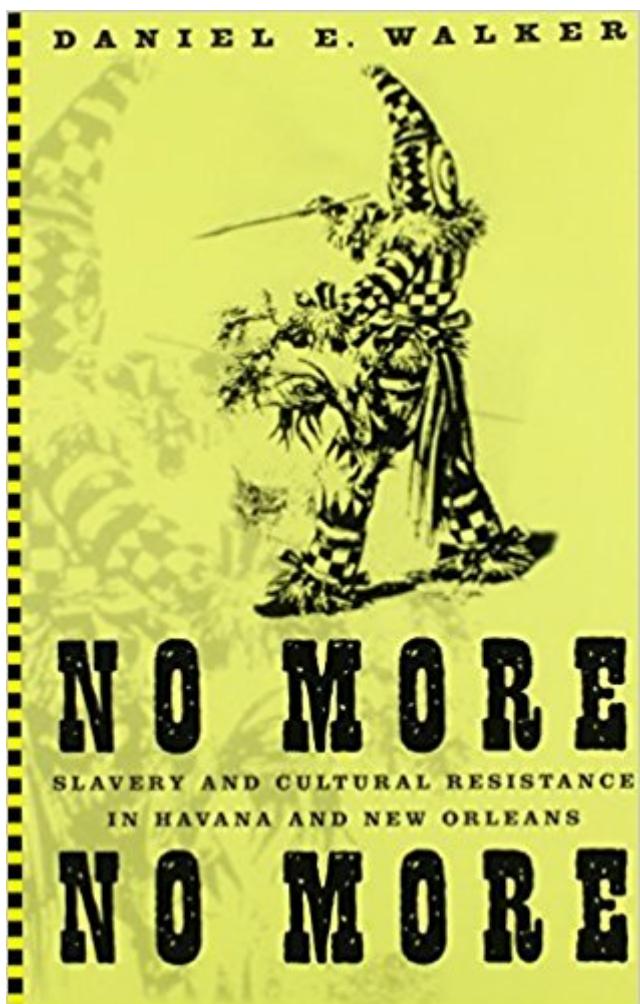


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# No More, No More: Slavery And Cultural Resistance In Havana And New Orleans



## **Synopsis**

Walker (history, Black Voice Foundation) describes public performances, specifically those of El Dia de Reyes festival in Havana and the weekly activities in Congo Square in New Orleans in the nineteenth century, as acts of cultural resistance. There, those of African descent, slave or free, controlled their own definitions of time, family, social

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

THIS IS AN EXCELLENT BOOK, IT ARRIVED IN TIME FOR MY PAPER TO WRITE. I WAS PLEASED TO HAVE PICKED THIS BOOK

Daniel Walker's innovative study of urban slave society is a well-thought out and thought provoking book which paints a new picture of the image of the "slave." Where most of us are probably familiar with the plantation slave society (Walker also acknowledges this), Walker opens the book on the urban slave society in Havana and New Orleans. An in depth look into why Walker chose these two cities is key in understanding the purpose of his book and his hypotheses of the cultural resistance of the slave society. Walker divides his book into chapters based on an attack on the living condition of the slave, for example, the attack on "space" or family life of a slave. By fully describing the events that support his assertion for this attack, Walker then describes how the slave counteracted that. This is not to say that these counterattacks were violent slave, many times Walker interprets the actions of the slaves through eyewitness accounts of annual or weekly festivals. In other words,

Walker uses an understanding of human nature to logically describe his belief. Overall, the book is a very enjoyable and fluid read. For one, it introduces the reader to a new slave society, and their culture (which Walker details), mostly comprised of festivals in these two cities. Thus, since both cities have a very similar festival, Walker links these two cities and the slaves within them in his book. Usually, history is a very bland topic to the uninterested, but Walker's book keeps the reader engaged through the lengthy facts, statistics, and quotes he uses to support his explanation. I would definitely recommend this book to anyone interested in history and anyone who is remotely interested in reading up on a theory which delves into the minds of the slaves.

This is an excellent book to read for those who have interest in the slave movement or for those who want to learn something new about US history. Walker supports his arguments with an in depth analysis of various primary and secondary sources including song lyrics, dance choreography, artistic symbols and figures, census data, manuscripts, journal entries, and scientific articles. Walker is a good historian and he knows his stuff. His sources are explained extensively in the historical context they are written. Walker's main premise is that urban slave societies maintained power and social control over blacks by defining physical spaces, preventing the formation of familial units, socially degrading the image of blacks and the racial concept of blackness, and destroying the idea of community among slaves and free blacks. Walker's other premise is that the black communities in these areas created and maintained institutions to contest the slave regime's dehumanizing social control objectives by using cultural practices in the form of public performances and festivals. Walker organizes *No More No More*, in an easy to read and follow structure. I am a high school student and the book kept me interested and involved. I liked the book because it gave interesting examples and it also explained a lot of misconceptions about slavery, slaveholders, and African slaves that I have been incorrectly taught in my history class. I also liked how the book made me want to learn more and do my own research about the true meanings behind slavery in the US and the actual human emotions that were felt by all who were affected by slavery. *No More No More* gets an A+ in my book.

Dr. Daniel E. Walker's recent book, *No More No More* is a detailed study of how blacks in nineteenth century New Orleans and Havana Cuba resisted the psychosocial oppression of slavery by participating in Congo Square and El Dia de Reyes cultural events. Walker attempts to tell this history from an integrated approach, weaving primary, secondary sources, visual art and song. From an ethnic studies point of view his book is quite good because it tells the story from many

angles and suggests why the white supremacy paradigm survives today. Walker lets the reader understand the severity of the plight of blacks with detailed accounts of subversion, that is, what whites did psychosocially and physically subvert blacks. This included but was not limited to the creation of oppressive spaces, physical and sexual abuse and psychological oppression created by a caste system. An interesting aspect of Walker's argument was that specific locations served to reinforce the white supremacy paradigm. It was an original perspective (to me) and helped to illustrate the world Walker described. Walker also argued that cultural events in New Orleans and Havana played vital roles in the survival of African souls at the hands of harsh oppression. I enjoyed reading about the aspects of African spirituality that helped slaves persevere. My words do no justice to the relationship between spirit and slavery, though Walker does a very good job of it. In total, *No More No More* was a good read, very well organized, meaningful and above all enlightening. Reading this book provided me with a deeper insight into people, both good and bad. Perhaps there are many books that provide information about slavery but this one conveys a believable picture of what life as a slave in New Orleans and Havana was like.

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