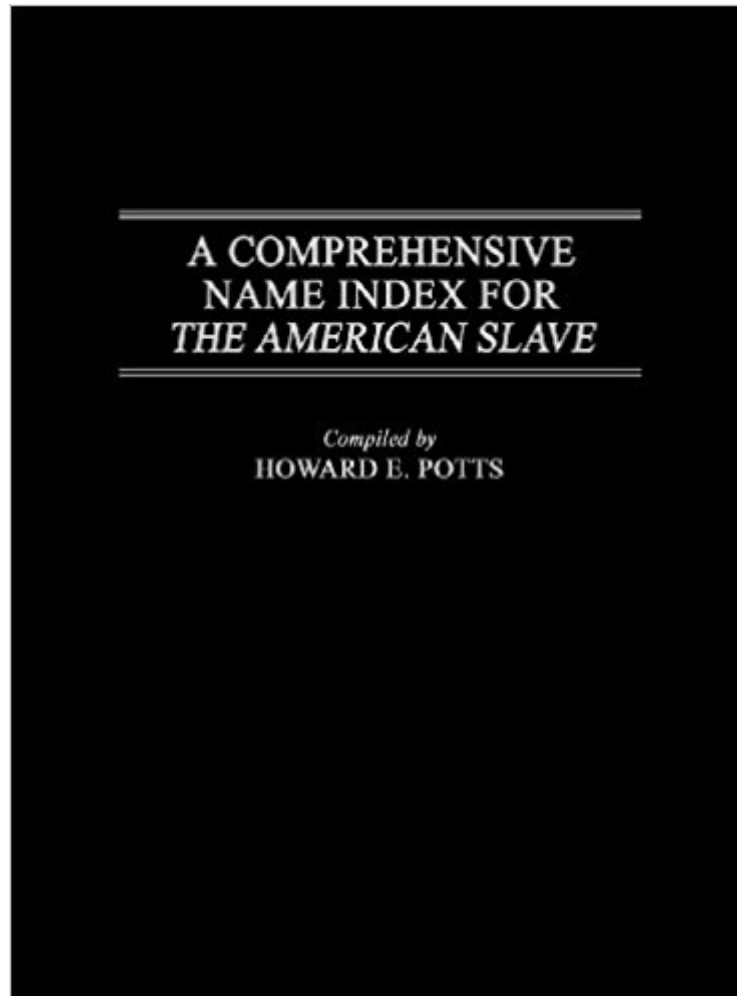


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A Comprehensive Name Index For The American Slave (Literature; 25)



Synopsis

In the 1930s, the Works Progress Administration began interviewing former slaves for their side of history, a project that would become one of the largest oral research projects on slavery. Forty years later, George P. Rawick compiled the thousands of interviews into the multi-volume series *The American Slave*. Published by Greenwood Press in the 1970s, the slave narratives have provided a valuable resource for historians and researchers, but they lacked a comprehensive name index. This volume indexes the slaves according to where they lived (as opposed to where they were interviewed), enabling researchers to locate slaves by state, county, or region, as well as by their master's name, their age, and the interviewer. The ease of access provided by this index will aid researchers who wish to consider the slave experience in specific states or regions. It will help scholars trace migratory patterns from one region to another and enable genealogical researchers to locate specific individuals.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Potts has done a praiseworthy job of cross-referencing the immense amounts of data in ways valuable to scholars. There is a county and state index, a narrator index, and master (slave owner) index, an interviewer index, and a narrator birth year index. The indexes are easy to read and make it only a few minutes' work to look up an ancestor or a region to see whether pertinent information

exists. This work will become necessary to anyone using the Rawick series. The amount of nongenealogical information in these interviews is astounding."-Choice?Potts has done a praiseworthy job of cross-referencing the immense amounts of data in ways valuable to scholars. There is a county and state index, a narrator index, and master (slave owner) index, an interviewer index, and a narrator birth year index. The indexes are easy to read and make it only a few minutes' work to look up an ancestor or a region to see whether pertinent information exists. This work will become necessary to anyone using the Rawick series. The amount of nongenealogical information in these interviews is astounding.?-Choice

HOWARD E. POTTS is an Instructor of Political Science and History at Waycross College in Georgia. He is currently compiling stories from The American Slave to complete a novel on slavery.

With the publication of Howard E. Potts, A Comprehensive Name Index for the American Slave (1997), one formidable obstacle has been removed from researchers searching for slave interviews from particular localities or interviews that relate to particular persons. The 42 volumes of Rawick's collection of slave narratives has daunted researchers because of lack of an index. Previously, the only way to find all interviews that related to a particular geographic area (for instance) was to read all 42 volumes, page by page. This book presents versions of the same database, sorted by different fields, including name of interviewee, name of interviewer, county/counties and states in which the interviewee lived during slavery, name of former owner/s, age and birth year of interviewee. This index is a very serviceable tool for historians who may be writing local history and who wish to gather testimony from a particular locale; likewise, biographers of particular slaves and slaveowners will find the book indispensable. Researchers like myself who always pine for more will wish that the compiler had indexed the names of ALL persons mentioned in the slave narratives, not just the interviewees and their former owners. There is still no subject index for this huge collection. Nevertheless, Potts has provided the only practical key to an indispensable set of documents of American history.

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