

Resource Sheet #09

Source: Letter From Thomas Jefferson to Edward Coles| Monticello: August 25, 1814, *Jefferson's Farm Book*

“...For men probably of any color, but of this color we know, brought from their infancy without necessity for thought or forecast, are by their habits rendered as incapable as children of taking care of themselves, and are extinguished promptly wherever industry is necessary for raising young. In the mean time they are pests in society by their idleness, and the depredations to which this leads them. Their amalgamation with the other color produces a degradation to which no lover of his country, no lover of excellence in the human character can innocently consent.

Document Analysis:

1. How does Jefferson feel about slaves and African-Americans when considering their capabilities as citizens?
2. How does Jefferson react to the possibility that, if slavery is abolished, inter-racial offspring (amalgamation) may occur?
3. What does Jefferson believe that slaves will do, if they are not used actively as laborers?
4. How does this document help to answer the question, “Where Did Thomas Jefferson Stand on the Issue of Slavery?”