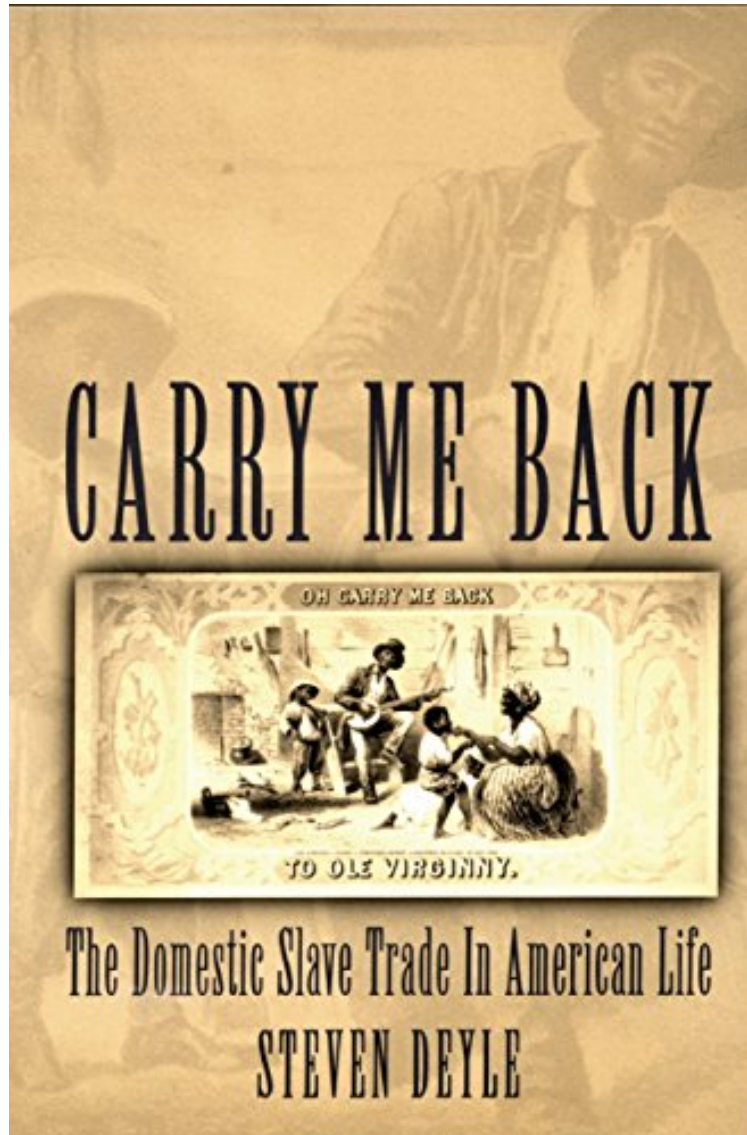


# Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life

*Steven Deyle*

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**Steven Deyle : Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Pretty GoodBy GreeneA decent historical read though he fails to adequately tie the Northern finances to the domestic slave trade. Deyle claims to convince the reader of the significance of the domestic slave trade on America as a whole, but spends most of the book beating up the same old dead Southerners while only touching on the North. Most Civil War readers like to use the South as a pinata and ignore the rest of the country which gets tiresome. That being said, the overall scholarship of the book was excellent

and he makes some original and interesting arguments.<sup>2</sup> of 2 people found the following review helpful. A good book on the domestic slave trade in Virginia. By Hartwell B. Lutz Well written, easy to read, Lots of good details. One criticism might be that it gets a little repetitious. Maybe not repetition of the same incident but in reporting very similar incidents that could have been left out or all covered in one chapter.<sup>3</sup> of 3 people found the following review helpful. First Rate History By David L. This is an excellent coverage of the the extensive internal slave trade in the American south. It's an "academic" book but accessible to the general reader. Well written without academic pretension prose but with high quality research.

Originating with the birth of the nation itself, in many respects, the story of the domestic slave trade is also the story of the early United States. While an external traffic in slaves had always been present, following the American Revolution this was replaced by a far more vibrant internal trade. Most importantly, an interregional commerce in slaves developed that turned human property into one of the most valuable forms of investment in the country, second only to land. In fact, this form of property became so valuable that when threatened with its ultimate extinction in 1860, southern slave owners believed they had little alternative but to leave the Union. Therefore, while the interregional trade produced great wealth for many people, and the nation, it also helped to tear the country apart. The domestic slave trade likewise played a fundamental role in antebellum American society. Led by professional traders, who greatly resembled northern entrepreneurs, this traffic was a central component in the market revolution of the early nineteenth century. In addition, the development of an extensive local trade meant that the domestic trade, in all its configurations, was a prominent feature in southern life. Yet, this indispensable part of the slave system also raised many troubling questions. For those outside the South, it affected their impression of both the region and the new nation. For slaveholders, it proved to be the most difficult part of their institution to defend. And for those who found themselves commodities in this trade, it was something that needed to be resisted at all costs. *Carry Me Back* restores the domestic slave trade to the prominent place that it deserves in early American history, exposing the many complexities of southern slavery and antebellum American life.

From Publishers Weekly Historian Deyle reveals the malignant heart of that most "peculiar institution," American slavery. Deyle's focus is the domestic buying and selling of human beings after the abolition of the international slave trade in 1808; the economics and unique practices of that macabre local marketplace; and the varied individuals who engaged in and profited from the trade. As Deyle, assistant professor of history at the University of California, Davis, points out, the vast majority of Southerners who bought and sold slaves were not professional dealers, but rather owners who traded slaves only when necessary: when they found themselves with either a short supply or a surplus of labor power. Deyle spells out how the cold, sterile economics of slavery led to the arbitrary separation of children from parents, wives from husbands. Deyle also makes clear the enormous profit to be had, especially in the market for healthy adolescent boys with years of hard labor ahead of them. Babies born to slave parents, fed a meager diet for 12 or 13 years, multiplied a minimal investment by hundreds. Most ironically, Deyle notes, the vast majority of slave traders were "good" people, devout Christians, respected citizens. In his first book, Deyle ably situates the important role of the domestic slave trade within the economy of the new and rapidly growing United States. Bw illus. (May) From Booklist Deyle focuses on the informal and business organization aspects of the domestic slave trade. From this perspective, he offers insights into the realities of chattel slavery, how it helped to shape our nation and continues to impact us to this very day. Deyle reviews the dynamics of the shift from the U.S. being an importer of slaves to a "breeder" nation. He interweaves the various political and economic forces that contributed to different viewpoints on the efficacy of slavery. The end of the slave trade, revolutionary ideals, and the technological advancement of the cotton gin all transformed the nation and its perspective on domestic slavery. The sale of slaves became the lifeblood of southern agriculture. As cotton became king, dominating the economy of the lower South, slaves took on more value there than in the upper South, increasing the interregional conflicts that led to the Civil War. Deyle also examines the political forces that led to abolitionist movements in the North as well as the actions of slaves that challenged the domestic slave market. Vernon Ford Copyright copy; American Library Association. All rights reserved "Scholars are aware of some aspects of Deyle's account, but never have all the pieces been pulled together in such a way. As a result, *Carry Me Back* may well become that rarest of all things in the modern publishing world: the definitive study."--Douglas R. Egerton, *The Alabama* "Deyle offers a comprehensive examination of the domestic slave trade that is stunning in its breadth.... His work is remarkable for placing the internal slave trade squarely in the context of the market revolution."--Jeff Forret, *The Journal of Southern History* "Deyle's contribution is significant."--Michael T. Tadman, *University of Liverpool* "Carry Me Back is a book we have long needed--a synthetic, region-wide treatment of the domestic slave trade. Deyle's deep research and lucid writing convincingly show that the sale and transport of human property from the upper to lower South was a national tragedy of epic proportions, a grand economic enterprise that both forged the Cotton Kingdom and was the root of its undoing. Behold! The story of how the largest source of wealth in antebellum America belongs at the center of our national narrative, and how it haunts us still."--David W. Blight, author of *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* and *Director, the Gilder*

Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance and Abolition, Yale University"Prodigiously researched and convincingly argued, Steven Deyle's *Carry Me Back* places the slave market at the center of the nineteenth-century United States. *Carry Me Back* tells the story of the disastrous effects of that market on black lives, of its crucial place in the Southern market revolution being pursued by their white masters, and of the role of images of the trade in the argument of nineteenth-century opponents of slavery. The information necessary to dismantle U.S. slavery, it turns out, was produced along the bloody leading edge of its commercial economy."--Walter Johnson, author of *Soul by Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market*"*Carry Me Back* takes us far beyond what we already know about the importance of the domestic slave trade. Steven Deyle shows us just how tightly entwined the domestic slave trade actually became with the overall development of the nation itself, North no less than South, and how it dictated the direction of our history in so many significant ways. Ambitiously conceived and skillfully executed, this is a study that all students of the antebellum era surely must read."--James Brewer Stewart, author of *Holy Warriors: The Abolitionists and American Slavery*"Deyle's research is incredibly extensive, even comprehensive. There is really no way to overstate the vast quantity of archival, newspaper, and other sources he has examined. Specialized work on the internal slave trade will now start with Deyle's footnotes."--Edward E. Baptist, *American Historical*