made up of individuals who wore work clothing that was made of slightly better quality material and who often had a fuller suit of clothes. Another group wore clothing that was stylish, either because of the type of garment or the type of fabric. Finally, many individuals wore a mixture of clothes that were impossible to fit into these categories, so they were placed in the catch-all “unique” category.

The advertisements themselves provided clues for distinguishing between clothing that would have immediately broadcast a person’s enslaved status and clothing
that would not have seemed out of place on a poor white person or free person of color. One advertiser gave a helpful explanation of what common laboring dress looked like, describing three Africans who disappeared into the Chickahominy swamp near Richmond in 1770 as: “well clothed in the common dress of field slaves: osnabrug shirts, cotton jackets and breeches, plaid hose, and Virginia made shoes, with a dual blanket each” (Virginia Gazette, Purdie and Dixon, 13 Dec. 1770). The cotton in this case was a cheap, fleecy woolen material, and the “plaid” refers not to a woven design but to another type of cheap imported wool (Baumgarten 1988). Other advertisers provided clues for which clothing might have been associated with free individuals. For example, one advertisement described a mulatto man named Chelter who fled from a plantation in Hanover carrying an “old brown broadcloth coat, a green jacket, three white shirts, two hats, and sundry other clothes very suitable for carrying on the cheat of a pretended freeman” (Virginia Gazette Purdie and Dixon, 1 Nov, 1770). What made these garments “suitable” for this “cheat”? The coat was an important part of this disguise, both because it was made of broadcloth, a good-quality wool fabric, and because it was an article of clothing not associated with enslaved laborers. The white shirts were also a clue, since osnaburg and other coarse shirt materials were not bleached (Montgomery 1984:312). Many advertisements used the word “cloth” in a way that seems redundant: a “blue cloth coat” or a “red cloth jacket,” as if “cloth” were a specific type of fabric. These items were often of a higher quality than the “cottons” and “plains” that many poorly-dressed fugitives wear, leading me to surmise that “cloth” may be a shortened form of broadcloth. The Oxford English Dictionary confirms that this was a historical use of the term.
Of the 37 men and women who were mentioned as possibly trying to pass as free, 17 were described by the clothing they wore. Only one of these individuals wore a complete outfit that could easily be categorized as typical coarse field clothes: a woman named Lucy who escaped from Gloucester, a rural Tidewater county, wearing a petticoat and jacket of, “Virginia cloth striped with copperas” (a green color) (Virginia Gazette, Dixon and Nicholson, 24 Nov. 1780). Lucy must have known that her homespun suit was not going to help her in her bid for freedom, because she also stole £200, plus an apron, a petticoat, and a blanket. Presumably Lucy used some of this money to buy less incriminating clothing. A mulatto man named John Wilson escaped in rural Tidewater carrying and wearing a selection of clothing that exemplifies the types of garments worn by people trying to pass as free. He had with him a “blue cloth coat and breeches, red cloth jacket, a pea jacket of black spotted cotton or flannel, brown plains jacket, white linen and osnabrug shirts and trousers, and good shoes and stockings” (Virginia Gazette, Purdie and Dixon, 13 Dec. 1770). The advertiser then went on to explain that this clothing, plus Wilson’s ability to read, made him, “every way well qualified to attempt passing as a freeman.” As this example illustrates, not all runaways who tried to pass as free completely eschewed coarse clothing, but they mixed them in with garments of more middling quality or even those that were fine or fashionable. In another example, one woman escaped clothed entirely in white Virginia cloth (probably the undyed coarse homespun used for slave clothing), except for “a linen bonnet made in the fashion” (Virginia Gazette, Clarkson and Davis, 19 Aug. 1780). Clothing specific to certain occupations could also help people disguise themselves as free. A group of three men
intending to pass as free who escaped from rural southeastern Virginia wore and carried coarser clothing than the rest of the runaways, clothes that did not at first glance seem like a very useful disguise: they wore short jackets and overalls (not the bibbed garment known today, but hard-wearing fitted trousers that fastened at the ankle) of coarse fabric. These outfits were typical seamen’s clothing, and their stated intention to “get on board some vessel,” along with one man’s experience as a waterman, supports the idea that free sailors wore coarse clothing that might have looked out of place in a different context (Norfolk Herald, Willett and O’Connor, 30 Oct. 1800; Copeland 1977:37). Other enslaved fugitives who endeavored to pass as free wore outfits that were typical of lower-class whites and free people of color. A black woman who was noted as being “paler than general” intended to pass for free when she ran from the Tidewater city of Norfolk while wearing a “black new fashioned paste-board bonnet, trimmed with black ribbon, a blue handkerchief on her neck, dark callico short gown, purple worsted Petticoat” (Norfolk Herald, Willett and O’Connor, 2 Oct. 1800). This outfit, although casual and working-class, was in sync with the trends of the year 1800 (Wass and Fandrich 2010:62-63). She had gone out into town with a basket of cakes to sell, and she could write well enough that the slaveholder speculated that she intended to forge a pass. As these examples illustrate, there was no one style of dress that enslaved people used to disguise themselves as free people. These fugitives must have factored in both the resources available to them and the social context into which they would disappear as they formulated their plans for escape.
Not all enslaved Africans and African Americans were able to dress as free people when they fled from bondage. Of the 119 black fugitives whose clothing was described, 45 wore only field clothes, which I defined as outfits consisting only of the coarsest fabrics. Textiles that I included in this category were fabrics from plant fibers like osnaburgs, homespun linens, crocus, rolls, and towcloth; and wool fabrics like plains, various types of “cotton,” and fearnaught. I also included the 12 individuals who were described using some version of the phrase “clothed as field Negros generally are.” No matter the season, none of these individuals wore more than one outer layer. For both men and women, the top outer layer was always described as a jacket or waistcoat. Although short gowns and bed gowns were very common laboring dress for women, none of those who wore these coarsest fabrics had these items. Two individuals, a man and a woman, escaped wearing essentially nothing but undergarments. The woman’s story is particularly heartbreaking. Her captors called her Betty, and she had been recently stolen from the Congo region. She was arrested in the Tidewater county of James City in November of 1770 about eight months pregnant, wearing nothing but an osnaburg shift and petticoat (Virginia Gazette, Rind, 15 Nov. 1770). Her desperation shows though the terse words of the advertisement. It’s hard to imagine being a pregnant women, clothed in completely inadequate, unfamiliar, and uncomfortable clothes, possibly experiencing cold weather for the first time. The other individual was a 25-year-old Virginia-born man named James from the rural Shenandoah county of Botetourt just a week earlier than Betty. James also seemed inadequately dressed for the season, wearing only a “country linen shirt and trousers,” although he at least had a new felt hat.
He had been purchased in King and Queen County, a region in the rural Tidewater, and the advertiser speculated he was making his way back there. This was a distance of some 200 miles, and his willingness to take on such a journey with so few supplies shows how determined he was to escape.

Only six enslaved black people wore clothing that I could identify as stylish. One man was simply described as “remarkable for always appearing well dressed” (Virginia Argus, Pleasants, 8 Aug. 1800). Another young man named Jim (the same “likely” man who stole a “likely” horse) fled from a plantation in rural Tidewater in 1800 dressed quite fashionably for that year: “He had on when he went away, a new black hat, a short Ticklenburg coat, a calicoe waistcoat, and blue pantaloons” (Norfolk Herald, Willett and O’Connor, 26 June 1800) The coat is the only element of this outfit that would be out of place on a free man: ticklenburg was a type of fabric similar to osnaburg, but coarser (Montgomery 1984:363). The waistcoat was made of stylish calico, and the “pantaloons” he wore were long, form-fitting breeches that were the height of fashion for 1800 (Wass and Fandrich 2010:140-141). The combination of the coarse coat with the other fashionable items may have struck white observers as odd or off-putting. A 20-year old man named Adam who had worked as a waiter ran away the same year dressed in a very similar manner, with a small coatee (a short tail coat) a lined waistcoat, and blue cassimere pantaloons: cassimere being a high-quality soft wool fabric (Norfolk Herald, Willett and O’Connor, 8 Mar. 1800; Montgomery 1984: 192). A woman named Sylvie ran away from the city of Norfolk in 1800 wearing a white cotton dress (the date and context imply that this fabric was actually cotton, not the coarse wool called “cotton” in
earlier decades), a cut glass necklace, and gold hoop earrings, which the advertiser noted she wore habitually (Norfolk Herald, Willett and O’Connor, 7 June, 1800). Sylvie’s white dress may have been one of the stylish new cotton chemise dresses of the period, but her clothing also calls to mind that worn by West Indian women during this time, and her urban Tidewater location raises the possibility that she may have had connections in the Caribbean (Kriz 2008:44-42; Wass and Fandrich 2010:64-66).

One advertisement confirms the fact that enslaved men and women could own clothing items of value. On a July day in 1770, a mulatto indentured servant name Frederick M’Farland broke into a slave quarter on the plantation in Stafford where he worked and stole a wide selection of high quality goods. The man took “a white cloth coat, a pair of black knit breeches, a pair of black worsted stockings, and a pair of white thread ones, two pair of silver buckles, one pair of which had silver tongues and anchors, one pair of pumps, a fine new hat, two new brown shirts, and one white one” (Virginia Gazette, Purdie and Dixon, 8 Nov. 1770). Presumably these items belonged to the residents of the quarter, not the slaveholder, and M’Farland stole these items either with the intention of selling them or wearing them. The goods in the quarter were considerably better than the clothing in which he ran away: a “green plains jacket without sleeves, osnabrug shirt, and short breeches.”

White servants and apprentices also wore a wide assortment of clothing, not all of which was of better quality than that which the enslaved men and women wore. Four escaped white servants and apprentices wore garments closely associated with enslaved field laborers. Three of these men escaped in the year 1770. Samuel Bayley, a convict in
Richmond County and a joiner by trade, wore “a blue plains jacket and breeches, new oznabrig shirt, and large country made shoes”: an outfit identical to those provisioned to enslaved laborers (Virginia Gazette, Rind, 26 July, 1770). Another runway was a man born in St. Kitts and raised in Scotland who had served seven years of his twelve year term of labor, presumably a convict’s sentence. He fled from Middle Creek in Frederick County wearing “a ragged shirt, tow trousers, an old felt hat, a lappelled country cloth jacket of a yellowish colour” (Virginia Gazette, Rind, 12 July 1770). Despite the rough clothing, he did wear new shoes with steel buckles. Another Scottish convict servant ran away in late August of 1770 wearing one outfit and was arrested six weeks later in Goochland wearing different clothes, but the same shoes. When he ran away from Loudoun County, William Adam was wearing a shirt and trousers of brown linen, a half worn hat, and a brown cloth jacket (probably referring to broadcloth) lined with plains (a coarse flannel-like material). After his escape, Adam stole a few items from the neighbors, including a brown linen shirt, a pair of stockings, a pocket knife, and a jacket made of Virginia-made cloth. When he was arrested, Adam had changed out the broadcloth jacket for what was likely the stolen jacket: “a short double-breasted jacket of striped Virginia cloth” and was wearing an osnaburg shirt and trousers (Virginia Gazette, Rind, 27 Sep. 1770). Although Adam changed his clothing during his escape, he was unable to change his shoes, and it may have been the odd nature of his shoes that led to his capture: both the runaway advertisement and the announcement of his capture mention that Adam only had one buckle for his shoes and he had tied the other shoe with string. Why retain the one buckle at all? Finally, a teenage apprentice from Essex County
escaped during the winter wearing an oznaburg shirt and trousers and a bearskin coat with pewter buttons (Virginia Gazette, Rind, 15 Mar. 1770). “Bearskin” in this case refers not to the hide of an animal, but to a cheap type of warm, shaggy wool fabric used for winter clothing (Montgomery 1984:160).

Seventeen of the white runaways wore common English working-class clothing. Two of this group were female and the rest were male. These men and women wore more complete outfits of middle quality fabric than most of the enslaved fugitives, but they did not wear the highest-quality items and were not noted as being particularly fashionable. A typical man escaped from Petersburg wearing “a brown lappelled coat, red waistcoat, a pair of light blue breeches, a white linen shirt, and brown mixed stockings” (Virginia Gazette, Purdie and Dixon, 24 May, 1770). Some of the men wore locally-made fabric, like the Scottish convict who escaped in Hanover wearing a Virginia cloth coat and breeches, and a broadcloth waistcoat, with good shoes and buckles (Virginia Gazette, Purdie and Dixon, 24 May, 1770). A Pennsylvanian woman ran away in Norfolk County in 1770 wearing her own blue gown made from a plain weave wool fabric with a glossy surface and a pink petticoat made from a similar material (Virginia Gazette, Purdie and Dixon, 27 Sep. 1770). The clothing she stole however, was much more stylish and pricy: three gowns made of expensive imported cotton chintz and calico, a “blue India Persian quilted coat,” a pair of almost-new stays, and a “black Peelong bonnet.”

Only four white men and one woman ran away wearing clothing that could be categorized as stylish or high quality, either because of the fabric or the type of garments worn. One apprentice ran away in Gloucester wearing a “light coloured frieze coat, with a
small cape to it, and bound with ferreting, a new broadcloth waistcoat and breeches, I think blue or blue gray, of pretty fine cloth” (Virginia Gazette, Purdie and Dixon, 8 Mar. 1770). Another boy escaped from his apprenticeship at a tailor in Dumfries in 1800, so it is perhaps not surprising that he was well dressed. He was wearing a suit of high quality blue wool with silver plated buttons and with overalls instead of breeches and a new black hat (District of Columbia Daily Advertiser, J. and J.D. Westcott, 18 Mar. 1800).

The woman who ran away wore an old but high quality calico gown, shoes made of glossy black wool fabric with plated buckles, and a scarlet cloak. In her ears she wore gold bobs with stones, one of the very few mentions of earrings in these advertisements (Virginia Gazette, Purdie and Dixon, 16 Aug. 1770).

**Regional Variation?**

When I initially compiled my database of runaways, I decided to include advertisements from all over Virginia, despite the fact that my archaeological sites are situated in rural central Virginia. I wanted to see if there was a difference in modes of dress between regions, or between urban and rural settlements. Instead, I found no definite pattern. Moreover, in reading the advertisers’ speculations about the intended destination of each fugitive, it became clear that many enslaved men and women had connections with family and friends throughout the colony or state. Slaveholders often noted that a man or woman had been bought from one town, county, or plantation, and taken to another distant place. Or they may have had spouses or families in places that were a considerable distance from the plantation where they lived. Constant disruption
was such a regular part of the lives of these men and women that it seems unlikely that regional styles were able to persist. I divided the locations from which the fugitives escaped into urban and rural, and analyzed the styles of clothing they wore according to four categories: field, middling, stylish, and unique (Table 5-3).

Table 5-3: Clothing style by race and region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Urban Black</th>
<th></th>
<th>Rural Black</th>
<th></th>
<th>Piedmont Black</th>
<th></th>
<th>Tidewater Black</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>30; 55%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middling</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9; 16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stylish</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3; 5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>13; 24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td>58</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentages of people wearing each category in the urban areas versus the rural areas were within a few percentage points of each other. I did the same for Piedmont versus Tidewater regions. These percentages were still very consistent with the overall numbers, but there were some slight differences. More people fled from plantations in the Piedmont wearing field clothing than those who fled in the Tidewater: 55% versus 41%; and more people in the Tidewater wore middling clothing: 26% versus 16%. The numbers of white and mulatto runaways were too low for this type of analysis to be productive. Overall, there seems to have been a remarkable consistency in the type of dress worn across Virginia. These runaway advertisements paint a portrait of the people who stole their freedom during the 18th century. Rather than revealing any pattern to the physical appearance of these men and women, the advertisements show a great deal of
variety and individuality in bodies and clothing. Some trends are evident, such as the fact that the white servants frequently dressed better than enslaved men and women, or that a significant percentage of the enslaved people who escaped did so in coarse, likely provisioned, clothing. These advertisements also demonstrate that enslaved people understood the meaning of the clothing they wore. If it was possible for them to do so, they changed into clothing that would have not been out of place on free black people of modest means. Of course, there are limitations to this observation. The primary limitation is that I am doubly an outsider: the slaveholders who placed these advertisements may not have had the cultural context to interpret the clothing they saw, and as a 21st-century reader, I am even farther separated from the original meanings of the fabrics and articles of clothing worn by these fugitives. I can make educated guesses based on research into the fashions and textiles of the period, but I cannot produce the kind of instant image of the “type” of person being described in the advertisement that an 18th-century reader surely would have been able to do. Additionally, I would need to create a much larger database to make any statistically-significant statements.

The images and the runaway advertisements together show that men and women in Virginia navigated through nuanced and often contradictory meanings when they clothed themselves. Mass-produced prints told them how they should behave: moderately, fashionably, and in keeping with their class, race, and gender, but the prints also opened up the possibility of dressing for the fun of it and to display individuality. Latrobe’s travel prints show that men and women in Virginia had their own priorities when it came to clothing and adornments: race was paramount. The runaway
advertisements show that at least some enslaved and bound black and white laborers understood the language of clothing well enough to disguise themselves as free, and they also demonstrate that men and women of all races took the messages about their bodies and clothing and fashioned themselves as they saw fit, according to their needs, desires, and the resources they had available to them. In the next two chapters, I will explore how men and women interacted with these messages on specific plantations by analyzing archaeologically-recovered artifacts of clothing and adornment from a variety of context in rural Virginia.
CHAPTER SIX
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Rationale for Choice of Sites

To answer my questions about the interplay of race, identity, and the material culture of self-presentation, I selected sites that had data that were easily accessible, systematically excavated, and that contained a reasonably large assemblage of adornment-related artifacts from the second half of the 18th century. I chose sites from central rural Virginia because during this period the “center of gravity” of the system of enslavement shifted from the coastal Tidewater region to the inland Piedmont (Morgan and Nichols 1989:217). As land and resources in the Tidewater became stretched to their capacity, many planters moved inland in search of greater profits. A new network of Scottish merchants operated stores that provided a market for tobacco, credit, and supplies. Enslaved Africans and African Americans were sent to the new plantations, and by the second half of the 18th century, the Piedmont region was the center of plantation culture in Virginia and more enslaved people lived in the Piedmont than in the Tidewater. I drew on data from the Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery (DAACS) for central Virginia plantation sites that had assemblages dating to the latter half of the 18th century and contained a reasonably large number of adornment artifacts. I also tried to find a range of cultural contexts associated with the three classes of people I include in my analysis: enslaved field laborers, enslaved craft and domestic workers, and free overseers. I decided on the overseer’s assemblage from Mount Pleasant, assemblages
from Mulberry Row and Site 8 at Monticello, assemblages from Wingo’s and North Hill at Poplar Forest, and the House for Families at Mount Vernon. I then added a site that is not currently in DAACS: the Accotink Quarter, which consists of an assemblage associated with an overseer’s household and an assemblage associated with an enslaved household (Table 6-1). Data from the Accotink Quarter comes from the site report. While these data are not quite as detailed as those catalogued in DAACS, the report did contain the information I required for this project. This chapter details the history, excavation chronology, and stratigraphic chronology for each of these sites.

**Monticello**

Monticello is located on a small mountain on the south side of the Rivanna River in Albemarle County, Virginia, on the edge of Virginia’s Piedmont region. Thomas Jefferson inherited most of the almost 5,000 acre plantation from his father, and the entire estate consisted of four quarter farms: the primary residence and home quarter farm of Monticello, plus four other quarters: Tufton, Pantops, Lego, and Shadwell. From 1774 to his death in 1826, Jefferson generally owned about 200 men, women, and children at any one time, about 120 of whom lived at Monticello (Stanton 2012:106). At first, the primary crop grown on Jefferson’s plantation was tobacco, but in 1792, changing markets induced him to shift to the diversified grain agriculture that was becoming more popular throughout Virginia. To make up for the potential loss of agricultural production during the switch, Jefferson established a nail-making enterprise for local markets (Stanton
Table 6-1: Summary of sites included in this project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>DAACS MCD</th>
<th>DAA CS TPQ</th>
<th>DAACS TPQ90</th>
<th>Other Date</th>
<th>Documents</th>
<th>Recovery Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negro Quarter (Bldg T (P01))</td>
<td>1807 (American stoneware)</td>
<td>1765</td>
<td>1762</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Not screened, features only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building T (P01)</td>
<td>1796</td>
<td>1840</td>
<td>1795</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1796 insurance plat</td>
<td>Not screened, features only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building S (P01)</td>
<td>1798</td>
<td>1840</td>
<td>1795</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1796 insurance plat</td>
<td>Not screened, features only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 8</td>
<td>1790.9</td>
<td>1830</td>
<td>1795</td>
<td>TPQ95: 1820</td>
<td>1778 Jeff. notes for sister site 7.</td>
<td>¼” screen, plowzone and features, float samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wingo’s</td>
<td>1760.5</td>
<td>1820</td>
<td>1762</td>
<td>BLUE MCD 1771.8</td>
<td>Maps, list of slaves 1773, 1774, marriage settlement 1790 for quarter (possibly not referring to the structure excavated)</td>
<td>¼” screen, plowzone and features, float samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site</td>
<td>DAACS MCD</td>
<td>DAACS TPQ</td>
<td>DAACS TPQ90</td>
<td>Other Date</td>
<td>Documents</td>
<td>Recovery Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Hill (P02)</td>
<td>1784</td>
<td>1820</td>
<td>1762</td>
<td>TPQ for subfloor pit: 1775 (light creamware)</td>
<td>1769 legal documents mentioning slaves 1781 map</td>
<td>¼” screen, plowzone and features, waterscreen and float samples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House for Families (3 phases)</td>
<td>1760</td>
<td>1775</td>
<td>1744</td>
<td>1793 end date</td>
<td>1747 survey 1770 end date</td>
<td>¼” screen, features only, float samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accotink</td>
<td>Seriation 1760</td>
<td>1748</td>
<td>1745</td>
<td>½” screen, plowzone and features, float samples</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt. Pleasant (P03)</td>
<td>1763</td>
<td>1762</td>
<td>1762</td>
<td>1760s: mansion built. 1796 Madison letter</td>
<td>½” screen, features only, float samples</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The enslaved people whose households are included in this study worked as field laborers, house servants, and craft workers on Jefferson’s home quarter. I included contexts from three distinct areas of Monticello in this project: two areas close to the mansion on the mountaintop, and two outlying field quarters.

**Mulberry Row**

The Monticello mountaintop was the site of all of the service buildings that supported Jefferson’s lifestyle and included housing for artisans and domestics who served the mansion. A baseline of about 100 enslaved individuals lived on Monticello Mountain at any given time, and the count of the entire enslaved population owned by Jefferson fluctuated between 165 and 225, the numbers changing because of births, deaths, inheritance and purchase (Stanton 2000:17-18). From the 1790s onward, about two-fifths of this community lived at Jefferson’s other home, Poplar Forest.

The primary service complex and industrial center for the plantation was named Mulberry Row after the trees that were planted there in the 1770s. The row was a straight pathway running 1000 feet roughly east to west on the southeast side of the mansion. The service buildings there lined the First Roundabout, one of four roads encircling Monticello Mountain. Houses and workshops for enslaved and free workers were built in a line between the pathway and the vegetable garden. When it was built around 1796 Mulberry Row consisted of 17 buildings: dwellings, stables, storehouses and workshops (Kelso 1997:23). The landscape of Mulberry Row as not static: structures were built, demolished and rebuilt over the fifty years of its use to facilitate Jefferson’s household
and economic activities (Neiman 2010), and during the antebellum period after his death. Jefferson had grand plans for his mansion and surrounding landscape, and in 1809 he added a wing of dependencies to the mansion that was meant to take the place of many of the log cabins and work spaces, but many of the Mulberry Row buildings (including S and T) continued to be occupied into the 1820s (Kelso 1997:44; DAACS 2017)

The data from Mulberry Row included here are the result of an extensive excavation project undertaken by William Kelso beginning in 1980. Mulberry Row is well-documented in the historical record. The best source of information about the locations of the buildings comes from a 1796 insurance plat that depicted 19 different buildings (Kelso 1986:31). These buildings were designated by letters of the alphabet on the map, and archaeologists used these same letters to designate the archaeological remains of each structure as they encountered them. Building O was excavated first, then buildings R, S, and T. Below these last three buildings, four subfloor pits associated with an earlier quarter dating to 1776 to 1778 were uncovered. These features were interpreted as part of a 17 ft. by 34 ft. “Negro Quarter” that appears on an earlier map (Kelso 1997:60).

Mulberry Row went through three phases of occupation, based on seriation analysis conducted by Monticello and the DAACS staff. The data for my project come from strata associated with the first two phases. Phase 1, from 1770 to 1790, is associated with the first construction of Monticello. The “Negro Quarter” from this phase is included in this project. Phase 2 lasted from 1791 to 1809, and it is associated with the reconstruction project that doubled the size of the mansion and significantly altered the
landscape around the mansion. Multiple new buildings were constructed on Mulberry Row: a smokehouse-dairy, a blacksmith shop, the nailery, and three new slave houses. I have included data from the lower layers of the slave houses, Buildings S and T in this project. The third phase lasted from the completion of the mansion renovation project in 1809 and ended with Jefferson’s death in 1826. Changes during this time include the addition of two new slave houses and the conversion of a kitchen to a wash house. No features from this period are included in this study (Neiman 2010).

The earlier structure of the Negro Quarter likely represents a barracks-style housing complex that held multiple families. The arrangement of the subfloor pits suggested a two-room duplex with a chimney centered on the south wall, between the two rooms. There are two subfloor pits on each side of the wall (Kelso 1986:34; DAACS building t-home). Houses with multiple subfloor pits appear to be associated with groups of unrelated people, rather than a single family unit. William Kelso notes that a building with a similar plan that may have been the Negro Quarter was to house “Great George & family, Bradley & Jenny, Betty Hem., Mary, Doll, Betty” (Kelso 1997:60). The Negro Quarter was occupied during a time of transition at Monticello. Jefferson began work on his mansion in 1769, ordering the top of Monticello Mountain to be leveled and thousands of bricks to be made (Adams 1983 54-75) Work continued on the house throughout the period of occupation of the Negro Quarter. The enslaved people who lived in this quarter did not do so in a completed household and landscape, but in a work in progress. The Negro Quarter was later replaced by buildings R, S, and T, which were likely built as log cabins. Most of the structural evidence for buildings R and T had been
disturbed: R was graded away, and all that remained of T was the lower stratum of a subfloor pit. Building S was the least disturbed. According to the insurance plat, all three of these structures were nearly identical (Sanford 1985). Archaeological evidence from building S informed the interpretation of all three structures. They were “one-room structures with board siding over the logs, a clay chimney centered on the south wall, and a subfloor pit positioned near each hearth (Kelso 1986:34).

**Building S**

Of the three log cabins on Mulberry Row that were built in the 1790s, Building S is the least disturbed. It consists of a 12 ft. x 14 ft. stone foundation with an earth floor, and a stone chimney base with a wood-lined subfloor pit in front of it. These features were not damaged by the 20th-century parking lots that disturbed much of buildings R and T. Jefferson described these buildings: “r. which as well as s. and t. are servants houses of wood with wooden chimneys, & earth floors, 12 by 14 feet, each” (Kelso 1997:58)

Excavations began in the spring of 1983, and as with buildings R and T, the first step to excavation of Building S was to machine strip the modern deposits. Some remnants of the 1925 and 1934 parking lots and fill from a furnace did disturb the site, but not to a significant degree. The features recovered from the site closely matched the documentary evidence (Sanford 1985:20-21). As with the other two buildings, excavation was conducted in 8 ft. x 8 ft. quadrats with 2 ft. balks in between that were excavated after the quadrats. The archaeologists used trowels to excavate in natural levels but did not screen these deposits (http://www.daacs.org/sites/building-s/#before).
DAACS staff used ceramic seriation to date all of the excavated contexts that contained more than five ceramic sherds. Using this seriation chronology, they organized building S into five chronological phases. Although all four of these phases have an 1840 TPQ, a second estimate that uses “the 90th percentile of the beginning manufacturing dates among all the sherds in the assemblage” (TPQ90) provides a more accurate date for these assemblages that were impacted by modern disturbances (http://www.daacs.org/sites/building-s/#chronology). Using the TPQ90 as a guideline, I selected artifact data from Phase 1 for analysis, excluding contexts disturbed by a 1928 wall.

Building T

Building T was excavated from 1984 to 1985 by William Kelso and Douglas Sanford. Four subfloor pits associated with the earlier “Negro Quarter” were also uncovered during excavation of this structure. The project began with the removal of two generations of parking lots and overburden from a furnace. William Kelso and his team used the 1796 insurance plat to plot out the likely locations of buildings R, S, and T, and each assumed house site and yard space were excavated separately (Sanford 1985:23-26). The excavation was conducted using a 10 ft. x 10 ft. grid aligned with the Monticello mansion. Eight-by-eight foot quadrats were excavated first, leaving 2 ft. balks to be excavated last. The excavation followed the natural stratigraphy. All layers were hand troweled, but screens were not used. Most of building T had been destroyed by the parking lots, leaving only the lower part of a subfloor pit and four post holes of an 1809 garden fence (Hill 2003).
As with Building S, DAACS dated building T based on frequency seriation of ceramic assemblages. I have analyzed the artifacts associated with the subfloor pits of the earlier “Negro Quarter” as separate assemblage from those relating to later occupational phases associated with deposition at Building T. I am not including Phases 3 or 4, since they are later than the parameters of my project (http://www.daacs.org/sites/building-t/#chronology).

Site 8

Monticello’s home quarter was not only used for activities related to industry and the upkeep of the Jefferson family. Fields on the lower slopes of the mountain were used for growing tobacco and later cereal. Site 8, and its connected site, Site 7, were originally used for agriculture by Thomas Jefferson’s father, Peter Jefferson, who used it as an outlying quarter farm a ways away from his home plantation of Shadwell. Most of the enslaved laborers who worked on the Monticello home farm lived at this location. Monticello archaeologists believe that the two sites “likely functioned as parts of a single settlement during the early Monticello period” (Bon-Harper 2006). Because of this belief, the two sites were excavated as part of a single project, using the same grid, numbering sequence for quadrats and features, and sampling strategy. The only documentary evidence for this site is a mention of a quarter for an overseer who lived at Site 7 until around 1805. The likely location of the overseer’s house was disturbed by a large (60 ft. x 70 ft.) 20th-century borrow pit (Bon-Harper 2006). Because this disturbance makes it
difficult to determine which parts of the site are associated with the overseer versus the enslaved laborers, I have chosen to exclude Site 7 and focus on Site 8.

Sites 7 and 8 were first identified as part of a 40-foot-interval Shovel Test Pit (STP) survey of Monticello Mountain. After confirming the site with additional STPs set at 20-foot intervals, Monticello archaeologists began a full-scale excavation from 1997 to 1999 and then returned in the 2004 and 2006 field seasons. Over 300 5 ft. x 5 ft. quadrats were excavated at the two sites. Because the site had been plowed throughout the 19th century, the archaeologists chose a sampling strategy that would allow for the analysis of the plowzone by placing units with a stratified random sample approach (Bon-Harper 2006) The entire site was excavated stratigraphically and screened through 1/4 in. mesh. Samples of plowzone were also waterscreened, and chemical and phytolith samples were collected. All sediments from cultural features were processed with flotation (http://www.daacs.org/sites/site-8/#before).

Site 8 consists of the remnants of three houses that were identified during these field seasons, with a fourth house that has been tentatively identified. House 1 consists of three small subfloor pits located in the southwest portion of the site. House 3 is to the northeast of House 1, in the center of the site. It is defined by one large rectangular subfloor pit. A possible House 4 is located just to the northwest of this house. It is defined by two small pits. This house has only been partially excavated, and its relationship with house 3 is unclear. House 2 is located at the farthest point to the northeast of the site. Its primary features are an 8 ft. x 8 ft. cellar lined with dry-laid brick. The fill of this cellar contained a large amount of cultural material. A possible
subfloor pit is located just east of the cellar. Correspondence analysis of the ceramics from the plowzone at Site 8 allowed Fraser Neiman and Karen Smith (2005) to place the site into three groups. Two of these groups are early, dating to the 1770s and 1780s, and the third group is later, representing the 1780s and 1790s. The quadrats adjacent to House 1 belong to one of the early groups, while quadrats southeast of House 1, in which no architectural features have been found, belong to the second. The quadrats adjacent to Houses 2, 3, and 4 fall into the third group (Neiman and Smith 2005) Monticello archaeologists believe that the Jefferson moved the residents of Site 8 onto more agriculturally marginal land in the 1790s, when he changed the agricultural strategy of the plantation.

Artifacts of adornment from all of the features associated with the four probable dwellings are included in this study. I also included material recovered from plowzone quadrats located directly above these features. The site does not appear to have been occupied after 1800, so I am confident that the adornment artifacts from these plowzone layers are directly associated with the 18th-century occupants of the site.

**Poplar Forest**

Poplar Forest was a 5,000-acre plantation located at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Bedford County, Virginia. Thomas Jefferson acquired it through his wife, Martha, after the death of her father, John Wayles in 1773. In addition to large tracts of land, Jefferson inherited 135 enslaved individuals from John Wayles’ estate. The Jeffersons managed the plantation on an absentee basis, growing first tobacco and then
tobacco and wheat after 1790. Anticipating his retirement in 1809, Jefferson developed the property as a retirement retreat and had a unique octagonal mansion constructed southeast of the Wingo’s quarter (Heath and Gary 2012:2).

Wingo’s

The 1000-acre Wingo’s quarter farm was probably established by Jefferson in 1773 to comply with the instructions in Wayles’ will. When Jefferson acquired the estate from his father-in-law, he drew up a census of the people who he now owned and where they lived. He recorded three men and two women at Wingo’s. Later that spring, Jefferson moved a number of the individuals he inherited from Wayles’ Powhatan County plantation farther east to Wingo’s: a second census taken a few months later listed ten adults over 16 years of age and five children (Heath et al. 2015:6-7). The same year, Jefferson hired an overseer, John Wingo, to manage the quarter farm, which is where the site gets its name. In 1790, the farm and all of its inhabitants were given to Jefferson’s daughter Martha and her new husband Thomas Mann Randolph as part of a marriage settlement (Heath and Gary 2012: 110).

Wingo’s was first excavated from 2000 to 2001 when Poplar Forest archaeologists conducted a shovel test pit and metal detector survey of a field near two springs that lead into a tributary of the James River. Two of three 5 ft. x 5 ft. quadrats revealed artifacts that dated to the period of Wingo’s quarter. Archaeologists from the University of Tennessee under the direction of Barbara Heath returned to the site in 2007 with surveys that led to the excavation of two large blocks and the discovery of two
subfloor pits, a post hole, and stake holes. The subfloor pits are both part of the same structure, which was likely constructed of logs with a stick-and-mud chimney, and the stake holes delineate two enclosures in the associated yard. Most of the sediments from the subfloor pits were floated and water screened, and all other sediment was screened through ¼ in. mesh (Heath et al. 2015:15-42). Because there are no other historic features at the site, I have chosen to include all of the personal adornment materials from the entire site in my study, including both plowzone and feature deposits.

**North Hill**

North Hill was part of the oldest quarter at Poplar Forest, established by John Wayles between 1764 and 1769. The first reference to slaved individuals on the plantation appear in a court order for enslaved people to work along nearby roads in 1769 (Heath et al. 2015:3). The primary residence and core of the plantation, it was referred to as “The Old Quarter.” North Hill is only part of the original settlement, which consisted of an overseer’s house, a barn, and housing for 40 years of enslaved laborers. Archaeological excavations date the North Hill occupation from the 1770s until about 1810, roughly contemporaneous with the Wingo’s quarter (Heath 2012 108). The residents of these sites were not permanent in the early years. In 1774, shortly after Jefferson inherited Poplar forest, he recorded that North Hill was occupied by one family and a single man, and a group of young men and women who were mostly unrelated lived at Wingo’s. Later that same year, Jefferson moved more enslaved people to Poplar Forest, placing two families and a few unrelated adults at each quarter. In Jefferson’s
1783 records, the men and women at Poplar Forest were part of eight family based households (Heath 2012:109)

North Hill was first identified in 1993 by Poplar Forest archaeologists in advance of a tree plantings on the eastern edge of the property; the discovery of the site prevented the planting from proceeding, and instead Poplar Forest staff, field school students, and volunteers returned to the site from 1994 to 1998 for full excavations. Topsoil was excavated in 10 ft. quadrats and screened through ¼ in. mesh, then the stripped surface was divided into 5 ft. quadrats for better spatial control. Features were hand-troweled and screened through ¼ in. mesh, and flotation, phytolith, pollen, and soil chemistry samples were taken (between 25% and 50% of feature fill)(Heath 2004). Archaeologists saw evidence for two phases of occupation, the earliest from around the early 1770s until about 1800, and the later occupation that extends to about 1810. For this project, I used only the deposits associated with the earlier phase of occupation, which include a 4.7 ft. square subfloor pit filled with deposits associated with the destruction of the building with a TPQ of 1775 (based on light-colored creamware in the deepest layer); the lower deposits of a nearby erosion gully on the slope below the building; and a shallow pit located in the nearby yard. No features that might provide clues for the size of the building or the boundaries of the yard space survive, but artifact concentrations end fairly abruptly on a line running southwest to northeast about 15 ft. away from the dwelling (Heath 2012:115-116). The site was seriated by DAACS staff, who placed the site into three phases with MCDs of 1764, 1784, and 1793. Rather than choose my data based on
the DAACS phases, I opted to use the upper and lower deposit divisions noted by the excavators, including only adornment artifact collected from the lower deposits. Because I wanted to focus solely on the earlier occupation, I chose to exclude plowzone data, but I have noted the presence of a few intriguing artifacts from plowzone.

**House for Families**

The House for Families is located at Mount Vernon, George Washington’s northern Virginia plantation. George Washington inherited the plantation from his half-brother in 1754, and he owned it until his own death in 1799 (Dalzell and Dalzell 1998:33). Mount Vernon consisted of five quarter farms making up close to 8,000 acres, which at the time of Washington’s death were worked by as many as 316 enslaved African Americans (Pogue 2001:111). Like James Madison, Sr., Washington abandoned tobacco as his exclusive cash crop relatively early, in 1766, when he diversified his economic activities with wheat, a fishery, a gristmill, and even a whiskey distillery (Pogue 2003). The House for Families was a part of the Mansion House Farm, the central quarter farm where, in 1786, 67 enslaved men and women lived and worked as craftspeople, gardeners, and house servants. The majority of these people lived at the House for Families (Pogue and White 1991:1). Documentary evidence for the structure is sparse: our main sources of information are the Vaughan plan of the plantation (1787) and a painting dated to about 1792, showing a large two-and-a-half story dwelling with brick chimney. Although the date of construction is unknown, it may have been erected during Lawrence Washington’s tenure of the plantation (Pogue and White 1991:3). The
house was torn down in the winter of 1792-1793, and its residents were moved to quarters constructed as wings of the nearby greenhouse (Pogue 2001).

Although it was originally a large structure, probably measuring about 55 ft. by 35 ft., the only surviving archaeological feature associated with the House for Families is a 6 ft. x 6 ft. square brick-lined cellar with surviving walls that are about 4 ft. tall. The earliest archaeological material in the cellar dates to 1759, based on a bottle seal and molded white saltglazed stoneware (Pogue and White 1991:3-11). The cellar for the House for Families was first excavated by the Virginia Research Center for Archaeology (VRCA), contracted by the Mount Vernon Ladies Association (MVLA). They bisected the cellar and excavated the northern portion of the fill. Archaeologists employed by the MVLA returned to the site four years later, in the winter of 1989-1990, to complete the excavation. Although archaeologists were able to identify sixteen separate strata within the fill, the collapse of a profile wall and differing excavation methods between the two different archaeological groups meant that artifacts from the entire cellar assemblage must be considered together. The VRCA archaeologists waterscreened all contexts through ¼ in. mesh, while the MVLA archaeologists floated and waterscreened all of the contexts they excavated (Pogue 2003).

Using ceramic correspondence analysis, DAACS staff divided the assemblage into three chronological phases. Because the cellar collapse during excavation mixed up a large portion of the deposits, and because most of the cellar is comprised of a jumble of secondary deposits with conflicting dates, I opted to treat the entire cellar as a single
deposit and analyzed adornment artifacts from the entire feature. The House for Families is unique among the sites that I analyzed in this project: it represents a more dense population of people than the other sites, and its residents discarded a more diverse array of material culture (Table 6-2).

Table 6-2: Phasing of House for Families (DAACS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>MCD</th>
<th>TPQ</th>
<th>TPQ90</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1760</td>
<td>1775</td>
<td>1744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1779</td>
<td>1805</td>
<td>1795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1782</td>
<td>1775</td>
<td>1775</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Accotink Quarter**

The Accotink Quarter shares some commonalities with Wingo’s: both are on outlying quarter farms, and both are among the earliest sites in this study, dating to the 1760s and 1770s. This tobacco plantation is located in Fairfax County, in northern Virginia. Accotink was excavated from 2011 to 2012 by Thunderbird Archaeology, a cultural resource management firm based out of Gainesville, Virginia. The Accotink quarter was first identified during a Phase I survey prior to construction on the site. After determining the site was significant, a full Phase III excavation was conducted (Sipe et al.
When the site was occupied, it was a plantation quarter farm owned by Abraham Barnes, a middling planter with aspirations to gentility (Veech 1998). An overseer named John Marvill and an unknown number of enslaved laborers lived on the site (Sipe et al. 2013:71). Account records for John Glassford’s store at Colchester document two different men making purchases for Accotink on Barnes’ account: a man named Free Jack and the overseer John Marvill from 1756 to 1760 (Sipe et al. 2013:73). The MCDs and TPQs calculated by Thunderbird for the site are earlier than these dates, but DAACS seriation places it around 1760, which corresponds well with this documentary evidence.

The site consists of features associated with an overseer’s quarter and slave dwelling that are more than 120 ft. apart, allowing researchers to differentiate material culture found at these two locations. Plowzone over the entire site was mechanically stripped down to subsoil to identify features, then test units were placed at the location of features identified during the Phase II survey. Each unit was excavated stratigraphically in natural layers. The principle investigators justified this decision because very few artifacts were found in plowzone outside of the features during Phases I and II (Sipe, et al. 2013:125). Half of the soil in each level was dry-screened through ¼ in. mesh, and half was water screened through 1/16 in. mesh. Soil chemical and flotation samples were also taken from each feature. Twelve cultural features associated with the occupation of the site were uncovered, consisting of the remains of two different structures, which were labeled Structure 1 and Structure 2. Structure 1 consisted mainly of a cellar measuring about 10 ft. north-to-south and 17 ft. east-to-west and 2 ft. deep, with a stairway entrance
that was later replace with a bulkhead and gravel ramp. A few postholes were also associated with the structure. Based on the lack of brick fragments, the comparatively small number of postholes, and the large number of nails recovered, archaeologists interpreted this as a frame building set on ground-laid piers that was occupied by the overseer (Sipe et al. 2013:203). Small quantities of brick and burned clay indicate that the structure likely had a brick hearth and stick-and-mud chimney, and locations of window glass indicate that the dwelling had a single glazed window on the south side. Structure 2 is associated with seven features: one circular subfloor pit (F16), two deep rectangular subfloor pits (F17, F18), and two shallow semi-circular sub-floor pits (F20, F21). All of these pits were situated around a central hearth (F19). Additionally, there were two postholes on the edge of the group of features (F15, F22). Site 2 is associated with enslaved occupants.

The MCDs for this site are fairly early: 1748 for Structure 1 and 1745 for Structure 2. Assuming the MCD as the true midpoint of occupation, Thunderbird archaeologists calculated the occupation dates of the site as 1726 to 1770. However, DAACS staff were asked to seriate the site and gave it a midpoint of 1760. Based on the fact that all of the fills in the features appear to be mixed secondary deposits laid down during the destruction of the structures, plus the later date of most of the buttons that were recovered, the assemblages most likely represent deposits associated with the later period of occupation from 1760 to 1770. I separated the assemblage associated with the
overseer’s house from that associated with the enslaved household, but consider both to date to the same time period.

**Mount Pleasant**

Mount Pleasant is located at Montpelier in Orange County, Virginia, the original plantation of President James Madison’s father and grandfather. It was one of the earliest European incursions into what at the time was British America’s western frontier. Mount Pleasant was first settled for Ambrose Madison, the grandfather of the president, who managed the property on an absentee basis until 1732, when he and his family moved to the new plantation. Shortly after this move, Ambrose died, supposedly poisoned by two of his slaves with the assistance of a neighboring plantation member. Following his death, his wife Frances became owner of the plantation, running it jointly with her son, James Madison, Sr., until her death around 1760. Frances Madison’s death ushered in a new era on the plantation. James Sr. made significant changes, including building a new mansion and redistributing his enslaved workforce around the landscape (Chambers 2005; Chambers 1991). When the new mansion was built and the Madison family moved, Mount Pleasant ceased to be the center of the plantation. The main dwelling house was intentionally burned, but the site was not abandoned. An unknown household took up (or continued) residence in the kitchen building, using the burned-out cellar of the main dwelling as a trash dump. These people occupied the kitchen until around the turn of the 19th century, when the structure caught fire and burned to the ground, an incident that
meant that the entire contents of this dwelling have been preserved for archaeologists (Reeves and Fogle 2007:4).

Montpelier archaeologists had assumed that the site became home to an enslaved household, but documentary evidence has recently come to light that may indicate that this site was actually the residence of James Coleman, one of Madison’s overseers. A letter from James Madison, Sr. to Thomas Macon dated February 7, 1796 states that Coleman’s house burned to the ground the month before, destroying all his property and enough spun material to make 500 yards of fabric:

Jimmy Coleman [overseer] had his House burnt the 2.d Night of the last Month, & lost a great many things beside what I lost, amongst other things, there was spun Stuff enough, upon a calculation, to have made 500 Yards of Cloth, some of which would have been wove up if Reuben had not been laid up with the Rheumatism, which has confined him from weaving for the last three months (Madison 1796: MS SC 2099, Carrier Library, James Madison University).

Additional archaeological and documentary evidence points toward this structure being an overseer’s dwelling. Archaeological surveys and excavations indicate that this area served as the “home quarter” farm for Montpelier, and at least six structures associated with enslaved field laborers have been excavated a short distance to the south of Mount Pleasant, placing the structure in a perfect vantage point for an overseer. Following the destruction of the Mount Pleasant kitchen, a new overseer’s house was
built about 200 feet away from the site of the kitchen, and it continued to be occupied until the Madisons sold the property in the mid-1840s. This dwelling appears on an 1844 plat and has been located archaeologically (Reeves and Trickett 2017:59).

Mount Pleasant was excavated in three different stages by archaeologists working for the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Montpelier Foundation over the course of about twenty years from the 1980s to the early 2000s. The primary components of the site are postholes, a root cellar and a pit used to borrow clay for construction, all associated with the earliest structure; a stone-lined cellar feature, for the kitchen, with evidence for multiple periods of occupation and repairs; and a large cellar, root cellar and other features that were associated with the main dwelling house. In addition, numerous postholes and small features, possibly associated with yard use, and a fenceline have been uncovered. Excavation methods changed with each new project director, but all feature deposits were excavated stratigraphically and dry screened through ¼ in. mesh. Samples of soil from each feature layer were also waterscreened through window screen material and processed with soil flotation. Plowzone was not consistently screened on this site, so I am excluding plowzone data. Exclusion of plowzone eliminated a few interesting objects of adornment, but the features on this site were so extensive and rich that a large assemblage was recovered (Reeves and Fogle 2007).

For this project, I focused purely on strata associated with the occupation of the kitchen that post-date the Madison family’s move away from Mount Pleasant. These are layers in the kitchen that lie above the mid-18th-century repairs made to the cellar and
foundation, plus midden deposits that lay on top of the burned-out cellar of the main dwelling house. Ceramic crossmends between the mid-to-late-18\textsuperscript{th}-century strata of the kitchen and these midden deposits atop the main dwelling house indicate that they are associated with the later occupation of the kitchen (Reeves and Fogle 2007:14). As part of my participation in the DAACS Research Consortium (DRC), I re-cataloged the midden of the main house and the strata in the kitchen that lay in between the cellar repair deposits and the layers associated with the final collapse of the structure. These data are now publically-available on the DAACS online catalog (DAACS 2017). All of my analysis for these materials was conducted on queries downloaded from this site. I also include some strata that were not re-cataloged with the DRC project: these were the upper layers associated with the burning and collapse of the structure (Reeves and Fogle 2007:69). I reanalyzed objects of adornment from these strata using DAACS protocols, but they have not been entered into the DAACS catalog.

\textit{Methodological Concerns}

Cross-site comparative studies always involve a degree of compromise. The sites I have included in this dissertation were excavated using various methods over the course of 30 years by many different project directors with differing project goals. These differences are challenges to overcome, but they do not prevent me from being able to make meaningful conclusions about the ways that the men and women who lived at these sites used objects of adornment. The inherently small sample sizes of adornment objects, plus the inconsistencies across sites, have influenced my decision to not conduct rigorous
statistical analysis of these data. Instead, I used a contextualized stylistic analysis of the types of objects found on each site, and compared these items among and between sites. Intra-site comparison helped me get a better sense of how much variation was caused by differences in recovery between sites. The Accotink Quarter is particularly useful in this regard, since it is the site of both an overseer’s dwelling and the dwelling of an enslaved household. The following chapter will describe and compare the artifacts recovered from these sites.
CHAPTER SEVEN

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA

Introduction

This chapter details all of the artifacts of adornment recovered from nine distinct cultural contexts on five different sites outlined in Chapter Six. I chose these sites based on the fact that they are associated with white and black non-elites. These people shared some commonalities that make comparing and contrasting their material culture worthwhile. Both enslaved people and lower class white people had limited resources and social mobility, and neither had access to direct trade with merchant factors. Neither group was viewed favorably by the white elites who were the arbiters of taste, fashion, and politeness. But in other ways, these men and women came from social situations that were radically different, and these differences likely had an impact on the way that both groups used and adorned their bodies. Race was, of course, the most oppressive factor, but differences in work assignments and social position on the plantation may also have had an effect on how members of different groups of enslaved Africans and African Americans perceived themselves. They were also perceived differently by their owners based on where they were forced to work, in effect creating different classes among enslaved people. For the purposes of my analysis, I have divided these sites into three groups: sites associated with free white overseers (Accotink and Mount Pleasant); Sites associated with enslaved men and women who lived in close proximity to the slaveholding family (Mulberry Row and the House for Families); and sites associated
with enslaved field laborers (Site 8, Accotink Quarter, and North Hill, and Wingo’s) I will compare adornment artifacts among and between these sites to learn how modes of self-presentation may have been different or similar among and between lower-class white people and enslaved black people. A few questions frame this analysis. How did overseers and enslaved men and women present themselves in the context of mid-to-late 18th-century trends in adornment and self presentation? How did gender, class, and race affect their self-presentation, how free were their choices in these matters, and what did they intend to accomplish through their choices? Images and documents offer a general snapshot of the appearance of enslaved and lower class white men and women, but they rarely provide minute details about the buttons, pins, beads, and other objects that fastened and adorned their outfits. I studied the archaeological objects in this chapter within the context of these images and texts with the objective of understanding how adornment objects were worn and how they contributed to the overall persona presented by the men and women who wore them.

I divided the artifacts of adornment in this chapter into three groups: fasteners, jewelry, and accessories, and I analyzed each object by form, style, and function. There is considerable overlap between each category, so my decision for placing an artifact into a specific class was dictated by what I perceived as each object’s primary function. For example, cufflinks (known historically as sleeve buttons) span two categories of artifacts of adornment: they are both jewelry and fastener. Because their symbolic function aligns them more closely with jewelry, I included them in that section. The fasteners category includes hook-and-eye fasteners, straight pins, an aiglet, buttons, and buckles. The
jewelry section encompasses linked sleeve buttons, beads, watch trinkets, and other objects that were worn on the body as decoration. The final accessories section is divided into fashion accessories (like fans and snuff boxes), tobacco pipes, and small task-related objects (such as needlework supplies). The relatively small numbers of each type of artifact and the different excavation strategies used for each site means that complex statistical approaches are not appropriate for my study.

**Fasteners**

This category includes all of the items used to hold together clothing: buttons, buckles, hook-and-eye fasteners, and straight pins. Straight pins and hook-and-eye fasteners were meant to secure and shape clothing without being seen. Buttons and buckles fasten outer layers of clothing and can form an integral part of a person’s overall look, making decorated buttons and buckles a type of artifact that is as much adornment as functional object.

**Straight Pins**

The straight pin is more than just a sewing aid, and its presence in an archaeological context is not merely a marker for sewing activities. Excluding ties and laces, straight pins were the most commonly used fastener on women’s clothing and could be found at nearly every layer of dress. Gowns or jackets might be fastened with laces or buttons, but they were also be held in place with straight pins; neckerchiefs, scarfs, shawls and wraps fastened with pins; and caps often had lappets that were pinned
to the top of the head (Beaudry 2006:14-15). Despite this ubiquity, straight pins were not strictly necessary for fastening working dress: certain styles of all of these women’s clothing items could also be held together with ties, tucked into other articles of clothing, or tied down with an apron. A book of picturesque illustrations of English rural life created in 1799 depicts many of the laboring women wearing their layers of clothing tucked and tied rather than neatly pinned (Pyne 1977). One of the most common types of working woman’s outerwear, the bed gown or wrapper, was constructed like a loose open robe. It could be fastened simply by wrapping it around the body and holding it in place with an apron. The other common article of women’s work wear, the jacket or waistcoat, could be held together with lacing or buttons. One surviving example has small metal rings sewn into the edges of the bodice that are quite similar to the copper alloy rings, generally about a centimeter to a centimeter and a half in diameter, that were recovered on a number of sites in this study (Baumgarten 2002:121, Figure 170). DAACS catalogers interpret these objects as the bases for knotted thread “Dorset” buttons, but this example suggests that these rings may have had multiple uses. Although working women could get dressed without pins, these fasteners were indispensable for more fashionable, less utilitarian clothing: for example they held in place the stomacher, a stiffened front panel of a gown or more formal jacket (Baumgarten 2002:115; White 2005:74). Pins allowed a woman to fasten her clothing smoothly and neatly, while ties and tucks created a less neat and fitted appearance. Pins were a uniquely feminine object of clothing, and the presence of large numbers of straight pins on a site may be an indication that its
residents were women whose work required them to embody a stylish, polite feminine persona, or who had the ability and inclination to dress in this way.

Pin production during the 18th century was a slow, tedious process that involved winding thin wire around one end to create a head and sharpening the other to a point. The difficulty in producing pins emphasizes the fact that they were not particularly cheap or expendable (Beaudry 2006:19). Their sizes varied in length and thickness which related to specific uses for the pins. The smallest pins, less than half an inch, were used for dressmaking and for pinning veils and other parts of women's clothing together. Common sewing pins were just over an inch long, and the largest blanket pins were around three inches long (Beaudry 2006:24). However, by the 19th century pins were packaged and sold in assorted sizes, and in the 18th century as many as 10 pin sizes were available; the presence of a variety of sizes does not necessarily indicate a consumer preference for a specific type of pin: the variety of sizes may simply be a reflection of the way they were packaged and sold, not which pin sizes were found to be particularly useful (Beaudry 2007:25; Breen 2017:84).

Because of the significant differences in recovery techniques, site formation processes, and cataloging protocols between the sites in this study, there is little to be gained from a fine-grained comparison of the pins on the sites in this project. Eleanor Breen has conducted some statistical analysis of the same pin data sets that I use here. She used K-mean clustering to sort pins from the Mount Pleasant Kitchen and the House for Families into groups according to size, which may relate to the function of the pins. The pins from the House for Families clustered at 20mm, 24mm, and 28mm, which was
very similar to clusters of pins from Mount Vernon’s South Grove Midden, a feature associated with the Washington family (Breen 2017:90). According to his correspondence with his merchant factor in England, George Washington ordered more than 90,000 pins in the years leading up to the Revolutionary War. Breen suggests that “there were sufficient quantities of pins at Mount Vernon that they flowed easily around the plantation such that the enslaved individuals who used and discarded them did not need to purchase them on their own” (Breen 2017:90). The pins from Mount Pleasant do not cluster so neatly, but again there were three groups at 19mm, 24.5mm, and 28mm, plus evidence for large pins over 32mm. Looking at other pin data from sites around Virginia, Breen sees evidence that enslaved consumers used at least five different types of pins (Breen 2017:90).

The most striking difference between the nine assemblages is how much the counts vary, from a single pin at the Accotink Quarter to 416 pins at the House for Families (based on minimum object counts of heads and complete pins; Table 7-1). Many factors could have caused this dramatic difference. The most problematic complicating factors are in the differences in site formation processes and excavation strategies. It is no surprise that the Mulberry Row sites contain relatively few pins, given that the deposits were not screened or floated. Likewise the field quarter sites with their more ephemeral features and their plowzone deposits that archaeologists generally do not analyze with fine screening techniques are also not conducive to the preservation of tiny, delicate objects like straight pins. Even the sites that might be roughly comparable because they all consist of deep, well-preserved cellar deposits that were excavated with similar
Table 7-1: Minimum pin counts across sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Count (head with shank + complete pins)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negro Quarter</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building T</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building S</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site 8 (House 3-4)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wingo’s</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House for Families</td>
<td>416*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accotink Overseer</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accotink Quarter</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Pleasant</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Eleanor Breen computed a minimum pin count of 314 in her analysis of the House for Families deposits, but the data have recently been re-analyzed and the waterscreen samples completely picked, resulting in the counts I have here.*
strategies proved to be impossible to compare in a meaningful way. Accotink, the House for Families, and Mount Pleasant were sites with these substantial cellar features, and at least a portion of each site was waterscreened through 1/16\textsuperscript{th} inch mesh or floated, so I was initially hopeful about these sites’ comparability (Sipe et al 2013; Reeves and Fogle date; DAACS Context query). Unfortunately, making a comparison between the House for Families and Mount Pleasant proved to be unproductive, because both of these sites were excavated under the direction of multiple supervisors with different sampling strategies: it simply is not possible estimate the volume of soil floated and waterscreened at each site. This leaves Accotink as the only site that can provide a comparison between a known overseer’s residence and a known enslaved household. The overseer’s house contained 44 pins to the quarter’s single pin. Is class, race, or gender the more relevant factor in pin use? The overseer’s house has far more stereotypically feminine items than the quarter overall, and based on the type of sewing accessories recovered from the overseer’s house, his wife may have been doing most of the sewing for the quarter farm. Another possible explanation is that the overseer was the supplier of goods to the quarter, so he was storing a larger quantity of pins at his house.

Despite the widely varying sampling strategies, there does appear to be a trend in pin usage across these sites. Field quarters have far fewer pins than the quarters nearer the house, possibly reflecting a requirement that enslaved women who worked as maids or otherwise in closer proximity to the public be more neatly and respectably dressed than their counterparts in the field. The overseers also seem to have more pins, potentially another indication that overseer’s wives and daughters also wanted to follow the rules of
neatness and respectability. This hypothesis cannot be tested with the data available here, but it may be an idea worth testing as better data become available.

 Hooks and Eyes

Hooks-and-eyes were fasteners used on any garment that required two edges to be held together. They were more common on women’s clothing, although sometimes they could be used on men’s suits, especially for fashions with decorative non-functional buttons (White 2004:75). Male fashion in the late 18th century called for tightly-fitted suit coats cut in such a way that they were impossible to close completely, so the buttons on these high-style coats were fastened at the top with hooks and eyes and decorated with non-functional buttons (Wass and Fandrich 2010:133-134).

Only three hooks and four eyes were recovered from the sites in this study. On Mulberry Row, Building T contained a single hook, and Building S contained two eyes. None were recovered from the earlier Negro Quarter. Surprisingly, the House for Families also contained only a single example. No hooks or eyes were recovered from any of the field quarter sites (Site 8, Wingo’s, or Accotink) or the Accotink overseer’s house. Two eyes and one hook were recovered from Mount Pleasant. These small numbers indicate that hook-and-eye fasteners were only used occasionally on non-elite clothing, perhaps for some specific, specialized purpose that could not be accomplished with pins, buttons or laces.
**Objects for Lacing Clothing**

A single copper alloy aiglet, still wrapped around a textile cord, was recovered from Mount Pleasant. Women’s work clothing was frequently fastened with lacing, so it is a little surprising that more aiglets were not recovered. However, the recovery of copper alloy rings may potentially point to the practice of lacing. These small rings, detailed in the button section because of the high probability that they were used for making thread buttons, were present on Mulberry Row, the House for Families, and Mount Pleasant. Potentially these rings were sold as generic items that could be utilized for multiple purposes.

**Buttons: Historical Context**

Buttons are the most abundant item of adornment recovered on archaeological sites (White 2005:50). The standard man’s suit of the 18th century consisted of a coat, waistcoat, and breeches which required a large number of buttons (White 2005:57). A coat by itself could have as many as 40 buttons, with breeches and waistcoat requiring still more. Not all of these buttons were functional: in fact, in one extant example made in England in 1750, only about half of the buttons on the coat had cut, functional buttonholes. The rest were purely decorative (Victoria and Albert Museum 1750). Another example from 1780 is a coat with completely non-functional buttons. The fabric within its seven buttonholes has never been cut to allow a button to pass through; instead, the coat fastens with three hook-and-eyes placed across the chest (Victoria and Albert 1780). Buttons are also seen on hats: the three-cornered man’s hat that was popular
throughout the 18th century had a single button holding down a loop of trimming on the left cock (Cumming 1998:58). Archaeologists tend to interpret buttons as gender signifiers associated with masculinity (Hinks 1987; Heath 1999; White 2005:57, Galle 2010:25) in keeping with historical evidence of fashion during this century: men’s clothing was covered with all manner of buttons, not all of them even functional, while women’s clothing fastened with laces, pins, and hooks-and-eyes (White 2005:57).

However, although buttons were much more common on men’s clothing, certain high-style women’s garments utilized buttons as well. A type of stomacher called a compere was decorated down the center with buttons: surviving examples all use textile-covered buttons. Buttons could also be used on the back of certain types of gowns that were worn gathered up in a bustle-like arrangement: the buttons fastened with loops that held the gathers of the skirt. Metal buttons were seen on women’s outerwear that mirrored menswear, like riding habits (Hart and North 1998:38,68; White 2005:57). For everyday workwear, the distinction in fasteners between men’s and women’s clothing may not have been that rigid, at least for enslaved men and women. Two different runaway slave advertisements from Virginia describe young women wearing jackets fitted with buttons rather than the more typical (and less expensive) laces or pins that normally fastened a working woman’s jacket. The first instance comes from Berkeley County in 1784, where a woman named Nelly Evans ran away wearing “a striped jacket with metal buttons” (Virginia Journal and Alexandria Advertiser, Dec. 2, 1784). The other instance describes a woman fleeing in 1767 wearing a waistcoat made of the same fabric as her green plains petticoat that “had metal buttons and button holes instead of a lace before, and without
skirts” (Virginia Gazette, Feb. 5, 1767). If the woman had been wearing a man’s waistcoat, it seems more likely that the advertiser would have simply stated that fact, rather than wasting so many words explaining the unusual lack of laces. Additionally, the fact that the woman wore a petticoat made from the same material as the waistcoat suggests these items were a matching set made for a woman.

Eighteenth-century buttons can be divided into four categories: metal buttons, composite buttons, textile buttons, and buttons made from other organics like wood, horn, and bone. Most of the metal buttons recovered on the sites in this dissertation are flat discs (N=167, 68% of the total button count). Flat metal discs could be stamped or cast from many different metals. The buttons detailed here are made from pewter, silver, various copper alloys, and hard white metal alloys like tombac. They fasten to the fabric with shanks that were attached in a variety of ways: they could be cast all in one piece, or they could have a wire shank in a different material (usually copper or iron) cast or soldered on. Flat metal buttons were often gilded or plated with gold, silver, or tin, and they could be decorated with designs applied by casting, chasing, engraving, or stamping (White 2005:64-65).

Two-piece metal or two-piece composite buttons with metal faces were less common (minimum object count: 28, 7% of the total). These buttons are manufactured with separate backs of wood, metal, or bone that are then glued, crimped or soldered to the face material to create a complete button. The faces are made from a variety of materials including metals, glass, and shell. The metal faces of two-piece buttons are often stamped with elaborate and fragile designs that mimic popular embroidered buttons.
They can be attached to the fabric with a metal shank or a thread loop, or they can have multiple hidden holes in the back that are sewn through (White 2005:67-68).

Different types of textile buttons were also popular. Although these rarely survive archaeologically, sometimes evidence in the form of bone or wood button molds or copper alloy wire rings survive. Evidence for a total of 29 textile buttons was recovered. Textile buttons can range from simple fabric-covered forms to intricate embroideries of metallic threads, spangles and paste gems, but they are all made in a similar way. A round mold of bone, wood, or cardboard forms the solid base of the button, around which either fabric or thread is wrapped. The face can then be further embellished with embroidery, then the fabric and threads are gathered together in the back to form the shank (Marsh 2006:80). Embroidered buttons were called passementarie buttons. Common motifs included the “death’s head:” a four-pointed star of overcrossed threads; “basket” designs of interwoven threads; and “snails” of spiraled thread. These designs could be worked simply in colored thread, or intricately embellished with metallic threads, foils, paste gems, and spangles (Hart and North 1998; Mackenzie 2004). The “Dorset” button is another type of textile button that appears archaeologically (Figure 7-1). These simple thread buttons were created by looping and knotting threads over a metal ring or a wad of thread, creating a distinctive spoked-wheel design. The best archaeological evidence for Dorset buttons are copper alloy rings, but these buttons were also made completely out of thread, especially if they were used on delicate undergarments (Marsh 2006:126).
Figure 7-1: Button ring from Building T (artifact ID 1003-953H-NOS--00151). DAACS
Organic buttons made entirely from wood, bone, horn, and shell were also common in the 18th century, but none were recovered from any of these sites, although the waste from manufacturing bone buttons was recovered from Building T: a fragment of bone from which a button (probably a blank for covering with textile or a sew-through type) has been punched. More extensive evidence for bone button production has been found on Mulberry Row in the form of a scapula with numerous (more than 8) button cutouts.

**Buttons: Analysis**

I analyzed a total of 244 identifiable buttons from nine excavations: 11 buttons from the Negro Quarter, 25 from Building T, 61 from Building S, 43 from the House for Families, 25 from Site 8, 14 from Wingo’s, 21 from North Hill, 16 from Accotink, and 23 from Mount Pleasant (Table 7-2). Buttons from Site 8 and Accotink were further divided according to the dwellings with which they were associated. I did not analyze shanks that had separated or buttons that were too incomplete to identify. I wanted to understand how buttons were worn across all of these contexts, so the variables I focused on are those that can provide information about style and function. These variables include: button type, shank type, material, color, decorative motif, and diameter. I chose not to include manufacturing technique as a variable (e.g. was the button cast or stamped?) because of the inconsistency in the way it was recorded between the assemblages. In making broad comparisons, I have separated the buttons into basic stylistic and material types based on the DAACS typology: undecorated and decorated flat metal discs, undecorated and
Table 7-2: Buttons by type and site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Type</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Button Type</th>
<th>Flat disc undec.</th>
<th>Flat disc dec.</th>
<th>2-piece undec.</th>
<th>2-piece dec</th>
<th>Bone mold</th>
<th>Ring</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No.%</td>
<td>No.%</td>
<td>No.%</td>
<td>No.%</td>
<td>No.%</td>
<td>No.%</td>
<td>No.%</td>
<td>No.%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Quarters</td>
<td>Accotink</td>
<td>1/50%</td>
<td>1/50%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1/50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Site 8</td>
<td>20/87%</td>
<td>2/9%</td>
<td>1/4%</td>
<td>(back)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>23/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N. Hill</td>
<td>11/52%</td>
<td>7/34%</td>
<td>3/14%</td>
<td>(2 backs)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wingo’s</td>
<td>11/79%</td>
<td>3/21%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft and Domestic Quarters</td>
<td>House for Families</td>
<td>9/21%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14/33%</td>
<td>4/9%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>13/30%</td>
<td>Domed, dec: 1/2%</td>
<td>Collar: 2/5%</td>
<td>43/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negro Quarter</td>
<td>8/73%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3/27%</td>
<td>(backs)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Site S</td>
<td>48/78%</td>
<td>1/2%</td>
<td>2/3%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7/11%</td>
<td>1/2%</td>
<td>4-hole: 1/2%</td>
<td>Domed undec: 1/2%</td>
<td>61/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseers’ sites</td>
<td>Accotink</td>
<td>2/10%</td>
<td>9/43%</td>
<td>2/10%</td>
<td>(1 back)</td>
<td>7/33%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Glass: 1/4%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mount Pleasant</td>
<td>14/61%</td>
<td>2/9%</td>
<td>4/17%</td>
<td>(2 backs)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1/4%</td>
<td>1/4%</td>
<td>Glass: 1/4%</td>
<td>23/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>140</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>243</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
decorated two-piece buttons, bone molds for textile buttons, and rings for Dorset buttons. In addition to these primary types, there are a few outliers, also categorized using DAACS terminology: metal collar buttons from the House for Families, and an iron four-hole button from Building S. I organize the comparisons of buttons types according to type of site: field quarters, quarters for enslaved domestic servants and craft workers, and overseer’s quarters.

To understand button function, I also considered size as a variable. Buttons of differing sizes were used for each article of clothing: coat buttons were generally the largest buttons, while jackets, waistcoats, and breeches used smaller buttons. No systematic study of the relative sizes of hat buttons has been conducted, but extant examples and historical images suggest they may be about the size of small coat buttons. Shirts and shifts were generally not fastened with attached metal buttons, but with bone, shell, glass, or wound thread buttons or with detachable linked sleeve buttons (Staples and Shaw 2013:346). Attached metal buttons were not practical for use on these undergarments, since they were subjected to regular heavy washing that would have damaged the metal buttons (Lynn 2010). To determine the function of the buttons, I divided them into categories by size and type. I categorized button rings, shell, and glass buttons as shirt buttons, then I sorted the remaining buttons by size. Buttons that are under 18 mm are more likely to be jacket, waistcoat, or breeches buttons, and buttons over 18 mm are probably coat buttons (White 2005:57).

The numbers and types of buttons recovered on sites in this study appear to differ by class and race, but making a definitive statement about this variability is complicated
by other factors. Minimum button counts vary widely from site to site; some of this variation can be attributed to site formation processes. For example, the differences in button counts between Building T, Building S, and the Negro Quarter on Monticello’s Mulberry Row could be caused by differences in household composition and duration of occupation, but they are also likely affected by varying levels of disturbance from several generations of parking lot construction. Building S is the least disturbed of the Mulberry Row buildings, so its high count of buttons (N=64 compared to building T’s N=23) is probably the most representative of Mulberry Row. Site formation processes also may affect the recovery of certain materials of buttons. For example, the acidic soils of the Piedmont region are not conducive to the preservation of bone, and we would expect bone artifacts to be recovered only from features whose ash, charcoal, and calcium content raises the pH levels. This is the case at Monticello’s Site 8, where the only bone recorded was recovered from charcoal-rich subfloor pit strata. Wingo’s appears to have slightly better bone preservation in plowzone than Site 8, with 104 elements represented, although the great majority (N= 682) of elements were recovered from the subfloor pit. However, about half of these elements from plowzone (N= 50) are teeth, which tend to preserve better in acidic soil than the scapulae from which bone buttons are usually made. Thus the absence of bone buttons at Wingo’s and Site 8, where artifacts from plowzone deposits form the majority of the data, may be related to acidic soil more than cultural activity.
Buttons: Field Quarters

When comparing percentages of basic stylistic button types (undecorated and decorated flat metal discs, undecorated and decorated two-piece buttons, bone molds for textile buttons, and rings for crocheted buttons), three field quarters share some commonalities (Wingo’s, Accotink, and Site 8), while North Hill is quite different. The similar sites are notable for their stylistic poverty: all three contain only metal buttons, the majority of these being undecorated flat discs (N=32) with the occasional decorated button (N=6) and only a single two-piece button. Site 8 at Monticello contained 20 (87% of the total) undecorated metal flat discs, 2 decorated flat discs (9%), and the back plate to a single metal two piece button (4%). Wingo’s had 11 (79%) undecorated metal flat discs and 3 (21%) decorated flat discs. The subfloor pits associated with the slave dwelling at Accotink only contained two buttons: an undecorated metal flat disc and a decorated metal flat disc.

Two of the three decorated buttons at Wingo’s are engraved with pointed star or floral motifs (1027-0168B-DRS—00001 and 1027-0285B-DRS—00001). One motif (1027-0285B-DRS—00001) is a ten-pointed star or flower engraved into a pewter jacket button. Corrosion makes it difficult to see, but the design appears uniform and well-made. The other is also a jacket button, made of tombac (1027-0168B-DRS—00001) with a very uneven and crudely-rendered engraved twelve-pointed star motif. Both of these buttons round to 16 mm, and they would have appeared silver from a distance. Were they meant to match or at least harmonize with one another? The third decorated button (1027-0183B-DRS—00001), also tombac, has a depression in the center surrounded by hatch
marks. What makes this button particularly unusual is the fact that it has been pierced: perhaps this is an indication that the object was reused to serve a purpose beyond that of a fastener. The Accotink Quarter is the poorest of all the sites in this study, with only a single decorated flat pewter disc with an engraved floral design, and a single undecorated flat pewter disc. Site 8 as a whole contains the most buttons (N=23), but the site actually represents at least three distinct houses. When broken down by house area, it appears that the residents of House 2 were considerably more invested in buttons than the residents of the other three houses. House 2 contained 15 buttons, all flat discs in either tombac or copper alloy. The only decorated buttons at Site 8 were recovered from House 2: a copper alloy button with a scalloped edge, and another with six stamped flowers inside a circle. House 3 and 4, despite probably representing two houses, contained only four buttons: three undecorated copper alloy and tombac flat discs and a tombac two-piece back plate. House 1 also contained only four buttons, all undecorated copper alloy and tombac flat discs.

The buttons from North Hill offer a striking contrast to the other field quarter assemblages. Where plainness and uniformity seem to define the other assemblages, decorated white metal flat discs make up a significant portion of the assemblage of 21 buttons at North Hill (N=7, 34%). Although no two decorated buttons were alike, many of the motifs involved decorative bands around the edge, some with central floral motifs and others with no central design. Interestingly, this theme of a floral motif surrounded by a band continues on the only linked button recovered from these contexts. There was evidence for three two-piece buttons: two bone backs and a single undecorated complete
button with a pewter back and a copper alloy face. One of the bone backs is only 7 mm in diameter, so I have classed this as a shirt button. One flat disc is decorated in an unusual manner: it is a pewter button cast with an intricate eight-petaled flower and leaf design. The button has been plated with both tin and copper alloy, with the copper alloy present on the raised areas and the tinning present on the depressed areas, creating a gold-and-silver effect, a decorative technique that can be seen on buttons from the period that survive in collections.

With the exception of North Hill, the general impression given by the field quarter sites, when looking purely at stylistic variation, is one of great uniformity. But this stylistic uniformity is not the whole picture. When the buttons are analyzed by their manufacturing technique, the uniformity disappears. A wide range of shank styles and materials is represented by the buttons in the field quarter assemblages, making attempts to summarize them in this way almost meaningless. The uniformity in appearance and variation in manufacture may indicate that the residents of these quarters were interested in wearing complete sets of matching buttons, but were forced to acquire them piecemeal, resulting in this general uniformity of style and diversity of manufacturing techniques. The uniformity also makes the few decorated buttons stand out all the more. These could be buttons lost from a smaller number of coats or jackets with decorated buttons, or they could potentially represent hat buttons. Portraits and satirical prints of men in fashionable dress show them wearing hats with metal buttons that contrasted with their suit buttons. For example, a portrait of the 1st Marquess of Downshire and his family, c.1755, by Arthur Devis depicts the Marquess in a three-cornered hat with a metal button that
contrasts with the fabric-covered buttons on his suit (Cummings 1998:57). A satirical print published in London in 1777 poking fun at the current fashion for giant coat buttons also shows a man wearing a hat button that is distinct from the rest of his outfit (Darly 1777). Unfortunately, archaeological evidence only allows conjecture about the real reason for the variability of these buttons. Are we seeing the occasional object lost from an otherwise complete set of buttons from 39 different coats, breeches, jackets, and hats belonging to different people? Or are we seeing mismatched groups discarded all at once from just a few articles of castoff clothing? Were the similar plain buttons an effort to create the effect of a matching set, or did the enslaved people reject the idea of matching entirely in favor of a more improvisational style? Finally, why were the residents of North Hill so much more interested in decorated buttons than the occupants of the other field quarters? This lack of a pattern between the field quarter sites suggests that enslaved laborers wore clothing in an individualistic manner, following personal taste rather than either accepting their plain provisioned clothing as-is or adhering to a particular style characteristic of field laborers. Mainstream fashion does seem to play a role, since the earlier sites contain more decorated buttons and the later sites contain more plain metal buttons, in keeping with changing trends.

When the buttons are analyzed by possible function, the proportion of jacket/breeches buttons to coat buttons varies from house to house (Table 7-3). Of all the field quarters, the North Hill buttons show the clearest differentiation between coat buttons and jacket/breeches buttons: with the exception of one button that is 19 mm, all of the coat buttons are fairly large, between 23 and 28 mm in diameter. The diameters
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Location</th>
<th>Shirt (count/%)</th>
<th>Waistcoat, Jacket, or Breeches (&lt;18mm) (count/percent)</th>
<th>Coat (18mm or greater) (count/%)</th>
<th>Total Measurable Buttons (count/%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site 8</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>12/60%</td>
<td>8/ 40%</td>
<td>20/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wingo’s</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>12/92%</td>
<td>1/8%</td>
<td>13/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accotink Field Quarter</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>1/100%</td>
<td>1/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monticello “Negro quarter”</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>2/22%</td>
<td>7/78%</td>
<td>9/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Hill</td>
<td>1/5%</td>
<td>9/45%</td>
<td>10/50%</td>
<td>20/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monticello, Building T</td>
<td>1/5%</td>
<td>15/71%</td>
<td>5/24%</td>
<td>21/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monticello, Building S</td>
<td>2/3%</td>
<td>31/51%</td>
<td>28/46%</td>
<td>61/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Vernon, House for Families</td>
<td>13/34%</td>
<td>14/37%</td>
<td>11/29%</td>
<td>38/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accotink Overseer</td>
<td>1/9%</td>
<td>5/45.5%</td>
<td>5/45.5%</td>
<td>11/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Pleasant</td>
<td>2/10%</td>
<td>11/55%</td>
<td>7/35%</td>
<td>20/100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
also show a larger percentage of coats than at the other sites: 10 (50%) of the buttons are for coats. There is an equal mix of undecorated and decorated coat buttons. At the rest of the field quarter sites, the percentages of coat versus smaller buttons varied from house to house. On Site 8, the residents of House 3 and 4 discarded mostly coat buttons (coat buttons: N=3, jacket button: N=1), and the residents of House 1 had two coat buttons and a jacket button. House 2 was more typical, with 10 jacket-sized buttons and only 3 coat-sized buttons. At Wingo’s, only a single coat button was recovered, and at Accotink, the only measurable button was 19 mm: either a quite small coat button or a rather large jacket button.

These button sizes complicate the information provided by documentary sources that tell us that coats were not generally provisioned for field laborers, and runaway slave advertisements that describe fugitives in typical working dress that consists of jackets, not coats (Baumgarten 1988:40). Given this information, I expected to see consistently large numbers of the smaller buttons across all of the field quarter sites, not this variation from site to site.

**Buttons: Craft and Domestic Workers**

The buttons discarded on slave quarter sites near the mansions of Monticello and Mount Vernon show a fair amount of stylistic variety. The house that is the most similar to the Monticello field quarter sites is the Negro Quarter, which is the earliest quarter located at the top of Monticello Mountain, dating to a period when the mansion was being constructed (Hill 2003). Its subfloor pit features underlay and predate Building T. The greater similarity of Negro Quarter buttons with the Site 8 buttons might be a result
of the two sites’ contemporary occupations. The buttons here that could be identified
stylistically are all undecorated metal flat discs (N=8, or 73% of the assemblage).
However, three buttons are bone backs with wire shanks that have missing faces. These
buttons could have had elaborately decorated metal, shell, or glass faces.

The later sites on Mulberry Row (Building S and T) show more variety. Although
undecorated flat metal discs still predominate (N=16 or 64% at Building T, N=48 or 79%
at Building S), the remaining buttons are a mix of bone molds for fabric buttons, copper
alloy buttons rings, decorated flat discs, and plain and decorated two-piece buttons. A
few bone molds for fabric buttons (N=4 or 16% at Building T and N=7 or 12% at
Building S) and metal rings for crocheted buttons (N=1 at each building) were recovered.
Very few decorated buttons were recovered. At Building S, the only decorated button
was a copper alloy flat disc with a motif of stamped circles around its diameter (1002-
830E2-NOS—00037). Two of the two-piece buttons from Building T were decorated:
one consists only of a shell inlay (1003-989B-NOS—00004) and the other is copper alloy
with horizontal lines stamped into an impressed center (1003-999B-NOS—00017). Both
of these two-piece buttons are quite small: the copper alloy button is about 13 mm, and
the shell inlay is about 11 mm. Although these were not cataloged as linked buttons, that
possibility cannot be ruled out given their small size. A single white copper alloy flat disc
decorated with small engraved circles was also recovered from building T (1003-976D1-
NOS—00015). The button assemblage at these more recent structures at Mulberry Row
seems to point to people who had a wider array of options for fastening and decorating
their clothing than their compatriots who worked in the fields. Building S has almost
double the minimum number of buttons as the House for Families, a structure that is otherwise notable for its great variety of adornment items. As in the field quarters, a wide variety of manufacturing techniques and materials may indicate that the wearers wanted matching sets of buttons but had to acquire them piecemeal.

The original excavators of Mulberry Row were so struck by the unusual number of buttons that they hypothesized that the residents were removing the buttons from castoff clothing to make quilts (Kelso 1986:34). Jillian Galle (2010) offers a different explanation: enslaved men were using the ability to procure fashionable buttons as a way of signaling their work ethic and ingenuity to potential mates and allies. An enslaved man with the drive to keep up with fashion was a man who might make a good ally in other matters (Galle 2010). The fairly late mean ceramic date of Building S and T and the large number of plain metal buttons, a few of which have back stamps that indicate they were plated or gilded, supports this idea to some degree. Plain plated and gilt buttons were in style at the turn of the 19th century, and Heath’s (1999) analysis of metal buttons from the Quarter Site at Poplar Forest found that enslaved individuals at that site discarded still-functional but unfashionable white metal buttons in favor of the yellow metal buttons that were coming into style during this period. It does appear that the residents of Building S and T, like those who lived at the Quarter Site, were in touch with fashion (Heath 1999; White 2004:64-65). Although Galle’s argument is compelling, it makes a few assumptions about the nature of buttons as symbols of masculinity that may not be completely applicable to enslaved men and women. Given the documentary evidence that enslaved women sometimes also used buttons, these objects cannot be used as simple
stand-ins for the embodiment of masculinity. Additionally, although it’s certainly likely many men sewed on the buttons themselves, were some of these outfits constructed for them by female partners and allies? How might a dependence on a female ally affect the dynamic of performing a masculine identity? Finally, as Lori Lee (2016:211) points out these objects are multivalent, and the signals they conveyed were not necessarily only meant for other, physically-embodied people, as spirits and ancestors may have also formed an important audience for objects of adornment.

Table 7-4: Building S buttons by size grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12-15 mm</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-19 mm</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-25 mm</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Measurable Buttons</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of size distribution, the Mulberry Row sites defy easy categorization into jacket buttons and coat buttons (Table 7-4). At Building S, 32 (52%) flat metal buttons are under 18 mm, and 28 (46%) are over, but that division does not adequately address the way these buttons vary. Medium-sized buttons predominate: 26 (43%) fall into a group that ranges in size from 16 to 19 mm, while only 23% (N=14) are fall in the 20 to 25 mm range. The remainder of the buttons was between 12 and 15 mm. One potential explanation is that this is a late-18th-century site, and the fashions for this period called for large buttons. If the enslaved people who wore these objects wanted to participate in this particular trend in masculine attire but were only provided jackets and waistcoats,
they may have improvised by accessorizing with these slightly larger jacket buttons. At Building T, of the 23 measurable buttons, only 5 are greater than 18 mm (24%), and the largest of these is only 23.6 mm. Four of the fabric button molds from Building S are equal size (16 mm), indicating that they may have belonged to a single article of clothing, probably a jacket or waistcoat. Shirt buttons are very uncommon at Mulberry Row, with only two button rings being recovered. An iron sew-through button (1002-830E1-NOS—00107) was recovered at Building S that is also included in the shirt button counts.

The buttons from the House for Families at Mount Vernon are the most unusual of all of the sites in this study (Figure 7-2). Compared to Building S on Mulberry Row, the House for Families had fewer buttons (a minimum object count of 37,\(^1\)), despite having far more of almost every other type of adornment artifact than the rest of the sites in this study. A clue as to why this is the case might be found in the evidence in the assemblage for the presence of pricy, elaborately worked mixed-media buttons. Twelve back plates for two-piece buttons were recovered: ten of bone, one of wood that has barely survived, and one of copper alloy. These buttons had delicate worked metal, shell, or glass faces. There is also evidence for embroidered thread buttons that used cardboard, wood, or bone button molds. These molds are slightly different in construction than the two-piece button backs, and although none of these molds was recovered from the House for Families, the presence of textile fragments points to their presence. One remnant of the face of a worked metallic-thread “death’s head” style button was recovered.

\(^1\) The minimum count is based on the total number of one-piece buttons plus two-piece button back plates minus the number of two-piece button faces.
Figure 7-2: Left: “Death's head” passementarie button from House for Families. Artifact ID 1007-40E-WTS—00614. Downloaded from DAACS (http://daacsrg.org/homepage/query_two_image_results) on Nov. 11, 2016.

(1007-40E-WTS—00614), as were other fragments of silver thread spun with a silk core (1007-47J-FLT—00010). The threads that make up the textile button face and the threads that were recovered separately appear to be associated with two different objects, because the threads of each were spun with a different type of twist. Finally, 13 (35% of the minimum object count) rings that could have been used for crocheted Dorset buttons were recovered. Given this ephemeral evidence for delicate, expensive textile buttons, it seems probable that the buttons worn by the residents of the House for Families were some of the most expensive and high-style of all the assemblages represented here. The decorated two-piece metal buttons (N=3, 8%) also mimic worked thread buttons, with basketweave and latticework designs.

The rest of the buttons (N= 9, 24%) are undecorated flat discs of various materials and manufacturing techniques. Washington provisioned buttons, and working out which may have been provisioned and which were a product of consumer choice is complicated by the fact that the men and women who lived in the House for Families were required to dress well for their duties in the house (Breen 2013:277). This quarter is slightly earlier than the Mulberry Row buildings, with a MCD that places it during a period where flashy, elaborately embroidered clothing was stylish (Doering 2016:284). Thus, the most decorative buttons may also have been objects that served as constant reminders of work and servitude, not as exuberant participation in the world of goods.

The buttons at the House for Families are relatively evenly distributed between shirt, coat, and jacket/breeches buttons. The copper alloy button rings were all of a similar small size, about a centimeter in diameter. Extant articles of clothing that include
knotted thread buttons are often undergarments: shirts, shifts, and babies’ gowns (Lynn 2010:16;144). The small size of these button rings indicates they were used for a similar purpose. The rest of the measurable buttons (including the bone button backs) have slightly greater numbers of small buttons than large: 14 (37%) are a size appropriate for jackets, breeches, or waistcoats (14 to 18mm) and 11 (29%) are coat size (18 to 28 mm).

The most distinctive characteristic of this assemblage is the large number of button rings. Why do these rings make up such a large portion of the buttons when other sites have so few? Although the supporting rings are often visible on surviving Dorset buttons, these fasteners could be made with no metal component at all, just a ball of thread wound around with more thread (Lynn 2010; Doering 2016:255) Perhaps the ring created a sturdier, neater button in keeping with the overall neatness and fashionable nature of the clothing worn by these men and women.

**Buttons: Overseers**

The overseer’s quarter of Accotink and the possible overseer’s quarter at Mount Pleasant were not similar, either to each other or to any of the other assemblages in this study. A minimum count of 14 buttons was recovered from the features associated with Accotink’s overseer. This individual and his family had a preference for decorated copper alloy two-piece buttons (N=7, 50%) in various stamped floral and geometric designs. Accotink was occupied about the same time period as the House for Families. The two plantations are close enough that both the Accotink overseer and Washington’s household made purchases at John Glassford’s store in Colchester (Breen 2013:22; Sipe et al. 2013:72-73). Yet of the two assemblages, it is the House for Families, not Accotink,
that appears to have the more expensive, stylish buttons. Accotink’s overseer bought stamped metal two-piece buttons that mimicked the more delicate and expensive passementarie buttons of the time. Undecorated buttons were the least numerous in this assemblage (one plain two-piece and two plain flat discs). Equal numbers of coat buttons and smaller buttons were recovered (N=5 or 45.5% for each), plus a single small black glass button, possibly a shirt button. The overseer appears to have been wearing the full suit required of a polite man, but he was either acquiring his buttons piecemeal or only a small sample of buttons from a larger collection of suits entered the archaeological record. No evidence of textile buttons was recovered at all, possibly indicating that the overseer lacked either the funds or the inclination to invest in high-style embroidered suits. Another possibility is that the overseer saw embroidered suits as an elite pretension: Ann Smart Martin observed that middling people in backcountry Virginia rejected some of the fashionable activities of the elites, such as taking tea with large matched sets of teawares (Smart Martin 1996).

In contrast to the Accotink overseer, the residents of the Mount Pleasant kitchen discarded more plain buttons. Twenty-three identifiable buttons were recovered from the Mount Pleasant kitchen. Fifteen (65%) of these were plain flat discs. Seven of the flat discs were copper alloy, seven were pewter, and the remaining two were tombac. Only two buttons in the entire assemblage were decorated, and both of these are cheap pewter imitations of worked fabric buttons about the size of large jacket buttons (both are approximately 17 mm). One (1029-MT249.H-WTS-1406—00078) has a molded six-lobed knotwork design: a stylistic echo of the elaborate passementerie buttons worked in
gold and silk thread which were popular during the mid-18th century. The other (1029-L42lot19-DRS-987—00001) has a simpler corded motif along the outside edge, with a rudimentary knot design in the center. Mount Pleasant also contained two plain two-piece buttons and two button backs, but no faces. A small round black glass button was also recovered. Relatively little evidence for textile buttons was recovered, with a single copper alloy ring and two bone button molds.

Twenty buttons from Mount Pleasant were complete enough for their diameters to be measured. Only two buttons in the assemblage are clearly meant for shirts: these are the two smallest buttons: a Dorset button ring that was 10.35 mm (1029-MT354.B-WTS-2257—00033) and a black glass button that was 11.56 mm (1029-MT249.G2-WTS-1419—00015). As in most of the assemblages, Mount Pleasant is dominated by the smaller jacket, waistcoat, or breeches buttons (N=11, 55%). All of the largest buttons (N=8) are flat metal discs measuring between 18 and 26 mm. In terms of material, size, and decoration, the buttons from Mount Pleasant are more similar to those from Building S than to the Accotink overseer’s house or to any of the field quarters. This button assemblage is not particularly pricy or high-style, and most of the buttons are about the size of waistcoat or jacket buttons, indicating people who tended wear full suits less frequently in their day-to-day life. It is the other adornment items: buckles, sleeve buttons, and accessories, that set this site apart from most of the dwellings for enslaved laborers and lend support to the idea that Mount Pleasant may be an overseer’s dwelling.

The buttons recovered from these sites present a number of challenges for interpretation in the context of embodied identity. Every facet of identity that might be
illuminated by these button assemblages is complicated by unknowns. The question of racial and ethnic identity is complicated by the question of choice. Exactly whose identity we are seeing represented by the buttons? The clothing worn by enslaved house servants in their daily work may have been more of an extension of the slaveholder’s identity than their own. The question of gender is also less straightforward than we might hope, since buttons were used occasionally on certain types of stylish women’s clothing, and there is some documentary evidence for enslaved women wearing their jackets with buttons. The question of loss, discard, and archaeological recovery also complicates interpretation. We have no way of knowing how many textile buttons were used, or whether the metal buttons were lost or discarded.

Table 7-5: Buckles by site and function

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Knee</th>
<th>Shoe</th>
<th>Unid:Clothing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site 8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wingo’s</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Hill</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accotink Quarter</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House for Families</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negro Quarter</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building T</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building S</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accotink Overseer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Pleasant</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Buckles and Footwear*

I analyzed 20 clothing buckles from seven sites (Table 7-5). Buckles were relatively rare on all of the sites except for the House for Families, and the Negro Quarter.
on Mulberry Row did not contain any clothing buckles. Although they could have been used on some clothing, buckles that were identified in DAACS as utilitarian or harness buckles are not included in my analysis because of the ambiguity of their function.  

Removable shoe buckles are a uniquely 18th-century fashion accessory, replacing laces and ribbons that had been in vogue in the 17th century. By the turn of the 19th century, the tide of fashion changed again, and shoe buckles were once again replaced with laces (McNeil and Riello 2006:106). Poor and working-class people appeared to try to keep up with this aspect of fashion, but period images also show working-class men and women wearing shoes fastened with laces. One satirical print from 1787, “In Fashion, Out of Fashion,” contrasts the apparel of a fashionable woman with a poor working woman. The fashionable lady wears slip-on fabric shoes, while the poor woman wears leather shoes fastened with laces or ribbons (Styles 2007:33)

Footwear seems to have had strong class and racial connotations during the 18th century. Runaway slave advertisements often mention the types of shoes worn by fugitives. The shoes worn are typically described as “old,” “worn,” or “Negro shoes.” There is little evidence of exactly what these “negro shoes” looked like, but they must have been distinctive enough that they were recognizable to anyone. The term appears in

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2 The DAACS cataloging protocol requires catalogers to be very conservative when assigning a functional type to a buckle. Thus, unless a buckle is nearly complete and has a clear, easily documented function, catalogers are asked to describe the buckle and then catalog it as “Unid:Clothing”. 

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10 different runaway slave advertisements dating from 1769 to 1790 that are transcribed and cataloged in the Geography of Slavery database (http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/exist/runaways/xprocess.xsp?count=10&start=1&query=Negro+shoes) The term also appears frequently in accounts books recording the economic activities of Virginia plantations (Gill 1996:39). These rough shoes were likely made from plain, unblackened leather and were not meant to be worn with buckles. Some shoes would have had hobnails in the soles for extra sturdiness and traction (Baumgartern 1988:6). Shoes were often made directly on the plantation, and “Shoemaker” is an occupation for runaways that is usually mentioned in conjunction with some other skill, such as coopering or joining. Ex-slave narratives collected in the 20th century often mention how painful these shoes were. Many enslaved individuals preferred to go barefoot when the weather allowed it, rather than endure the discomfort (Wass and Fandrich 2010:359). In contrast, enslaved men and women whose duties brought them in closer contact with upper-class whites required footwear to match their more formal clothing. If shoes, or lack thereof, were class and racial signifiers, it might be expected that overseers would have used footwear to embody their racial superiority and perhaps to prove their aspirations toward respectability. Thus the meaning of shoe buckles can change according to context. On field quarter sites, they may reflect enslaved men and women using shoes to counter narratives about their supposed animal nature. On overseer sites, they might be evidence of lower-class whites dressing to prove their racial superiority. On domestic sites associated with enslaved house servants, shoe buckles might reflect a lack of choice in dress and self-presentation. Another factor to keep in
mind is that laced shoes begin to take over by about the year 1800, and elaborately
decorated buckles were going out of vogue around this time (Wass and Fandrich
2010:152-153). So for the later-dating sites, buckles may not have even been a
particularly desirable accessory.

The shoe buckles are distributed unevenly among the field quarter sites. Monticello
and Accotink had none, and only a single iron chape was recovered from Wingo’s. This
might seem to support the idea that shoes were used to reinforce class or racial
identity, but the shoe buckles recovered from North Hill complicate this story. A
minimum of three shoe buckles were recovered from the earlier contexts at North Hill
(more buckles were recovered from plowzone and contexts associated with a second,
later occupation that extends into the first decade of the 19th century). Two buckle
frame fragments appear to be part of the same square copper alloy shoe buckle, decorated
with simple incised lines and rouletting. Two of the buckles are identical to each other,
although only one is complete: they are both undecorated iron and oval in shape. The
chapels of these buckles are identical to the chape recovered from Wingo’s, a distant
quarter of the same plantation. Why are these three shoe buckles identical? Were they
simply a popular, inexpensive style that a few enslaved individuals acquired for
themselves? Or was it possible that they were provisioned? The documentary evidence
seems to point away from the possibility that buckled shoes were provided to enslaved
field laborers. The runaway slave advertisements that mention buckles do so in
conjunction with the “old shoes” or the “good shoes,” never with the “Negro shoes.”
These “Negro shoes” are occasionally mentioned for sale in Virginia newspapers, and
they are listed as a separate category from “men’s shoes” and “women’s shoes,”
emphasizing the way enslaved men and women were gendered differently from whites
through the clothing that was given to them. Thus it seems likely that even these cheap,
uniform buckles may have been used as a response to the coarse, unbuckled shoes
provisioned by the slaveholder (Pinkney: Oct. 20, 1774 – pg. 3, col. 2; Purdie and Dixon:
Oct. 20, 1774 – pg. 3, col. 1). Why were shoe buckles so rare on the other sites? Perhaps
most enslaved field laborers had no way to acquire shoes that were made in such a way
that they could be easily accessorized with buckles. Buying an entire new pair of shoes
that could only be worn occasionally just so they could be accessorized with buckles may
have been a luxury that was too great. The limited spending money enslaved men and
women had may have gone further on other modes of adornment, such as buttons or
jewelry. Another possibility is that buckles (and the shoes that went with them) were so
precious that they were carefully curated and never entered the archaeological record.

Buckled shoes are not the only type of footwear-related artifact recovered from
the field quarter sites. An iron spur buckle fragment was recovered from the House 2 area
of Monticello’s Site 8. Spurs did, of course, have a practical purpose for horse riding, but
they were also stylish accessories around the turn of the 19th century. Men wore
decorative spurs to complement the tall riding boots that were in fashion (Wass and
Fandrich 2010:150). The spur from Site 8 is too fragmentary and corroded to provide
much information, but the possibility that it was worn purely for its appearance cannot be
ruled out.
Shoe buckles are not much more common at Mulberry Row. No buckles at all were recovered from the earlier Negro Quarter. A fragment of the frame of an undecorated copper alloy shoe buckle and a wrought iron shoe buckle hook were the only evidence of shoe buckles at Building S. Building T had a single shoe buckle. It is a single-framed white copper alloy buckle with a “geometric ‘cable’ design” (DAACS 2016a). This relative lack of shoe buckles indicates that these objects were not so common or expendable as to be regularly lost or discarded. At least two people on Mulberry Row did buckle their shoes. Whether the residents of Mulberry Row owned one or two prized pairs of buckles, or they wore no buckles at all, these were not common, easily lost or discarded objects like buttons. The date of the Mulberry Row structures should be taken into account as well: by the turn of the 19th century, the period when building S and T were occupied, buckled shoes were on the wane and boots and laced shoes were coming into vogue. The possibility that so few shoe buckles were recovered because they were outmoded accessories cannot be ruled out.

The use of buckled shoes is one of the many areas where the House for Families proves to be an outlier in this study. Six shoe buckles that could be analyzed stylistically were recovered from this site. One is undecorated iron, but the rest are decorated with exuberant Rococo-inspired designs. Four are copper alloy, and one of these still has remnants of gilding. One buckle is solid silver. These buckles are stylish and not cheap. Shoes with attractive buckles would have been a necessary part of a livery uniform or other “presentable” clothing that Washington required his enslaved domestic servants to wear.
With only two overseer’s quarters represented here, it is difficult to make a broad statement about race and shoes. However, it is interesting that both overseers’ households discarded shoe buckles. Two copper alloy shoe buckles were recovered from the Accotink overseer’s house. One is similar to one of the plainest buckles from the House for Families, decorated simply with parallel lines. The other is undecorated. Mount Pleasant’s residents also discarded two buckle fragments: a simple cast iron openwork buckle and a tiny fragment of what may be a cut steel buckle. The impression these buckles give is that their owners wore shoes that were coded as “white,” but they were not aspirational enough to try to make much of a fashion statement with their shoes. Of course, absence in the archaeological record is always nebulous: another plausible explanation is that the more valuable buckles never entered the archaeological record.

The numbers of shoe-related artifacts in this study are too few to make wide-reaching claims about them. The shoe buckles associated with enslaved individuals seem to vary more by plantation than by type of site. The sites from Monticello included in this study had the fewest shoe buckles. At the later houses of Mulberry Row, this lack may be explained by changes in fashion, although this does not account for the lack of shoe buckles in the earlier Negro Quarter. The remaining sites in this study were occupied during the height of the popularity of buckled shoes, and no clear pattern emerges in the numbers or styles recovered. At least some buckles were recovered from both overseers’ quarters. The House for Families has a greater number of elaborate Rococo-inspired buckles than the other sites, and these buckles may have been part of the clothing Washington required his enslaved domestic servants to wear. However, the presence of
buckles at field quarter sites like those at Poplar Forest shows that they were not exclusively associated with livery. The historical record indicates that footwear did have racial connotations, and enslaved men and women did seem to use buckles to contest those connotations [more on this in the next chapter], but this does not seem to be an aspect of embodiment that can be easily addressed archaeologically.

**Other Buckles**

Other types of clothing buckles were also recovered from the sites in this study. Because of the ambiguity of their function, it is generally difficult to determine how these buckles were used for embodying identity. Buckles were used for a wide range of fastening needs beyond shoes, including: “breeches, stocks, hats, swords, collars, girdles, gloves, gallus [suspenders], and any other kind of clothing that might need fastening” (White 2005:31). The only clothing buckles identified as having a definite functions other than shoe buckles were undecorated iron knee buckles: one from the House for Families and two from Building S on Mulberry Row. These buckles were used to cinch the kneeband of breeches closed at the knee, often below a row of buttons. Knee buckles were fashionable but not functionally required, since breeches could be held closed with ties or with buttons (White 2005:43). Breeches were not always worn by men doing manual labor: trousers were work wear in the 18th century, although they came into style as fashion wear at the turn of the 19th century (Staples and Shaw 2013:344). Another buckle from House 1 at Site 8 may also be a knee buckle, since it is about the right size and shape, and its pin (which is missing) was located on the short axis of the buckle frame, a diagnostic trait of knee buckles. However, without the distinctive anchor-shaped
chape characteristic of knee buckles, this identification is not definitive. The buckle is copper alloy and decorated with a cast pattern of raised square beading. If this is a knee buckle, it might be another indication that at least one of the men who lived at Site 8 put in some effort to achieve a fashionably masculine look.

**Jewelry**

Jewelry might be defined as any object whose function is primarily decorative that is not permanently attached to another item of clothing. Very few objects in the assemblages examined here perfectly fit this definition, as many items that serve as adornment also have a practical function. Sleeve buttons are also fasteners; watch accoutrements keep track of time; equipages hold thimbles and keys; and beads might serve as charms. At least one object that could fit into this category was recovered on each site. I analyzed a total of 215 objects, including beads, linked sleeve buttons, watch trinkets, fragments of jewelry chains and fasteners, a brooch, a hatpin, and a cowrie shell (Table 7-6). The primary jewelry objects in these assemblages are linked sleeve buttons and beads. No one type of object was recovered on every site, but beads and sleeve buttons were the most numerous artifact type. I analyzed all of these objects based on their function and stylistic motifs in order to understand the meaning they may have carried.

**Sleeve Links**

Cufflinks, called sleeve buttons in this period, bridge a gap between fastener and jewelry (Rivers Cofield 2012). They were frequently highly decorated, and most of those
Table 7-6: Summary of Jewelry Objects by Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Sleeve Buttons</th>
<th>Beads</th>
<th>Watch Trinkets</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site 8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wingo’s</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Hill</td>
<td>1 (10 from plowzone)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accotink Quarter</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House for Families</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jewelry Coil: 1 Jewelry Clasp: 1</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negro Quarter</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Cowrie Shell: 1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building S</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Brooch: 1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building T</td>
<td>3 (uncertain)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Hat Pin: 1 Glass Object: 1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accotink Overseer</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Pleasant</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jewelry Chain: 2</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>186</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>220</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
style that were carefully curated (Loren 2010:52). Today, cufflinks carry a strong connotation of wealthy masculinity, but in the 18th century they were not seen in this found in these assemblages are just as ornamental as they are functional. Because these fasteners could be moved from shirt to shirt, they were an important element of personal way. While men did appear to wear sleeve buttons more frequently than women, they were not an exclusively male item of adornment, and there were so many styles and price points to choose from that even poorer people could own multiple pairs. Sarah Rivers Cofield cautions archaeologists not to assume that sleeve buttons were “more precious than they actually were” (Rivers Cofield 2012:101). Linked buttons were not necessarily limited to use on sleeves: Rivers Cofield notes a historic image of a man wearing a shirt collar fastened by a sleeve button, and jackets or waistcoats with holes meant for laces could also be fastened with linked buttons (Baumgarten 2002; Rivers Cofield 2012:105). At the African Burial Ground site in New York City, some sleeve buttons were found near the wrists of the interred individuals, but others were found near the neck or the upper arms suggesting that these items were not merely sleeve fasteners. One woman was found with two turquoise enamel sleeve buttons beneath her upper arm (Loren 2010:53). In terms of chronology and fashion, new styles were regularly introduced, increasing the number of varieties available, so size and style are not reliable chronological indicators (Rivers Cofield 2012). Sleeve buttons are highly individual, optional items of adornment, and it is unlikely that they would have been provisioned. Thus, they provide an excellent lens for seeing adornment choices made by enslaved men and women.
A total of 18 separate sets of sleeve buttons were recovered from 5 of the sites in this study. This minimum set count includes glass button inserts, single complete buttons, identical buttons from the same set that have separated, and still-linked complete sets. It is not always perfectly clear whether a small button or a fragment of molded glass should be cataloged as a sleeve button or put in a different category. I generally chose to defer to the cataloger in these cases, but there are three objects from Building T that I believed warranted inclusion in this section even though they were not originally cataloged as sleeve buttons.

Sleeve buttons are relatively rare on the field quarter sites in this study. At Site 8, a single sleeve button was recovered from contexts associated with House 3 or 4. It is a plain pewter linked button 18 mm long by 13 mm wide. A similar sleeve link is displayed on the Diagnostic Artifacts in Maryland page from the Jackson Homestead site in Maryland, with a beginning date of occupation around 1800 (Maryland Archaeological Conservation Lab 2014). This button would not have added much ornamentation to an outfit, and it would not have been particularly expensive. Oval buttons like this one were not popular before 1750 (Rivers Cofield 2012:113). Although no definite sleeve buttons were recovered from the Wingo’s quarter, a colorless oval paste gem about the right size for a sleeve link insert was found. It is about 9 mm by 10 mm, and one side shows slight signs of wear while the other side appears slightly melted. North Hill, also at Poplar Forest, had a single oval copper alloy sleeve button with a naturalistic daisy motif surrounded by a corded border. This sleeve link harmonizes with the other decorated buttons at North Hill, suggesting someone who lived there preferred a certain aesthetic.
The Accotink quarter, which is by far the poorest site in terms of adornment items, contains no sleeve links. The fact that only a few sleeve links were recovered from the field quarter sites may indicate either that these were the only objects they chose to acquire, or that other, more expensive or undamaged links were acquired by these men and women but they never entered the archaeological record.

Although none were recorded as such in DAACS, three objects were recovered from Mulberry Row that may be sleeve buttons. A small fragment of intense dark purple molded glass was recovered from Building T. The object is too fragmentary to determine its use, but it may have been a jewel or button insert. Additionally, two unusually small metal two-piece buttons were also recovered from Building T. One is a 12.2 mm copper alloy button with parallel lines stamped into a central depression, and the other is 11.4 mm with a shell inset. Their small size, manufacturing technique, and decorative motifs are all consistent with sleeve buttons.

The House for Families had a greater variety of linked sleeve buttons than any other assemblage in this study: buttons from seven different sets were recovered. Buttons with glass inlays appear to be the most popular type. Three buttons are gem-like colorless pastes that are each slightly different. One is oval, with 14 facets and a pointed back; one is a complete copper alloy button with a faceted jewel, and the other has an 8-pointed star motif that would also appear faceted from a short distance. Two buttons have a naturalistic sea creature motif: a purple glass molded clam shell and a clear molded coral motif. One button has a house surrounded by two trees, a fence and a path (Fig. 7-3). It resembles a button from Mount Pleasant, which also has a house motif. The example
Figure 7-3: Colorless sleeve inlay from House for Families. Artifact id 1007-40E-WTS—01219. Downloaded from DAACS (http://daacsrg.org/homepage/query_two_image_results) on May 4, 2017.
from Mount Pleasant is more obviously a chinoiserie style, with what appears to be a pagoda surrounded by willow or laurel leaves, than that from House for Families. Finally, there is one complete set of less exuberantly decorated buttons with a simple stamped dot motif. Because these objects are unlikely to have been a part of provisioned clothing, this wide array of linked buttons is one of the best indicators of choice in adornment that we have for the House for Families.

Both overseer’s quarters appear to have been occupied by people who enjoyed wearing sleeve buttons. The Accotink overseer’s quarter has the greatest ratio of sleeve buttons to ordinary buttons of all the assemblages, with six different sets represented. Three have colorless round glass inlays; slight stylistic differences prove they belonged to different sets. One has a black glass inlay. Two sets are octagonal. One of the octagonal buttons has a geometric pattern of concentric circles; the other is engraved with a floral motif. As with the shoe buckles, the overseer’s cufflinks are fairly sober and understated when compared with those of the House for Families. Was this a matter of poverty or of taste? Or does the larger, more varied collection of sleeve links at the House for Families simply reflect the fact that a greater number of individuals, each with his or her own particular tastes, are reflected in that assemblage? Mount Pleasant’s sleeve buttons are smaller in number, but more highly decorated One set is similar to those recovered at Accotink: an octagonal copper alloy button with a geometric motif resembling a stylized flower. Another clear paste inlay is decorated with a vaguely chinoiserie pagoda surrounded by laurel leaves (Figure 7-4). The most elaborate links are a pair of oval pewter buttons with clear paste inlays with a marbled yellow and pink design either
Figure 7-4: Sleeve button insert with a chinoiserie pagoda, Mount Pleasant. Artifact id 1029-L42lot19-DRS-980—00003. Photo by Karen Price, Mount Vernon
painted or set in paper behind the glass. The gems themselves are worn smooth, but retain traces of faceting.

*Beads*

Beads possessed cultural significance in the regions of Africa from where enslaved people were stolen. At the time European contact, West Africa had its own bead making industries, including an industry in carved stone beads that developed in the Kingdom of Benin in the 15th century in service of the royal court, and gold bead making through the lost-wax technique that was the specialty of the Asante. Glass beads were imported from India from as early as 200 BC, and a glass bead making industry centered around what is today Niger, Nigeria, and Ghana emerged in the 16th century (Dubin 1987:124-129). The role of beads as a medium of exchange meant that they were significant throughout the African continent, but these items also had considerable symbolic significance. In Benin, beads, especially coral beads, were symbols of royal honor (Dubin 1987:140). Likewise in Yorubaland, beads were markers of royalty and power: rulers and spiritual leaders wore beads to “signify their good fortune in living productive, purposeful lives with sacred support” (Ogundiran 2002:437). A common theme in bead use across Africa is the creation of objects that have a “spiritual force,” and beads are often included as “part of an assemblage, a mixture of materials” that gives the object a sense of life (Dubin 1987:149). Beads were used in Africa to embody not individual identity but communal identity, and their importance in rituals associated with rites of passage and the life cycle emphasizes this fact (Dubin 1987:151).
Historical archaeologists have taken note of the potential African link provided by beads, and they have studied them on many African American sites as an indication of shared cultural practices or values. Linda Stine and her colleagues (1996) believed that the color of beads may be significant, so they compared percentages of bead color from 26 different American sites. They found that blue was a predominant color, arguing that this color held a specific cultural or spiritual significance for people of African descent. They also noted the importance of color and the use of beads as charms and amulets for protection in West and Central Africa and in recollections of ex-slaves in the WPA slave narratives of the 20th century. Subsequent archaeologists have called this hypothesis into question, but there has been a general consensus that beads are significant on sites associated with slavery (Agbe-Davies 2017).

Beads were the most numerous jewelry item recovered from the sites discussed here: 186 beads were recovered from six of the nine sites. With the cultural significance of beads in mind, I was expecting fairly consistent numbers of beads across the African American sites, and lower numbers on the overseer sites. This was not exactly the case (Table 7-7). Only two beads were recovered from contexts clearly associated with field quarter sites from the period in this study, and there were intriguing differences between the quarter sites associated with enslaved craft workers and domestic servants. Most surprisingly, a good number of beads were recovered from both of the potential overseer’s houses (N=37). Some of these differences are certainly due to depositional:

---

3 At the field quarter of North Hill, nine beads were recovered from plowzone across the site and one bead was recovered from a colluvium layer in the erosion gully, but it is unclear to which occupation period these beads date.
Table 7-7: Beads by color, type, and site. “Strung” beads are larger than 2 mm in diameter, “Sewn” beads are 2 mm in diameter or smaller and are either seed beads or tiny tubular beads.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color/Type</th>
<th>North Hill</th>
<th>Accotink Quarter</th>
<th>Bldg T</th>
<th>Bldg S</th>
<th>House Families</th>
<th>Accotink Overseer</th>
<th>Mount Pleasant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sewn</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reds</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greens</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blues</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browns</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Colorless</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strung</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greens</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blues</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browns</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Colorless</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>125</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
processes and recovery methods. All of the field quarter and overseer’s quarter sites have
been plowed. North Hill, the Wingo’s quarter and the houses at Site 8 were plowzone
sites with subfloor pit features. Both plowzone and features were excavated
fullyplowzone was screened through dry 1/4 in. mesh, and feature fills were processed
with flotation and water screening through fine mesh. The likelihood of tiny seed beads
being recovered from plowzone is fairly low, so tiny artifacts would have only come
from the truncated features. Recovery through ¼ in. mesh does not necessarily preclude
the recovery of all beads: nine of the 10 beads from North Hill were recovered from
plowzone deposits screened through ¼ in. mesh. The plowzone at the Accotink quarter
was stripped, and the plowzone at Mount Pleasant is not included in these data, so only
seed beads from features would be present in these assemblages. However, both sites had
large, deep features that were not significantly impacted by plowzone. The biggest
problem with comparison is presented by comparing beads from Mulberry Row with
beads from the House for Families. The House for Families was fully screened and at
least partially water-screened, while the artifacts from Mulberry Row that are currently
available on DAACS are the result of trowel sorting only. Thus the differences in the
beads recovered from these two sites are likely to be more representative of differences in
recovery techniques than differences in adornment practices between the two sites.

Quite small numbers of beads were recovered from all of the field quarters. No
beads at all were found associated with features or units around the house footprints or
yards at Monticello’s Site 8. No beads were recovered from Wingo’s. At North Hill, nine
beads were recovered from plowzone and one bead was recovered from a wash layer in
the gully, but no beads were found that were clearly associated with the earlier occupation of the site. Seven of these beads appeared to come from the same article of adornment: they were medium-sized transparent dark blue sub-spherical beads. These beads were distributed all across the site: two were recovered in close proximity to the subfloor pit, while the others were closer to the refuse-filled erosion gully. The only field quarter assemblage that contained beads that were clearly associated with the period of occupation was the Accotink quarter, with two large wound sub-spherical beads. One is clear and faceted, the other is white and smooth. What is surprising about the general lack of beads at the Accotink quarter is that large number of beads recovered from the overseer’s house. These differences cannot be explained by differences in site formation or excavation, as both structures were part of the same site and were excavated with the same methods.

The sites where large numbers of beads were recovered were the quarters close to the mansions of Mount Vernon and Monticello. Mulberry Row contained only large beads, a fact that can be easily explained by the lack of screening during excavation. No beads were recovered from the Negro Quarter, and only two were found in the overlying deposits of building T. Building S had 10 beads, which again may have had more to do with site formation processes than cultural differences between the two quarters, as more artifacts were recovered from Building S overall. Medium and large beads predominate, with an even mix of blues and browns punctuated by one black bead and one orange bead.
As with most of the other artifacts, Mount Vernon’s bead assemblage is unique. The assemblage consists mostly of tiny seed beads and small tubular beads. The predominant beads at Mount Vernon were green and aqua seed beads about 2 mm in diameter, and small black tubular beads about 2 mm long. Although these tiny beads could certainly have been strung to use as jewelry, a more likely use for beads of this size in the 18th century was for ornamenting richly embroidered clothing. Metal spangles and glass pastes appear to be used more frequently, but seed beads are also seen on surviving examples. One French waistcoat dating to about 1780 in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum is adorned with opaque black and white seed beads in a floral motif around the pockets and edges (Hart and North 1998:145). Beadwork was not limited to male clothing. One popular women’s item that could have thousands of beads was the sablé-beaded drawstring purse, which was completely covered in beaded designs (Cumming 1998:69). The only large beads recovered from the assemblage are multicolored trade beads. One is red with a blue core, and the other is a transparent blue with white stripes. These two beads are so unlike the rest of the assemblage that they suggest a different purpose than the seed beads. Perhaps the seed beads represent the outermost layer of identity, the richly ornamented and decorative clothing worn for the benefit of the slaveholder, while the larger beads represent an innermost personal layer, worn for protection or as a symbol of group solidarity.

At the Accotink overseer’s house, the quantity of beads recovered turns our expectations about bead use and cultural identity upside down. Of the 27 beads recovered from the entire site, all but two came from the overseer’s house, not the slave quarter.
Archaeologists have often placed a greater emphasis on beads from sites associated with Native Americans and people of African descent, to the point where beads start to serve almost as a stand-in for people of color (Loren 2010:62). At the Accotink site, however, a large assemblage of inexpensive beads, many of them trade beads, was associated with the house of the white overseer. The predominant color in this assemblage is shades of blue (N=17, 68%), and the blue beads represent a variety of types and styles of bead, indicating that these beads may have originally been part of multiple items of adornment. Eleven beads are small enough to have been sewn on clothing, while the rest were larger and likely served as jewelry. Two beads in this assemblage are highly unusual. One blue-green bead is cut like a gemstone and has unusually good clarity and hardness: if it were not for the drilled hole, it would have been interpreted as a paste gem such as was used on linked buttons. This paste could very well be a fragment of one of the paste necklaces that were popular at the time. The other odd bead is a large square molded black glass bead with a molded design of hatched parallel lines. Nothing like it was recovered on any of the sites in this study. In contrast to the large, varied bead assemblage recovered from the overseer’s house, only two beads were recovered from the slave quarter.

The authors of the Accotink site report offered three potential reasons for the difference in beads between the two assemblages. One possibility is that gender played a greater role in the use of beads than ethnicity: according to documentary evidence, the overseer John Marvill may have lived at the quarter with his wife in the 1760s, while the gender ratio of the enslaved residents of the quarter farm is unknown. Another possibility is that lower-class white Americans may have been more active consumers of beads than
archaeologists initially believed. A final possibility is that the large number of beads represents “the highly creolized character of the space” (Sipe et al. 2013:422). I am most inclined to agree with the idea that bead consumption was divided more on class lines than racial lines. If the beads were an indication of a creolized space, one would expect both assemblages to have large numbers of beads.

In contrast to the beads from the Accotink overseer’s dwelling, the bead assemblage from Mount Pleasant was smaller and less diverse. Twelve simple, smooth beads in shades of blue, black, and white were recovered. Three aqua-colored seed beads are small enough to have been embroidered on clothing. Three black and one blue barrel beads were right around 3 mm, a size that could have been used either for clothing or jewelry. Only three beads are large enough to have been exclusively used on jewelry. Two of these are “pony” style beads with large perforations: both are badly patinated but may have been clear originally, and one is a black sub-spherical wound bead. The most noticeable difference between this assemblage and the Accotink assemblage is its uniformity. Based on the similarity of colors and sizes, only a few items of adornment are represented here. If this is really an overseer’s house, it provides an interesting contrast to the lively and diverse bead assemblage at the Accotink Quarter.

Other Jewelry

Beads and sleeve buttons are not the only jewelry items recovered from the sites in this study. This section includes necklace parts, brooches, watch trinkets, and a cowrie shell. Although watch trinkets also make sense as accessories, I decided to include them here because they were often worn as jewelry in the 18th century. Similarly, the cowrie
shell may not have been considered jewelry, but is included here to offer a contrast to the more Euro-centric jewelry found on these sites.

**Watch Trinkets**

Before the Revolution, watches were expensive luxury items imported from England that only the wealthy could afford. In the Federal era, an increase in local watchmakers and improvements in technology made the pocket watch an accessible jewelry item. Improvements in watch mechanisms allowed watches to become sleeker and flatter, so that they could actually be worn in the pocket, and new methods of applying jewels allowed the watches to become objects of jewelry (Fales 1995:128). Men wore watches attached to a chain in a fob pocket on their breeches, and decorative watch trinkets became fashionable in the later part of the 18th century as waistcoats became shorter, revealing the fob pocket and the chain (Figure 7-5). Watches were popular, but owning a watch was not quite as important as looking like you owned one. At the height of the watch craze in the late 18th century, there was even a fad for wearing two watches, one of which was an imitation called a *faux montre* in America (French: “false watch”). These fakes could hide snuff boxes, locks of hair, or miniatures (Fales 1995:131). A less wealthy person might opt to wear just the *faux montre*. The presence of watch trinkets on these sites does not necessarily mean that their owners had watches, real or fake, to go with them: the chains, seals and watch keys were the visible part of the ensemble. Fob seals were also popular jewelry items in their own right, and women could wear them as pendants, with or without the accompanying watch (Scarborough 2016:164). Watches and
Figure 7-5: Satirical print poking fun at late-18th-century male fashion. Note the large and prominent watch chain and trinkets. Print by S.W. Fores, 1795. (Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University)
their accessories were not gender specific: women could wear them attached to the waist on an equipage (later called a chatelaine) or around the neck. Equipages fastened at the waistband of the petticoat with fasteners called stay hooks (Fales 1995:130). Watch trinkets were accessories that helped both men and women embody their genders, but that particular layer of meaning is lost to archaeologists because their use in performing gender relied on where on the body the watch and trinkets were worn. Worn on the pocket of a pair of breeches or trousers, the watch becomes a symbol of male authority. Worn on an equipage along with household keys and sewing trinkets, the watch becomes a symbol of female domesticity (White 2005:130).

Four watch trinkets were recovered from three sites: fob seals from Wingo’s and the House for Families, and a watch key from Mount Pleasant. The fob seal from Wingo’s is the only non-fastener item of jewelry other than beads recovered from any of the field quarter sites. It is made from clear glass paste and decorated with an “engraved intaglio of British crown with orb above it flanked by 2 scepters, held in brass frame with scroll-shaped attachment” (DAACS 2016d) Fob seals could serve a functional purpose: they replaced the signet ring as a way to stamp documents with sealing wax (White 2005:133). However, their use was not limited to literate men and women who needed to seal documents. Seals could be made from many different materials: from carnelian, amethyst and other semi-precious stones, to gold, hard stone, or glass paste. Seals could be engraved with all manner of motifs, and wealthy individuals had their own crest engraved in the seal (Fales 1995:131-133).
What does this particular seal say about the person who wore it? Its wearer could have been male or female, and his or her decision about how to wear it could have been conventional, in keeping with gender or fashion norms, or in a way that perhaps went against these norms. In keeping with its intended use as a document seal, the fob seal was meant to be seen as a symbol of individuality, and the choice of motif may have had some significance to the wearer (Figure 7-6). Did the crown motif have a symbolic significance, or was it simply seen as an attractive design? Barbara Heath, who oversaw the excavations and analysis of the Wingo’s site, found a fob seal with an identical motif in the National Museum of Wales that had been excavated from the grounds of Cardiff.

Figure 7-6: Watch fob intaglio seal, engraved crown and orb from Wingo's. Artifact id 1027-0285B-DRS—00060 Downloaded from DAACS (http://daacsdr.org/homepage/query_two_image_results) on May 4, 2017

University. She believes the symbolism of the orb, coronet, and two scepters was chosen originally chosen not by a enslaved Wingo’s resident, but by the elite plantation owner.
himself. Coronet styles represented the rank of the wearer, and the style of coronet represented on the seal was meant for a duke, the highest level of the peerage. The other symbols, the orb and scepters, represent the monarch. Heath believes that the seal could have been associated with either John Wayles or Thomas Jefferson, as they both served in public office as representatives of the Crown. The base materials used for the seal: glass and copper alloy rather than semi-precious stone and gold or silver, seem to contradict the elite symbolism of the seal itself. Heath argues that perhaps “the seal was manufactured as an affordable accouterment of public office, distributed to communicate public and official, rather than personal and private, identity” (Heath 2015:89). The artifact’s symbolic association with either Jefferson or Wayles, unfortunately, does little to solve the mystery of the seal’s presence at the Wingo’s quarter. Was it a cast-off given directly to a resident of the quarter? Was it lost or discarded by its original, elite owner and found and repurposed by one of the Wingo’s men or women?

Watch accessories were also recovered at the House for Families. Two different watch fob seals were recovered from this context, as well as a copper alloy clasp and jewelry coil that could have been part of either a woman’s necklace or an equipage. One fob seal is nearly complete, with both the seal and filigreed copper frame still in place, while the other is just the copper alloy frame, also filigreed (Figure 7-7). Unlike the seal at Wingo’s, the decorative motif of this fob seal is vaguely Neoclassical, with a bust molded into the glass seal. The decorative motifs of the seal and the frames are actually at odds with each other. The 18th century was the first period when multiple design ideals
Figure 7-7: Watch fob swivel seal; classical figure, intaglio from House for Families. Artifact id 1007-40FF-WTS—00195. Downloaded from DAACS (http://daacsrc.org/homepage/query_two_image_results). Photo by Karen Price.
dominated the decorative arts. Two conflicting schools of design reigned during the 18th century: Neoclassicism and Rococo. Neoclassicism looked backwards to the time of the Greeks and Romans, while Rococo was meant to be modern and fanciful, inspired by natural motifs such as shells, leaves, and feathers (Snodin and Styles 2001:192-199). The sober, clean lines of late-18th-century clothing are more in keeping with Neoclassicism, while the ornate, exuberant designs of the mid-18th century are more inspired by Rococo.

So it is intriguing that this fob seal combines the two supposedly conflicting motifs. Perhaps this was a piece mass produced specifically for lower-class consumers who weren’t bothered with trying to stay true to some specific school of design. Michael Snodin and John Styles (2001:199) note that Neoclassicism took some time to spread from elites to ordinary people, and that even a notable furniture designer like Adam in the 1760s “was content to add a neo-classical spin” to rococo furniture.

Both the mixed decorative motifs and the base metals and glass used on these seals contrast with the luxurious watch items owned by George Washington and his family. Washington owned a number of different watch seals: one made of white cornelian with his coat of arms, and at least two others engraved with his initials. The watches they accompanied were made from gold and imported from France. In 1788, Washington requested a watch for himself be “about the size and kind of that which was procured by Mr. Jefferson for Mr. Madison (which was large and flat)” (Fales 1995:129).

A watch key and a fragment of decorative chain were recovered from Mount Pleasant, a context likely associated with an overseer. Watch keys were another functional and fashionable accessory meant to be attached to a watch fob chain. The
chain fragment from Mount Pleasant could have been part of a fob chain, or it could have been part of an equipage or necklace. Watch keys ranged from base metal keys stamped with simple designs to elaborate objects made with precious metals and gemstones and decorated with fashionable motifs (Fales 1995:129). The watch key from Mount Pleasant is on the cheaper end of the scale: made from copper alloy, it has a round handle decorated with a geometric six-petaled flower surrounded by concentric rings and dots. The person who lost or discarded this item had the inclination to participate in this fashion trend, but lacked the means or desire to procure a flashier watch ornament.

Watch accessories may be rare finds on the sites in this study, but they were clearly not limited to one particular class, race, or gender. They were recovered on all three types of site: a field quarter, a site of enslaved housing associated with a mansion, and a site potentially associated with an overseer. Watch trinkets are objects that were intended to be used as markers of individuality. Their presence on such different types of sites proves that these items were part of a trend that resonated with all walks of life, but that was not so widespread as to be commonplace.

Cowrie Shell

The only potential jewelry-related artifact found at the early Negro Quarter was a single modified cowrie shell. It is the only cowrie recovered on any of the sites in this study. The cowrie is a Monetaria moneta, one of the two species used as currency in trans-African trade and exchange (the other being Monetaria annulus). M. moneta was the primary shell used as currency in the era of the slave trade, although most of the cowries that have been recovered archaeologically in Virginia are M. annulus. Both are
marine gastropods native to the Indian and Pacific Oceans (Heath 2016:19-22). This cowrie has been modified by removal of its rounded back, and wear patterns on the shell indicate that it was probably originally strung. This type of modification is typical of cowries used along the coast of West Africa, where they were traded in strands of set monetary amounts. Most of the shells recovered archaeologically in Virginia and analyzed by Barbara Heath were uncut *M. annulus* shells, although a little less than

![Cowrie shell from Negro Quarter. Artifact id 1003-947J-NOS—00001.](http://daacsrc.org/homepage/query_one_image_results)

Figure 7-8: Cowrie shell from Negro Quarter. Artifact id 1003-947J-NOS—00001. Downloaded from DAACS on May 4, 2017.

half of the *M. moneta* shells were cut (Heath 2016:29). The cowrie from Mulberry Row is a fairly unusual find for the Piedmont region in Virginia, since the majority have been recovered in the Tidewater region (Figure 7-8). The only Piedmont sites containing cowries mentioned in Heath’s article are Monticello, the Foster site, and a site at the University of Virginia, suggesting that these shells were “curated and carried westward before being lost or discarded” (Heath 2016:30). The vast majority of cowries in Virginia
were recovered in or near port towns, pointing to their significance as part of the transatlantic slave trade. Their presence at commercial establishments in the Tidewater also points to the possibility of their use as “an informal medium of exchange” in these areas (Heath 2016:36).

While much of the analysis of cowrie shells on African diasporic sites has focused on their African spiritual significance, Heath’s article suggests the possibility that they were also used as a mode of exchange in the American colonies. Cowries stop appearing in large numbers in Virginia at the same time the slave trade to Virginia ceases in the 1770s (Heath 2016:37). It seems rather unlikely that this particular cowrie was used as a medium of exchange, given that the Negro Quarter is a 1770s-period Piedmont site.

Two meanings could be held by this object, perhaps both simultaneously. The cowrie could have been brought west by someone who had used cowrie shells in the informal economies of the Tidewater, only to discard what was a useless object in an economy that did not use cowries, or the shell had ritual or symbolic purpose and was used as an object of bodily protection or helped in the performance of a uniquely African or African American identity. The story of the people who may have resided in the Negro Quarter could support either interpretation. An enslaved woman named Ursula Granger, her sons Bagwell and George, and possibly her husband Great George were purchased by Thomas Jefferson in 1773. Ursula’s third son, Isaac later recalled the location of their house as being near Jefferson’s deer park: Monticello staff believe this house may have been the Negro Quarter (DAACS.org; Stanton 2012:117). Jefferson purchased Ursula and her family at his wife’s request in Cumberland County. Her oldest and youngest sons
became metalworkers, while her middle son was a farm laborer. Ursula’s husband, Great George, would later become the plantation’s only enslaved overseer (Stanton 2012:117-121). This family is only one of many who lived on Mulberry Row, and it is not certain that they occupied the Negro Quarter, but it is interesting that they came from farther east, closer to the region where cowrie shells had monetary significance. However, the shell’s use as ritual adornment cannot be ruled out. There are accounts of enslaved men and women on Mulberry Row, including Ursula and her family, using the services of a conjurer in Buckingham County. Jupiter, Great George, Ursula, and George all became ill and died in suspicious circumstances: believing they had been poisoned, they consulted a conjurer in Buckingham County to heal them. The white Jeffersons believed that the conjurer was responsible for their deaths (Stanton 2012:130). Thus there is evidence that at least some of the people who lived on Mulberry Row held non-European spiritual beliefs. The economic meaning and the spiritual meaning are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Cowries in Yorubaland in West Africa held both meanings simultaneously (Ogundiran 2002). Whether the significance of the cowrie is monetary, spiritual, or both, this shell represents ties to the global slave trade, either as a marker of African identity still held or a link to informal economies farther east.

Brooch, Pendant, Hat Pin

The later buildings on Mulberry Row contained a few more conventional jewelry items. These artifacts consist of a brooch, a pin for a cloak or hat, and a possible jewelry fragment. The large pin comes from Building T and is cataloged as a “cloak or hat pin,”
but it most likely a hat pin. Its shank of is thick drawn iron wire (1.6 mm dia.) with a wound glass bead head that is about 9 mm in diameter. The glass is heavily patinated, but it appears to have been a dark color, probably black. Unfortunately it is not complete, so it is impossible to determine the pin’s length, but its thickness indicates that it was used for holding together a relatively hefty article of clothing, and its decorative glass head implies that it was meant to be seen. Hat pins would have been fairly common, given the popularity of headwear in the 18th century (Whitacre 2016:144). Fashions during the early Federal era called for extremely large and elaborate hairstyles, with a flat hat cocked at an angle on top of the hair, making hat pins essential for keeping the hat in place. Flat round hats made of straw or a cheaper wood “chip” were produced throughout the 18th century (Mackenzie 2004:8) Runaway slave advertisements indicate that enslaved women sometimes styled their hair in the kind of large, elaborate hairstyles that were in vogue (Blanco et al. 2016:35). When searching for documentary evidence relating to enslaved women wearing hats in Virginia, I only found one runaway slave advertisement for a woman, described as being “fond of dress” wearing a “black chip hat” in 1777 (Virginia Gazette (Dixon & Hunter), Williamsburg, October 3, 1777). Fashions during the turn of the 19th century, the period that building T was occupied, shifted toward more naturalistic, classically-inspired hair, and bonnets that fastened under the chin became more common (Wass and Fandrich 2010:81). Bonnets appear in the runaway slave advertisements more frequently than straw or chip hats toward the later years of the 18th century. One Norfolk woman in 1800 is described as wearing “a black new fashioned paste-board bonnet, trimmed with black ribbon” (Norfolk Herald (Willett
and O‘Connor), Norfolk, October 2, 1800). Thus if this hatpin was used for its original purpose, its wearer was not necessarily following the latest fashions in headwear.

The possible jewelry piece from Building T is an intriguing item of adornment. It is black faceted glass molded into an L shape, possibly part of a cross. The dimensions of the object are 23 mm long by 14 mm wide: a reasonable size for a pendant. Although it is broken, this item was potentially part of a piece of jewelry. Women of Federal-era America wore a wide array of jewelry, such as necklaces, pendant earrings, hair ornaments, and layers of gold chains or pearls. Necklaces usually had “lockets, pendants, and crosses attached to them,” and watches and watch fobs were also in style as women’s necklaces (Scarborough 2016:165). Up until the French Revolution, ornate, layered jewelry was in vogue, only going out of style in the early 19th century when revolutionary sentiments called for more understated styles. In America, this trend toward simplicity and egalitarianism came into fashion for elite revolutionaries earlier (Haulman 2011:96). The variety and type of jewelry available in America was dizzying. A typical advertisement from Williamsburg in 1773 lists “a genteel assortment of millinery and other goods” including: “Paste Necklaces and Earrings, Sprigs and Pins Ditto, Lockets set with Garnets, plain Ditto, Gold and Silver Lockets for Necklaces, Paste and Marcasite Crosses, Foil Stone Ditto, Wax Necklaces and Earrings . . .” (Purdie and Dixon: Oct. 14, 1773). This fragment of jewelry might be a cross made from glass meant to mimic jet.

A large fragment of a gilded copper alloy brooch was recovered from Building S. It is an open oval with a stamped or molded bead design. Although the brooch is broken, it appears that it was not much larger than three centimeters when it was whole. The style
of this particular brooch is similar to a style called a bosom pin that was used to fasten a large handkerchief worn around the neck and shoulders on women, or to decorate a neck stock on men. These brooches were usually heart-shaped and open in the center, with a pin going across the frame’s horizontal axis. The fabric (such as a stock or kerchief) was meant to be wrapped around the pin. Bosom pins were usually set with paste gems (Fales 1995:50). This brooch from Building S may be a cheap version of a bosom pin: the gilded, beaded design could mimic the appearance of a pricier paste-set brooch. Although we think of brooches as exclusively feminine objects today, this brooch would have been appropriate for a man or a woman.

**Accessories**

This category includes items carried on the body as part of a particular persona, whether they be associated with work activities, with fashion, or with leisure. They are items small enough to be easily carried or slipped into a pocket, and they often have specific, repeated actions associated with their use that would imprint themselves on the user’s body such as bringing a pipe to the lips or fluttering a fan. The types of objects recovered from each site reflect the daily lives of their residents and the ways in which their lives could be similar or very different. Someone at every site smoked; someone at nearly every site carried a clasp knife; someone at nearly every site worked with textiles. But other items point to ways in which people’s lives were unique. Not everyone smoked the same type of pipe, and some people were more in touch with mainstream fashion than others (Table 7-8).
Table 7-8: Accessories by Type and Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Tobacco Pipes (minimum count)</th>
<th>Fashion Objects</th>
<th>Task Objects (minimum count)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site 8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>Clasp knife: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scissors: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wingo’s</td>
<td>6*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Needle: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thimble: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Hill</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Clasp Knife: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Needle: 2 (4 frags)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thimble: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scissors: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accotink Quarter</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Slate Pencil: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negro Quarter</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building S</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bobbin: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Needlework tool: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Needle: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scissors: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Slate pencil: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clasp knife: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building T</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Thimble: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scissors: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clasp knife: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House for Families</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Fan Guard: 1</td>
<td>Clasp knife: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Snuff Box: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accotink Overseer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Wig curler: 1</td>
<td>Scissors: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thimble: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sewing ruler: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Pleasant</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>Thread spool: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thimble: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Slate Pencil: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Based on stem/bowl junctures and unique fragments. Crossmending and close examination of surface color and thickness resulted in a minimum count of eight pipes, two of which may be prehistoric.
Fashion Accessories

The only portable fashion accessories recovered on any of the sites in this study came from the House for Families, again setting its residents apart from the people who lived on the other sites. The accessories on the other sites were tobacco pipes or small work items such as clasp knives or thimbles. The House for Families contained tobacco pipes, but no portable work items other than straight pins (which are just as likely to be used only as fasteners). Given the elaborate nature of the clothing items recovered from this structure, the lack of needles, scissors, and thimbles is especially striking. Although the buttons and pins could be interpreted as evidence of sewing, other sites in this study that were occupied by much smaller groups of enslaved people (Buildings S and T, Wingo’s, North Hill) had a greater diversity of sewing artifacts, possibly indicating that the residents of the House for Families were not making clothing on a large enough scale for it to appear in the archaeological record. The accessories that were recovered were potent symbols of 18th-century style: a fan blade guard and a fragment of a snuff or patch box.

Fans were constructed in several parts: carved wood, bone, or ivory sticks provided the structure to which was attached a paper or fabric “leaf” that caught the air and provided a canvas for printed or hand-painted design. Fans were an essential feminine accessory for the fashionable woman, and they “ranged from cheap printed souvenirs bought on the street for a few pence when going to the theatre, to exquisite examples worth hundreds of pounds with a superbly painted leaf and intricately carved ivory sticks inset with jewels” (Hart and Taylor 1998:7). In the early 18th century,
brisé fans constructed entirely of delicately carved ivory sticks with no paper leaf were popular; these fell out of vogue in the 1730s when paper became more widely available. Brisé fans experienced a brief revival at the turn of the 19th century, when an explosion of fans in exotic materials such as tortoiseshell, mother-of-pearl, and sandalwood became available (Hart and Taylor 1998:81-82). All manner of designs could decorate the leaf: pastoral scenes, classical motifs, romantic scenes, and chinoiserie designs were all popular. Advances in printing meant that 18th-century fans could be cheaply printed with political and commemorative motifs and messages: the fan was not an accessory limited to upper-class or aspirational women (Hart and Taylor 1998:7). A bone fan guard blade that is decorated with an incised crosshatched design was recovered from the House for Families. Only the fan guard was recovered, so there is no way to determine what type of motif decorated the original fan. However, compared to fan blade fragments that were recovered in the Mount Vernon midden, this fan guard is less delicately carved and decorated, perhaps indicating a cheaper object. Eleanor Breen interprets the crosshatched design as possible post-manufacture modification, rather than an integral part of the original fan, comparing it to a similarly modified bone objects at the Utopia quarter in James City County (Breen 2013:292). Unfortunately, surviving examples in collections tend to be curated high-style objects, so it is impossible to say exactly what cheap mass-produced fans looked like. It seems just as probable that the coarse decoration seen on this fan blade guard is typical of inexpensive fans.

Fans were an important prop for the performance of femininity. One early-18th century writer, Joseph Addison, imagined the fan as the lady’s weapon in a battle
between the sexes. To him, the fan provided the perfect outward embodiment of a woman’s inward emotions and even her character, belying feelings that might be hidden behind her face. “’There is scarce any emotion in the mind which does not produce a suitable agitation in the fan’, declares Addison, citing the angry Flutter, the modest Flutter, and the amorous Flutter” (Steele 2002:9). The fan also served as a symbol of female sexuality, as a fragile, decorative plaything, and “Fan” was even a popular slang term for female genitalia (Steele 2002:14). Thus, unlike the majority of 18th-century fashion objects recovered archaeologically which could have been worn by either gender, fan parts point directly to the embodiment of femininity.

The snuff box or patch box is another modish accessory of the 18th century, but one that could be associated with either men or women. The copper frame for the top of a small, round box (about 5 cm in diameter) with the fragments of a hinge and iron pin was recovered from the House for Families. This was interpreted by the catalogers as a “snuff, patch or battersea box” (DAACS 2016d). With only the frame and hinge surviving, there is no way to tell whether this item was a snuff or patch box, since both were about the same size and shape and used the same type of frame. The difference is that patch boxes are generally slimmer in thickness. Both types were made from a multitude of materials and had all manner of decorations. Metals such as gold, silver, copper alloy, or pinchbeck (a base imitation of gold); organic materials such as shell, wood, and ivory; or composite materials like papier maché and Battersea enamel were all used (McAusland 1951). A quick scan of 18th-century antiques on auction turned up examples similar to the one recovered from the House for Families with copper alloy frames and hinges of about the
right size and shape (round, from 5 to 8 cm in diameter) decorated with family portraits, an image of George III, a raunchy poem, and even a fanciful figurine of a pug dog (https://www.1stdibs.com/search/?q=snuff+box). Snuff-taking was popular among both men and women and among all ranks of people. For English men, the trend grew up alongside coffeehouse culture; among English working women, it served as a cheap “pick-me-up” (McAusland 1951:23, 33).

This box frame could have been part of a patch box instead. Applying little silk, velvet or paper beauty marks or patches to the face was a practice that went in and out of vogue throughout the 18th century. These patches could be as simple as dots or as elaborate as miniature silhouettes of friends or family. Patches were mostly worn by women, but extremely fashion-conscious men sometimes wore them as well. Patch boxes were made in all the same shapes and materials as snuff boxes, but they were smaller and flatter. Some patch boxes came with a little mirror and a separate compartment for rouge, similar to a modern compact (Corson 2003:203-211).

Since we only have the frame to this box from the House for Families, this object provides few clues for interpretation. Given the number of tobacco pipes recovered from the same contexts, it is clear that tobacco consumption was an activity that many of these individuals enjoyed. This context might support the idea that this object was a snuff box. Taking tobacco as snuff rather than smoke provides a different type of effect: snuff gives a quick burst of energy, while smoking is a more relaxing activity. Snuff taking also involves a different bodily performance: quickly taking a pinch of the substance and bringing it to the nose, rather than the slower ritual of filling the pipe, lighting it, and

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repeatedly bringing it to the lips. This object could have been used by a person who preferred snuff’s quick pick-me-up effect to the more relaxing quality of tobacco smoke, or a person who found the small, decorative snuff box a performance prop that fitted better with his or her persona than the tobacco pipe. Without more information, however, we cannot rule out the idea that this object may have been a patch box, and of course pocket-sized boxes could have been used to carry collections of all sorts of small objects.

**Task-Related Accessories**

With the exception of tobacco pipes, the accessories from the rest of the sites were all task-related items: clasp knives, textile tools, and slate pencils. The sewing artifacts are unevenly distributed across race and class lines. Accotink was the only field quarter without sewing artifacts. In the other field quarters, Wingo’s had a needle and a thimble, North Hill had a thimble, two needles, and three pairs of scissors, and Site 8 had two identical pairs of scissors (one at House 1 and one at House 3-4). The Accotink quarter had no sewing artifacts. Among mansion quarters, the early Negro Quarter of Mulberry Row contained no sewing artifacts, but the other two Mulberry Row buildings did. Building T has a thimble and scissors. Building S has a lace bobbin, an unidentified possible needleworking tool made from bone, a needle, and scissors. There were no sewing-related items other than pins at the House for Families. The overseer’s quarters both contained the largest numbers of sewing-related accessories. The Accotink overseer’s quarter had blunt-nosed scissors, three thimbles, and a fragment of a small copper alloy sewing ruler. Mount Pleasant had a cotton-barrel-style, turned-bone thread spool and three thimbles. The lack of sewing-related artifacts at only three of the nine
sites raises questions about who engaged in textile activities and why. Perhaps sewing was a task either assigned to specific women because of their particular skill, or an activity that specific women engaged in to create items for themselves and their families or to make some spending money. Another possibility that cannot be ruled out is that some households were all male. The presence of sewing artifacts at both Accotink and Mount Pleasant suggests that sewing was a more expected activity for white women.

The other task-related objects are clasp knives and slate pencils. Knives occur across most of the sites associated with enslaved men and women. Five were recovered from Mulberry Row, one at Site 8, one at the House for Families, and one at North Hill. None were recovered from Wingo’s, Accotink, or Mount Pleasant. Slate pencils are a surprising artifact to recover from sites associated with enslaved men and women, given that literacy among slaves was not encouraged, although it did not become illegal in Virginia until 1819 (Virginia 1819:424). Four slate pencils were recovered from Building S on Mulberry Row, one was recovered from the Accotink quarter (but none from the overseer’s house), and two were recovered from Mount Pleasant. Considering that many of the residents of Mulberry Row were craft workers, the presence of so many slate pencils is not surprising and may have been related to their work lives. Likewise, if Mount Pleasant was occupied by an overseer, the slate pencils do not seem unusual. However, the slate pencil at the Accotink quarter is more interesting, especially considering that there were none associated with the overseer’s house.
Tobacco Pipes

I began my analysis by sorting the pipes in these assemblages by material and decorative motif (if any) (Table 7-9). To calculate the minimum number of pipes, I started with Bradley’s (2000) minimum pipe count methodology by calculating both the number of stem/bowl junctures and the number of mouthpieces. The larger number serves as the minimum object count. Into this number I added any bowl or stem fragments that clearly represented unique pipes: fragments of different decorative motifs or materials. Makers’ marks, while informative for questions relating to trade, have little impact on the function or aesthetic appeal of tobacco pipes, so I chose not to include them in this analysis. The vast majority of pipe fragments recovered on all the sites in this study were undecorated white ball clay pipes (N=1,124: 99%). When looking at minimum object counts, the ratio of undecorated white ball clay pipes to other types changes a bit: 50 (77%) pipes are undecorated white ball clay, and 15 (23%) are decorated or other types of materials. There were not enough complete bowls to determine the preferred pipe shape or style of these undecorated forms. It appears most of the smokers at these sites either cared more about the activity of smoking than making a statement, or they valued uniformity more than individuality for their smoking accessories. However, this overall uniformity makes the few unusual pipes stand out all the more. An individual at Building S on Mulberry Row chose a schist pipe. Given how cheap and accessible plain smoking pipes were, a stone tobacco pipe represents a choice to put considerable effort or even expense into a unique object. The almost exclusive...
Table 7-9: Minimum pipe counts by type and site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Ball Clay, undecorated</th>
<th>Ball Clay, decorated</th>
<th>Colonoware</th>
<th>Other Clay decorated(^4)</th>
<th>Other, Clay undecorated</th>
<th>Stone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wingo’s</td>
<td>1 (5)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Hill</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accotink Qtr</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Site 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negro Qtr</td>
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<td>Building T</td>
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<tr>
<td>House for Families</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Pleasant</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accotink Overseer</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>54</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
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</table>

\(^4\) The categories included in this table reflect the categories chosen by the catalogers. Some pipes that may have been colonoware were cataloged as “terra cotta” or “handmade buff clay.” Rather than making assumptions without seeing the artifacts themselves, I have retained these distinctions here.
presence of white ball clay pipes (with the exception of single highly fired buff earthenware fragment) at Accotink is particularly noteworthy because this site has one of the largest assemblages of colonoware in Virginia. Although it is the only tobacco pipe fragment like it in this study, the stone pipe bowl fragment from Building S points to the possibility of a shared community identity among enslaved people owned by the Jefferson family. The bowl fragment is made of an unknown stone, polygonal in shape, and decorated at the rim with a beaded band of paired raised squares. Stone pipemaking was a tradition shared by other members of the Jefferson enslaved community. Evidence for the production of stone pipes at Monticello comes from a stone pipe blank recovered from a disturbed context at Site 8 beneath a brush pile (due to the disturbed nature of this context, I chose not to include it in this study), and six other stone pipe fragments were recovered around Monticello plantation. Not far away, a possible pipe blank made from local phyllite was recovered from Shadwell, the home of Thomas Jefferson’s father (Lee 2012:143). The best evidence for a pipe making tradition comes from the Quarter Site at Poplar Forest, where 36 stone pipe fragments and 17 fragments related to pipe production were recovered. This site is a bit later than Wingo’s and North Hill, with an occupation date from 1790 to 1812. Both elbow-shaped reed-stem pipes and tubular pipes were recovered at the Quarter site, along with the debris from their manufacture (Heath 1999b:56; Lee 2012:132). Polygonal bowls like the one recovered at Mulberry Row were also recovered, but they were decorated with incised crosshatching rather than the raised, square beaded band decorating the Mulberry Row pipe. Pipes like these were not found in the earlier Poplar Forest sites of North Hill and Wingo’s, indicating that the pipe maker
either arrived or learned how to make these pipes at a later date (Lee 2012:137). The pipes at Monticello and those at Poplar Forest are different enough stylistically that it seems probable that they were produced by different individuals, but the presence of stone pipes on all three plantations connected to Thomas Jefferson seems to indicate that a stone carving tradition was shared among the members of this enslaved community (Lee 2012:152).

All of the outliers in tobacco pipe assemblages are sites in the central Piedmont region. Wingo’s, North Hill, and Mount Pleasant all have relatively more diverse collections of tobacco pipes. Mount Pleasant had one colonoware pipe stem fragment, one buff clay pipe stem fragment, and one terra cotta bowl fragment, along with two decorated bowl fragments whose decorative motif was not recorded. The original catalogers did not note the difference between the three fragments that were not white ball clay, and it is possible that all three are in fact colonoware. If Mount Pleasant is an overseer’s quarter, then it is interesting that it contains the only colonoware pipe in this entire study. Wingo’s is the only site where unusual pipes form the majority of the minimum object count. Only a single stem/bowl junction from white ball clay was recovered, although the majority of non-diagnostic bowl or stem sherds recovered were from white ball clay pipes (bowl fragments: N=16, bowl rim fragments: N=4; Stem fragments: N=8). Five bowl fragments of other types of earthenware pipes were recovered. One is hand-made from orange clay with quartz inclusions. The rest are mold-made. Two are lead-glazed brown earthenware, one with inclusions of mica and one without. The final two fragments are both made from unglazed reddish-brown clay. One
of these is decorated with “three roughly horizontal lines and one diagonal line” (DAACS 2016d). Similar tobacco pipes were found at the North Hill Quarter. While five of North Hill’s tobacco pipes are white ball clay, three are lead-glazed pipes of different types of earthenware: a fragment of a glazed orange clay pipe bowl with an incised line decoration; two fragments of lead glazed brown clay, and three bowl fragments with a single incised line below the rim. The unusual nature of the pipes at Mount Pleasant, North Hill, and Wingo’s, and the single schist pipe at Monticello, is the only indication of a possible regional significance to styles of accessories.

**Conclusion**

Archaeology may not generally allow us to trace the choices made by named individuals, but the varied nature of each assemblage shows that enslaved African Americans and lower class whites were not cultural monoliths. Subtle variations in the objects that were recovered from different living spaces on the same sites, such as the differences between artifacts recovered from Buildings T and S on Mulberry Row, or the differences between artifacts recovered from possible house footprints at Site 8, show that decisions about how to use adornment were highly personal (or made on the household level). Some fashion trends were only picked up by a few individuals, yet still crossed class and race lines, as exemplified by the watch accessories recovered from Wingo’s, Mount Pleasant, and the House for Families. Other clothing decisions appear to be a bit more universal, such as the consistent use of undecorated metal buttons among the late-18th century sites. Some artifacts may have carried associations of class and race, such as coat buttons and shoe buckles.
The question of choice is woven throughout this chapter. Who made the decisions about how these men and women presented themselves? A host of factors bounded the actions of every person who lived on these sites, black and white, as they clothed their bodies each day. People were bounded by expectations based on gender, class, race, and ethnicity; by parameters laid out by slaveholders, employers, or heads of household; and by limitations set by wealth, creativity, or the ability to steal or repurpose. The internal desires and identities of individuals might either conflict or converge with these outside influences. Thus, none of the people who wore the items lost or discarded on these sites made their decisions based on an internal identity that was free from outside influence. However, some people may have had more choice than others. We might assume that the overseer at Accotink was constrained only by convention and funds, but what about the enslaved men and women at the House for Families? How much real choice did they have in clothing and adorning their bodies? The symbolic nature of their clothing may have meant that they felt just as constrained and dehumanized by their elaborate suits and gowns as the field laborers in their oznaburg breeches and petticoats. In fact, the field laborers may have experienced more liberty in these matters. The question that is the most compelling is also the question that can never be answered: how did these people feel about their bodies? Did the enslaved house servants buy into the 18th-century ideals of politeness that Washington espoused? If so, did they feel superior to their compatriots in the fields when they wore clothing that molded their bodies into fashionably stiff upright postures and adorned them in sparkling spangles and beads? Were the field laborers attempting to emulate these same polite bodies? Or were they taking advantage
of their slightly greater degree of freedom of movement and expression to adorn
themselves in opposition to politeness and sensibility? Whatever the answers to these
questions, the variations between households even on the same area of the same
plantation seem to indicate that these were highly personal attitudes and decisions
CHAPTER EIGHT
CONCLUSIONS

This study advances our understanding of the dynamics of race-based slavery in Virginia by foregrounding the body as the medium through which identity was constructed. It uses visual, historical, and material sources together to access new insights about the way clothing and the body were used to create identity for lower-class white and enslaved black Virginians during a period when race was becoming an immutable, embodied fact. Bodies meant a great deal in the 18th century: thinkers were obsessed with their classification and analysis; satirists tasked themselves with making sure people used their bodies correctly and in keeping with their station; travelers noticed when they saw bodies clothed and used in unfamiliar ways; labor-owning elites described bodies so they could regain control over them; and laboring men and women used their bodies in the context of all of these proscriptions and descriptions.

All artifacts hold meaning for archaeologists, but artifacts of personal adornment are unique in that their original intended function was to communicate identity to others. Clothing is a form of visual communication, a system of symbols and references that transmits the wearer’s identity to an audience of the people the wearer comes in contact each day. Using these potently meaningful artifacts as sources of purely quantitative data misses the fact that they acted individually and in often unique combinations to shape identities in the past. People and artifacts are both physically-embodied inhabitants of a material world, and artifacts, bodies, ideas, and representations are all a part of a unified cultural whole, not separate pieces to be identified and analyzed in isolation from one
another. In this dissertation I have tried to access a small part of that cultural whole by placing material, visual, and conceptual culture together.

Identity is not a classification into a fixed category, but an active process of belonging and identification in which individuals participate. Harkening back to Judith Butler’s (1990; 1993) groundbreaking concept of performativity, identity is not so much a state of being as a state of doing, and identities are constantly being created and recreated. Identity can be self-fashioned, but it can also be forced upon a person from the outside. Identity is always contextual and historically situated, so even when we see categories in the past that still exist today, such as categories of race, class, or gender, we need to understand what these categories meant to contemporary people.

In the 18th-century Chesapeake, the categories of race, class, and gender were wrapped up in the system of chattel slavery, so understanding identity in this context means understanding the development of race-based slavery. This institution was not a result of a simple linear progression of events, and its creation was not inevitable. As a result of a combination of slavery, colonialism, capitalism, and the Enlightenment, the 18th century saw a new understanding of the body as innately sexed and raced. At the same time, the ideal body vacillated between one that was natural and innate and one that was created through artifice. These conflicts could be seen in the visual culture of the period, especially in mass-produced prints that moralized and commented upon the 18th century body and clothing. Travelers like Benjamin Latrobe took these expectations and applied them to what they saw in Virginia, and they were often surprised by the way they saw people adorning and using their bodies.
Race was the overarching framework for identity in 18th century Virginia. The color of a person’s skin, the texture of his or her hair, and the racialized status of his or her parents determined who a person could be. Race was such a dominant factor in people’s lives that how they dressed had less consequence than the appearance of the body. No matter how people dressed, if they fit a certain imagined bodily category, they were slaves or they were associated with slaves. Likewise if individuals possessed the characteristics that were considered “white,” then no matter how poorly they dressed or how lowly their position, they could always rest assured that they were at least free. As we saw in Latrobe’s drawings, poor white men and women could dress in rags, but their racial superiority remained intact. As the other side of the same coin, black men and women could dress in the finest clothing, such as that worn by the residents of the House for Families, by Julius Soubise, or the enslaved manservant Alic, but it made no difference to their racial status.

My study asks this overarching question: How did the experience of institutionalized slavery shape the materially-expressed identities of both enslaved black and lower-class white members of Virginia society in the 18th century? I divide this question into several smaller ones in an effort to produce some answers through the material and documentary record. How did the modes of expressing identities vary from plantation to plantation in rural Virginia? How did the different social positions of the people who made up a plantation affect the way they interacted with mainstream trends in fashion? Did they adopt ways of dress and display unquestioningly, or did they refashion them to create their own identities and critique these expectations? The matter of how
race, class, and gender played into these negotiations is woven into every one of these questions

*How did the modes of expressing identities vary from plantation to plantation in rural Virginia?*

I answered this question by comparing the artifacts of adornment recovered from plantation contexts associated with enslaved domestics and craft workers with enslaved field laborers and with free white overseers. I compared how these artifacts varied from household to household, both within the same plantation and across plantations. I expected to see differences in the distribution and stylistic qualities of artifacts of adornment across different social contexts, and similarities in artifacts between similar social contexts. After analyzing the artifacts of adornment, I did see some of this expected variability, but I also made some surprising observations.

Social position on the plantation did appear to make a difference in what types of objects of adornment men and women wore, although whether this was because of access or preference is unclear. Buttons are one area where this variability could be observed most easily. With the exception of North Hill, most of the sites associated with enslaved field laborers contained a greater quantity of undecorated metal buttons than those associated with enslaved domestics and craft workers or overseers. What is noteworthy about these buttons is that they do not appear to have been acquired all at once (as would be the case with provisioned items): despite the uniformity in appearance, there is a diversity in manufacturing techniques that points to these buttons being acquired piecemeal. North Hill and Mount Pleasant complicate this observation somewhat, since
North Hill, a field quarter, contained a larger percentage of decorated buttons, and Mount Pleasant, an overseer’s house, contained a large percentage of undecorated buttons. This evidence seems to indicate that although there were some general trends in buttons, individual or household choice was also important.

I also saw variability in contexts associated with people of different social stations in the way they may have responded to the 18th-century emphasis on a neat, put-together appearance. My primary evidence for these differences is in the variable distribution of straight pins across different contexts. The larger quantities of straight pins recovered from contexts associated with overseers and enslaved domestics compared to the small numbers recovered from contexts associated with enslaved field laborers points to different expectations in neatness of dress between these groups. Straight pins were required for a neat, “put-together” appearance in women’s dress, and they were essential for high-style gowns, but they were not essential for the types of clothing available to female field laborers. I cannot prove this conclusively with the evidence I have here, but it is a question for future researchers to keep in mind as better data become available. The fact that both the overseers’ houses and the House for Families contained an impressive number of straight pins may indicate that enslaved women who worked in the public eye were required to conform to 18th-century standards of respectability, while the women in overseers’ households may have used neatness in dress as a way to maintain their respectability in the face of elites who considered them low class.

Lower class white Virginians experienced privileges because of the way their bodies were conceived of in contrast to black bodies, but the overseers and their families
who are included in this study were not simply expressing some kind of “white overseer” identity through their clothing and adornment choices. The artifacts recovered from the Accotink overseer’s quarter versus the Mount Pleasant site seem to indicate different emphases on clothing and adornment that may relate to different priorities and decisions made at the individual or household level. The Accotink overseer or his household seemed to have a preference for decorated metal buttons, while the household at Mount Pleasant wore more plain metal buttons mixed with occasional textile buttons. Members of both household liked sleeve links, but the people at Accotink seemed to prefer quantity and the people at Mount Pleasant seemed to prefer quality. The Accotink residents had a use for large glass trade beads, while the people at Mount Pleasant used smaller, more matched beads. Someone at Mount Pleasant participated in the watch trinket fad, while there is no evidence for watches at Accotink.

Shoes are one aspect of dress that varied between contexts but proved to be surprisingly difficult to interpret. The documentary record seems to indicate that shoes carried strong class and race connotations. The numbers of “Negro shoes” that appear in the runway advertisements show how shoes could be racialized. If Latrobe’s sketches are any indication, shoes, or lack thereof, were an article of dress that separated respectable people from the “rabble.” The archaeological distribution of shoes is less clear. The overseer’s houses and the House for Families had enough decorated shoe buckles to suggest that buckles were used as a part of neat and respectable dress. However, the numbers of shoe buckles that were recovered from Mulberry Row were surprisingly low, and the presence of a spur at Site 8, plus buckles at Poplar Forest complicates what would
seem like a clear class or race division in shoes. The possible significance of buckled shoes is a question to keep in mind for future archaeological studies of class and race.

*How did the different social positions of the people who made up a plantation affect the way they interacted with mainstream trends in fashion?*

Although the wide date ranges of the sites in question make any definitive statements difficult to make, the types of objects recovered on nearly every site may indicate that almost everyone, no matter their social position, interacted with mainstream fashion in some way. Some men and women appeared to have engaged with fashion more than others. The members of the House for Families, although they were enslaved, had more fashionable items than any other group, in the form of beads for embroidered clothing, sleeve links, textile buttons, and fashionable accessories, although the large number of people who lived in the house also has an effect on the number of items that were recovered. Residents of Mulberry Row participated in fashion as well, though to a much lesser degree than at Mount Vernon. The presence of jewelry items like a brooch and hat pin, plus potential sleeve links, show evidence of some engagement with fashion. Overseers also used fashion: the family at Accotink made use of stylish decorated metal buttons and a variety of sleeve links, but their dress was more understated than that of the people at the House for Families. Field laborers also participated in fashion to some degree, from the wearing coats instead of provisioned jackets, to occasional sleeve links, to a few decorated shoe buckles and a spur, to a watch trinket. The erratic distribution of many of these artifacts of adornment indicates to me that clothing and adornment were one area where individuality and personal preference can be seen in the archaeological
record. Although intriguing trends can be noted, there is also a great deal of diversity, and no definitive statements can be easily made about the variation in personal adornment items across these sites.

For enslaved men and women, enslavement affected how their identities could be expressed materially. These people were limited by what they were allowed to do by the slaveholder and what few liberties they could negotiate or take for themselves within the confines of enslavement. Most enslaved men and women, whether they worked as house servants or field laborers, had no choice in what they wore during their daily work. However, they may have been able to dress and adorn themselves how they liked on their own time, and hair may have been an area where they were allowed to do as they saw fit. Wearing clothing and working at tasks that are not of one’s own choosing six days a week would have had an effect on a person’s self-perception and identity. The materials these men and women were forced to wear were not always coarse and low quality: the residents of the House for Families were quite well dressed. So dehumanizing effects of the clothing of slavery may not have been so much a result of having to wear certain items, such as “negro cloth” or livery, but in the fact that the makeup of their bodies themselves were used as the justification for their oppression.

How were free white people interacting with all of these messages? Their racial superiority, at least, was assured, allowing them to interact with white elites. Whether or not they participated in mainstream fashion, the trends they saw were developed and meant to be worn by bodies that looked like their own, allowing them to be more easily understood by white elites when they used the language of clothing for each other. But
just because the fashions were developed for their bodies did not mean that lower class white men and women could participate in trends without risking misunderstanding and mockery by their “betters”. The 18th century was full of complicated and contradictory messages about how a person should use his or her body in accordance with class and gender expectations: even an elite person who had full access to the latest goods and ideas could get it wrong.

*Did they adopt ways of dress unquestioningly?*

Although this question cannot be answered definitively, I do believe there is evidence for men and women potentially using clothing and adornment and mainstream fashion to contest prevailing messages about their bodies. The fact that enslaved men on every site in this study appeared to have worn coats is one piece of evidence that points in this direction. The documentary record alone seems to indicate that enslaved men who did agricultural labor never wore the three-piece suit of coat, jacket, and breeches/trousers required of a respectable man. Provisioning lists indicate that these men were generally only given jackets (or only given enough fabric to make jackets), and runaway advertisements also confirm that field laborers generally escaped without coats. With this documentary evidence, it is surprising that I did find significant numbers of buttons of a size that was likely meant for use on coats, not jackets or vests, on every site. This may be evidence of enslaved men wearing these garments of respectability, either simply to have a complete, dressy outfit, or perhaps to actively contest their debased status.
Other pieces of evidence may point to men and women choosing not to adopt mainstream fashion, or using items to express ethnic or group identity. The pierced button at Wingo’s may be evidence for people using objects of European fashion in an unconventional or surprising way. The fact that a few individuals owned by Thomas Jefferson preferred to smoke tobacco with decidedly non-mainstream carved stone pipes may be another area of expressing an identity that was distinct from that of white popular culture. The cowrie shell from Mulberry Row, although its purpose is unclear, is another item that may point to enslaved Africans and African Americans expressing a distinct identity. The runaway advertisements show enslaved men and women using their bodies in ways that both fit into the mainstream and were at odds with it. Some individuals tied their hair in “tails” or combined articles of clothing in new and surprising ways, but other individuals dressed very respectably and used items of fashion in conventional ways. The fact that many fugitive enslaved men and women were able to successfully clothe and shape their bodies to disguise themselves as free people of color indicates that they understood the language of clothing quite clearly. The phenomenon of the black macaroni indicates that at least a few black men embodied a direct challenge to the prevailing messages about race and gender.

With bodies already coded and classified into such rigid categories, why bother with self-expression through clothing at all? Some people must have had this attitude, as indicated by the small quantities of adornment artifacts recovered from the field quarters and the large numbers of men and women who fled bondage wearing the coarse clothing of slavery. The enslaved people who ran away decided to contest their status not through
clothing, but through the ultimate embodied protest of stealing their own bodies. But both
the archaeology and the documents also show enslaved men and women who cared about
how they dressed. The few durable items that have made their way into the
archaeological record are but a pale reflection of the rich world of textiles available to
18th-century men and women. The fact that we have a few vestiges of these items:
fragments of buttons, sleeve links, beads, buckles, and accessories, proves that there may
have been enslaved individuals on plantations who did use artifacts of adornment to talk
back to the messages of their bodily inferiority.

Free whites also interacted with fashion in variable ways. The overseers at
Accotink and Mount Pleasant appeared to have had an interest in dressing respectably,
and many of the white men and women in the runaway advertisements dressed in
conventional or even stylish clothing. But not even all white people had access to
respectable clothing: a number of convict servants ran away wearing the clothing of
enslaved field laborers. Latrobe’s illustrations indicate that lower class white men and
women were not necessarily striving for respectability in the way that they dressed. The
barefoot man in the tavern at Hanover Town seems to have not cared in the least about
dressing correctly. The woman and children Latrobe illustrated in their outlandish
bonnets cared far more about keeping their skin white than about dressing correctly.

How did race, class and gender play into these negotiations?

I was expecting much more variation along racial lines than I actually
encountered. People of both races used the same items of dress in similar ways. In the
runaway advertisements, white fugitives did generally dress better than enslaved
fugitives, but the numbers were not as clear-cut as I expected. Overseers and enslaved
domestics and craft workers had more in common in terms of dress with each other than
they did with enslaved field laborers. The distribution of beads was another surprise. The
presence of trade beads at both overseers’ houses complicates our assumptions about the
role of beads in enslaved African and African American culture. The bead distribution at
Accotink was particularly interesting, where far greater numbers of beads were associated
with the overseer’s house than with the slave quarter. We need to further investigate the
role of beads on sites associated with white men and women.

If race was immutable, then how people dressed when they could choose their
own clothing may have been less about identifying with a racial group than about
identifying with a class or other social group or about expressing individuality, a reality
that may be reflected in the archaeological and documentary record. Although my small
sample size certainly factors in, the fact that the trends I saw in the archaeological
materials and the runaway ads are so full of exceptions makes me believe that trying to
articulate an overarching “black style” or “poor white style” is unproductive. Fashion, the
body, and identity are by their very nature some of the most personal and individualistic
aspects of a culture. There are so many factors at play that would affect how an
individual saw their own body. How much did an individual “buy in” to the prevailing
messages about his or her body? About race? About fashion? Which of the many mixed
messages was he or she picking up on? How much did the individual even care about
their body or how it would be perceived?
In the visual record, we see poor white men not letting their shabby clothing prevent them from interacting with elite white men. But at the same time we see class embodied in what people wore and how they carried their bodies. The visual satirists showed us that rising above one’s station as a poor white was seen as distasteful. There also seems to have been some anxiety about the mutability of race: the possibility that black and white might not have been the hard category that everyone tried to pretend it was. So we see women carefully covering themselves in giant bonnets and “disfiguring” dresses to keep their racial superiority unblemished, and we see slaveholders tripping over their words as they try to explain what family history or physical characteristics made a light-skinned enslaved person not white. Slaveholders noticed minute bodily details and held them up as proof that mixed-raced individuals were not white and thus deserved enslavement. In the eyes of the slaveholders, not even the finest clothing could hide the truth imprinted on the bodies of those who they deemed as lesser.

Although I have kept gender in mind as an important category of identity in this study, it was difficult to separate it out for analysis, especially in the archaeological data. I do not believe it is possible to answer questions about gender that foreground male versus female using objects of adornment from sites from this period. With the exception of straight pins and a few gendered accessories like fans and spurs, every artifact of adornment that can be recovered archaeologically can be used to gender either male or female bodies. Buttons have been long held up as uniquely male items of adornment, but historical documents and surviving items of clothing show that they could also be occasionally used on female garments. Sleeve links were used by both men and women.
Watches and their accessories were powerful gender symbols, but their use in constructing gender depended entirely on their placement on the body. Even items that seem unequivocally feminine today like beads, gemstones, and brooches, could help construct either masculine or feminine identity, depending on their usage. Thus, I have kept most of my conclusions about gender on these sites intentionally vague: we know that these items were used in the construction of gender, but it is difficult to determine how this was accomplished.

**Limitations and possibilities for future research**

This study was limited by both time and the number of resources that were available to me. The small number of sites that were analyzed, their temporal distribution, plus the differences in site formation processes and excavation techniques likely affect my conclusions. A larger and more detailed analysis of both images and runaway advertisements would also have strengthened my conclusions and potentially pointed to trends that this study missed. Determining a broad regional pattern, if one exists, would require scaling up this project on a significant scale, analyzing as many curated collections as are available and every runaway advertisement and image that can be found, plus excavating more sites associated with poor white people, all the while tightly controlling for chronological factors, since fashion varies so much through time. A fine-grained, long-range study might show ways of dressing and representing the body changing significantly as race becomes more immutable as a bodily category. To accomplish such a goal, I would need to expand the chronological parameters of the study to cover the entire “long” 18th century, from the 1690s to the 1810s. This
dissertation does not have enough sites or sources to answer such a question, and its focus on the latter half of the 18th century is on a period when the concept of race has become more or less entrenched. Other avenues for future research include investigating the possibility that the use of straight pins varies by class and race; pursuing a better understanding of how poor whites used beads; and pursuing the class and race implications of shoes.

There is a paradox to the embodiment of identity in the late 18th century. The people in power tried to keep up the charade that race was real and immutable, no matter how a person dressed or acted, yet at the same time enslaved people could use clothing and body language to disguise themselves as free, poor whites had to worry about becoming too dark in the sun, and slaveholders may have suspected that the bodies of the people who escaped their grasp were not really that different from their own. We also see this paradox in the push and pull of nature versus artifice in the fashions of the period. Could a person use material culture to improve his or her body, or was “natural” always better? The natural, unadorned body became the ideal right around the same time that race became an absolute physical category. With such a swirl of contradictory messages forming the cultural milieu of 18th-century Virginia, we should not expect the archaeology of clothing and adornment to be straightforward or easy to interpret, but for those willing to wrestle with the complexities of these artifacts, they offer a powerful way to understand some of the most personal aspects of lived experience.
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Haulman, Kate

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313


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Lee, Lori


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Loren, Diana DiPaolo


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Lydon, Jane

Lynn, Eleri

McAusland, Hugh

Mackenzie, Althea

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O'Brien, Karen

Ogundiran, Akinwumi

Orser, Charles.


Orser, Charles E., Jr. and Pedro P. A. Funari

Ortner, Sherry B.

Otto, John Solomon

Parent, Anthony
Parker, Freddie L.  

Paynter, Robert  

Pogue, Dennis  


Pogue, Dennis and Esther White  

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Rauser, Amelia  

Rivers Cofield, Sara  

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Stolberg, Michael

Styles, John

Summers, Leigh

Tilley, Christopher

Thomas, Brian W. and Larissa Thomas.

Trigger, Bruce

Tringham, Ruth E.

Upton, Dell
Virginia

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1770 Runaway Advertisement. 13 December. Williamsburg, VA.
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1770 Runaway Advertisement. 15 March. Williamsburg, VA.
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1770 Runaway Advertisement. 26 July. Williamsburg, VA
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White, Shane

White, Shane and Graham White


White, Sophie

Wilkie, Laurie A.
Williams, Bryn
Wilkins, Andrew

Wilson, Gaye

Windley, Lathan Algerna

Withey, Alun

Wood, Margaret C.

Wurst, Louann

Young, Amy L.

Yale University
## Buttons, Negro Quarter

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<thead>
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<th>Button Type</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Decoration</th>
<th>No.</th>
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<tr>
<td>2-piece, back only</td>
<td>Bone with copper alloy eye</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flat disc, concave back, alpha shank</td>
<td>Copper alloy, identifiable shank material</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat disc, concave back, shank in boss</td>
<td>Tombac, copper alloy shank</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat disc, concave back, shank in boss</td>
<td>Tombac, missing shank</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat disc, shank in boss</td>
<td>Tombac, copper alloy shank</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat disc, alpha shank</td>
<td>Copper alloy, copper alloy shank</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat disc, alpha shank</td>
<td>Copper alloy, iron shank</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
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## Buttons, Building T

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Material</th>
<th>Metal Color</th>
<th>Decoration</th>
<th>No.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Blank/Mold</td>
<td>Bone</td>
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<td>None</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ring</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Piece</td>
<td>Copper Alloy Face and Back</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>“Parallel, horizontal lines stamped into a depressed center.”</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Piece</td>
<td>Shell Face, Missing Back</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>FD concave back, Alpha Shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy, missing shank</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FD concave back, shank in boss</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Alpha Shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>“Small circles in the center of the button.”</td>
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<td>Flat Disc, alpha shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, alpha shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Alpha Shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Unid.</td>
<td>May have traces of black lacquer or paint</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buttons, Building T</td>
<td>Button Type</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>Metal Color</td>
<td>Decoration</td>
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<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>Flat Disc, Alpha Shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy, missing shank</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Cone w/ Wire Eye</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Flat Disc, unid. shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>n/r</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, shank in boss</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, shank in boss</td>
<td>Copper Alloy, iron shank</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, alpha shank</td>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Bone</td>
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<td>Button Ring</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Four-hole</td>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Piece, domed, hollow cast</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Unid.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Piece, domed</td>
<td>Copper Alloy front and back</td>
<td>Unid.</td>
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<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Unid.</td>
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<tr>
<td>FD concave back, alpha shank</td>
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<td>Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FD concave back, unid shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Unid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Alpha Shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Flat Disc, Alpha Shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Various back stamps</td>
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<td>Flat Disc, Alpha Shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>White</td>
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<td>Flat Disc, Alpha Shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Spearhead back stamp</td>
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<td>Description</td>
<td>Quantity</td>
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<td>Various back stamps</td>
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<td>Flat Disc, Alpha Shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Alpha Shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy, missing shank</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>“Four impressed circles at the cardinal points centered on the shank; Series of impressed circles around the edge of the button”</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, cone w/wire eye</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, embedded wire</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Unid</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Flat Disc, missing shank</td>
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<td>Silver plated</td>
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<td>Flat Disc, missing shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Back stamp</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Flat Disc, Omega shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Shank in Boss</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>White</td>
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<td>Flat Disc, Shank in Boss</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
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<td>Flat Disc, Wire Eye</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>Flat Disc, embedded wire</td>
<td>Pewter, Copper Alloy Shank</td>
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<td>Pewter, iron shank</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Shank in boss, missing shank</td>
<td>Pewter</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Flat Disc, unid shank</td>
<td>Pewter</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, cone w/wire eye</td>
<td>Tombac, copper alloy eye</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Shank in boss</td>
<td>Tombac, copper alloy eye</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buttons, Building S</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>Color</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Shank in boss</td>
<td>Tombac, missing shank</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, unid shank</td>
<td>Tombac</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buttons, House for Families</th>
<th>Button Type</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Metal Color</th>
<th>Button Decoration</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Button Ring</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Piece, Domed</td>
<td>Pewter</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Raised molded initials: “HP”</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-Piece, face only</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Sheffield Plate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-Piece, complete</td>
<td>Bone back, Copper Alloy face</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Gilded</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-Piece, complete, 4-hole back</td>
<td>Bone back, Copper Alloy face</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Gilded, basketweave pattern</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-Piece, face only</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>White (plated)</td>
<td>“Central design is a four 'petaled' possible flower with a background lattice design”</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-Piece, face only</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>White (plated)</td>
<td>“Criss-crossing linear pattern of very fine detail”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Piece, Face Only</td>
<td>Metallic Textile</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Look this up, either “basket” or “death’s head”</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Piece, Back only</td>
<td>Bone</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2 Piece, Back only</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Piece, Back only</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collar Button, Bar Type</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FD, concave back, shank in boss</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FD, concave back, shank in boss</td>
<td>Tombac, iron shank</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Button Type</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>Color</td>
<td>Decoration</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FD, concave back, missing shank</td>
<td>Tombac</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, shank in boss</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, unid shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, cast eye</td>
<td>Pewter</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, shank in boss</td>
<td>Tombac</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>43</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buttons, Site 8, House 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Button Type</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, alpha shank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, alpha shank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, alpha shank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, missing or unid shank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Cone with wire eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Shank in Boss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, alpha shank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, alpha shank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buttons, Site 8, House 3/4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Button Type</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, alpha shank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, unknown shank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, unknown shank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Piece, back plate only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Button Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, shank in boss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, missing shank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Alpha Shank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, missing Shank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Buttons, Site 8, House 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Button Type</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Decoration</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Alpha Shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Gilt</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Alpha Shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Shank in Boss</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Plated, Silver/Tin,</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Shank in Boss</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc Shank in Boss</td>
<td>Copper Alloy, missing shank</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc Shank in Boss</td>
<td>Tombac, Copper Alloy Shank</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc Shank in Boss</td>
<td>Tombac, Iron Shank</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc Shank in Boss</td>
<td>Tombac, Copper Alloy Shank</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Depressed center surrounded by engraved circle and angled hatching</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Buttons, Wingo’s
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flat Disc Shank in Boss</th>
<th>Tombac, Iron Shank</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Engraved twelve-pointed star or flower.</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Cast Eye</td>
<td>Pewter</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Engraved ten-pointed star</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Buttons, Accotink Overseer’s House

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Button Type</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Decoration</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-piece, semi-domed</td>
<td>Glass, wire eye</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-piece</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Gilt</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-piece, Back Only</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-piece, five hole</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Plated, stamped floral design</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-piece, face only</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>“stamped star decoration on a field of diamond hatching”</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-piece, face only</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Gilt, stamped pattern</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“concave center, stamped dot pattern, cement attached to interior”</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-piece, face only</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Fragmented, unidentified decoration</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-piece, face only</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>“decorative circular pattern”</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-piece, face only</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Gilt, “recessed center, engraved decorative pattern”</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Button Type</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>Color</td>
<td>Decoration</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat disc, alpha shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat disc, drilled eye</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat disc, unid shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>“recessed center with stamped circle decoration”</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat disc, unid shank</td>
<td>Pewter</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>“engraved five point star decoration”</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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### Buttons, Accotink Slave House

<table>
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<th>Button Type</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Decoration</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, wire eye</td>
<td>Pewter, unid eye</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Engraved floral motif</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat disc, cast eye</td>
<td>Pewter</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Buttons, Mount Pleasant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Button Type</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Button Color</th>
<th>Decoration</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ring</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank/Mold</td>
<td>Bone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Piece, semi-domed,</td>
<td>Glass, Missing Eye</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wire Eye</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Piece, Back Only</td>
<td>Tombac, Copper Alloy Shank</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Piece, semi-domed,</td>
<td>Bone, Copper Alloy Eye</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back Only</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Piece, semi-domed,</td>
<td>Copper Alloy,</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>Missing Shank</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Piece, semi-domed</td>
<td>Tombac Face, Iron Back and Shank</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Convex Back,</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shank in Boss</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Cone with</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wire Eye</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
### Buttons, Mount Pleasant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Shank Type</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Drilled eye</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Unid</td>
<td>May be silver plated</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Alpha Shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Unid Shank</td>
<td>Copper Alloy</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Cast Eye</td>
<td>Pewter</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc</td>
<td>Pewter</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>“Cast six-lobed knotwork design with three layers of interwoven 'threads' surrounding a six-pointed star in the center.”</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Drilled Eye</td>
<td>Pewter</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Unid Shank</td>
<td>Pewter</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Unid Shank</td>
<td>Tombac</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat Disc, Shank in Boss</td>
<td>Tombac, Copper Alloy Shank</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td><strong>23</strong></td>
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</table>

### Tobacco Pipe Fragment Counts, Wingo’s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Stem Frag.</th>
<th>Bowl Frag.</th>
<th>Stem/Bowl Juncture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White ball clay, undecorated</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handmade, orange clay, quartz inclusions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead-glazed brown earthenware</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead-glazed brown earthenware, mica inclusions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reddish-brown earthenware, decorated with incised lines</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reddish-brown earthenware</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tobacco Pipe Fragment Counts, Accotink Quarter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Stem Frag.</th>
<th>Bowl Frag.</th>
<th>Stem/Bowl juncture</th>
<th>Mouthpiece</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White ball clay, undecorated</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buff bodied earthenware</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tobacco Pipe Fragment Counts, Site 8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Stem Frag.</th>
<th>Bowl Frag.</th>
<th>Bowl, complete</th>
<th>Stem/Bowl Juncture</th>
<th>Mouthpiece</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White ball clay, undecorated</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White ball clay, scalloped decoration</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tobacco Pipe Fragment Counts, Negro Quarter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Stem Frag.</th>
<th>Bowl Frag.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White ball clay, undecorated</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tobacco Pipe Fragment Counts, Building T**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Stem Frag.</th>
<th>Bowl Frag.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White ball clay, undecorated</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Tobacco Pipe Fragment Counts, Building S

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Stem Frag.</th>
<th>Bowl Frag.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White ball clay, undecorated</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buff clay, molded rib decoration on bowl</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carved schist, polygonal decoration</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tobacco Pipe Fragment Counts, House for Families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Stem Frag.</th>
<th>Bowl Frag.</th>
<th>Bowl, complete</th>
<th>Stem/Bowl Juncture</th>
<th>Mouthpiece</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White ball clay, undecorated</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White ball clay, scalloped decoration</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tobacco Pipe Fragment Counts, Mount Pleasant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Stem Frag.</th>
<th>Bowl Frag.</th>
<th>Stem/Bowl Juncture</th>
<th>Mouthpiece</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White ball clay, undecorated</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White ball clay, decorated</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terra Cotta</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buff Clay</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonoware</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tobacco Pipe Fragment Counts, Accotink Overseer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Stem Frag.</th>
<th>Bowl Frag.</th>
<th>Stem/Bowl Juncture</th>
<th>Mouthpiece</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White ball clay, undecorated</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Beads from Building S

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size and Shape</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medium Sub-spherical</td>
<td>Light Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Sub-spherical</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Sub-spherical</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size and Shape</td>
<td>Color</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Sub-spherical</td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Sub-spherical</td>
<td>Dark Blue</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Spherical</td>
<td>Aqua</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Faceted</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Waisted</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Beads from Building T**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size and Shape</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large Sub-spherical</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Sub-spherical</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Beads from Mount Pleasant**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size and Shape</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seed Bead</td>
<td>Aqua/Light Green</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawn barrel</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawn barrel</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawn Tubular</td>
<td>Aqua/Light Green</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wound Barrel</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawn barrel Pony Style</td>
<td>Unidentifiable</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wound Sub-Spherical</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Beads from Accotink Overseer’s House**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size and Shape</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drawn Barrel</td>
<td>Black w/ white stripes</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawn Barrel</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawn Barrel</td>
<td>Blue Green</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawn Disc</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawn Disc</td>
<td>Blue Green</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawn Disc</td>
<td>Lt Purple Blue</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawn Disc</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawn Sub-spherical</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Very Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawn Tubular</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Very Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawn Tubular</td>
<td>Med. Purple Blue</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shape and Size</td>
<td>Color</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawn Tubular, Cased</td>
<td>Red on Green</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molded Square</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Very Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wound Faceted</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>Very Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faceted</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Very Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wound Sub-spherical</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beads from House for Families</th>
<th>Shape and Size</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seed Bead</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed Bead</td>
<td>Aqua</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed Bead</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed Bead</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed Bead</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed Bead</td>
<td>Bright green</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seed bead</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Drawn Barrel</td>
<td>Bright green</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Drawn Barrel</td>
<td>Dark Blue</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Drawn Barrel</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Drawn Barrel</td>
<td>Light blue</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Drawn Barrel</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Drawn barrel</td>
<td>Aqua</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Drawn Sub-Spherical</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Drawn Sub-Spherical</td>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Drawn Sub-Spherical</td>
<td>Light blue</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Drawn Sub-Spherical</td>
<td>Aqua</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Drawn Sub-Spherical</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Drawn Sub-Spherical</td>
<td>Dark Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Drawn Sub-Spherical</td>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Drawn Tubular</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Drawn Tubular</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Drawn Tubular</td>
<td>Dark Blue</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Color</td>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Large Drawn Tubular</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Large Drawn Tubular</td>
<td>Red/dark blue</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>125</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hope Smith was born in Richmond, Virginia in 1983 to Philip and Barbara Smith. She was homeschooled by her parents from kindergarten through high school, where she was encouraged to pursue interests in art and the humanities. Her love of hands-on, interdisciplinary learning led her to a BA in Historic Preservation at the University of Mary Washington in 2005. It was in this program that she discovered that Historical Archaeology combined all of the topics she found most interesting: history, anthropology, and material culture. After a field school at Jamestown, Hope went on to work in cultural resource management before being hired as a field archaeologist at James Madison’s Montpelier. At Montpelier, at the encouragement of Matthew Reeves, she decided to pursue a PhD in Anthropology with a focus in Historical Archaeology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 2011. While at the University of Tennessee, Hope received a fellowship from the DAACS Research Consortium to recatalog the Mount Pleasant assemblage into the DAACS online database. For her last year of writing, she was awarded the University of Tennessee Humanities Center Fellowship. Hope graduated from the University of Tennessee in 2017.