

John Quincy Adams

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Professor Peterson

Narrative of the Life of John Quincy Adams,
When in Slavery, and Now as a Freeman

This slave narrative isn't like most being that John Quincy Adams' main focus is his family. He never mentions gruesome moments or times where he thought he couldn't survive from being mistreated. Instead, he showed how his family and their unity were most important to him. In my research I want to bring emphasis on the bond he and his family had, especially him and his twin brother Aaron. I would like to answer questions like "Why does he include more information about his family more than mistreatment?" and "How does his family impact his life?" I will explore these questions by finding resources that will dig deeper into his life to help me understand their relationship.

Annotated Bibliography

Polsky, Milton. *The American Slave Narrative: Dramatic Resource Material for the Classroom*. 2nd ed. Vol. 45. D.C.: Journal of Negro Education, 1932. Web. 15 Feb. 2012.

This source explains the reasons behind most slave narratives. In my research I will show the difference between well-known slave narratives and John Quincy Adams'. He didn't do so much of describing suffering from forced labor or mistreatment but suffering from the loss of his family. This source will help compare the two factors.

"the narratives served as important weapons in the warfare against slavery"

Roberts, Kevin D.. "Adams, John Quincy." *African American National Biography*. Ed. Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham. New York: Oxford UP, 2008. Oxford African American Studies Center. Sun Feb 12 17:08:23 EST 2012.
<<http://www.oxfordaasc.com/article/opr/t0001/e1857>>.

This article sums up Adams' narrative. It shows how his family impacted his life and was the cause of his happiness and also sadness. This source will be useful because it helps me understand the emotions behind Adams' writing.

"The most poignant events in Adams's early life involve the sale of family members and friends. In 1857 the sale of his twin brother Aaron and his sister Sallie left Adams "very sad and heart-broken"

Simkin, John. "Slave Families." Spartacus Educational. Web. 15 Feb. 2012.
<<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USASseparation.htm>>.

In this source it gives reasons why slaves were separated from their families. It varies from economic reasons to bad behavior. This source could be useful by giving me a better understanding of why Adams' family was separated.

"Frequently, before the child has reached its twelfth month, its mother is taken from it, and hired out on some farm a considerable distance off."

"Slavery in Western Virginia." West Virginia Division of Culture and History. West Virginia Archives and History. Web. 15 Feb. 2012. <http://www.wvculture.org/history/slavery.html>

This website gives details on slavery in Virginia during the 1800s. Part of the reason why Adams probably didn't mention any real hardship in his narrative is because slavery at this time wasn't so harsh. He was born in 1845 and slaves around this time really weren't needed in Virginia. He probably didn't experience anything as cruel as most because slaves weren't as profitable as those in southern states.

"slavery was no longer as profitable in the east and slaves were frequently hired out or sold"

Williams, Heather Andrea. "How Slavery Affected African American Families." Freedom's Story, TeacherServe©. National Humanities Center. February 15, 2012.
<<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/freedom/1609-1865/essays/aafamilies.htm>>

This essay explains the role of the slave family on the plantation. Every family member, even the youngest had a specific job within the plantation. I could possibly use this essay as a way to describe why Adams' family was so close to one another. This source tells how the families worked together and also fought to stick together.

"Enslaved people lived with the perpetual possibility of separation through the sale of one or more family members"