



PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

In the Footsteps of Others: Process Drama

HASAN JEFFRIES

Thank you for allowing me into your home. First, I'd like to ask you a couple of biographical questions. Where were you born?

JANIE GRAVES

I was born in Pennsylvania County, Virginia on October 22, 1948.

HASAN JEFFRIES

Janie Graves began teaching Social Studies at Durham High School in 1975, just as desegregation swept across the South, flipping the school from white to black. For the next 20 years she taught government, American history, and street law, a favorite of hers. A keen observer, she knew her students' strengths and weaknesses.

JANIE GRAVES

To get a verb/noun connection, you must know grammar, otherwise you are not going to write well. You're not going to speak well.

HASAN JEFFRIES

She also knew the fraught racial politics of the school board.

JANIE GRAVES

There's dearly something wrong with the system, when you have legislators dictating, people and the educators that are dictating what should be taught, and how it should be taught.

HASAN JEFFRIES

Which is why she opposed this decision to turn Durham High into a magnet school. That move was meant to flip the school again, this time from black back to white. Her vocal opposition to this controversial plan led me to interview her for my oral history project.

My name's Hasan Kwame Jeffries. I'm interviewing Miss Graves at her home on March 12, 1995.

I was in my first year of graduate school at Duke University, but I was taking oral history with Jacqueline Hall at UNC Chapel Hill, one of the perks of going to school on Tobacco Road, that and ACC hoops, of course. The interview was a part of a group assignment. My group, like the others, interviewed local women in an effort to redefine grassroots leadership.

When I interviewed Miss Graves, she did not disappoint. She spoke with candor about the school board's plans, and with passion about the obstacles black students faced. When she shared her fears about the uncertainty about their future, she welled up. I remember her saying, "Graduation, to me, is a crying day. We've done so much to get them prepared, to walk, but to walk where?"

My group met once or twice to hash out our presentation, settling on something simple. We'd each identify who we interviewed and explain why. It was a truly unimaginative approach to history. The other groups clearly put more thought into the assignment.

As I listened to their presentations, I gained a clear understanding of what their interviewees had accomplished, but I did not get a good sense of who these women actually were as people, and how they actually felt about the world around them.

When it was our turn, my fellow group members read the bland, and frankly boring, biographical sketches that we had crafted. It was worse than I thought. More than any other group, we had managed to turn dynamic, thoughtful, radical women into a list of dates and organizational affiliations. At that moment, I realized we were doing these women a terrible disservice. I also realized that our grade was falling fast.

I was desperate. I scrapped my biological sketch of Miss Graves and hastily arranged a dozen or so index cards with quotes from her interview into what I hoped would be a coherent first-person narrative of her opinions and feelings. I didn't stop there. I decided to actually perform the interview.

When my turn came, I stood up, slowly turned around, and without saying a word, began walking about the room, fidgeting with things here and there, just as Miss Graves had done at the start of our interview. When I finally spoke, I used only her words. Staring off into the distance, just as she did when she formulated her thoughts, and catching someone's eye, as she caught mine when she wanted to drive home a point. I ended the monologue with the last thing she had said in the interview. A heart-rending commentary on the likely fate of her students.

When I finished, there was a long silence. So, I took my seat, unsure of exactly what I had just done, but when I glanced over at Professor Hall, she smiled and nodded approvingly. I knew right then: mission accomplished. I had salvaged our grade. But I had also accomplished something quite unexpected. While performing the interview, more than Miss Graves' words leapt from my lips. Her passion and her pain did as well.

I remember that moment because I remember being Miss Graves. I also remembered sharing the very last thing Miss Graves said in her interview. For me, graduation from high school is a very sad time because I know it's going to be life ...

JANIE GRAVES

For me, graduation for high school students is a very sad time because I know it's going to be life for them. It's almost, it's saying, "Life in prison." The prison, though, is the world. Either they make it, or they die, but oft times, they die.

HASAN JEFFRIES

Oft times they die.

JANIE GRAVES

Oft times they die.

HASAN JEFFRIES

Oft times they die. I thought I had understood the things she had said to me during our interview, but it wasn't until that very moment when I had to think deeply about what her words meant to her, that I truly understood their meaning.

I'm Hasan Kwame Jeffries, and this is *Teaching Hard History: American Slavery*. It's a special series from Teaching Tolerance, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center. This podcast provides an in-depth look at how to teach important aspects of the history of American Slavery.

In each episode, we explore a different topic, walking you through historical concepts, raising questions for discussion, suggesting useful source material, and offering practical classroom exercises. Talking with students about slavery can be emotional and complex. This podcast is a resource for navigating those challenges, so teachers and students can develop a deeper understanding of the history and legacy of American slavery. Historical subjects can often seem distant and two-dimensional. It can be a challenge to convey what was at stake for people living through a particular experience.

In this episode, Lindsay Randall explains a technique called “process drama.” It is a way to help your students build empathy, and better understand the risks and complexities that enslaved individuals actually faced. She'll walk us through how to create a successful lesson plan, highlighting things that work and noting a few things to avoid. I'll see you on the other side. Enjoy.

LINDSAY RANDALL

Whenever I talk about process drama and how I use it in the classroom, one of the first questions I get is, “What is that?” And when I explain that it is a teaching technique where students are presented with a problem or a situation and interact with each other using improv to move to a conclusion, I am often met with skepticism.

Most educators that I talk to have never encountered this particular teaching method. They might be familiar with other interactive lessons, but not this. They are very weary of it, especially those who teach at the high school or college level. This is because the word “drama” has certain connotations.

When people hear the word “drama,” they envision stage performances, costume roles, sound and lighting, and that couldn't be farther from what a process drama lesson really is. Lessons that utilize process drama aren't about creating performances. They aren't engaging with an audience. Shockingly, for the history classroom, they aren't even trying to depict 100% factual scenarios.

Instead, they are explorative. They allow students to use prior knowledge in conjunction with their own life experiences to make meaning of the past. The process is the purpose. The process helps to connect

students to the material that is being covered. It encourages students to become more engaged and invested in the classroom.

Having students wanting to learn, without even realizing it—that hits every teacher’s sweet spot! Process drama is so much more than a flashy activity that can hook students. In today’s world, as educators, we’re required to have multiple layers in our lessons. It can’t just cover only a topic. It needs to reinforce important skills or other benchmarks and standards.

Process Drama is amazing at ticking a lot of these boxes for history teachers. Logical and critical thinking, check. Understanding cause and effect, check—making this teaching method perfect for the history classroom. It demonstrates that history is more than just the memorization of dates and other facts. It creates a unique framework that can cast the student in the role of the historian.

During the process drama activity, students are allowed to focus only on the facts that they deem most important. This mimics the process of identifying and analyzing points while writing a research paper. Throughout the activity, the students are debating and arguing with one another. This is similar to working through conflicting historical sources.

At the end of the lesson, students reflect back on not only their experience, but that of their peers. This last crucial step is like synthesizing a pile of muddled information into a coherent narrative. But more important than all of that, process drama allows me, as the teacher, to answer the most universal questions in history education. Ones I know we all get. “Why couldn’t they have done _____,” or “Why didn’t they do _____?” In relation to the topic of slavery, one of the questions I get the most is, “Why didn’t slaves just run away or revolt?” Understanding why individuals in the past made the decisions that they did is one of the most difficult concepts for students at all grade levels to grapple with.

In the example process drama lesson that I will be discussing with you today, students are presented with a scenario of enslaved people living on a plantation in Virginia in the lead up to the American Revolution, facing a choice of whether to run away to fight for the British, or to stay.

To the students, this might seem like a no-brainer. If a slave ran away to the British, and the British win the war, then they gained their freedom. Why wouldn’t someone choose to do that? Any chance for freedom would be worth it. However, as historians and teachers, we know that such a choice is not nearly as simple as it is in the minds of our students. Process drama can help students begin to understand the experience of historical individuals.

I want to pause here and say, process drama, by no means, can or wants to give students an authentic experience related to any topic such as slavery, nor does it seek to minimize the horrific nature and conditions of slavery. No lesson can or should ever do either of those things. What it does do is force students to look at the facts and situations, to consider the perspectives and motivations of people in the past separate from their own beliefs. It is a tool which fosters empathy in students. Given that this is a very different lesson than most people are familiar with, I’m going to spend some time talking with you about how you might create a process drama lesson.

First, you have to select the topic and focus. This is one of the most important steps in the whole process, because everyone has heard news reports about lessons that sound similar to what I am proposing you do, but went horribly, horribly wrong.

We've all read about lessons where students were asked to pretend they are members of the KKK and to justify the treatment of black people, or ones in which students are asked to debate the ending of slavery with pros and cons as members of the legislature on the eve of the Civil War.

It is understandable that you don't want to be that teacher. You don't want to be the teacher that creates a lesson that harms your students, or their families, or your community. The idea of making a process drama lesson might scare you, particularly one that is related to the history of slavery, or any other sensitive topic. This is because in doing so, you are going to be asking your students to debate, discuss, and argue not as themselves, but as a historical individual. Because of that unease, it is easier to just do a lesson with an impersonal worksheet or an impersonal reading of a primary source—any other type of lesson that doesn't put you and your students out there.

I get it. I really do. But the way to fix the issue isn't to simply ignore this type of meaningful teaching, but to identify the problems with those particular lessons, and learn how to avoid them. Engaging as historical characters isn't the problem. Which characters they were asked to engage with is.

A common thread in every example you see in the news is that the teacher was asking students to create historical empathy and emotional understanding for groups for which it is simply not appropriate to do so. Yes, we need to understand the motivations of the KKK, or the mentality of southern senators in the 1800's, but we shouldn't empathize with them. We don't need to validate their views, and we should never ask our students to do so either.

When picking a topic, you should ask yourself why you want your students to empathize with those whose history they will be intimately engaging with. Why do you want there to be an emotional investment? What is gained from this type of instruction?

It is also important to communicate your motivation to students. It could take the form of posted learning objectives or essential questions, something so that they understand the goal and motivation of the activity.

For the lesson about the lives of enslaved people during the American Revolution, it was essential for me to have students see past the text in history books to realize that real people were affected in real ways, that this history mattered to real people and still matters today. It helps give a voice to underrepresented historical people in the minds of our students.

Far too often, history books, text books, and even classroom instruction deal with slaves as passive people in history, to which things just happen to. This is damaging to not only our students as historians, but also as citizens of our communities. This history continues to affect us today, and our students need to understand the intergenerational trauma that has been created from it.

This activity also highlights that those that are enslaved, despite the horrific and controlling conditions that they were forced to live under, had personal thoughts, convictions and motivations. While we may never fully know everything about these people, we can see in the records a material culture that they left behind one undeniable truth. They had agency. Limited as their agency might be, it is an important aspect of understanding the history of slavery that our students must know about.

Now, another key to doing this type of lesson well is that you need to know the information related to the topic like the back of your hand. This cannot be a phone-in lesson that you briefly researched via Google for five minutes the night before. There is serious prep work involved, but don't let that scare you either. It is totally worth it. Once you have built the lesson and supporting materials, it can be used again and again and again. For example, the lesson that I am talking about today is one based on intensive research I conducted for a college course. Well, one of my other process drama lessons is based off my Master's thesis about the relationship between Puritans and Native Americans.

You need to find a subject that you are comfortable taking a deep dive into what has been written about it. This is not to say, however, that you need to take a course or get an advanced degree on a subject in order to have the proficiency required to create this type of lesson. One way that you can gather more in-depth knowledge is to search the internet for a college syllabus related to your topic.

Typically, professors include seminal works or ones that focus on new research in their required readings. They also frequently post guiding questions for each reading. Selecting one or two of these books and using the related questions can help you to make the most of your research.

No matter how you decide to go about it, a good foundational knowledge about the subject will also help you be more confident that the subject is appropriate for a process drama. If you ever feel uncomfortable or unprepared to talk about sensitive topics such as race, this will also help you.

Learning about a topic in-depth will give you the power to see connections between historical events and contemporary issues, giving you the confidence to engage with your students in these discussions. I know that these conversations can be scary to have. As a white woman who frequently teaches students of color about their own history, I get that it can be nerve-racking.

You don't want to mess up something so weighty, so important. While my own racial and gender identity does mean that I will never have the full understanding of everything my students go through, being at least academically prepared about the depth and breadth of their history allows me to better connect with them. It allows me to show them that their history matters, and if their history matters, then that shows that their voices matter.

The next step to creating a Process Drama lesson is to identify the knowledge and skills you want your students to gain from the activity, looking to your own curriculum standards for guidance. Since I'm from Massachusetts, I've used our history and social science curriculum frameworks.

One of the objectives for US-1 is, "Students will be able to analyze how Americans resisted British policies before 1775, and analyze the reasons for the American victory and the British defeat during the

Revolutionary War.” I use that knowledge objective as a starting point, but instead of focusing on how white Americans resisted British policies, I twisted it a little to focus instead on how others living in the colonies felt about both British and American policies.

Standards tend to have a very white, Eurocentric topical focus, and we sometimes have to be creative so that we can better reflect the diverse history of our country in our classrooms. It is valuable to show our students that the history of events, such as the Revolutionary War, which we treat as being something to celebrate, was in fact more complicated than what we often consider. It was not celebrated by everyone involved. American victory meant dire consequences for some people. This is the complicated history we owe our students.

To further student understanding, you should also identify skills that the lesson will allow students to engage with. Again, using my state’s curriculum standards, one of the skill objectives that I have identified is “Students will be able to understand bias and points of view and how causation relates to continuity and change by being able to: show connections, casual and otherwise, between particular historical events and ideas and large social economic and political trends and development; distinguish between long-term and short-term cause and effect relationships; explain how a cause and effect relationship is different from a sequence or a correlation of events.”

Now I’m going to walk you through a brief list of the parts of the process drama activity that I’ve created, and then I’ll discuss each part in more detail. The components of the lesson are: the scenario, character biographies, student-directed activity, revealing of outcomes, and discussion. Let’s break each of those down for you.

First, you have to give the students context or set the stage. To do this, you might read a scenario to the class, which places them in a particular situation. It can be 100% factual, or it can be slightly fabricated. Whatever you think is best based on your research.

In this example, students are presented with a scenario where enslaved individuals must decide whether or not to run away to fight for the British during the American Revolution. Here’s what I explained to the class.

The year is 1775, and you are a slave on a plantation in Virginia. Lord Dunmore, the British Royal Governor of the Colony of Virginia, has issued a proclamation. The proclamation states that “All indentured servants, Negros, or others appertaining to rebels, free, that are able and willing to bear arms, they joining His Majesty’s troop as soon as may be.”

This means that any slaves of American patriots who fight for the British will be given their freedom upon British victory in the conflict. You have heard stories about the British, especially their Ethiopian regiment, which is comprised of runaway slaves. They said that the slaves who join are given plenty of food, nice clothes, in addition to their freedom.

Many colonists, however, begun controlling for runaway slaves, and those who are caught trying to make it to the British are severely punished, even hung. A group of youth come together in secret to discuss the choice that Lord Dunmore’s proclamation has given you.

Then students receive a character card with information about an individual such as their name, age, and a small biography. If you have ever been to the National Holocaust Museum, it is very similar to what is done there. The information might tell a student that their character was a woman with a young infant child, or that they were an elderly man whose wife had recently died.

Each fact might help students determine what is best for their character to do in regards to Lord Dunmore's proclamation. For example: Name: Elizabeth. Age: 25. You were born on this plantation along with your sister, Celia, who still lives here, and is married to another slave, Abraham. Everyone here calls you Bet. You have a three-year-old daughter named Abigail. Your husband was sold away from the plantation two years ago, and you have not seen him since. Your primary job on the plantation is to serve as a cook and laundress for your owner and his family.

Again, have fun with this, and make the information in the character cards varied. You might disclose that some characters are single, married, have children or are childless, have elderly parents, male, or female, among other possibilities. These different character traits and factors help to make the lesson more engaging. It allows for an infinite number of outcomes.

Let me pause here to mention a crucial thing to remember when creating character cards. Whenever doing a process drama, the characters should hold comparable roles or social status. There can be differences between positions or experiences characters have, but there should never be a true power imbalance between anyone, such as would exist between a master and a slave.

Again, there are individuals we don't want our students to empathize with. To produce a more complex and nuanced lesson, you might also choose to secretly incorporate a feature that can have unexpected consequences. This could take the form of a student receiving a background card that has a covert role.

Name: Caesar. Age: 40. Background: You were born in the Ashanti Empire where you were captured and brought to the West Indies. You labored in the sugar cane fields for a year before you were sold again to a ship's captain. While working on the sugar plantation, you saw many slaves die from sickness and disease. The captain brought you up to Virginia where you were sold at auction.

You have now lived here for 15 years. You have a wife, Josephine, who lives here at the plantation also. Here's where you could add directions for the student. Optional, personal decision: If you choose to inform your owner about the plans of another slave to run away to the British, you will not sell Josephine to another plantation nearby. There is no guarantee, however, that your owner will keep his word, since in the past he has repeatedly failed to fulfill promises he has made. Then you can end the card with a final set of directions such as: If you decided to inform on another student, you must wait for the directions from the teacher before informing the student of your choice. Do not let other students know that you are an informant.

This can foster discussion after the lesson about the ramifications of a single choice, why individuals may or may not have acted in the manner that they did. It is a great introduction to students about the idea that actions can be viewed through multiple lenses, and that many factors influence them. If a student decides to serve as an informant, is that selfish because they are taking away another character's chance

at a better outcome? Or is it self-less, in that they were trying to protect Josephine?

While there are no correct answers to such questions, these are the issues we need our students to begin wrestling with. In doing so, our students can begin to see agency more clearly in examples that aren't as straightforward as they might be used to. But please be careful in handing such a card out. You don't want this activity to make any real tensions or bullying that might be taking place between students in real life worse.

You might also incorporate simple props such as sashes with a color—denotes a person's gender. These types of props help to make discussions and interactions smoother, especially if you have students making the decisions for a character of a different gender. Remember to be very judicious and use props sparingly. They're only meant to help highlight information, not create ambiance or to propagate any racist stereotypes.

During the activity, students meet as their characters and engage with each other to figure out what they would do in such a scenario. Would their character decide to run away or stay? To do this, students should be free to direct the movement of the classroom, such as moving about the room, staying in their seats, meeting in large or small groups, whatever they want.

Students also direct how they will interact with each other. There could be pacts made, arguments, cajoling, limited threats, and as long as it's within the confines of the activity, any and all of it is allowed. While students are engaging with the lesson, your involvement is key. This is not a lesson where only students are participating.

One way that you can interact with the students is by playing a devil's advocate role. This can encourage students to participate. They see that you are also fully committed to this activity, and it can force students to defend their positions. When I'm teaching this exercise, I move around the room while students are talking.

I listen to what they are saying and then whisper things to them. If they are thinking of having their person run away, I might say something like, "You're right, and if more people decide the same thing, you might have an even better chance. There aren't enough resources to catch everyone. But, if you choose that and your character is caught, well, they would face a very harsh punishment. I wonder if it's worth it?"

If a student was considering remaining on the plantation to protect their family, "I totally understand where you are coming from. You want to protect your family, and this is certainly the safer option. Or is it? What if too many people choose to run away? Do you think that there might be consequences for those who stay behind?"

One of the most central roles that you are also responsible for during the lesson is redirecting students' comments or actions in a positive manner, before they become inappropriate. Since many students consider the classroom a safe place, they may push the boundaries of what is acceptable, whether it's related to the history and betrayal of slaves, Native Americans, or other minorities.

This can be used as a very powerful, teachable moment for all students. This needs to be done in a

sensitive manner, so as to not single a student out, or inhibit future participation. One of the most pervasive issues I have had is students who want to speak as they imagine their character might. This is always problematic.

One of the best ways to head that off is to lay ground rules in the beginning. One rule I always give them is to just talk like themselves. No accents, no different speech patterns, no different vocabulary. However, when I've had students still try to do this in class, I pause the activity and remind them that they are to talk normally with a brief explanation that how we think people of the past talked is often inaccurate and typically based on a harmful caricature or a stereotype.

Another ground rule I have is that you cannot verbally attack a fellow student, but that you can attack the decisions of a character. We talk about what that distinction means. In the heat of the moment, with self-preservation on the line, this is another area where students might engage in inappropriate actions. This usually is more related to real social issues between students and less with the activity. But it's just as important to deal with these. Knowing your students is key here, and by moving around the room, you can use your role as devil's advocate to redirect in a more positive manner. If a student just comes out and says something really bad or something you need to deal with, don't ignore it.

If a student's actions need to be addressed, it is important to remember that while you don't want to single a student out, you do need to deal with the issues in front of the entire class, whether during the activity or discussion. This is because while you might get through to the single student, the other students may not be aware that you have addressed anything.

Your actions, or perceived *lack* of actions, can inadvertently reinforce stereotypes or create the belief that your classroom is not a safe space. Never be silent. This advice goes not only for process drama lessons, but as just a good classroom policy in general. But if you do ever find yourself having to stop the class, know that class participation may be tentative after that. So again, use your role as the devil's advocate to get the activity moving.

At the end, you're going to ask your students to make a decision based on their beliefs and interactions during the activity as to whether their character would run away to the British or not. To visually show their decisions, one group might go to that side of the room, the rest to the other side of the room.

It is also here where you pause the class and reveal that one student had an optional personal decision, and ask the student to share what they have decided. Depending on the answer, a student may need to move to a different side of the room. Now, you hand out envelopes that reveal the outcomes for the characters based on their decisions. Either their character remains enslaved, is caught and shipped to the West Indies as punishment, or makes it to Lord Dunmore and the British.

If the character is successful in escaping to the British, there can be further ramifications once the British lose. The character can be sold back into slavery, or shipped off by the British to a small settlement in Nova Scotia.

A more in-depth example of an outcome for a student who decided that their person would attempt to

run away to the British might be: You successfully made it to the British Army. You serve in Colonel Tye's elite black brigade in New Jersey. Despite all your efforts, the British ultimately concede victory to the American colonists. For those who are near New York, the British create a list called the Book of Negros. You are able to convince a British official that you are a runaway slave and had fought for the British, and so your name was added to the list. The British brought you to Nova Scotia, where they promised to give you land and freedom. Although they did keep their promise, the land that you were given was rocky and could not support crops. You also face discrimination and physical threats from your white neighbors.

Or there might be a different outcome for a student who also chose to have their character run away to the British. Like the other outcome, they are still successful, but have a different consequence when the British lose the war. You successfully made it to the British Army. You serve in the British Army under General Cornwallis. You traveled with the Army and helped fight, as well as gather supplies as you march across Virginia. During your march through Virginia, there was a breakout of smallpox, but you are lucky and do not succumb to the sickness. This meant that you were able to join Cornwallis and the rest of the Army at Yorktown. While under siege, even more soldiers, both white and black, died of smallpox. Since large numbers of the Army are sick, the American and French forces are able to successfully take Yorktown, effectively winning the war. When the American troops enter, they found you, took you, and sold you back into slavery.

There are a multitude of outcomes that can be created that are relatively historically accurate. In reality though, these options were more open to men than to women, which can also be used as a discussion point at the end about the impact of gender on opportunities. The variety of outcomes demonstrates to students that whether their character ran away or not, the outcomes were not often positive ones.

As I had mentioned before, we often think of periods in our nation's history, such as the American Revolution, as very positive events. However, this type of lesson can highlight the difficult realities that minorities, particularly enslaved people, faced during the founding of our nation. Not everyone celebrated American victory.

That leads me to the most critical part of the lesson, one that you cannot skip on: the wrap-up. Such a discussion can allow students to articulate their thoughts and feelings related to the exercise. It can also demonstrate to you how their perceptions and empathy for historical events and people may have shifted, and can be used in future discussions as a way to make broader, historical connections.

More importantly, it allows students to process what they have learned. To deescalate emotions the students might be feeling, they should be directed to return to their seats. Often simply changing the setting in this manner serves to immediately bring students back to the present.

Then some of the questions you might ask are, "How did you feel during the activity? What were some choices that your character faced? Were they easy for you to make? Why or why not? How did the choices of others impact what happened to you? How did the uncertainty of your choices influence what you decided? How do you think your gender affected your choices?"

While you should give the discussion some direction, students should be free to not only share their

thoughts and feelings related to the exercise, but to also dictate the discussion topics. Your students' own lived experiences informed the choices they made for their character, and unpacking that is a critical component to any discussion.

Their experiences, and that of everyone living in the United States, have been shaped by this history of enslavement in our country. The discussion is where students can engage in a conversation about the important concept of race and racial stereotypes connecting between historical events and today in a safe and supportive environment.

That is really why using this technique to teach history is so valuable. Not only are students empathizing with those in the past, but they are able to begin to make concrete and meaningful connections as to how history impacts current issues. As we work as educators to prepare our students to be responsible citizens, it is vital that we highlight these connections to ensure that our students are prepared to confront, deal with, and change these damaging legacies.

HASAN JEFFRIES

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Teaching Hard History is a podcast from Teaching Tolerance, with special thanks to the University of Wisconsin Press. They're the publishers of a valuable collection of essays called *Understanding and Teaching American Slavery*. In each episode, we're featuring a different scholar to talk about material from a chapter they authored in that collection.

We've also adapted their recommendations into a set of teaching materials available at [Tolerance.org](https://www.tolerance.org). These materials include over 100 primary sources, sample units, and a detailed framework for teaching about the history of American slavery. Teaching Tolerance is a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, providing free resources to educators who work with children from kindergarten through high school. You can find those resources online at [Tolerance.org](https://www.tolerance.org).

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Our theme song is "Kerr's Negro Jig" by the Carolina Chocolate Drops, who graciously let us use it for this series. If you like what we're doing, please share it with your friends and colleagues, and consider taking a minute to review and rate us in iTunes.

We appreciate the feedback, and it helps us get more visibility among potential listeners. I'm Dr. Hasan Kwame Jeffries, Associate Professor of History at the Ohio State University and your host. You've been listening to *Teaching Hard History: American Slavery*.

