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A real strength of *Masters of Violence* is its exploration of the power dynamics on plantations. Although some overseers kept the same job for years, for example, their contracts were typically short-term. This arrangement ensured that they would not undermine their employers. It also, however, made it less likely that overseers would gain valuable experience, incorporate innovations, or develop a strong sense of loyalty to their employers. Many female plantation owners saw overseers as protecting them from the commercial world, but some overseers refused to recognize the women's authority. Sometimes, enslaved people would complain to planters about overseers, even contradicting the overseer directly in the planter's presence. Because overseers were held in low esteem, planters sometimes sided with the enslaved.

Stubbs focuses on the eighteenth century because the Revolution's impact was so significant. During the war, enslaved people were increasingly likely to run away, and overseers were blamed for those escapes. Also, opposition to violent punishment increased after the Revolution, as did the notion that the slaveowner's affection was a reward. Increasingly, overseers were regarded as malicious figures. The perception of overseers as sadistic would be highlighted in nineteenth-century works including *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the writings of Frederick Douglass. Sometimes, their depravity would be contrasted with planters' benevolence.

Masters of Violence is a fascinating study of an important and understudied topic and a valuable addition to the scholarship of eighteenth-century plantations.

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A Ride to Remember: A Civil Rights Story. Written by Sharon Langley and Amy Nathan, illustrated by Floyd Cooper. (New York: Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2020. 40 Pages. Illustrations, notes. Hardcover, $18.99.)

Round & Round Together: Taking a Merry-Go-Round Ride into the Civil Rights Movement. By Amy Nathan. (Philadelphia: Paul Dry Books, 2011. 250 Pages. Index, notes. Paperback, $14.95.)

Children's literature and non-fiction books have not traditionally had a major focus on history, let alone provided a unique lens on social justice and racial inequality. Even those publications that do, tend to highlight nationally known stories, rather

than the local context. However, this gap has increasingly been filled as authors and publishers alike realize the need for young minds to process what they see occurring in their communities today. This is particularly useful as parents, educators, and librarians look for new materials in the time of pandemic-related homeschooling and hybrid education.

Sharon Langley and Amy Nathan co-authored a wonderful resource to fulfill these goals with *A Ride to Remember: A Civil Rights Story*, released in early 2020. Both authors are Baltimore natives, who only later in life came to understand the significance of the events described in the narrative. Readers are also treated to the artwork of Floyd Cooper, an acclaimed African American illustrator known for deftly depicting scenes in children's literature.

Maryland is not always cited as a central location in the civil rights movement, but it should be. Though considered by some to be more aligned with progressive, northern ideology when it comes to race relations, communities and facilities in our state were often strictly segregated even into the 1960s. Private venues for recreation were at times the earliest to integrate, while others stubbornly stuck to discriminatory policies barring African Americans. Gwynn Oak Amusement Park was one such business, located along the western border between Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

A Ride to Remember places the reader into that era, when equal rights activism was becoming commonplace in many parts of the country. Sharon Langley brings a fascinating perspective to storytelling in this book. Not only is she an educator herself, but Langley is also a central figure in the story. The first-person narrative infuses a child's point of view, which is no easy task when addressing racial injustice. Langley frames the narrative with some historical context, presented through a conversation between her father, mother, and younger self. The story accurately recounts that by this time, "kids could go to the same schools and libraries, restaurants, and some movie theaters, too—no matter the color of their skin." The Baltimore area was certainly unique in how such changes did not occur all at once, and discriminatory policies often had to be challenged one by one.

The authors describe how the Gwynn Oak example fit into this landscape. A multi-racial cohort comprised of ministers, rabbis, college students, and adult activists decided that July 4, 1963, was the perfect day to strike a blow for freedom and equality. Those protesting the park's segregation policy were met with angry opposition from white patrons, and were also mistreated by law enforcement. Some activists were bloodied, while hundreds were arrested during two days of protest.

Partially due to negative media attention (from the *New York Times* as well as local outlets), and significant political pressure, Gwynn Oak Park's owners reluctantly agreed to drop the segregation policy.

The timing of these events also coincided with developments on the national stage. On the same day Langley's family helped to integrate the amusement park, Martin Luther King Jr. delivered the iconic "I Have a Dream" speech during the March on Washington. Ironically, the carousel from Gwynn Oak Park is now located on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., where visitors of all backgrounds can enjoy the attraction.

As I read the book to my nearly five-year-old daughter, it struck me just how impactful such stories can be in shaping young minds. Her excitement at recognizing the narrative's location in Maryland was a great hook, stunted by the realization that we were learning about how unfair and cruel our fellow Americans were toward African Americans and others that did not look like them. It may be some years before she can fully understand these circumstances, and grasp the impact that racially based discrimination has had on American communities. However, *A Ride to Remember* is a very useful starting point for these conversations. The book's content is appropriate for children as young as pre-K, while the reading level is suitable for most elementary school students who could absorb the story more independently. The new release complements the previous work of co-author Amy Nathan, addressing similar content and different audiences.

Nathan's earlier title *Round & Round Together: Taking a Merry-Go-Round Ride into the Civil Rights Movement* provides educators, young adults, as well as other interested adult learners a useful primer in this local history. Published in 2011, the book covers not just the desegregation fight for Gwynn Oak Amusement Park, but also the broader movement for racial equality in early-to-mid-twentieth-century Maryland. Ms. Nathan covers a great deal of material highlighting the efforts of activists to expand access in public accommodations, education, employment and recreational venues.

She does an excellent job connecting those local efforts to developments within the national civil rights movement, which was more focused on the Deep South. The author emphasizes how in many cases Maryland activists pioneered strategies, including organizing sit-ins and boycotts of businesses, before they were utilized in other parts of the country. The book covers the immense contributions of the Baltimore NAACP chapter, as well as the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and students from then Morgan State College. First-hand accounts from many Marylanders involved in the movement are drawn from oral history interviews in

the McKeldin-Jackson Collection at the Maryland Center for History and Culture, including those from local leaders Marion C. Bascom, Juanita Jackson Mitchell, and Walter Sondheim Jr.

A Ride to Remember and *Round & Round Together* are both invaluable tools for engaging in challenging conversations about our nation and state's history. Now more than ever, Americans would be well served to acknowledge our fraught past and apply those lessons as we navigate yet another divisive time. The youth especially will need this knowledge and accompanying resources, as they will be the leaders who shape what values define our country for years to come.

Interested researchers can learn more about these resources and how to access them from the H. Furlong Baldwin Library at the MCHC, mdhistory.org/collections/oral-histories.

Educators can access digital lesson plans and relevant collections, as well as learn more about virtual and onsite programming for K-12 students at the MCHC, mdhistory.org/learn.

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The Men of Mobtown: Policing Baltimore in the Age of Slavery and Emancipation. By Adam Malka. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2018. 352 pages. Endnotes, bibliography, index. Hardcover, $39.95.)

This smart and thought-provoking book joins a growing list of recent high-quality publications examining antebellum Baltimore that grapple with the causes and implications of Baltimore's seemingly pervasive violence.[1] It should become a must-read for anyone interested in the subject.

While other authors have seen an implicit tension between Mobtown's violence and the growth and development of what was then America's third city, Malka argues that the violence was a natural outgrowth of Baltimore's liberal foundation. He concludes, "All of this arresting, all of this imprisonment, and

1. See too Tracy Melton, *Hanging Henry Gambrill: The Violent Career of Baltimore's Plug Uglies, 1854–1860* (Baltimore, MD: Maryland Historical Society, 2005), Robert E. Shalhope, *The Baltimore Bank Riot: Political Upheaval in Antebellum Maryland* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009), and Frank Towers, *The Urban South and the Coming of the Civil War* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2004).