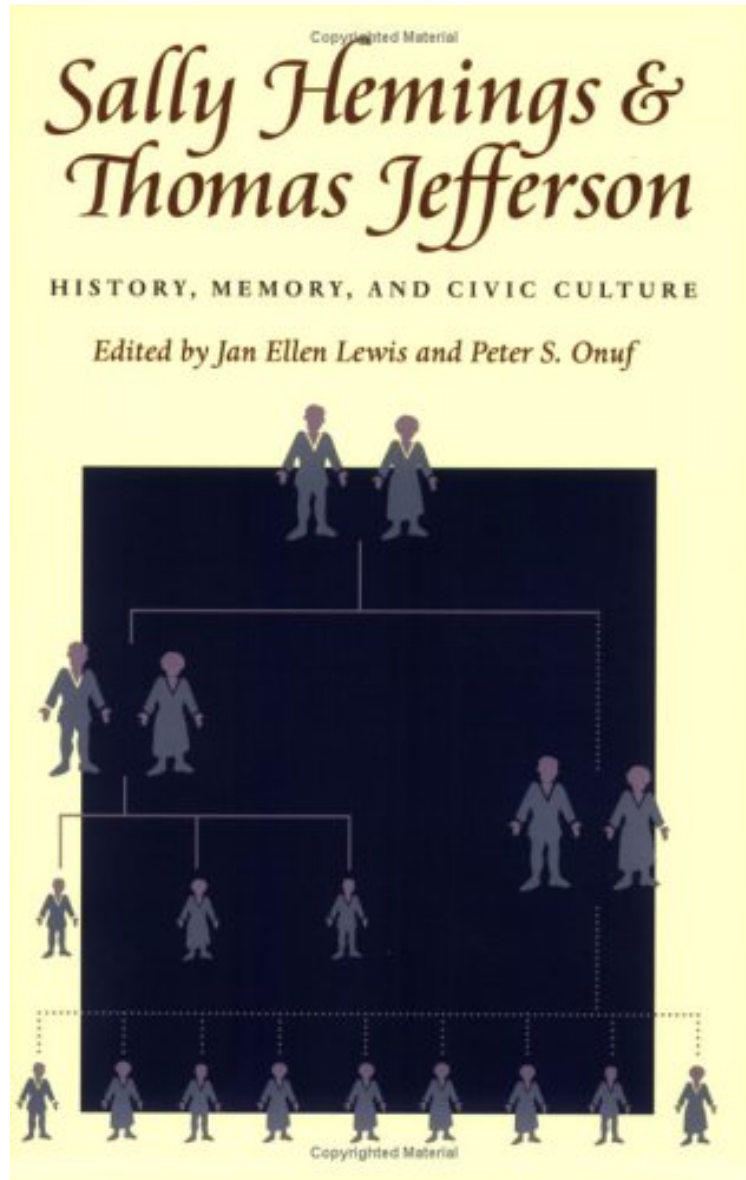


[Mobile pdf] Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson: History, Memory, and Civic Culture (Jeffersonian America)

Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson: History, Memory, and Civic Culture (Jeffersonian America)

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From Brand: University of Virginia Press : Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson: History, Memory, and Civic Culture (Jeffersonian America) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson: History, Memory, and Civic Culture (Jeffersonian America):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By Alberto Mendez
Excellent study of the topic.
14 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Black oral histories
By W. Drake
Black oral family histories were painstakingly recollected and passed down from generation to generation. The only possessions black families were allowed to possess were their memories- powerful and precious they were, and accurate as well. It is a tragedy that the descendants of Sally Hemmings are criticized for bringing forth what they already knew to be truth. To quibble over the fact that Jefferson's brother carried similar DNA misses this book's point entirely- Hemming's children had been told who their father was. Her descendants knew! The DNA evidence confirmed it. The central message of this book is not about the biological evidence, however. It is about the psychological and cultural issues that cause us to react in extreme ways (anger, fear, disbelief) to complex racial issues, particularly those regarding sexuality. In this respect the book is outstanding. It causes each of us to examine our personal and cultural viewpoints from both black and white perspectives. Americans of all races will benefit from reading this book.
17 of 41 people found the following review helpful. Let us Bury Thomas Jefferson with Unsubstantiated, Unproven Writing
By Herbert Barger
I was present at this open house discussion that this book is based upon because as Assistant to Dr. E. A. Foster, I had requested to be present and was invited by Professor Peter Onuf, one of the authors of this book. Upon arrival I was denied a seat on the panel and told to seat myself in the audience and if I wished to say anything that the "open mike" at the end of the discussion was my conduit. I was immediately opposing this august panel's findings as it applied to the actual DNA findings. In my opinion it was a seemingly overwhelming desire to have the prevailing combined force that DNA had proven Thomas Jefferson guilty of fathering slave children. This book conveys this image for the reader. Many, many statements in this book are absolutely inaccurate and have not been proven by DNA. The very first page has a Jefferson-Hemings Family Tree that is outrageous in that it portrays Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings as being the parents of Madison and Eston Hemings (absolutely unproven). A note states that Eston Hemings is "almost" certain the son of Thomas Jefferson. Are these "authorities" educators or soothsayers?) The notes further state that descendants of Madison Hemings were not tested. This is true, HOWEVER, after deep research I found a deceased son of Madison and suggested to Dr. Foster, the Hemings, Dr. Daniel Jordan, Monticello President, and others that the DNA of William Hemings be tested against the Jefferson DNA and also against Eston Hemings DNA. ALL have refused to move forward to test this valuable science..... WHY? Later they suggest that some sort of long term relationship existed between Jefferson and Hemings. How can this otherwise learned group make such an obvious incorrect assertion? This shows their lack of details of the long running controversy. The long believed, by some for obvious reasons, theory that Jefferson fathered Tom (Hemings) Woodson was completely obliterated by the DNA test..... No Jefferson/Woodson match, thus James Callender was proven a liar. Not only that, it was almost 6 years after Sally returned to Monticello that she had a first recorded child, Harriet I. An assumption is made that if Jefferson wasn't guilty then some other white man on the plantation was and the Carr brothers are mentioned. This again provides evidence of the very limited knowledge that the authors have of the DNA subject. Thomas Jefferson inherited a mulatto named Sandy from his father, Peter. It is not too far removed to see that this man, possibly having Jefferson DNA and sandy or reddish hair, could have fathered "yellow people", as referenced by story tellers. These male offspring, having the Jefferson DNA and physical traits, could have fathered Eston Hemings the ONLY Hemings tested. The original Dr. Foster plan was to "prove or disprove" the Carr brothers implication in this slave parentage. Because Dr. Foster had not given Nature Journal the valuable family genealogy that I had given him, when there was no Carr match with any other of those tested, THEN Nature Journal in the absence of being aware of any other Jefferson, "assumed" and wrote a false and definitive headline that it was Jefferson, yes, just "SOME" Jefferson.... but not necessarily Thomas. It is stated that Jan Lewis, one of the authors, "analyzed" that Jefferson was evading the truth by not denying the rumors. Jefferson DID write his Secretary of the Treasury, Levi Lincoln and Secretary of the Navy Robert Smith that he did admit to seeing a married lady friend when he was young and unmarried BUT that was the only rumor about him that he would admit to and denied the others. Jan Lewis is also very analytical in stating that the white Jeffersons told lies in that they said the Carr brothers implicated themselves as fathers, however DNA told otherwise. It must be remembered that ONLY ONE of Sally's children's DNA was tested. Since the Hemings refuse to test William Hemings (son of Madison), how are we to know that Madison is not one of those referenced by the Carr brothers or one of the others. Annette Gordon-Reed says that Jefferson must be the doting father, described by daughter, Martha, and not the indifferent one described by his son (what proof), Madison. I have no faith at all in what Madison is supposed to have said in the Pike Co., Ohio article. Who could believe that tale about Dolley Madison being present at Monticello when he was born on January 19, 1805. She was acting as Mr. Jefferson's Hostess and her husband, James Madison was Secretary of State. Are we to believe that she suddenly announces to these two that she has heard that a male slave is to be born at Monticello and she must be present to name him for her husband, James Madison. Never mind that predicting the sex of a child is a fairly late feat. Leaving both men in Washington she heads out in the cold, muddy and frozen roads over rivers and creeks and uphill to Monticello. Never mind also that Monticello was closed and under construction most of the time when Jefferson was away. The Madison Papers indicate that the Madisons NEVER visited Virginia during the winter from Washington. This book places much glory upon this Pike Co., Ohio article written by Samuel Wetmore, from an abolitionist family. As for Annette Gordon-Reed..... she

now states in later versions of her book that DNA does not prove that Jefferson fathered the descendant of Eston Hemings. She was also taken to task by the blue ribbon panel of 13 senior scholars known as the Scholars Commission ([...]), for taking and rearranging words and complete meaning of a letter from Ellen Randolph Coolidge (Thomas Jefferson's granddaughter), to a family member. This book cites Dr. Foster's statement that the DNA evidence "neither definitely excludes nor solely implicates" Jefferson in the paternity of Sally Hemings' children. He has stated this in e-mails to me, in Nature Journal (January 7, 1999), the New York Times article of early 1999 and in other publications. Then HOW and WHY do non-DNA literate "authorities" come rushing forward to assume that since Jefferson owned slaves he "MUST" now to have been found to share Jefferson DNA with a slave descendant. DNA does not honor given names. There are many too many other citations that try to prove anything to substantiate their claims. If the group of contributors to this book wish to do something constructive let them pursue the DNA of another male Hemings, William, and also read what the Scholars Commission Report says. Why don't they challenge those from "the other side of research" to a nationally broadcast debate? So far none of them have come forward for this. I recommend reading this book to at least learn how a group of people can sway the minds of some people by ignoring the research of the other side. Let us hear BOTH sides of any question. May I please ask readers to order the new book, "Jefferson Vindicated" with a forward by the distinguished past Director of Monticello. Ordering information may be secured from the cited web pages. I recognized most of the well recognized names on this panel and knew they were authorities on the slavery issue. Other than Dr. Eugene Foster, none of them knew any of the "nuts and bolts" of the DNA Study that I had participated in advising Dr. Foster in family genealogy and history and securing sources for DNA study. Herbert Barger Jefferson Family Historian Assistant to Dr. E.A. Foster

The publication of DNA test results showing that Thomas Jefferson was probably the father of one of his slave Sally Hemings's children has sparked a broad but often superficial debate. The editors of this volume have assembled some of the most distinguished American historians, including three Pulitzer Prize winners, and other experts on Jefferson, his times, race, and slavery. Their essays reflect the deeper questions the relationship between Hemings and Jefferson has raised about American history and national culture. The DNA tests would not have been conducted had there not already been strong historical evidence for the possibility of a relationship. As historians from Winthrop D. Jordan to Annette Gordon-Reed have argued, much more is at stake in this liaison than the mere question of paternity: historians must ask themselves if they are prepared to accept the full implications of our complicated racial history, a history powerfully shaped by the institution of slavery and by sex across the color line. How, for example, does it change our understanding of American history to place Thomas Jefferson in his social context as a plantation owner who fathered white and black families both? What happens when we shift our focus from Jefferson and his white family to Sally Hemings and her children? How do we understand interracial sexual relationships in the early republic and in our own time? Can a renewed exploration of the contradiction between Jefferson's life as a slaveholder and his libertarian views yield a clearer understanding of the great political principles he articulated so eloquently and that Americans cherish? Are there moral or political lessons to be learned from the lives of Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings and the way that historians and the public have attempted to explain their liaison? Sally Hemings and Thomas Jefferson: History, Memory, and Civic Culture promises an open-ended discussion on the living legacy of slavery and race relations in our national culture.

About the Author Jan Ellen Lewis is Professor of History at Rutgers University, Newark, and author of *The Pursuit of Happiness: Family and Values in Jefferson's Virginia*. Peter S. Onuf is Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation Professor of History at the University of Virginia and editor of *Jeffersonian Legacies* (Virginia). His new book, *Jefferson's Empire* will be published in April 2000.