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Emancipation Landscapes: Archaeologies of Racial Modernity and the Public Sphere in Early New York

> *The public sphere was a space of opportunity as well as of danger, a space of abysmal voicelessness as well as of unexpected opportunities for expression.… Consequently, freedom was broadly experienced not as a natural or inherent state of being but as a profoundly discontinuous and contingent condition that required constant vigilance.*
>
> - Brooks (2005:92)

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the creation of the public sphere as a key context for understanding early 19th century New York. The focus is on the struggles and conflicts that came with emancipation as whites and African Americans negotiated their place on the same landscape. Whites took advantage of their superior position to subtly designate public space as white. This segregation was absorbed into the landscape so that it can be recognized in new settlement patterns and changes in domestic landscapes. African Americans countered white claims to urban space in varied ways, with a special emphasis placed on inserting themselves in publicly visible positions. African American attempts to racially integrate the public sphere ultimately failed leading to the development of more formalized forms of segregation that helped to underwrite more damaging assumptions about African American racial inferiority in the antebellum era.

Introduction

It is context that makes material things important. Where things come from, what they were part of and found with, how they were made and used, and by and for whom constitute the basic questions archaeologists must answer in order to understand their material findings. Building proper interpretive contexts, however, is not straightforward. As the field of historical archaeology continues to grow, the process of placing people in the recent past has received serious critiques from mainstream theorists writing from feminist, postcolonial, post-structural, and Marxist standpoints. While interested in different issues, all of these critical perspectives call for a greater sensitivity to the multiple contexts that past actors and present researchers negotiate every day. Moreover, these perspectives highlight that the contextual intersections of nation, class, race, gender, sexuality, knowledge, power, and authority are always fluid and poised for change. Proper contextualization thus requires flexibility on our part encouraging us to ask diverse questions simultaneously about the possible meanings of recovered histories and the way these meanings change through time and across the social spectrum. We also require a deeper understanding of the historical and material contexts of how past actors, as well as their descendents, positioned themselves within, and at times against, their contexts. These contexts are thus defined by a two-way process in which historical actors should be seen in dialogue with their material, social, and cultural conditions, neither producing nor being produced by these conditions exclusively.

The key in this for archaeology is the need for a nuanced sense of the work that material things "do" in the constitution and criticism of social discourse, or the way persons use things to actively engage in and make sense of their relationships with others. As others have noted, things were indeed components of past lives and their materiality permitted and delimited certain expressions and meanings (Olsen 2003, Brown 2004, Miller 2005). Yet, thinking contextually, the function we need most to understand is how things embodied statements about persons, relationships, and social formations, as well as the cultural sensibilities and expectations of past people and groups. To address social discourse calls for well-defined contexts that help us to conceptualize and thus question the foundations of identity and belonging in past societies. Since most historical archaeologists study plural and divisive settings, understanding the conflicted discourses of identity and belonging is vital to the process of interpreting and explaining the importance of material things. To explain this further, I propose we think of how contexts operate in two distinct yet overlapping categories, the historical and the material.

The Historical Context

Building a historical context requires an understanding of the social discourse engaged in by historical actors. We can begin this process by listing familiar national, racial, class and gendered contexts in which past people can be placed. For example, one of the main characters in this paper, Rufus King, was a wealthy, white American man from New York. In order to truly understand the material culture from King Manor, his home in Jamaica, Queens, we need more than just King's vital statistics—we need his life history. Certainly, I can add that he lived in the late 18th and early 19th century (1755-1827), the era of the American Revolution and the subsequent phase of American state formation where he served as a Federalist politician, United States Senator, delegate to the Constitutional convention, and minister to England. We can also gather that he came from a prominent Massachusetts merchant family and married a wealthy New Yorker, Mary Alsop, with whom he had several children. All of these descriptions begin to flesh out the traditional social contextual background typically gathered in historical archaeology, which for the most part focuses on domestic activities and a professional portfolio. Indeed, these are significant aspects of his life, but they alienate rather than connect Rufus King to his daily life at King Manor--we need more of the social context before we can even begin to understand the domestic sphere and the meanings behind the artifacts and features discovered in archaeology. Most important, we need to understand King's relations with those who moved in and out of his daily life. In this case, these people include the range of laborers, domestic servants, and supervisors who found employment on his property.

King Manor was a farm involved with raising animals, field crops, and fruit orchards. The farm produced goods for the household as well as for sale locally and in nearby New York City. Thus, the historical and material record of the site documents not the just activities of the King family but also their employees. Notably, before the Kings, the site was owned by the Colgan-Smith family who also operated a farm on the property from the 1760s until the Kings obtained it in 1805. The Colgan-Smiths differed from the Kings in that their laborers included as many as 10 enslaved Africans (US Federal Census 1790, 1800). While the archaeology of American slavery has produced many invaluable insights and understandings about enslavement and African American life (Ferguson 1992; LaRoche and Blakey 1997; Edwards 1998; Singleton 1999; Fennell 2007), these contexts cannot function as a template for understanding Rufus King, who did not own slaves while living at King Manor. In fact, King was an anti-slavery advocate throughout his political career (Ernst 1968).

My discussion thus far indicates the sort of contextual richness that most well documented sites contain and which should be considered. However, we should not stop here. More is needed to fully understand the archaeology. Specifically, we need to recognize the social context of Rufus King's life and how he was "seen" by not just his peers but, his subordinates. What was the meaning of being wealthy, prominent, Federalist, white, and anti-slavery in early 19th-century New York? In other words, how did these various contexts that intersect at King Manor produce the meaning of being Rufus King during the years he lived there?

The Material Context

The material context provides this framework. At the center of the site is the manor house (Figure 1), the home of the King family as well as the Colgan-Smiths who preceded them. The

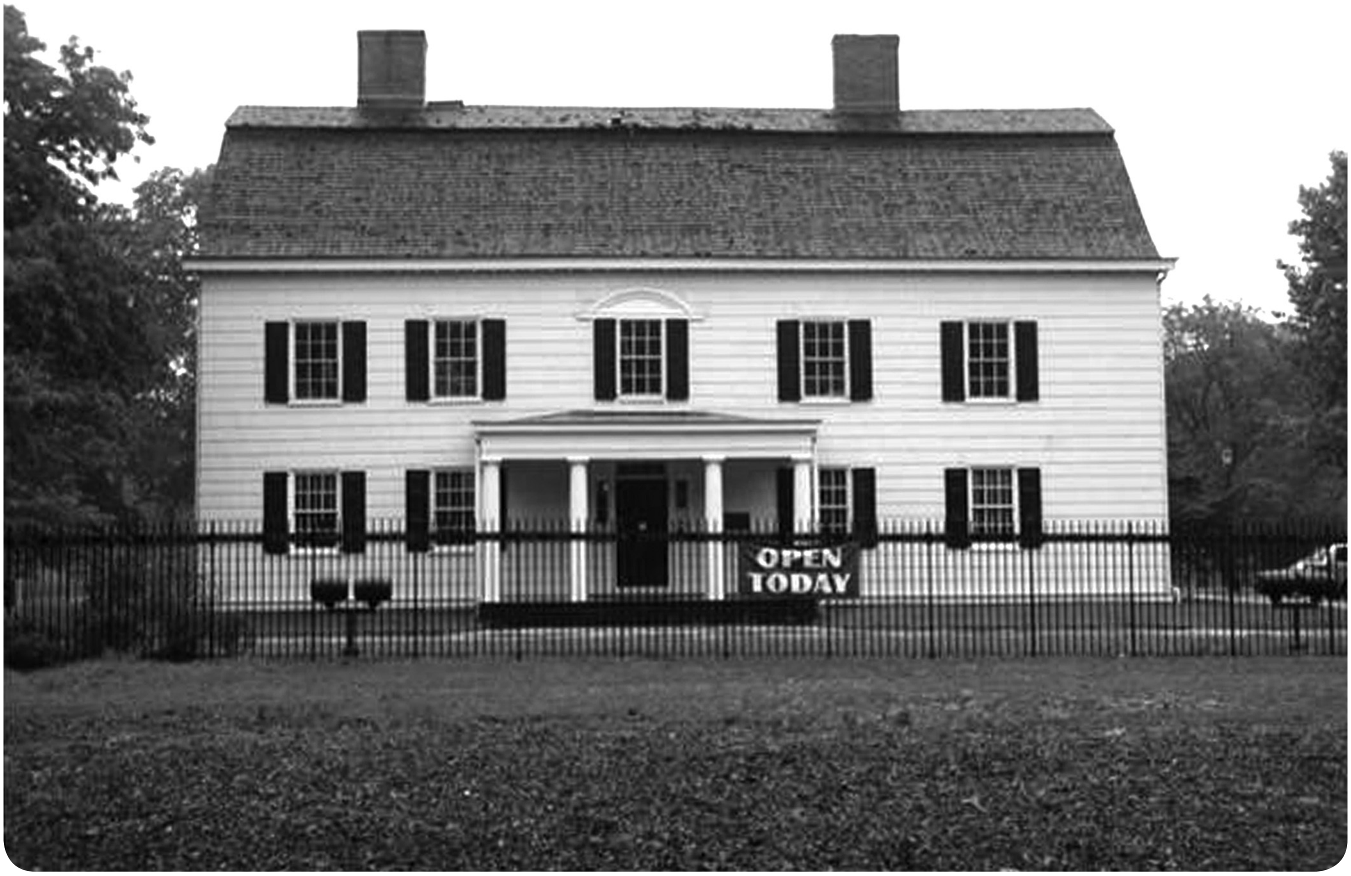

Figure 1. King Manor Museum, Jamaica, Queens. The house depicted is a final architectural permutation after several modifications to earlier structures that are now largely incorporated within it. (Photograph by the author).

house is a modified Georgian "Long Island Half-house" that was expanded by the Kings around 1810 to produce the unified, full-framed federalist façade seen today. The Kings expanded the service ell (Figure 2) immediately after moving in by adding a new kitchen with a lean-to shed addition in the rear. The new kitchen complemented an existing kitchen that was not actually removed. Rather, the new King-era kitchen was distinguished by a larger workspace and a very large beehive bread oven, the body of which extended under the lean-to shed. It seems the Kings required both a household kitchen and a separate working kitchen for the farm.

Beyond the house, King Manor also contained a series of outbuildings and facilities (Figure 3). Some of these date to the 18th-century Colgan-Smith ownership, including a privy and a structure later designated as Building K (Figure 2), a stone walled outbuilding adjacent to the kitchen ell that was likely a dairy, smokehouse, and/or barracks. The other buildings shown to the north of the manor house were barns and sheds built by the Kings. Thus, while both the Kings and the Colgan-Smiths used the property for farming, only the Kings erected a substantial service landscape to support this work. Not knowing exactly what sort of farming the Colgan-Smiths undertook, this may reflect different practices, but the question of the shift from the use of enslaved versus free laborers nevertheless lies waiting to be explored.

Before considering this aspect of the material context, however, the site must be further situated in the surrounding material world of Jamaica, Queens,

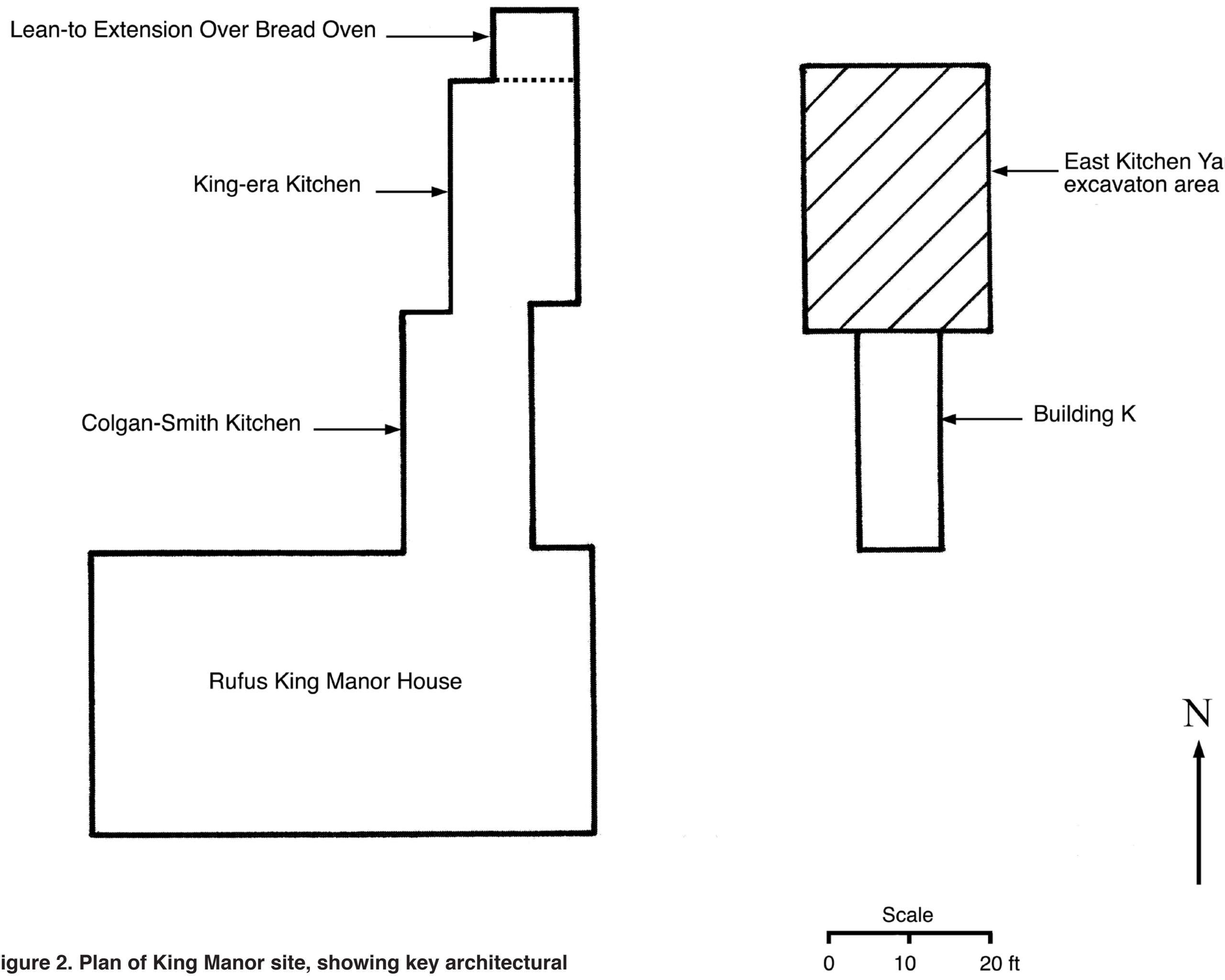

Figure 2. Plan of King Manor site, showing key architectural elements and excavated areas (Drawing by Ross Rava, 2011).

and early New York. While Jamaica was a small rural village when the Kings moved there, it was a political center for the county and thus held some prominence in the region. Nearby New York City, then confined solely to lower Manhattan, was fast rising to international commercial significance as a port of trade in the north Atlantic basin. Working New Yorkers were also undergoing a shift from a skilled craft-base to an unskilled industrial productive economy. Given these factors, the material context of the early 19th century in New York was primarily marked by a great deal of significant change and modernization that overturned long-held norms and introduced new ideas about work, the creation of urban space, and its peopling.

These particular data refer to one of the most basic components of the material context: the body in social space. During times of great change, bodies, as basic units of experience, become beacons for conceptualizing and understanding new practices and interpretive orders (Foucault 1976, 1979; Joyce 2009). Furthermore, placing the body in its proper material and historical context presents a useful way to record and understand the meanings of social change to the people who experienced them. It is this topic, in particular, that I pursue by exploring the way bodies became engaged with historical contexts during transition from slavery to freedom at King Manor and in the New York area. I have introduced the basic transformation of the dominant system of production in early New York, but other factors and historical data need to be considered in order to contextualize the record of how bodies changed in the making of a free New York. It is the connections between people, spaces, artifacts, and ideas that give objects importance, and illustrating

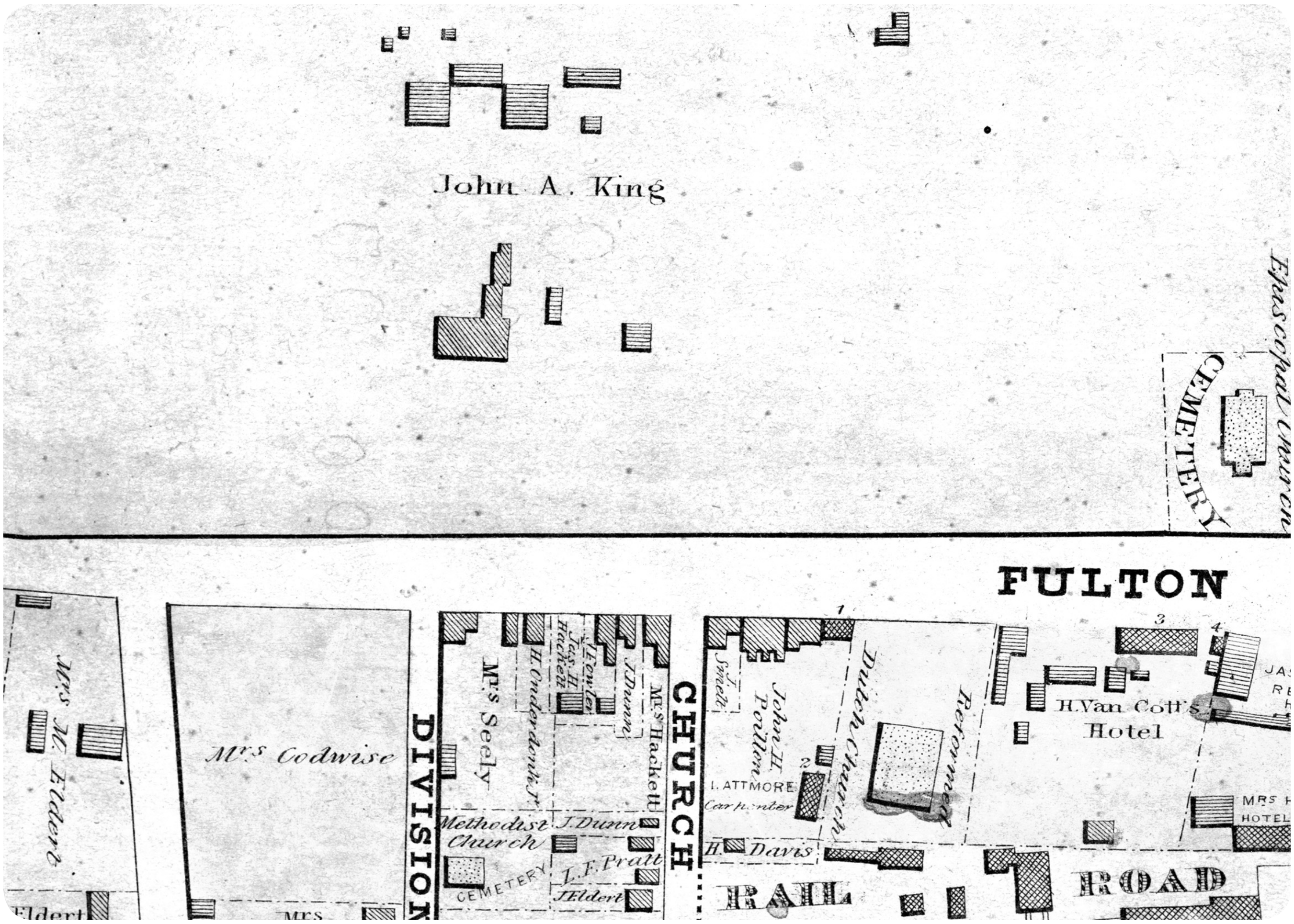
John A. King
CEMETERY
FULTON
Mrs M. Eldert
Mrs Codwise
DIVISION
Mrs Seely
H. Onderdonk Jr
Jas. H. Hackett
J. Dunn
Mrs Hackett
CHURCH
John H. Polhemus
I. ATTMORE
Carpenter
Dutch Church
Reformed
H. Van Cott's Hotel
MRS H HOTEL
Methodist Church
J. Dunn
CEMETERY
L. F. Pratt
J. Eldert
H. Davis
RAIL
ROAD
1
2
3
4

Figure 3. Map of the village of Jamaica, Queens County, Long Island, 1842 Q-1842.Fl; Martin G. Johnson. (Courtesy of the Brooklyn Historical Society).

a broader and more nuanced contextualization of material things—whether excavated, above ground, and/or reconstructed from historical documents—is the central purpose of this paper.

Landscapes of Slavery and Freedom in New York

While a northern state, slavery was widespread in New York prior to the state's gradual emancipation act of 1799, which led to the end of slavery in 1827 (White 1991; Gellman 2006). During the 18th century, New York City contained the largest population of urban captives north of Charleston, South Carolina. African New Yorkers worked as domestic servants, in the shops of craftsmen, and as laborers on the docks and on farms near the city. African labor was vital to the success of the colony, and slave ownership grew with each decade of the colonial period. In fact, many historians agree that New York was becoming more like a "slave society" (Berlin 1998) leading up the American Revolution, such that not only did the number of captives grow but ancillary businesses like auction houses, printers, lawyers and scriveners became more closely tied to the practice of slavery for their livelihood (McManus 1966). Even after the Revolutionary War, when the tide of liberty held strong in the north and many states promptly enacted emancipation legislation in the 1770s and 1780s, New York failed to follow suit. Nevertheless, after the state's 1799 gradual emancipation act, and for some even before, slavery wound down relatively quickly in New York and a free black community of some significance emerged in the city. For example, while the number of enslaved Africans fell from more than 2,000 in 1790 to 1,440 in 1810, the community of free blacks grew substantially from just over 1,000 to 7,470 (White 1991:26, 156).

The rapid growth of the free black community, which is accounted for as much by a rural to urban migration as local emancipation, was a major part of the changes that marked the emergence of modern New York, though other important parts of society also changed during this era. For most New Yorkers, the nature of work shifted. While in the 18th century, trades were dominated by skilled masters who owned and operated private shops, the mechanization of production shifted work increasingly towards wage-based industrial factory systems. One result was the deskilling of labor, a process that unified members of different trade guilds and fostered a consciousness of their shared class standing (Wilentz 1984). Another outcome was the removal of non-family members from the combined homes and workplaces of master craftsmen and brokers. Instead, early factory-owners, commercial agents, and other members of the middle class moved to new homes on the city's edge that were kept separate from work places downtown. By 1840, most household heads in New York (70%) lived in homes separate from where they worked (Wall 1994). The early 19th century was thus not only a time of emancipation but also of class formation and settlement change that dramatically changed the landscape of New York.

I propose that we regard these changes as the material context for American freedom—meaning both the underlying principles of liberty that emerged in the Revolution as well as the simultaneous end of northern slavery and the articulation of new relations between masters and workers. To document freedom in early New York, I use an archaeological perspective to describe how the way life was articulated within the imagined ideals of liberty that drove so much of social discourse, a process that puts the material and historical contexts in close dialogue. To describe and interpret the material context of American freedom in New York I consider the period from roughly 1785 to 1830, or what I call the "emancipation era." Here, I draw from excavated data at King Manor and other sites as well as a broader reaching set of landscape data that reference the materiality of the city and position how it was experienced during this time of great change.

The main goal is to examine and explain the essential context of the emancipation landscape: "the public sphere." During the colonial period, deferential paternalistic norms and a moral economy (Thompson 1963) constrained the emergence of "the public" (cf. Fraser 1990; Habermas 1991; Brooks 2005). Yet, during the emancipation-era, diverse claims made on the emerging public sphere reveal an array of circumstances and negotiations that arose with American democracy and new ideas and practices of liberty and citizenship (Leone 2005). Debates over who was actually free in early America were actually conflicts over the right to have a legitimate stake in the public sphere where this freedom materialized. The first pattern I discuss is how the public sphere in New York came to be designated as a "white" space. The second is the way the free black community challenged this designation through temporary, yet regular and visibly spectacular, occupations of the public sphere, especially through participation in commemorative parades.

To integrate these data, I employ James Brewer Stewart's (1998; 1999) notion of "racial modernity." Racial modernity describes the new "race relations" that emerged during the emancipation era as free African Americans and whites sought, for the first time, to occupy the same landscape. Racial modernity emerged in the way whites resisted African American claims on almost every front. Whether in the labor market or on the open street, whites of all ranks regularly expressed their disapproval of emancipation. Ensuing conflicts were sometimes violent, yet, whether passive or aggressive, white resistance consistently asserted the illegitimacy of a visible black freedom. Whites ultimately embraced the "racially modern" idea of blacks as permanently inferior and at odds with the image of American citizenship. As a concept, racial modernity captures the sedimentation of social difference and segregation in the immutability of race such that, at least in the opinion of most "modern" whites, blacks and whites were inherently separate and unequal races. My goal is to elaborate how racial modernity was built in a truly material sense and to explore how to use archaeology to develop a sense of the materiality of the racially modern experience. While I draw from traditional sources such as settlement patterns and excavated archaeological data, the evidence is not handled in standard ways. That is, I do not seek solely to explain what was found as much as to use these findings to create a contextualized sense of the dynamics that fostered racial modernity in the public sphere. I key materiality to performance such that artifacts, bodies, spaces, buildings, and streets are employed as necessary props in the difficult racial discourse that came with emancipation. As things, artifacts and features of the landscape were present, entangled, integral, and debated, and they speak to the making of past lives. Yet, in this story, it is less the meaning of things that was in debate than the ability of some to certify their preferred meanings in the public sphere and thus force others to accept these meanings (and whether they did so) that is the focus of my discussion.

The Invisibility of White Public Space

Research on white public space highlights the making of an "invisible normal[ity]" (Page and Thomas 1994) through indirect rather than direct action such that whites less often claim spaces for themselves than monitor and control others' access (Hage 2000). While the dominant position of whites in public space supports this claim, restrictions are not like the images we have of the "whites only" Jim Crow American South. Rather, they are the result of subtle boundary enforcements such as assumptions and homogenizations that define some actions as different and disorderly despite the same actions being defined as "colloquially normal" when performed by members of the dominant group (Hill 1998; 2008). This interpretive distinction reveals a broad acceptance of diversity within social groups combined with strict policing of the boundaries between them. Linguist Jane Hill (1998:682) suggests that we think of white public space as an "indirect [racial] indexicality" such that "disorder on the part of whites is rendered invisible and normative" thereby making minority disorder even more visible; so visible, Hill argues, that it can become the "object of expensive campaigns and nationwide 'moral panics'." As an example, Hill cites the 1990s movement for English-only education in the United States based on highly visible and supposedly threatening non-English (predominantly Spanish) language use by non-whites. She contrasts this movement with whites' use of "mock-Spanish" (for example, the well-known line from ***Terminator***: "hasta la vista, baby") that is instead seen as humorous and politically neutral. I make a similar case suggesting that what we see in the crystallization of modern racial communities in emancipation-era New York reflects a moral campaign to normalize white authority. This authority rested on emergent modern foundations of race and was formed in the face of an insistent black freedom, which was regarded as threatening because of its difference and because of the interpretation of African Americans' attempts to express their rightful place on the American landscape as confrontational. A key factor that underwrites the success of indirect racial indexicality is homogenization, a process that the concept of race exemplifies so well (that all blacks or all whites are the same).

Evidence of the emergence white public space in early New York is found in settlement pattern data that show that whites actively cultivated structural changes to the way lived social space was defined in the city. Tracking data from city directories, Diana Wall (1994:21) shows by 1840 that the majority of New Yorkers shifted from living in combined homes and workplaces to living in homes separated from work (Blackmar 1991). This new settlement pattern elicited new ideas embraced especially by middle class households regarding domesticity and respectability. A proper life highlighted the moral purity of the family, an idea that was simultaneously a spatial construct that characterized the workplace and the market more generally as an immoral sphere to be isolated from the home. Wall's archaeological study of several of these new households in Greenwich Village documents a diversity of strategies employed by middle-class women to ensure their homes met the respectable standards of modern domesticity. Both etiquette manuals and excavated ceramic assemblages, for example, indicate an increasing ritualization of family meals. The service of multiple courses with specialized vessels to present and contain food as well as the use of increasingly decorated and expensive wares through time record the growing investment families put into the meaning and significance of the activities defining a modern and separate "home" (Wall 1994: 136-47, Appendix E). That most household members spent significant time away from home at work or at school, further intensified the ritual aspects of family meals, which came to be seen as "a constant and familiar reunion" (Frederick Law Olmstead in Wall 1994:113) through which the family—as both a collective ***and*** as a modern idea—was reproduced.

Wall's study offers insight into the gendered aspects of this process, and shows how the family home created a separate female sphere in the city especially as women took control of the moral authority of the household. The process of isolating and symbolizing certain bodies in social space is key to her analysis. Both through the location of women and their actions as household managers, the separate home served a middle class seeking to publicly demonstrate a highly gendered sense of respectability. While Wall does not consider race in her study, she nevertheless describes a white pattern of settlement in the context of a multi-racial city. African Americans, New York's most visible minority, did not follow their more well-off white neighbors to the city's fringe, nor were they invited. As such, a next step is to ask how separate homes and workplaces speak to the racial as well as the class and gendered concerns of those who adopted this new life during the emancipation era.

In fact, this settlement pattern was elaborated at King Manor and because the site has a history of slavery, I consider the settlement transformation there in light of the racial dynamics of emancipation. I mentioned previously that Rufus King was known for his Federalist anti-slavery politics (Ernst 1968). Specifically, he is credited with leading the effort to ban the expansion of slavery to the Northwest Territories in 1785, and later in his career he became famous for his anti-slavery speeches in 1820 during the Senate's Missouri Compromise debates. Still, while his politics were anti-slavery, King grew up with slaves in his childhood home in Massachusetts and owned slaves as an adult prior to moving to Jamaica (Ernst 1968). Additionally, many of his neighbors, friends, and peers in Queens and elsewhere in New York remained slave owners during the era of gradual emancipation. As such, prior to their arrival at the site, the Kings knew well the landscapes of northern slavery (Fitts 1996). Looking at how they altered their property shows the differences that their embrace of freedom looked like, and also how they envisioned the world after slavery should be.

Archaeology shows that the Kings' created an emancipation landscape at the site by shifting the locations for household labor (Figure 2). Excavations in several areas around the manor house as well as in the fields where the barns and service sheds once stood show a distinct pattern of change through time. The area most intensively used during the period of slavery was located adjacent to the original kitchen and behind Building K. This area contained a buried living surface layer with a large number of crushed late 18th century creamware and pearlware ceramics as well as a collection of large olive green wine bottle fragments found in sheet deposits located directly behind Building K. The crushed ceramics indicate a frequently used work yard during the time of slavery while the larger glass shards may indicate the illicit consumption of alcohol by enslaved laborers in what was then a hidden space (Matthews 2008; 2010). Based on the distinct lack of early 19th century artifacts in this area, this space ceased to be used with any regularity after the Kings moved to the site. Building the new kitchen at the rear of the service ell, which included the covered lean-to rear addition, they provided instead indoor space for household work. Excavation in the lean-to space in fact produced early and mid-19th century ceramics as well as a large collection of other artifacts indicating an intensively used domestic workspace during the King-era. Archaeological testing in the area of the barns and other service buildings in the north field show that this area was also used only in the 19th century (Grossman 1991). The sum of this evidence indicates that the Kings deliberately created distinct areas for work through new construction that enclosed work spaces near the house and designated other areas for work in the back fields, a lengthy distance from the house.

These findings establish the Kings' embrace of the same settlement idea of separating the home from the workplace found in the city discussed by Wall

(1994). During the time of slavery, African laborers at King Manor worked near the house in view of their master and others in the neighborhood. In the Kings' landscape, by contrast, free laborers worked either inside the new kitchen or lean-to addition or in spaces in and near new barns far removed from the manor house itself. This landscape arguably made the laborers and by extension the labor they performed on behalf of the Kings largely invisible to the public eye and certainly distinct from home space that people would have visually associated solely with the Kings. Like in the city, emancipation at King Manor involved the creation of a home clearly separated from areas at the site devoted to work, but this was a home that was as much the result of the era's racial discourse as it was about class and gender.

Additional meanings of the landscape emerge by tying it to King's federalist politics, which rested on a theory of a competent and autonomous political subject who could navigate the political spheres of federal, state, and local authorities. The new landscape projects this democratic ideal and materializes for the Kings' laborers and peers the idea that the home ***should*** be separate from work and that all citizens should have a home to return to at the end of the workday. In this light, emancipation was not only about freeing the slaves but also about freeing masters (now more broadly construed as citizens) from a direct association with work and those who did it. This process effectively transformed the workplace—whether a workshop, factory, counting house, or farm—into a politically neutral site where those coming together arrived on their own "free" will as equivalent parties in the production process. Against the backdrop of slavery, this Federalist conception of separation and equivalence was a powerful break from the past, which had integrated political and legal power with the way work was done. After emancipation, masters and laborers were no longer qualitatively distinct by their legal or class status but equivalent except for their quantitative wealth differences at the given moment.

The landscape was also integral to the federalists' racial ideals. One interesting aspect of Rufus King's political career was his support of the American Colonization Society after its founding in 1817 (Burin 2005:18). Colonization was a pseudo-abolitionist effort to create new settlements in West Africa for enslaved African Americans to occupy after their emancipation. Despite a long record of vehemently resisting the spread of slavery to new territories, King seemingly had no trouble joining with others in thinking that free blacks were a threat to America's democracy and thus better removed from, rather than folded into, American society. He offered his assessment on this matter during the contentious New York State constitutional convention in 1821: "As certainly as the children of any white man are citizens, so the children of the black men are citizens; and they, may in time, raise up progeny, which will be disastrous to the other races of this country" (Gellman and Quigly 2003:126-7). The issue, colonizationists believed, was a racially modern sense that African Americans were degraded beyond recovery and that their natural inferiority put the security of the nation as a whole at risk. Adding further justification, King and others likened emancipation and colonization to other early 19th century "internal improvements" like the national bank, turnpikes, canals, and railroads (Burin 2005:17-18). Clearly, emancipation was tied to an imagined landscape that many elites sought to construct.

Documents suggest that the Kings hired both black and white laborers in Jamaica, so his new landscape was not solely for enclosing and hiding black bodies from view. However, the message of the separated home was aimed only at whites, or those that King felt capable of reaching his expectations for citizenship. His support for colonization illustrates a similar approach to space and the emancipation landscape. As African American's racial difference was more than he imagined the system could handle, removing black bodies from view or altogether through colonization simplified his desire for creating a nation of actually equivalent persons.

Yet, while colonization ultimately failed, King also embraced another proposal, whose legacy still colors many popular conceptions about slavery in America. At the same convention in 1821 he argued:

> It is now the proud boast of England, that the moment a slave stands upon her soil, breathes her air, he becomes a free man. Yet, we are informed that time was, when England sold

> English men into foreign bondage; and that so great was the number of English youths sent for sale to the Irish market, that Ireland passed a non-importation law to keep them out. If this practice of ancient times be almost sunk in oblivion, does not the circumstance encourage us to hope that the enslaving of black men hereafter be forgotten? (in Gellman and Quigley 2003:198).

This wishful sentiment that slavery might be put behind Americans and that racial divisions could be whisked away reveals King's limited recognition of the racism that marked his imagined American future. On the one hand he feared the "disaster" of a black America and on the other he found solace in the absurd idea of forgetting slavery. It is notable that his statement came the same day that another convention delegate claimed quite to the contrary that "the provisions designed to deny black men the right to vote in New York had indelibly imprinted the legacy of slavery on the new constitution" (Gelmann 2006:213). King's statement nevertheless foreshadows northern practice of "disowning slavery," which, as Joanne Melish shows, helped white Northerners to forget their slavery by inventing a history of a "free" North set in opposition to the "slave" South. Notably, this distinction rested on and praised the widespread evidence of white property ownership in the north as the proper basis of a free society as opposed to southern practices that founded a society on human chattel, which not only degraded African Americans but their masters as well. A society of northern white freeholders was an ideal embraced by King since the 1780s and the foundation of the voting franchise established in most northern states after emancipation that excluded the majority of blacks from civic society. It is my contention that we owe modern conflations of "whiteness as property" (Harris 1993; Roediger 1999) to King and his social contemporaries who prized the values of private property and failed to address the problems and legacies of slavery for black citizenship due to a persistent denial of a full black humanity that was, after all, visible before them almost every day.

African Americans in White Public Space

To understand black humanity during the emancipation era we need to ask where African Americans in the early 19th century, many of whom as ex-slaves embodied freedom in its most fundamental way, ended up in the new city of the separate spheres. The problem is that being a minority in a propertied landscape, African Americans are not so easy to find: some remained enslaved and even some of those set free continued to live with their masters; others were recent migrants and lived wherever they could; and as a whole African Americans were much more transient than whites who have to date typically been the ***de facto*** focus of archaeological study (Wall 1994; Yamin 2001; White 2002). This is why we gain so much by looking at African American public actions, especially parades. But, we need to look to the public sphere not only because that is where we can find them, but also because that is where African Americans put themselves in order that they may be found. Parades reveal a consciousness among African Americans about their marginal, transient, dismissed and invisible presence in early New York, and a ***strategic*** program of visibility to assert—as black Americans—the legitimacy of their freedom and rightful place on the landscape.

An excellent example of the free black emancipation era landscape relates to the New York Manumission Society (NYMS), a group of elite whites organized to assist African Americans in the transition to freedom. Among the NYMS accomplishments was the founding of the New York African Free School in 1787 (Figure 4). Emphasizing that it was slavery that caused black degradation, the NYMS argued that proper instruction in core white values would naturally bring about black improvement. This paternalistic rationale alienated the black community who naturally rejected assumptions of their inferiority. Most African Americans agreed that education was essential for their improvement and achievement in New York, but they disagreed that an education in white norms best suited their interests. For them the values of the NYMS reflected the very racism that they claimed was the true source of their degradation, more so than slavery ever was. Evidence

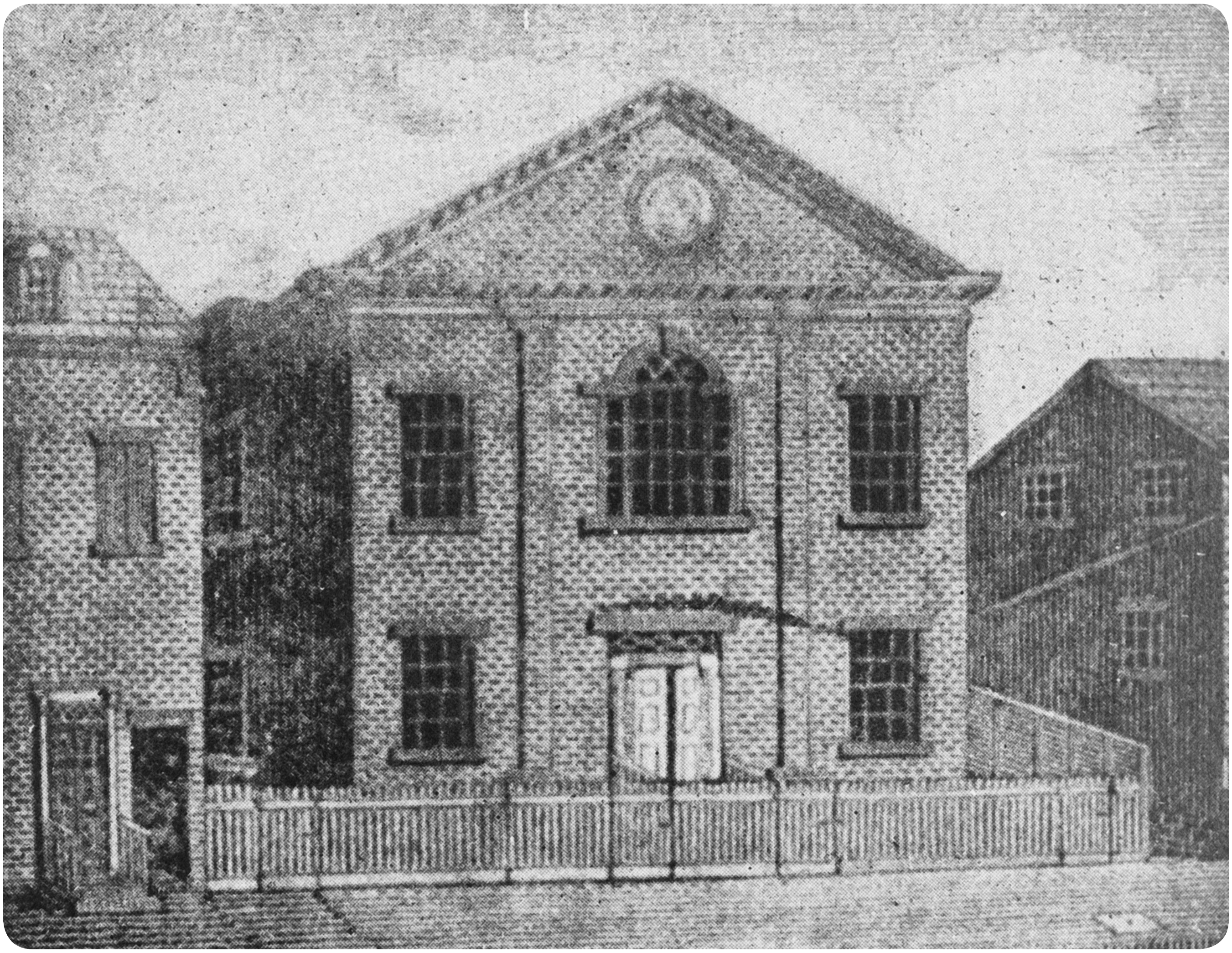

Figure 4. New York African Free School Number 2, drawn by P. Reason, 1822. (Courtesy of the General Research & Reference Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, the New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations).

of this racism was documented by a 1788 NYMS committee formed to "consider ways and means to prevent the irregular behavior of free negroes" in order that they remain in the good graces of NYMS "patronage" (Swan 1992:339). It was proposed that:

- All negroes under the society's patronage be registered in a book containing names of the negroes, their ages, places of abode, occupations, and number of male and female children.
- Negroes should report every change of abode and birth and death in their families.
- Trustees can refuse admission to school of children of unregistered negroes.
- That negroes when registered be informed of the benefits derived from the society [and] are not to be extended to any except such as maintain good characters for sobriety and honesty and peaceable and orderly living—and that they be particularly cautioned against admitting servants or slaves to their houses—receiving or purchasing anything from them and against allowing fiddling, dancing, or any noisy entertainment in their houses whereby the tranquility of the neighborhood may be disturbed.

- The committee thinks that a negro should forfeit patronage of the society if some mode of informing others could be devised. Suggests committing the case to writing and placing it in a conspicuous place in the school as a measure that would … be a warning to the scholars and tend to impress their minds with sentiments of respect for the society. (Swan 1992:339-40).

With these points, we may expand the black landscape from one defined solely by the contrast of transience and shoddy housing with the inspired institutional buildings to one actively framed and experienced as racial subjugation in public space. For one, by seeking to create a register of the city's black population, the NYMS clearly entrusted itself with the surveillance of the community on behalf of all whites. Moreover, the register was tied to the control of everyday public and even private actions. Black sobriety was their concern but so was black celebration and, effectively, happiness, which was to be found in isolated and quiet households that reinforce "the tranquility of the neighborhood" rather than in communal "noisy" celebrations. Finally, we also see how the school buildings meant to inspire learning also served as spaces of social control where warnings to students about the consequences of misbehavior could be posted and instilled.

Accordingly, as historian Robert Swan argues, the failures of the African Free Schools to promote a just space for black education cultivated a racial consciousness especially among free black youth about the depths of their marginality. Because of their frustrations and disappointments with the African Free School, they created a more organized and racially defined activist black New York community consisting of both free and enslaved members. As whites failed to respect black achievement and ignored clamors for statewide manumission after 1785, blacks coalesced and started to act more than ever on their own behalf at the end of the 18th century (Gellman 2006).

The landscape of the city during this period contains increasing evidence of this African American agency. For example, after learning the NYMS would not support a separate black religious society under their auspices, blacks formed their own: the African Methodist Episcopal Zion church in 1796 (Rael 2005:135). Benevolent and mutual aid societies also formed. One of the earliest, the African Society in New York, hosted the enslaved poet and speaker Jupiter Hammon in 1787 who delivered his famous "Address to the Negroes of the State of New York" (Ransom 1970; Swan 1992:341). While these earliest societies did not survive, the African Society for Mutual Relief founded in 1808 remained active until 1945. The African Society was highly concerned with the black image in the white mind requiring of "its members 'upright' deportment and a solid reputation" (Rael 2005:136). Still, its cofounder, William Hamilton (1809), offers a different perspective on the substance of the black community than we get from NYMS:

> But my Brethren, mere socialities [sic] is not the object of our formation, but to improve the mind, soften the couch of the sick, to administer an elixir to the afflicted, to befriend the widow, and become the orphan's guardian, and is this not a noble employment, can there be found a better, you ought to be proud to be engaged in such an exercise. It is employment of this kind that raises the man up to the emperium, or highest heaven.

Rather than solely a concern with social control and an interest in the black future, the black community emerges here as interested ***and*** capable of providing for itself, by providing for its members in need now.

Related to both the early black church and mutual aid societies was a concern for finding a proper place to respect black New Yorkers at death. Having long used what is now known as the "African Burial Ground" along lower Broadway, the community sought out a new space after that land was subdivided in 1790s and built over. A petition from the African Society to establish a cemetery on Christie Street was accepted in 1795. The city agreed to provide £100 towards the £450 purchase price, which the African Society raised on its own. Obviously, building over the African Burial Ground stands as a powerful example of how white power made the black landscape disappear. Moreover, the call for the new cemetery followed soon after a rather torrid compliant in 1788 in which African petitioners accused doctors and students of robbing graves for the purpose of collecting cadavers to study. Obviously, the lack of respect for the dead, both in the past and future, would have angered the black community and further led them to take matters into their own hands (Perry et al. 2006:62-8).

While we see a free black landscape start to emerge in schools, churches, mutual aid societies and a new cemetery, the landscape was also a site for a more active discourse of racial conflict in the city. For example, the 1788 grave robbing complaint was tied to the landscape by a violent social action known now as the Doctor's Riot (Bell 1971). The violence started with the discovery of disturbed graves and dismembered cadavers in medical student labs, which caused public outrage and spurred a riot that terrorized the city for three days. In the end the medical labs were destroyed and three rioters were killed by the militia. While the mob is not described, nor were the abuses perpetrated in the African Burial Ground, it would be surprising if the mob was not interracial. The riot also puts the landscape into motion through the choreographies of street violence. It was the ***streets*** where the politics of this issue were played out and where some members of the community lost their lives and others restored order. Thus, to fully understand the emancipation landscape, we have to consider both the sites and the connecting tissues that peopled those sites, or the streets—the home of the public sphere.

In order to find early New York's free blacks, one should look to the streets rather than in traditional household archaeological studies. Shane White (2002:35-6) records that before 1820 pockets of black settlement began to appear in the city. However, he also notes that most free blacks lived in deplorable, crowded mixed-race slum neighborhoods in "cellars that filled with filth when it rained" and "back-alley shanties that lacked any amenities." Lacking fair access to property ownership, African Americans have not yet been found in household archaeological collections from emancipation-era New York. This is not to deny that an archaeology of black households in early New York is possible, only that this data does not yet exist. With the good fortune that accompanies much of New York City's historical archaeology, emancipation era African American sites may yet come to light. In fact, archaeologists have produced some very compelling and important studies of African Americans in New York from the periods before and after the emancipation era. For example, we have learned a great deal about African New Yorkers from the findings of the African Burial Ground project (Blakey and Rankin-Hill 2004; Perry et al. 2006) as well as a study of Africanisms by Wall (2000). New research by Diana Wall and Anne-Marie Cantwell (2010) also explores evidence associated with Africans in New Amsterdam. For later periods, archaeology has researched the late 19th century African American communities of Weeksville in Brooklyn (Henn 1981; Geismar 2010) and Sandy Ground in Staten Island (Askins 1985). Diana Wall and Nan Rothschild have also laid the groundwork for upcoming excavations at the site of Seneca Village, a mixed-race mid-19th century community formerly located in what is now Central Park (Wall et al. 2004). As of yet, however, emancipation-era African American life remains archaeologically unknown.

The written record of African American public actions is very rich and provides a fine sense of their political and cultural lives as an oppressed yet emergent minority community. The city streets provided black New Yorkers the opportunity to express themselves in parades and other public events held in view of the white majority, and they did so regularly. Moreover, parades helped to further establish their African and black identities and equally their claim to belonging and ultimately citizenship in America. Parades also reveal the underlying racial animus African Americans negotiated every day.

The earliest recorded African American parade was on July 5th, 1800 to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the 1799 gradual emancipation act. With "grand marshals, uniforms, banners, and music" (Swan 1992:343), the large parade had the same material trappings and pomp and thus appeared the same as any white parade already known to New Yorkers. The effort and expense put into a parade that stood equal to those of the whites demonstrated the substance of the black community, challenging dominant assumptions about their degraded condition. Aspects of this parade emphasize the confrontational politics that parades produced. First, the organizers of the 1800 parade asked the well-known Pierre Toussaint to be grand marshal, and though Toussaint declined, the invitation is telling. Toussaint was an enslaved Haitian who had come to New York with his master, Jean Berard, in 1787. After later losing their fortune in the Haitian Revolution, the Berards remained in New York. To support themselves they apprenticed Toussiant to a hairdresser, where he learned the trade and rapidly became quite well-known and wealthy while still enslaved (S.V.D.P. Management, Inc. 2004). As Toussaint was not freed until 1807, the request for him to be grand marshal was a call to put a slave at the head of the emancipation commemoration parade. Perhaps the organizers wanted to put a black Haitian on public display, and they certainly sought to put up a slave as someone capable of leading the community. With Toussaint as an example, they hoped to use the parade to make the public statement that it was less slavery than racism that degraded blacks.

The second part of the 1800 parade that stands out is the date: July 5th. The parade followed after a series of July 4th Independence Day activities held by whites in the city. With the streets dominated by the Tammany Society and other white merchant and mechanic organization parades, July 4th festivities were declared unsuitable for African American celebrations. So, African American revelers seized the very next day to celebrate their freedom. In so doing 5 July became a traditional "Black Independence Day" and set black New Yorkers to creating their own ritual calendar for marking the passing achievements of their lives. The date also put forward the awkward juxtaposition of having two freedoms in American life, one black and one white, a declaration that thoroughly criticized assimilationist efforts to make them adhere to white norms and exclusionary efforts to deny them—as black Americans—a legitimate place on the landscape (Sweet 1976:265-66).

The decision to parade in 1800 was informed by other factors as well, some of which reflect African American heritage. It was common for northern enslaved communities in the 18th century to celebrate at festivals such as Negro Elections, Pinkster, and Negro Militia or Training Days, which brought African Americans together on specific days for rituals, performances, contests, and other pleasurable activities (Wade 1981, Piersen 1988, Lott 1995, White 1994, Williams-Meyers 1994, Rael 2002, Kachun 2003). After emancipation rural slave festivals declined and were replaced by city parades led by free blacks (White 1994:15,33). The shift in part reflects the migration of free blacks to northern cities whereas the colonial festivals were typically held in the country. Yet, more than just adapting to a new place, emancipation era free blacks inhabited a new setting and lived in new circumstances increasingly framed by race. Denied fair access to the emancipation landscape African Americans sought ways to assert their presence and establish legitimacy to their lives through orderly public actions.

African Americans may also have played off of a related "tradition" of racial violence associated with black public actions in early America. Historian Shane White records that blacks enjoyed election day on the Boston Common as they were free to drink, gamble, and dance without trouble. This varied from other days where such visible enjoyments would have been cause for whites, as remembered by theater man Sol Smith, to "chase all the niggers off the common" (White 1994:17). The guarantee of open white hostility towards organized black visibility may have been a counter-intuitive reason to parade. African American parades were apt to bring out crowds of whites who verbally and physically assaulted black revelers. Parades were "followed by the rabble; hissed, hooted, and groaned at every turn, and one would suppose that Bedlam had broken loose" recollected ***The Liberator*** in 1847 (White 1994:38). Similarly, "coachmen and carters were notorious for mean-spiritedly and often dangerously driving their vehicles through black processions in order to disrupt them" (White 2002:64). Disorder, in other words, was part of the black parades even if those marching were orderly. This suggests an African American strategy to create a visible opposition between themselves as orderly ranks of marchers in military uniforms and regalia next to a crowd of jeering, disorderly whites. Even if onlookers were unsympathetic to black interests, no one would miss how the orderly black regiments made the white crowd look to be the problem.

Nevertheless, black celebrants were not always orderly. In at least one instance white harassment in Boston hit its mark and blacks broke rank to fight back

(White 1994:38). Evidence of other disorderly black behavior like drinking, gambling, and singing is also known indicating that parade days were seized by blacks as rare instances of public personal enjoyment. Referring to an upstate New York Pinkster celebration, James Fenimore Cooper described African Americans "beating banjoes, singing African songs, drinking and, worst of all, laughing in a way that seemed to set their very hearts rattling within their ribs" (Rael 2002:58). Such visible black celebrations were alarming to the sensibilities of the white elite. Still, we need to consider that frivolity and festivity in the face of oppressive power may have been one reason for their zeal. The fact that most parades, like the New York parade in 1800, were commemorative also explains their exuberance and celebration. The making of a black ritual calendar for parades commenced in earnest in the early years of the 19th century. Soon after establishing July 5th as emancipation day, in 1808 blacks adopted New Year's Day for parades commemorating the abolition of the foreign slave trade. Starting in 1834, the July 5th celebrations declined as African Americans embraced the celebration of West Indian emancipation on August 1st (Gravely 1982:303-4). It was in favor of the August celebrations that Frederick Douglass directed his famous July 5th, 1852 speech where he asked his Rochester audience: "What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July?" (Sweet 1981:248).

Despite good reasons to celebrate, the problem with any sign of black disorder was that it was essentially twice as visible as that of whites, and parades were closely monitored by both blacks and whites. Historian Patrick Rael (2005:136-7) reports that "In 1809, when New York blacks held such a parade, even their white 'friends' cautioned them against the move. Black New Yorkers would not be denied, however, and proceeded nonetheless." Additional examples of black political assertion through parading are plentiful. This richness is itself evidence that parades supported conceptions of black political agency. As parades occupied the landscape for long stretches in highly visible and politicized arrangements, they demanded recognition and commentary by New Yorkers. Some of these strategies and impressions were described in the 1827 Minutes of the Common Council of the City of New York:

> A long procession of black men and boys in rows five or six wide marched behind the major men's associations. African Society members flew brightly colored silk banners and were 'splendidly dressed in scarfs of silk with gold edgings, and with colored bands of music, and the banners appropriately lettered and painted.' The main orator was on horseback with a scroll tightly clasped in his right hand. The grand marshal, Samuel Hardenbaugh, sat atop of white horse trotting beside the procession. Hardenbaugh drew his sword as he led the marchers to City Hall to meet the mayor. 'The sidewalks were crowded with the wives, daughters, sisters, and mothers of the celebrants' (in Wilder 2005:225-6).

Parades, though, were not just statements, they were actions that put black New Yorkers in view of those who found them threatening. Parading tempted fate, and, as parades were public claims by free African Americans to civic belonging, they contributed significantly to New York's developing emancipation era racial discourse. As historian Craig Steven Wilder (2005:225) writes:

> It was in the very public spaces that white New Yorkers expressed themselves most violently in defense of the racial order. In 1807, a committee planning black New York's celebration of the impending end of the United States participation in the slave trade had to petition the city council for a 'sufficient number of peace officers' to protect the celebrants. An 1809 parade honoring the African Society for Mutual Relief's first anniversary and an 1810 celebration of its incorporation were met with threats of violence and warnings from city officials who refused to grant safety to the participants. 'Secure in their manhood and will,' wrote an antebellum member, 'they did parade.'

African American parades show that "the streets of New York City were every bit as important an arena for racial politics as were the statehouse and the courtroom. Public processions staged African Americans' demands for equality far more effectively than white abolitionists championed black rights" (Rael 2005:136-37). I suggest we take this further and see the streets as essential and integral to the workings of emancipation politics writ large. Streets were not just an alternate site for action, they also fostered a different form of expression of the same discourse and debate that was otherwise contained within the exclusionary walls of government. Walls at sites of power have two sides: one facing inward and enclosing those directly involved in political discussions and another facing outward towards the public whose lives will be effected by the decisions made within. There are times, however, when debate is less about what goes on inside spaces of power than about how the walls themselves are re-positioned and appropriated to create new spaces for social action. The results of legislative acts, court decisions, or presidential proclamations, that is, are not necessarily more empowering or constraining than the public actions that assert alternative and critical opinions, presences, and processes on the street. In this light, African American parades and other actions were constitutive of the emancipation landscape. Parades were neither sideshows nor merely symbolic performances, they constructed the political agency of an African American community who, collectively, demanded recognition. The streets, as the space where newly imagined public lives confronted public power, fostered new meanings and experiences of freedom and of racial modernity that have since driven actions supporting and rejecting an array of programs from Reconstruction to Civil Rights. The streets were not only used but also ***made*** into spatial crucibles of political and racial conflict. Archaeologists can read these spaces on maps, measure their remains on the ground, and reconstruct them in their interpretations to document how landscapes created the politics that drove history.

Conclusion: Regarding the Noise of Capitalism

By way of conclusion, I want to discuss a final set of examples from New York's emancipation landscape to show the racially modern distinctions that emerged in the antebellum era. In 1859, for example, Frederick Douglass drew on a landscape experience that typified African Americans' emancipation struggle: "No one idea has given rise to more oppression and persecution toward the colored people of this country, than that which makes Africa, not America, their home. It is that wolfish idea that ***elbows us off the sidewalk***, and denies us the rights of citizenship [emphasis added]" (Douglass 1859). A key component of the public sphere, sidewalks absorbed the conflicts of emancipation in New York, and in turn became a space that marked America's racially modern resolutions. The 19th century sidewalk was a busy urban space, filled with people moving and socializing as well as the goods merchants and shopkeepers displayed for sale. It was also where one stood to watch African American parades, and it was the space that some stepped down from in order to harass them. The sidewalk was also the space where blacks and whites came into close and at times unwanted contact, as described in the exasperated words from a black woman in 1822, who "wished the yellow fever would kill all the whites, so that [the blacks] might have the sidewalks to themselves" (White 2002:58). In Providence, Rhode Island, in fact, an 1824 race riot ensued when blacks refused to step down from the sidewalk to make way for whites (Gilje 1995:89). The sidewalk also marked the proper space from which to witness the association of private property and the autonomous dignities of citizenship, as at King Manor, and equally the supposed folly of the blacks who claimed a public right to a citizen's dignity on the street. In contrast, for Douglass and other African Americans, the sidewalk was a space of citizenship for all Americans. It was where one could walk as a free person while witnessing the spectacles and experiencing the turmoil of a free society that any citizen could claim as their own. Access to and removal from the sidewalk, in other words, was a significant part of the emerging American democracy.

It is notable that Douglass's criticism was of the African Civilization Society (ACS), a colonization group based in Brooklyn's African American Weeksville community (Bernstein 2005:302). The founding of a black led colonization group illustrates the depths that modern racial differentiation reached in the minds of both whites and blacks by the antebellum era. For members of both races, racial separation was the solution to racial conflict, and thus, we have to interpret that racial mixing, in both its social and sexual senses, lay at the root of the problem. Douglass rejected this as he consistently criticized his exclusion (Stauffer 2004). Yet, there were others who, albeit less politically notable than Douglass, were equally ambivalent about segregation. These were the ones whose livelihood counted on the commerce of amalgamation in places far from the dignities of street or the citizen's home.

The way into these hidden landscapes is to follow the path of Charles Dickens, one of antebellum New York's most famous observers. When Dickens toured the city in 1842 he wrote about lower Broadway. "How quiet the streets are … are there no punches, fantoccinis, dancing-dogs, jugglers, conjurers, orchestrinas, or even barrel-organs?" (Cook 2003:I:1). Unlike in London, downtown New York after emancipation took on qualities of a segregated urban landscape, which valued privacy over access, separation over integration, quiet over liveliness, and an unmarked dominant whiteness over a visible subordinate blackness. The distinctions Dickens discovered between the New York and London streets show the peculiarity of the American landscape and describe the impact of emancipation and racial modernity that was not known in England. In New York, the struggle to make ends meet and to find a niche for making a living and a life were removed from view. Whether in the new factories or the quiet suburbs, the noise of capitalism in New York seemed orderly or at least kept at bay. Unsatisfied with such a distorted view of urban life, Dickens grew "increasingly impatient" and "quit Broadway above City Hall, 'plunging' himself into an east-side neighborhood known for its amusement of another sort—the infamous Five Points" (Cook 2003:I:1). This amusement was interracial amalgamation.

Five Points presented Dickens with "squalid streets," "wretched beds," "fevered brains," and "heaps of negro women" who force the "rats to move away in search of better lodgings." It also presented Almack's, a renowned black-owned dance cellar whose "welcoming mulatto 'landlady' with 'sparkling eyes' and a 'daintily ornamented' handkerchief [and a] 'landlord' … with a 'smart blue jacket' and a gleaming gold 'watchguard'" (Cook 2003:I:3) inspired Dickens. His descriptions in ***American Notes*** made Almack's world famous along with its leading dancer, William Henry Lane, also known as Master Juba (Master Juba 2010) (Figure 5).

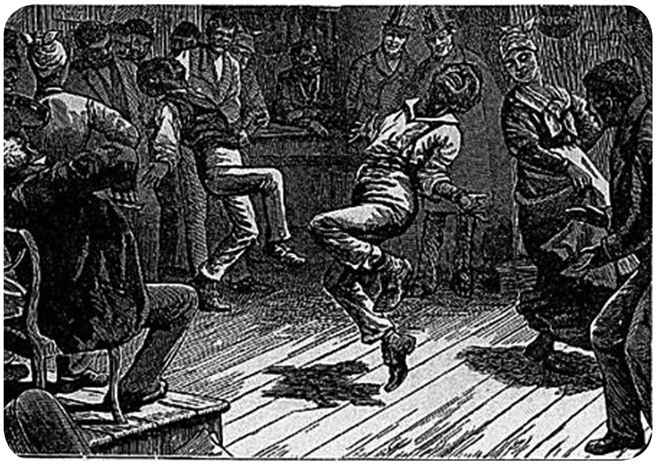

Figure 5. Engraving of William Henry Lane, a.k.a. Master Juba, performing at Almack's in New York City. Note the several "sporting men" looking on. (Dickens 1842).

While Dickens' description of Almack's and Lane's rise to fame as a black minstrel are well documented, historian James W. Cook's recent contextual interpretation provides an important perspective for understanding the emancipation landscape. Five Points and other mixed-race poor urban neighborhoods in the United States had taken on part of their aura less because they contained vice, poverty, and crime, all of which were in fact quite obvious, but also because they hid the principle patrons of Almack's and other interracial public houses from view. This was a new sort of urban American: young, white, single, white-collar "sporting men," whose gender, race, income, and desires sustained poor neighborhoods who in turn helped to support the modern basis for an emergent white invisibility.

> Pious and licentious, sunshine and shadow, innocent and vulgar, high and low–antebellum

> sporting culture took root between and across the binary distinctions represented by middle-class conduct manuals as natural and fixed. In this way, sporting men put themselves in close proximity to the "rougher" social worlds of the emerging urban proletariat, and even identified with some of its causes. But the milieux were never simply equivalent. More accurately, they overlapped and intersected–temporarily–in particular urban sites: brothels, saloons, boxing arenas, cockpits, gambling dens, theaters, and dance halls–places, in short, like Almack's (Cook 2003:II:3).

For sporting men, their travels to Five Points were a rite of passage on the way to a respectable middle-class manhood (Stewart 1998:190). For others, the slum was their home, a space in part of their own making but one from which they were increasingly hard pressed to escape. Five Points was the antithesis of the removed and isolated middle class landscapes of the Kings and their protégés in Greenwich Village, but it was a home for the working class nonetheless. The problem was that the interests and activities of sporting men sustained many livelihoods in Five Points. Since sporting men were intentionally hidden from view, reformers and critics found it difficult to fault anyone other than Five Points' visible residents for the spectacles of poverty and vice that characterized the slum (Yamin 2001; Mayne and Murray 2002; Reckner 2002). I have tried to reconnect these communities in order that Five Points is seen not only as a home for landless laborers and racial amalgamators but a place where sporting men—those the system most subsidized by virtue of their race, gender, and aspirations—could enjoy the fruits of their privilege. The key is that their pleasure and patronage came with an expectation of privacy or invisibility that demanded others be positioned in public view.

Because of a tendency to see some actions and actors and not others, this essay has in part used a deep reading of the contexts of the emancipation era to rearticulate the city's neighborhoods, events, and actors with one another in order to see them in dialogue and, more so, as opposite sides of the same coin. This was the coin of American freedom, which defined freedom as being self-contained or self-possessed and, because of wealth and privilege, of being invisible to the eyes of power. In addition, it is against the dominant drive to ignore black visibility that African American parades must be placed. The public positioning of black bodies, in an orderly procession and in the face of disorderly white assault, put on display the issue of emancipation and how African Americans might fit into the public landscape. In contrast, whiteness was expressed by a withdrawal into the private home and away from the active or at least ***visibly*** active use of public space. This withdrawal did not leave the streets un-signified but established that the whole of the urban landscape was under white surveillance. Whites were free to walk anywhere, even into interracial brothels, yet, they were also free to stay at home where they nonetheless remained visible as the standard of American morality and citizenship. Lacking this legitimate basis for what may be called an invisible-visibility, African Americans struggled to participate in the social discourse and establish their rightful belonging. Bearing the doubled burden of being both formerly enslaved and racially distinct, of being highly visible and at the same time politically invisible, African Americans turned to the streets to perform their presence in the city.

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