The concept and reality of American slavery worked its way into every major aspect of the political strife between Great Britain and her colonies between 1763 and 1783, usually as a powerful adjunct to other issues that made up the core of the conflict. But slavery’s use as a means rather than an end did not mean that enslaved African Americans were passive objects rather than actors, or that these debates had no impact on whites’ attitudes towards slavery, both in the United States and Great Britain.

**Matthew Mason** is a professor of History at BYU, and he is the author of numerous studies on the history of slavery, early America, and Britain, including *Slavery and Politics in the Early American Republic.*