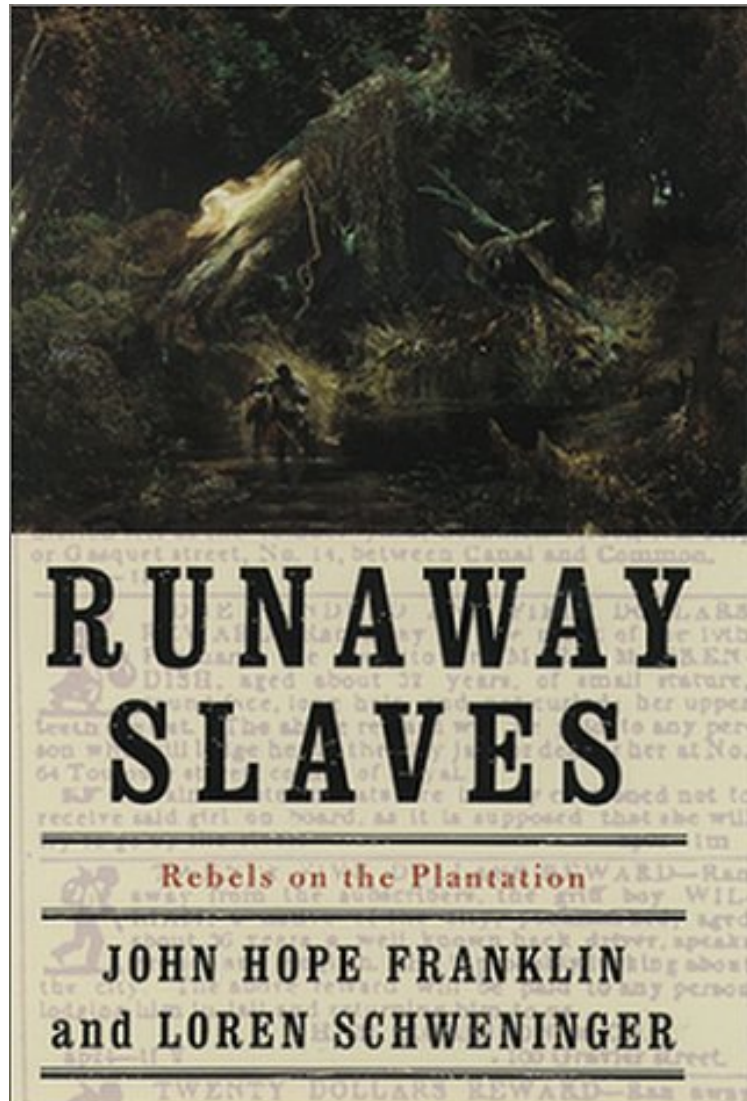


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## Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation

*John Hope Franklin, Loren Schweningen*  
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#1591420 in Books John Hope Franklin 1999-04-29 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.10 x 1.60 x 6.401, 1.78 #File Name: 0195084497480 pages Runaway Slaves Rebels on the Plantation | File size: 70.Mb

**John Hope Franklin, Loren Schweningen : Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Rebels - The stories of daily and normal resistance By Read-A-Lot In order to fully appreciate this book you must clearly understand the purpose. Failure to do so will probably result in a disappointing experience. The focal point of Runaway Slaves is, "slave flight." Not the organized rebellions of a Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey or a Gabriel Prosser that readers may be familiar with, but the everyday individual resistance perpetrated by thousands despite the punishment and attendant violence. So what you get is an examination of the slave

system as told through the many examples of those who absconded. Some for days, others for weeks and months. It is not a book about the planning of escapes and what happened to the individuals who escaped, the book paints the picture of how abhorrent a system of bondage is. It also explodes the myth of a happy plantation system and contented "slaves." Even in the face of the most horrific corrections, the absconding continued and the discontent remained extremely high. What becomes extremely clear is the profits involved in the trafficking of human beings was apparently worth all the trouble that plantation owners went through. Runaways were a cost of doing business that many southerners tried to hide from the larger public. The obvious reason for this was to keep the lie of happy and contented bondsmen and bondswomen alive. "Masters were forced to explain how 'contented' and 'well cared' servants abandoned them in such large numbers." Although the stories of absconders are told in paragraphs and sometimes mere sentences the courage and boldness that African people displayed is simply amazing. Every African-American should be proud of how our ancestors were committed to freedom under the most heinous conditions. Never again should you believe in the docility of "slaves" as a whole. The use of notices of runaways and petitions to legislatures and county courts was a brilliant deployment of sources. These two sources "provide a number of unique strengths. Masters who advertised for a return of their property had little reason to misinform their readers and every reason to be as precise as possible." The takeaway for the reader is the information and inspiration you will receive from the story of consistent and constant resistance to slavery in this book. You will also have a great resource for any other reading you may want to do in the area of slavery and resistance to bondage.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Valuable Reference and Interesting Read  
By Lorraine P. Zigman  
I recently did a program on the Underground Railroad, especially in my State of Vermont. This is a valuable addition to my library on the subject and will be used as a reference in the future. It is an interesting read for anyone interested in the subject matter, and the past history and lives of African Americans.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Compelling information  
By DiscoMatt  
From the author of college level Black History.

From John Hope Franklin, America's foremost African American historian, comes this groundbreaking analysis of slave resistance and escape. A sweeping panorama of plantation life before the Civil War, this book reveals that slaves frequently rebelled against their masters and ran away from their plantations whenever they could. For generations, important aspects about slave life on the plantations of the American South have remained shrouded. Historians thought, for instance, that slaves were generally pliant and resigned to their roles as human chattel, and that racial violence on the plantation was an aberration. In this precedent setting book, John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger demonstrate that, contrary to popular belief, significant numbers of slaves did in fact frequently rebel against their masters and struggled to attain their freedom. By surveying a wealth of documents, such as planters' records, petitions to county courts and state legislatures, and local newspapers, this book shows how slaves resisted, when, where, and how they escaped, where they fled to, how long they remained in hiding, and how they survived away from the plantation. Of equal importance, it examines the reactions of the white slaveholding class, revealing how they marshaled considerable effort to prevent runaways, meted out severe punishments, and established patrols to hunt down escaped slaves. Reflecting a lifetime of thought by our leading authority in African American history, this book provides the key to truly understanding the relationship between slaveholders and the runaways who challenged the system--illuminating as never before the true nature of the South's "most peculiar institution."

.com Runaway Slaves is yet another masterpiece from the esteemed African American historian John Hope Franklin, author of the influential *From Slavery to Freedom*. Along with history professor Loren Schweninger, Franklin examines the often unexplored phenomenon of slave resistance--specifically, that of runaway slaves. For too long, there has been a myth that slaves were happy with their condition. Armed with the data from numerous Wanted posters, letters, county-court petitions, and newspapers, Franklin and Schweninger prove that slaves were in a constant state of rebellion with their masters. The intense circle of violence between blacks and whites was marked by property sabotage, work stoppage, assault, murder, and escape into the North. "Perhaps the greatest impact runaways had on the peculiar institution," the authors suggest, "was in their defiance of the system. Masters and slaves knew that there were blacks who were willing to do almost anything to extricate themselves from bondage." Comprehensive in scholarship and compelling in prose, this book sheds light on an underappreciated aspect of the American quest for freedom. -- Eugene Holley Jr.

From Library Journal  
Franklin (history, emeritus, Duke Univ.) and Schweninger (history, Univ. of North Carolina, Greensboro) have written an exhaustive account of slaves who escaped during the antebellum period. Organized topically, this scrupulously detailed work is based primarily on advertisements for runaways and records of court cases involving escaped slaves. While the book is longer on description than analysis, the authors do agree on one theme: that the substantial number of runaways makes it clear that slaves were hardly content with their condition. Because of its careful, sometimes overwhelming detail, this work can serve as both a reference book and a monograph.

AA.O. Edmonds, Ball State Univ., Muncie, IN  
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From Kirkus  
In a searing indictment of plantation life in the antebellum South, noted historian Franklin (professor emeritus at Duke Univ.) and Schweninger (History/Univ. of North Carolina, Greensboro) use primary documents such as court

records, newspapers, and letters of contemporaries, including slaves themselves, to show that slaves often resisted their condition by means direct and indirect, and frequently to the point of running away. Historians traditionally have depicted antebellum plantation slaves as docile and resigned to their fate. Indeed, early studies of American slavery, such as Ulrich Phillips's *Life and Labor in the Old South* (1929), romanticized plantation slavery and even portrayed slaves as generally contented with their lot. While modern scholarship has exposed the harsh aspects of plantation life, the image of the slave as passive victim has survived. The reality was vastly different, say the authors; quiet resistance and open rebellion were common occurrences on the typical Southern plantation, and the average plantation owner had several runaways every year. In a meticulous survey of primary sources, the authors examine multiple aspects of slave resistance, including passive resistance and outright racial violence on the plantation; the motives of runaways, which included, commonly, the desire to be reunited with family members; and typical opportunities for running away, such as the death of the master. Runaways faced tremendous obstacles, the authors point out: they had to travel hundreds of miles to freedom amid a well-organized system of slave catching and retrieval that was so efficient and vicious that it even enslaved free blacks, and runaways faced drastic penalties, including physical punishment and even death, if caught. Most were caught, but thousands continued to seek their freedom, and many made it, whether alone, through the solicitude of free blacks or by the Underground Railroad of clandestine assistance, to the promised land of the free states or Canada. A well-crafted and carefully researched account that opens a new window onto a dark and painful chapter in American history. -- Copyright 1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.