



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Historic Newton's Spring Lecture Series: ENCOUNTERING SLAVERY AND RACE IN NEW ENGLAND**

February 11, 2010, Newton MA . . . When we think of slavery in the United States, most of us think of it as belonging solely to the history of the South. However, slavery's true history is inextricably tied to the North, particularly New England, as well.

In the lecture series, "Encountering Slavery and Race in New England," Historic Newton will present three stories that uncover the role that northern colonists played in slave ownership and trading. The series is made possible with funding from the Foundation for Racial, Ethnic & Religious Harmony.

On Monday, March 1 author C. S. Manegold will speak about her new book *Ten Hills Farm: The Forgotten History of Slavery in the North*, which is the powerful saga of five generations of slave owners in colonial New England.

Ten Hills Farm was a 600-acre estate, located along the southern bank of the Mystic River in portions of what are now the cities of Somerville and Medford. In 1630, it was owned by John Winthrop, governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony; the property subsequently passed from the Winthrops to the Ushers, to the Royalls—all prominent dynasties tied to the Native American and Atlantic slave trades.

This book exposes how the fortunes of these families and the fate of Ten Hills Farm were bound to America's tainted legacy. Each successive owner of Ten Hills Farm would depend upon slavery's profits up until the 1780s, when Massachusetts abolished the practice.

*Ten Hills Farm* digs deep to bring the story of slavery in the North full circle—from concealment to recovery.

In the second lecture in the series on Thursday, March 11, Historic Newton will present the documentary film, *Traces of the Trade: A Story From the Deep North*.

In this award-winning documentary, filmmaker Katrina Browne discovers that her New England ancestors were the largest slave-trading family in U.S. history. She and her cousins retrace the Triangle Trade and gain a powerful new perspective on the current black/white divide.

Discussion following the film will be led by Newton resident and film participant James DeWolf Perry, who is a direct descendant of the 18th-century slave trading family.

From 1769 to 1820, DeWolf fathers, sons and grandsons trafficked in human beings. They sailed their ships from Bristol, Rhode Island to West Africa with rum to trade for African men, women and children. Captives

were taken to Cuban plantations owned by the DeWolfs or were sold at auction in such ports as Havana and Charleston. Sugar and molasses were then brought from Cuba to the family-owned rum distilleries in Bristol.

The film follows Browne and nine fellow family members on a remarkable journey which brings them face-to-face with the history and legacy of New England's hidden enterprise. The issues the DeWolf descendants confront dramatize questions that face the whole nation: What is the legacy of slavery? Who owes who what for the sins of the fathers of this country? What history do we inherit as individuals and as citizens? How does Northern complicity change the equation? And what would repair—spiritual and material—really look like?

The third lecture is titled *...some cotton, and tobacco, and negroes... Pray you have heard nothing of my black guard Peter*. State Representative and historian Byron Rushing will reflect on the first two centuries of Africans in New England by comparing the original story of Africans in Massachusetts Bay Colony recorded in Winthrop's journal with the visit of South Carolinian John Rutledges's enslaved servant to Boston in 1803.

For more information on these programs, including locations, please contact Historic Newton at 617-796-1450.