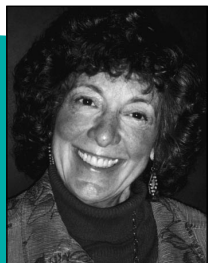


No More!

Doreen Rappaport and Shane Evans Turn Slavery on Its Head



Doreen Rappaport

No More! Stories and Songs of Slave Resistance, written by Doreen Rappaport and powerfully illustrated by Shane W. Evans, is a collection of true vignettes and traditional verse telling the story of slavery in America in a way it's never been told before. "I wanted to turn slavery on its head," says Doreen Rappaport about her reasons for writing this riveting anthology, the first of three books that

will ultimately cover the history of African Americans from the beginning of slavery through the civil rights era. "History is usually written by the victors, but I wanted to tell it from another viewpoint. I wanted to redefine slavery, to show it as a source of defiance and resistance—to present a parallel life of hope." We recently asked Doreen some questions about *No More!*, which she answers candidly below.

Candlewick: Why should kids today care about slavery in America, when it happened so long ago?

Doreen: We tell and retell the history of events that happened in the past so we can understand what happened—and so, in some cases, it doesn't happen again. The fact is that slavery still exists in some countries even today.

Candlewick: How do you know that the stories in *No More!* are true?

Doreen: I spent a great deal of time researching these stories to make sure they were true. In the introduction to the book, I wrote about how I used sources and how I double-check them. I also give a list of references about my sources at the end. All writers of history must check and double-check their sources for accuracy. Sometimes a few years later or even many years later

historians uncover new information, and then we can correct our books.

Candlewick: Why did you include songs, if you were writing about history?

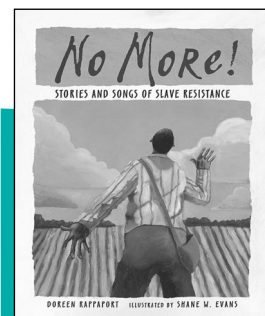
Doreen: The enslaved African Americans were forbidden to read and write, so they used music and storytelling as a way of expressing themselves and as a means of transmitting information. Their words were power. To write about slave resistance and not include song is to tell only part of the story.

Candlewick: How did it help slaves to do the things you describe in your book—such as tell "trickster tales," or pick less cotton, or worship together in secret—if it didn't change the fact that they were slaves?

Doreen: Picking less cotton directly affected the slave owner's pocketbook: the less cotton picked, the less to sell, and the less money the slave owners received. Telling stories reaffirmed the slaves' spirit. Worshiping in secret in "hush harbors" and incorporating elements of African belief was another act of defiance. Such acts of defiance temporarily freed one's mind from the condition of being a slave.

Candlewick: What do you hope kids will learn from this book?

Doreen: If kids take away one thing from this book, I hope it's a realization that the human spirit cannot easily be crushed.



No More!
Stories and Songs
of Slave Resistance
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A letter from illustrator Shane W. Evans

No More! was a true labor of love for me. As an artist, every time I put paint to brush, brush to canvas, it is a journey. Some journeys are pleasant, some not so pleasant. All are life lessons. For me *No More!* represents a history even deeper than the history taught to me as a young child. It allowed me a more personal look into one of the darkest moments in American history. It gave me the opportunity to share in and appreciate the struggle of enslaved African Americans.

It is difficult to express in words my feelings about this work, but I believe that I have captured my feelings in the colors and brush strokes of my paintings. I share these images with all of those who are interested and I hope that they inspire viewers the way that I was inspired to create them.



Shane W. Evans

