**Freedom on the Move – Transcription Assignment**

Instructions for Students:

Today you will be transcribing runaway slave advertisements provided by Cornell University’s [*Freedom on the Move*](https://freedomonthemove.org/)project. This project is a publicly accessible, open-source database that asks users to transcribe and fill out information on each advertisement in order to create searchable data on enslaved people.

You will be required to write a 450-500 word analysis of the advertisements that you transcribe detailing what kind of information you found out about these enslaved people (as well as their families, neighborhoods, communities, enslavers, etc. if provided) through the descriptions provided by people seeking to reclaim them. Be sure to include anything that surprised you, and what you learned about slavery and the people involved from this exercise. This written analysis is due by the next class session. Upload your analysis post to Canvas.

You will then have 48 hours to respond to two classmates’ original analyses. This response must also be 450-500 words. For these responses, you must do more than re-state the contents of the original posts to which you are responding. If you agree or disagree with the analyses provided in the original posts, use the course material and your own experiences with transcribing these advertisements to explain why, and try to expand on the original posters’ ideas. Be sure to acknowledge similarities and differences between your analysis and your classmates’. Did your classmates say anything that surprised you, or helped you to think more deeply about something? Did you have different or similar experiences with the ads you transcribed? What do you think your classmates did effectively in their analyses?

I will grade responses according to the same standards and weight as the original posts; you should therefore take equal time thinking about, writing, and proofreading your original AND response posts.

Transcription Exercise Instructions:

As you go through each advertisement, take note of the details as you fill them out (you should take screenshots of the advertisements, or transcribe them for yourself – you will need these for the written assessment).

1. Access the site: <https://freedomonthemove.org/>
2. Go to “Access the Database” on the homepage
3. Select “Contribute”
4. Register using your name and email address
5. Begin with “Extract Data”
6. Select “Start from Scratch”
7. Read through the directions carefully – be sure to ask questions if you are confused! A glossary is provided, as is a “Need Help?” link, which you can use at any time if you are confused about a term or the information provided in the ad. Be sure to ask your instructor as well!
8. The first information you will have to fill out is what language the ad is printed in. If it is in a language in which you are not fluent, you can select “Skip to Next Advertisement.” If you are comfortable with the language of the advertisement, proceed by selecting the appropriate language and click “Next”
9. Fill out who the advertiser is. It may be posted by an enslaver, a jailer, someone else such as an attorney or agent on behalf of an enslaver, or not provided at all. Read through the advertisement carefully several times and take notes for yourself as to who you think the advertiser is based on the context and information provided. If you are unsure, ask your instructor for help. Once you have determined the appropriate answer, click “Next”
10. Fill out the date of escape (“Runaway Event”) if provided or known. Additionally, does the ad mention anyone who may have aided the runaway? Select “yes” or “no”
11. Fill out the name(s) of the runaway(s) mentioned in the advertisement. Be aware that multiple names may exist for the runaway, so be sure to closely read the advertisement to determine whether this is the case. The ad may mention whether the runaway has run off before, and if they claim to be free – be sure to select these boxes if that is the case. Select “Add Another Runaway” if multiple people are mentioned and provide their names if provided. Click “next”
12. You will be asked to provide physical characteristics, skills, locations, and rewards. Take note of what information is and is not provided as you go through these questions. Think about the significance of all these details, and what these details tell you about the runaway as a person – do you get a good sense of their personality? Consider the audience for whom these advertisements are written – how might an enslaver craft an effective advertisement in order to increase the chances of recovering a runaway? What do you think is important about this? Click “Next” as you complete each category.
13. Fill out any names of enslavers that may be provided in the advertisement, their relationship to the runaway, as well as their location.
14. When you have completed filling out all of the information, take a minute or two to summarize in your own notes your findings and thoughts about the advertisement you just looked through. Then move on to the next. There is no limit to the number of advertisements you can transcribe during this class session, and I encourage you to continue with it outside of class if you have any interest in doing so! Be sure that you take notes as you go so that you do not forget details from the advertisements, which will aid you as you write your analysis.