

An Educator's Challenge Inspired By the Life of Mary Prince and the Roundtable Discussion Titled "Seeing Through Whiteness"

Welcome to the 12th event of the BARS Digital Events Series

Seeing Through Whiteness: The History of Mary Prince (1831)

Please remain muted with your video turned off unless you are speaking.

If you would like to ask a question please let us know through the chat function by beginning your question with a 'Q'. You can ask a question at any time.

PLEASE REMEMBER SESSIONS WILL BE RECORDED

We will start shortly!



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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGL-dVF5CZ4&t=585s>

Jeanette Loredo

ENG 5513

Dr. Kerry Sinanan

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The History of
Mary Prince
A West Indian Slave

Introduction

In reading *The History of Mary Prince*, the heartbreaking scenarios that were presented resonates in the modern times we live in today. We know this treatment still exists and continues to permeate through our homes, schools, workplaces, colleges, universities, social media, entertainment industry, and in the news. Most ask, "What's going on? Or Why can't we all just get along?"

The Problem

Most of us can agree that we have never read these pieces of Mary Prince until now. So as educators, professors, and doctors in the teaching field, we must continue to actively present the unheard voices as this country desperately needs unity in this matter.

But how can we do this?

By taking the suggestions of the 3 amazing speakers, which includes our professor Dr. Sinanan, and also Dr. Shelby Johnson and Dr. Christina Huang, in the roundtable discussion with Dr. Daniel Cook. I chose to concentrate our efforts into the classrooms as I am inspired and ready to join the movement with scholars like Dr. Sinanan and so many others who are striving to educate the world in this vastly approaching movement.

When researching or teaching British Literature, we must begin with *The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave* when introducing the transatlantic voyages.
Why?

The History of Mary Prince (1831) was the first narrative of a black woman to be published in Britain. Filled with countless details of Prince's experience as a slave in Bermuda, Turks Island and Antigua, and in London 1828, we are immediately immersed into the raw experience of slavery. Escaping from Mr. Wood, her brutal owner, she utilized the Anti-Slavery Society and shared her story to Susana Strickland (Moodie), and gave us the gift of her narrative and truth.

I extend my thanks to the late Mary Prince and Susan Strickland for giving me the lens that is so needed in the year 2022. Thank you to Dr. Sinanan for boldly taking the initiative to give us the version of the voyage we never heard about in our history, which help remedy our U.S. society and humanity.

In "Seeing Through Whiteness," the following are comments taken from the speakers on teaching Mary Prince in the Classroom

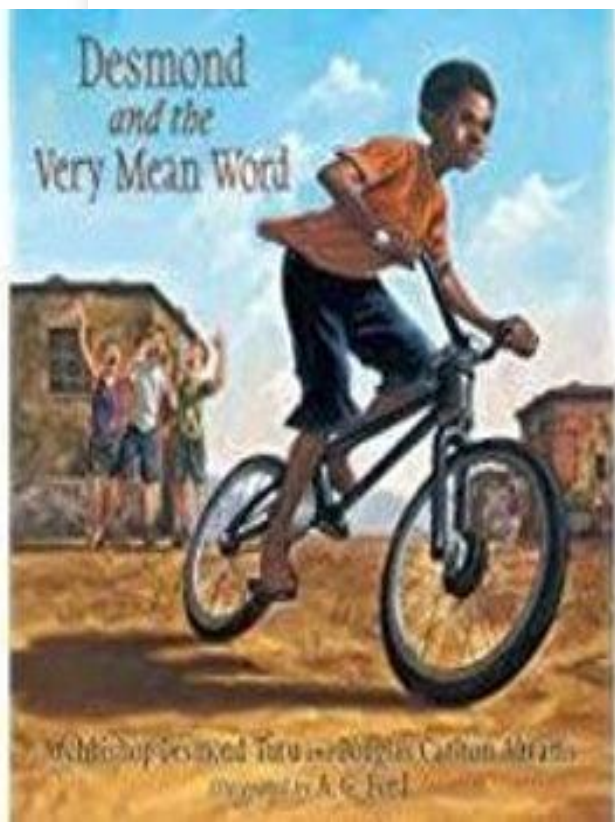
To begin, the host, Dr. Daniel Cook, said, at 2:05-2:11 "It's all well and good talking and releasing statements as we have done, but it's all about action as well so we are looking forward to looking at the whole community. And of these kind of initiatives...we're looking to merge,"

1:08.43-Dr. Shelby Johnson says Mary Prince is: - very valuable because it introduced questioning for sympathy for her students, she also uses **Sinanan's work for Mary Prince as the archive**, also uses **Saidiya Hartman's *Venus of Two Acts*** to get students **to compact those dynamics.**

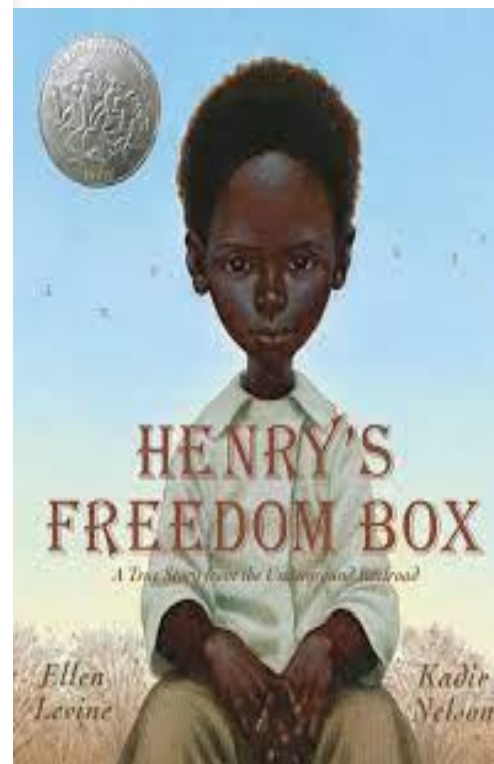
1:11:32-Dr. Christina Huang **recommends: Dr. Sinanan's essay on Mary Prince as a "Cultural Artifact"** for undergrads to get them to think as a piece of oral history and how it operates in black political thought to situate resistance to colonialism and slavery. -Huang uses **Gale Jackson's poem – *mary prince. bermuda, turks island, antigua. 1787.*** -and pairs and **Phyllis Wheatly & June Jordan essay with *The Difficult Miracle of Black Poetry in America.*** She also says **mixing Mary Prince with Contemporary writing and poetry has generated fruitful conversations patterns of racism in class.**

1:20:44 Sinanan says takes 3 weeks to teach and students are shocked, Mary Prince tries to get white people to recognize themselves, and suggests the aspect motherhood. Anchoring in the detachment of the mothers. Jennifer Nash-Historical context 1662 passed chattel status via the mother, **recommends Hortense Spillers as it shows representation of the Black mother as the Belly of the World, which is the one that produces Wealth of the West..** **a way of tying up those trajectories.**

When reading, "Miss Betsey, for whom I was purchased...I was made quite a pet...She used to lead me about by the hand, and call me her little (name)...This was the happiest period of my life; for I was too young to understand rightly my condition as a slave..." (Prince, pg ii), you must visualize two small children. "Mary Prince" being "othered" by being called the epithet by Little Betsey. I emphasize that grade school children are so impressionable. We must educate on appropriateness in language to minimize microaggressions and build the resistance.



Based on a true story, Desmond was called a very mean word by a boy who he later learned was being abused by his own family every day. Desmond realized that he may never get a "sorry," but there is a room to forgive. This book promote embracing our own uniqueness and also the uniqueness in others and tries to stop bullying.



Based on a true story of Henry "Box" Brown, who escaped the Underground Railroad describes a painful journey of an enslaved boy through love and loss. His family was sold off, so he mailed himself to Philadelphia. The end result was that he got his freedom.

Hetty and her small mistake

"French Black called Hetty...She was the most attractive woman I ever saw, and she was tasked with her utmost...from milking cows, put on supper...rubbed down horse, gave the hog and cow their suppers, prepared the beds, and undressed the children, and laid them to sleep...She gave me supper...Poor Hetty, but she led a most miserable life, and her death...One of the cows...got loose...my master flew in a terrible passion...repeatedly flogged by both masters and mistresses...till the water burst out of her body and she died" (Pg v-vi).

Thinking of all the tasks she did, I thought of future college professors/ teachers and their awareness of working moms, domestic/dating violence, child abuse, neglect, bullying is crucial. To teach our students insight in leaving room to learn from mistakes, no one deserves abuse or death just because of personal minor conflict.

"Mr. D-----had a slave called old Daniel, who he used to treat in the most cruel manner. Poor Daniel was lame in the hip, and could not keep up with the rest of the slaves...and our master would order him to be stripped and laid down on the ground, He was an object of pity and terror to the whole gang of slaves..." (Pg. ix).

We must also teach from the discrimination of disabled and handicapped treatment. In schools, these days, the ridicule and shame still exists but we must acknowledge the tendencies that people still can have toward aggression of "othered" people.

"El Deafo" helps students awareness of disabilities in that they are the same as any normal person, just with superpowers.



Source: La Republica | Illustration by Carlin

<https://www.deccanherald.com/metrolife/gender-inequality-cartoon-goes-717690.html>

Women in the workplace

Old Daniel



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5L4DQfVlcdg>

Something to think about-

Teaching through current events, field trips, resources, and libraries.

Did you know?

In South Lake, Texas, George Dawson, who was named the American poster child for literacy after learning to read and earn his GED at the age 98, who was the grandson of a slave, published a book toward his journey in literacy. The administration in South Lake banned his book out of the library because it had a story of lynching. This school also happens to also have the middle school named after him.



If learning about the Holocaust is to be better and to not repeat history.
Then we must educate about this in the same efforts as well.

<https://www.tiktok.com/t/ZTRQyDABY/>

TikTok name: Datagentdub896, Kevin Lee

Did you know?

Briscoe Western Art Museum in San Antonio, TX



This is a real life subject of a child who's father is in prison in Kansas. The prison has a program where ranchers will bring in horses for the prisoners to help train them, so that the horses can be sold for auction.

John Espinoza, former Museum Educator at the Briscoe Western Art Museum, who is now currently at the Science Mill as a STEM Education Specialist, stated "Prisoners are doing this work for free, they are predominately Black or people of color and the ranchers who bring their horses in are white. The money the museum wanted to raise would not go to the family or the child, and so the painting/story perpetuates this stereotype of people of color working for free (enslaved) to "protect/ensure" this image of the West."

<https://www.cowboyartistsofamerica.com/artwork/young-horseman/>

Painting: Phil Epp "Young Horseman," 2021 acrylic on board, 40 x 40 in.

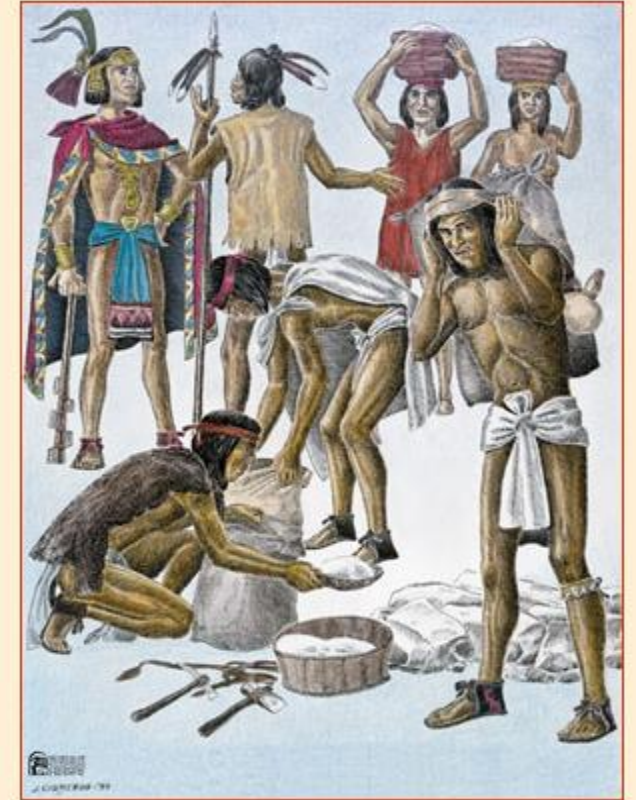
Did you know? There is a salt lake in Edinburg, Texas



Owned by the King of Spain.
Spanish Explorers claimed the land for
public use in 1798.



Map circa 1849, showing La Sal Del Rey. The lake is labeled as Salt Ls, and lies near the Port of Saint Isabel. Map: Banyon Library, University of Nevada.



Northern Mexico Indian traders at La Sal del Rey lake, circa A. D. 1400. Many cultures, including the Huastecans and the Aztecs, sent trading parties to the lake to mine the valuable white mineral. Earlier hunting and gathering peoples were attracted to the resources as well. Painting by Jose Cisneros. Courtesy of the Museum of South Texas History.

<https://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/st-plains/images/he5.html>

<https://texastimetravel.oncell.com/en/edinburg-la-sal-del-rey-90726.html>

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