



Enslaved: Peoples of the Historic Slave Trade

Diane L. Richard reviews an online source with world-wide scope

I HAD BEEN WAITING FOREVER, OR SO IT SEEMED, FOR THIS NEW resource to go live. I first learned of its planned existence in January 2018¹ and noticed that it went live in December 2020, a reminder that it does take time to go from concept to reality. The project is called Enslaved: Peoples of the Historic Slave Trade (Enslaved). Via its website, <https://enslaved.org>, we learn that the goal of the project is "... a robust, open-source architecture to discover and explore nearly a half million people records and 5 million data points. From archival fragments and spreadsheet entries, we see the lives of the enslaved in richer detail." The website will continue to expand during 2021 and beyond.

Enslaved.org

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Enslaved

Peoples of the Historical Slave Trade

Explore or reconstruct the lives of individuals who were enslaved, owned slaves, or participated in the historical trade.

[Learn More](#)

Start a search across 624337 records from the historical slave trade

[Go to Advanced Search](#)

Search People, Events, and Places

Explore
Browse People, Events, Places, and Sources

People	391559	>
Events	216124	>
Places	14097	>

Exploring

As I write this article, there are just about 625,000 records. You can search for a record or explore by browsing people, events, places, or sources. The project is world-wide in scope and so extends beyond the U.S.

The easiest way to get a sense of what data is currently available is to select "Data" from the menu (or click this link, <https://enslaved.org/data>), and you will find a list of projects which have "linked data

that is currently available within Enslaved.org." You can "View project data" or "View this journal data article." The latter will be discussed further below. When you click on "View project data," you are taken to a page that will summarize how many people, events, places, and sources are referenced for each entry. If you see more than the number "1" in the person category, this tells you that this person is linked to someone else on the website, often a parent or child. These connections reflect a crucial focus of this platform – to interconnect data so that each data point doesn't exist in isolation. So, the life events of an individual or family connections are shown. A person can also have multiple events and places associated with them based on various sources.

Scroll further down the Data page, and you will also find a list of forthcoming datasets, including (as we go to press) the following:

- (1) Contested Freedom: Free Persons of Color in Savannah, GA, 1823-1842 (Marquis Taylor)
- (2) They Had Names: Representations of the Enslaved in Liberty County, Georgia, Estate Inventories, 1762-1865 (Stacy Ashmore Cole)

¹Massive New Database Will Finally Allow Us to Identify Enslaved Peoples and Their Descendants in the Americas, Open Culture, 2018, www.openculture.com/2018/01/massive-new-slave-trade-database-will-finally-allow-us-to-identify-african-american-slaves-and-their-descendants.html