



ABHM Book Club Discussion Guide
December 12th, 2024 at 6 PM CT
***Enslaved, Indentured, Free* by Mary Elise Antoine (2022)**

How to Use this Guide:

[America's Black Holocaust Museum](#) staff created this guide to assist in reading and discussion of *Enslaved, Indentured, Free*. Please feel free to print a copy and keep it with your book as you lend to friends and others who are interested. Do not expect to get through all of the questions during the upcoming meeting nor in one sitting. Perhaps consider them as conversation starters or an invitation to reflect more deeply about this book.

Suggested Questions for Discussion:

1. How did learning about the stories of Marianne, Mariah, Patsey, Courtney, and Rachel impact you? How do their personal stories relate to the national and state histories we are more familiar with?
2. How did the country and state legal systems affect their lives and livelihoods? What tensions existed in the country at this time, especially as territories were being colonized westward?
3. How does the author deal with the significant silences in the archives about these women? How are we as historians and readers still able to piece together their life stories, journeys, feelings, etc.?
4. Relatedly, what does this book teach us about the importance of telling our own stories? Of the role of archives in preserving stories and addressing these silences?

5. How does this story complicate and address the myth that slavery was only a southern problem? Did you know that we had slavery in Wisconsin, a supposedly free state? Why is it important for us to tell the truth about this dark chapter in the state's history?
6. What does this book reveal or add to our understanding about the relationship between the United States military and enslavement? And about the forced removal of indigenous people in what came to be known as the Upper Mississippi?
7. Who was present in this region from 1800 to 1850? Were you aware of or surprised by the mix of cultures and countries in this region? What did this mixing mean in terms of communities and families in the region?
8. What does this book reveal about migration patterns, whether it was forced or propelled by choices made in freedom? What makes Prairie du Chien a good case study in migration of different peoples at this time?
9. Despite the fact that slavery in the United States was designed to destroy relationships between people who were enslaved, how and why did they continue to create bonds, friendships, and marriages? What does this book add to our understanding about the importance of such relationships?
10. This book ends with a focus on the pursuit of freedom, especially within the United States legal system. Where do we see these five women using their agency to secure their freedom? What other ways did people in this book seek freedom?