



A CLOSER LOOK AT MYTHS ABOUT SLAVERY

Contrary to popular belief:

- **Slavery was a *northern* institution**
 - The North held slaves for over two centuries
 - The North abolished slavery only just before the Civil War
 - The North dominated the slave trade
 - The North built its economy around slavery
 - The North industrialized with slave-picked cotton and the profits from slavery
- **Slavery was a *national* institution**
 - Slavery was practiced by all thirteen colonies
 - Slavery was enshrined in the U.S. Constitution and practiced by all thirteen original states
 - The slave trade was permitted by the federal government until 1808
 - Federal laws protected slavery and assisted slave owners in retrieving runaway slaves
 - The Union was deeply divided over slavery until the end of the Civil War
- **Slavery benefited *middle-class* families**
 - Slavery dominated the northern and southern economies during the colonial era and up to the Civil War
 - Ordinary people built ships, produced trade goods, and invested in shares of slave voyages
 - Workers in all regions benefited economically from slavery and slavery-related businesses
 - Consumers bought and benefited from lower prices on goods like coffee, sugar, tobacco, and cotton
- **Slavery benefited *immigrant* families**
 - Immigrants who arrived after the Civil War still benefited from slavery and its aftermath
 - Immigrants flocked to the “land of opportunity” made possible by the unpaid labor of enslaved people
 - Immigrants found routes to prosperity which were closed to the families of former slaves
 - Federal programs in the 20th century provided white families with aid for education, home ownership, and small businesses