

DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND THE  
SOCIAL SCIENCES IN THE PROFESSIONS

July 7, 2016

PERSONAL ENDORSEMENT

To Whom It May Concern:

I am honored to add my name to the list of my fellow historians who have endorsed the Unpaid Labor Manifesto. As the document says:

*Americans of African descent have been vital to the American story since the beginning—and the contribution of the first 12 generations of Americans of African descent between 1607 and 1865 is the indispensable factor in the United States of America becoming the most successful nation in modern history.*

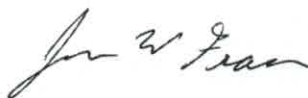
Everything I know about the history of the United States says that this manifesto is true. In my own research I have found that:

- + Prior to the American Revolution, slave labor made possible the tobacco crop that made Virginia the first profitable English colony, but the work of slaves and the international slave trade also created many fortunes in northern colonies, especially New York and Rhode Island.
- + There are a number of clauses in the Constitution of 1789 that were specifically designed to support and strengthen the institution of slavery—or as the authors said “persons held to service or labor” since they did not want to embarrass themselves using the word slavery.
- + With the coming of greatly expanded cotton production after 1815, cotton produced by the labor of slaves provided the foundation for the nation’s wealth, supplied the raw material essential to the development of the factory revolution in the North and new forms of transportation to bring slave-produced cotton to England.

As the Unpaid Labor Manifesto makes clear, to fail to understand the essential role of enslaved African Americans is to fail to understand the economic foundation of the modern American economic system. And to fail to include this story as part of the way we teach America history is to rob future generations of a true account of this nation’s story.

I am grateful for your work and happy to support it.

Sincerely,



James W. Fraser  
Professor of History & Education  
Chair, Department of Humanities & the Social  
Sciences in the Professions



March 30, 2016

PERSONAL ENDORSEMENT

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to give my full endorsement of the historical principles and the conclusion they support as stated in the Unpaid Labor™ Manifesto (attached). Unpaid Labor is an entrepreneurial initiative organized by its founders, Messrs. Mathew Foggy, Jr. and Clifton D. Berry, to accomplish the purposes put forth in the Manifesto's Preamble. These purposes derive from the founders' deeply informed understanding of American history and their belief that getting the history right brings the power of the past into the present to effect racial justice and positive social change.

This initiative, by my estimate, offers a creative grassroots context for using history to change our nations deeply embedded problems of discrimination against and marginalization of its African American citizens. It opens valuable opportunities for ordinary people to embrace the rich historical accomplishments of African American people and to extend their legacies. In short, to me, this initiative offers a realistic promise of hope and empowerment at a time when they are so sorely needed.

The historical understandings inspiring this initiative are outlined in its founding documents. I find them to be persuasive and foundational to our understanding of American history.

Most Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Brewer Stewart".

James Brewer Stewart  
James Wallace Professor of History Emeritus  
Macalester College

Attachment: The Unpaid Labor™ Manifesto

Cc: Mathew Foggy, Jr.  
Clifton D. Berry

Peter H. Wood  
3713 Chestnut Place  
Longmont, CO 80503  
phone: 720 340-7807 e-mail: [phwgourds@gmail.com](mailto:phwgourds@gmail.com) or [pwood@duke.edu](mailto:pwood@duke.edu)

May 4, 2016

## PERSONAL ENDORSEMENT

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to join other historians in offering my support to the initiative being put together by Unpaid Labor, LLC. For far too long, most American citizens have remained surprisingly ignorant about the fact that generations of African Americans were forced to work, without wages, in ways that brought great wealth to others and that provided the base for the ensuing expansion and success of the American economy.

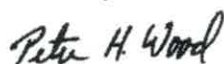
We may never agree as to who is most at fault for this enduring ignorance. No doubt all of us share the responsibility, though teachers, preachers, and politicians certainly have contributed more than their share. What is important now is to alter this situation, since these basic misunderstandings contribute to continuing discrimination and to deeply misguided social policies of all sorts. The time for improved awareness and understanding is at hand, and Unpaid Labor, LLC stands out among a whole host of positive efforts to move beyond blame and guilt and find innovative paths of change.

This effort by Clifton D. Berry, Mathew Foggy, Jr, and others reminds me of a quotation by the late August Wilson (b. 1945) that applies to societies as well as individuals. The impressive black playwright wrote:

Confront the dark parts of yourself, and work to banish them with illumination and forgiveness. Your willingness to wrestle with your demons will cause your angels to sing.

Confronting the dark reality of North America's vast system of Unpaid Labor, however painful it may be for all of us, will indeed lead our culture towards a better place. It has been more than 150 years since the end of slavery, and since President Lincoln, in his first inaugural address, invoked "the better angels of our nature." Wilson is echoing that phrase, and urging us to make amends. Raising awareness about the scope of unpaid labor by millions of African Americans, confined to slave labor camps, is a worthy goal. I am in favor of creative efforts such as this one, intended to inform the general public.

Sincerely,



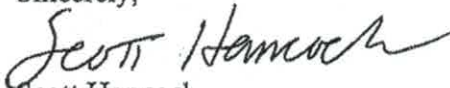
Peter H. Wood  
Emeritus Professor of History  
Duke University

To Whom It May Concern:

I endorse the historical foundation and the moral quest of Unpaid Labor, LLC. Founders Clifton D. Berry and Matthew Foggy, Jr. are usefully and creatively seeking to spark a national conversation that can put paid to a debt that continues to accrue—a measurable economic debt and an immeasurable spiritual, physical, and cultural debt. As Unpaid Labor's website notes and as has been confirmed by a numerous economists and historians, the uncompensated labor of enslaved Africans and African Americans was an economic dynamo of the American and global economy. Mississippi's Article of Secession stated this quite succinctly when the state government decided to leave the United States in order to protect slavery: "Our position is thoroughly identified with the institution of slavery—the greatest material interest of the world. Its labor supplies the product with constitutes by far the largest and most important portions of commerce of the earth."

When Adam Smith published *Wealth of Nations* in 1776, he conceived a form capitalism that was responsible to community. Unfortunately he and early American leaders heavily influenced by his work did not apply that conception to enslaved people of African descent. Unpaid Labor's message, well grounded in the economic and political realities of United States history, represents a worthwhile pursuit of racial and economic justice.

Sincerely,



Scott Hancock  
Associate Professor of History and Africana Studies  
Gettysburg College