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My Brother Slaves: Friendship, Masculinity, and Resistance in Antebellum South

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segregation throughout the state made her a reluctant visitor to Georgia.

World War II took a heavy toll on Roosevelt's health and it was at the Little White House in Warm Springs that he passed away. With him that day were Lucy Page Mercer Rutherford, former mistress and constant friend, artist Elizabeth Shoumatoff, and two cousins, Daisy Suckley and Laura Delano. Pictures and commentary reflect that Georgians pulled together to provide an emotional, but dignified funeral escort for their friend and champion.

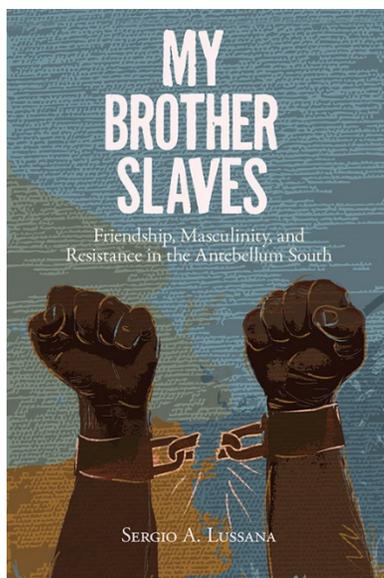
With *A President in our Midst: Franklin Delano Roosevelt in Georgia*, author Kate Minchew achieves a dual accomplishment. With the cornucopia of photographs, it succeeds as a coffee table book for browsing and as a point for conversation; with the addition of the thoughtful, well-researched text, it becomes a seminal resource on Franklin Delano Roosevelt's relationship with Georgia.

Recommended for academic and public libraries.

Melanie J. Dunn

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My Brother Slaves: Friendship, Masculinity, and Resistance in the Antebellum South. Sergio A. Lussana. Lexington: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 2016. ISBN 978-0-8131-6694-0 (Cloth); 978-0-8131-6695-7 (epub); 978-0-8131-6696-4 (Web pdf). 238 p. \$50.00



In Sergio Lussana's "My Brother Slaves", his detailed research and writing focused on the lives of enslaved men "throughout the antebellum South—from the slaveholding border states, down to the Lowcountry and Deep South and across to the southwestern slaveholding states such as Texas"(p. 16). Emerging from the research, Lussana saw that no matter whether the region, crop, or size of the plantation differed, enslaved men responded to their lives

in similar ways. The themes Lussana identified as masculinity, friendship and resistance were "generally uniform" (p. 16). Clarifying behaviors of enslaved men, themes arose again and again: drinking, gambling, wrestling, hunting, evading patron gangs, stealing, forging friendships and resisting enslavement" (p. 16).

Lussana gives us a look at the research into the relationships between a man and his wife and their children. Given to women all the responsibility to care for, educate and sustain children, enslaved men held no place of importance in the family, resulting in the formation of a "matrifocal" society. Enslaved men could not protect their wives from abuse nor stop the selling of a wife and children to other owners on other plantations (p. 2). The forging of bonds between enslaved men became of great importance to their fellow enslaved men.

From a beginning chapter where the work of enslaved men is presented, it is clear that slave owners understood the relationships of the men and how those added to their abilities to work, to lead and to manage. Observing the motivation level of enslaved men to bond and fashion their own work culture, owners appeared to put faith in their abilities and depend upon their solidarity. In Chapter two, the value of the leisure time of enslaved men added significantly to work production—some time for family but significant time spent with their enslaved brothers by "drinking, gambling and wrestling" (p. 17). Lussana points out that hunting, evading patrol gangs, stealing from other plantations, and resisting plantation owners' constraints allowed enslaved men to form additional bonds of masculinity.

In Chapters 4 and 5, the major insights showed how the friendships of enslaved men led to bonds that allowed for rebellion and sharing of networks to further their chances for freedom, "Through each other, enslaved men created a secret world that defied and subverted the slaveholder's authority" (p. 18).

A fascinating read of 149 pages, Acknowledgements, Notes, Bibliography and Index of 62 pages provided a great resource of primary source materials for any reader or researcher pursuing new light on the topic of friendships, masculinity and resistance of enslaved men in the Antebellum South. Recommended as a text or supplemental readings for African American Studies, Gender Studies, and American History students.

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