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“Let Us Never Stop Trying To Learn”:
Gender Roles of Antebellum Slave Education

Allyson Perry

When the United States Congress passed the Thirteenth Amendment, it set four million blacks free from legal bondage. Yet many had nowhere to go, few skills to rely on, and no formal education. In 1870, about seventy percent of blacks in the South were illiterate.¹ Despite the major setbacks, African Americans strived to develop their own autonomy in a hegemonic society that endowed whites with political, economic, and social power. Blacks developed their independence in a major way: learning how to read and write. Even while enslaved, African Americans yearned for an education, as seen in several slave narratives, but slave owners shuddered at the idea of teaching blacks to read and write. White masters feared that slaves, upon learning to read and write, would become aware of their condition, then organize, and rebel against the slave system. White oppression of blacks did not end with the restriction of education, however. Rather, the intersections of race, education, and gender display slaves' desire for and endeavors in education. Women and men shared in the effects of oppression and desire for education to fulfill their self-ownership, but each gender went about resisting slavery, learning to read and write, and passing that education along in highly different ways.

While enslaved men and women during the antebellum era equally desired an education for their own self-worth, the various regions lent differing capabilities for the enslaved population. In the Chesapeake region of the United States from 1840 to 1860, whites lived in fear of slaves and remained vigilant for any slave insurrection. Conversely, African Americans lived either in communities of free blacks, or on plantations—all the while looking for a route to freedom. According to T. Stephen Whitman in *Challenging Slavery in the Chesapeake*, slavery in the most northern parts of the region was on the decline, and many free blacks lived in this section. In northern Delaware, western and northern Maryland, and west of the Blue Ridge in Virginia, slavery was static or declining as well. Only in the most southerly areas, such as in Maryland's tobacco growing counties and Virginia's Tidewater and Piedmont counties did slavery define both state and society. Even though politicians from Maryland and

Delaware rarely contested the heated issue of slavery, Virginian officials and their constituents remained vehemently proslavery because the system was their way of life.² Despite the fact that the region's social and political systems varied by geographical aberrations, the region still remained terrified in the 1840s by the threat of rebellion. White people living in the Chesapeake had just recently fought off Gabriel's conspiracy and Turner's rebellion and consequently distrusted organized, and especially educated, African Americans.³

Despite this fear, blacks particularly in this region formed groups in order to create institutions that fought their oppression. In larger cities, free blacks established their own African Methodist Episcopal churches and attached a Sunday school for children. This tie linked together spiritual ideals and republican ideals of freedom to inculcate children.⁴ Some abolitionists, though, erected schools without a religious affiliation. For example, in 1851, Myrtilla Miner opened a school for free blacks in Washington, D.C. She advocated for black education because it "was the key to emancipating African Americans from slavery and racial oppression."⁵ By fighting in the public sphere for their own religious denomination and their own education, free blacks in the Chesapeake began to carve away at white hegemony, but what of the majority of blacks still enslaved in this time and region?⁶

Antebellum slave narratives reveal various aspects of slave life in the Chesapeake. One common subject of intense interest was education because white masters consistently withheld this freedom from slaves for fear of rebellion. Their inability to learn how to read and write only fueled slaves' desire to resist their masters' laws. In particular, slaves in the Chesapeake region often wrote of the love and need for an education because the ideology of liberty and independence permeated slave culture as it did white culture. Yet, democratic thinking spread dramatically as slavery declined and large communities of free blacks established institutions. Male and female African Americans shared the desire for education, used similar forms of resistance, and sought autonomy in comparable ways. However, men and women spoke differently of the themes of ingenuity and educating children. The slave experience was unique for each individual, but his or her experiences of education were even more distinctive and particularly gendered.

Male and female slave narratives were about individual slaves' experiences, written to instill empathy in their audience. Although of the same literary genre, they vary greatly by gender. This gender variance displayed by the

narratives may have derived directly from the gender roles present during the antebellum era. According to Elizabeth Fox-Genovese in *Within the Plantation Household*, slaveholders, non-slaveholding whites, and slaves themselves “shared an ideal of the universal division between women and men.”⁷ The separate spheres—a world for modest, fragile women in the home and a world for undaunted and physically strong men in the workforce—defined a universal division between women and men during the era. This social system was as necessary for whites as it was for the free and enslaved populations of blacks.⁸ Thus, men wrote narratives displaying particular masculinities, which the men hoped to achieve. Most often, the themes of desire, resistance, ingenuity, and autonomy reappeared in male slave narratives. The uncommon theme in male slave narratives was the interest in passing on education to black children; only one man writes of this need despite all authors’ acknowledgement of not denying blacks an education.

Frederick Douglass, arguably the most notable antebellum slave because of his widely read *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, was born in Maryland, taught himself how to read and write, and eventually made his way to the North. Because he wanted to know how to read and write, Douglass “was compelled to resort to various stratagems.” First, he convinced his mistress to teach him.⁹ He quickly and diligently learned characters and a few words, but she

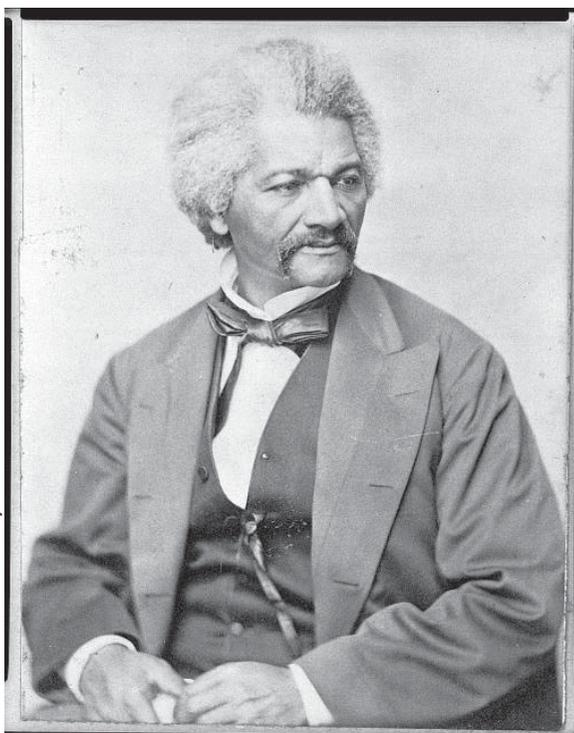


Figure 1 Frederick Douglass, head-and-shoulders portrait, facing right. C 1850-1860. Photographic print, albumen. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

soon stopped teaching him after she realized the danger. Later, Douglass persuaded poor white children in the neighborhood to teach him by bartering bread. He again actively sought this education, but when Douglass stopped having lessons, he became despondent. His desire to learn, and to learn about abolition in particular, made him regret his “own existence.”¹⁰

The three themes of resistance, autonomy, and ingenuity were also apparent in the narratives, and each related closely to the other. Because Douglass desired to learn how to read, he also wanted to resist the slave system and create his own independence. Likewise, he had to invent an ingenious method to receive that education. When his master sent Douglass on errands, he always found a way to sneak in a lesson. He ran his errand quickly and carried bread with him, so when he came across poor, hungry children, he traded the bread for a lesson. Similarly, once he learned to read, he longed “to hear any one speak of slavery.”¹¹ His desire to hear of abolition fueled his ambitions for freedom. By learning to read and write, Douglass immediately resisted anti-literacy laws, but he was also resisting the institution of slavery itself, as he refused to allow white owners to oppress his natural right to learn. North Carolina started these anti-literacy laws, and in 1830, passed an act that “constituted part of a larger scheme of surveillance and control over African Americans, enslaved and free.”¹² This legislation quickly spread to other states in the South. By learning, Douglass broke this law but also broke the scheme of surveillance and gave himself autonomy.

Like Douglass, John Quincy Adams, born in Frederick County, Virginia, talked of his great desire to learn, his forms of resistance, his effort to create his own independence, and others’ ingenuity. However, he also mentioned passing on education to children, particularly to young boys. For one, Adams was forward about his hope for an education. He aspired to learn how to read and write so he worked all day and studied every night to, as he said, “accomplish my desire.”¹³ He “saw others going to school, and wanted to go too.”¹⁴ Adams achieved this goal by learning to read from his father, who was literate. In passing education to his children, Adams’ father carried on the masculine ideal to learn to read and write, as men needed education in southern culture for employment in leadership roles.¹⁵ However, educating children was also seen as a feminine act because teaching is another form of nurturing, a female characteristic. Even so, Adams included his brother’s tale of learning to read and write and presented the theme of ingenuity. Adams’ brother Robert exchanged apples for the opportunity to have

children listen to him say his lesson, and after trading the apples for lessons, Robert soon learned to read.¹⁶

In addition to his obvious aspirations, Adams learned to read and write to resist the institution of slavery and to critique the slave society. He argued, “the man who would deprive another of learning to read and write, and learn wisdom does not fear God. They took my labor to educate their children, and then laughed at me for being ignorant and poor, and had not sense enough to know that they were the cause of it.”¹⁷ His analysis of the intersections of race, education, and class in the antebellum South was later eclipsed by his hatred of racism and how it affected his life, for he had “a better education than some of [his] white friends in the South who were not slaves, and when they worked were paid for their labor.”¹⁸ Adams wrote candidly of the slave system, not only to criticize slavery but also to shine a light on the entire way of life. According to him, few white slaveholders profited from the system while leaving poor white men and black slaves to function within its society. Yet, he knew poor white men and blacks were illiterate because of extremely different reasons. White men still had the opportunity to be free, while Adams knew that “there was something more than learning to read and write that they did not want the negro to know,” and that notion was freedom.¹⁹

Like Douglass and Adams, Leonard Black highlighted his desire to read, but otherwise Black only mentioned the theme of resistance. Born in Maryland, Black entered the ministry just prior to running away. From a young age he thirsted “for that knowledge which was denied me,” and he “was anxious to learn to read” after seeing his master send his two sons to school.²⁰ However, Black noted that his master did not send his four unmarried daughters to school. For Black, this intense yearning for education derived from a severe beating he received by his master when he found Black carrying a book. In the confrontation, “the old man saw it in [his] bosom, and made inquiry as to what it was. He said, ‘You son of a b—h, if I ever know you to have a book again, I will whip you half to death.’ He took the book from [him], and burnt it!”²¹ Despite the beating that followed, Black bought another book, this time an even larger one, but his “master found it out; and he then made [Black] sicker of books by beating [him] like a dog.”²² While Black’s master made him balk at the idea of reading a book, he did not quell Black’s desire for an education. Black knew that when he was free he could educate himself, but until that time, he lived with the idea “that slave-holders [were] worse than the devil, for it is written in St. James, ‘Resist the devil, and he will flee from you,’ but if you

undertake to resist the slave-holder, he will hold you the tighter.”²³

The last slave narrative, by Louis Hughes, exemplified the themes of slaves’ desire for education, their extreme cleverness in learning to read and escape, and the autonomy they hoped to achieve. Hughes acknowledged that he “was eager to learn to read and write,” but did not have many opportunities to do so, especially compared with his friend Tom.²⁴ Hughes revealed much of his view of education through the story of Tom’s learning and eventual journey to freedom. Every night Tom slipped out of his quarters, not attached to the house, but Hughes, who stayed in the same house as the masters, could not leave. Hughes desperately wanted to learn, so one night Tom took him to the side of the barn and wrote several characters on the planks with chalk. Hughes practiced, but when the men left, they forgot to rub out the lesson. The next day, their Old Master Jack found the “rude characters” and surmised the two men had practiced, but he had no proof. Several months later, Master Jack found letters Tom had written to his mother, and Master Jack called in the culprit to be whipped. After the incident, Tom only stayed a few weeks until “he wrote himself a pass, which was of the usual kind, stating his name, to whom he belonged, and that he was privileged to hire himself out wherever he could coming and going.”²⁵ This pass allowed Tom to leave his master, find work in nearby cities, and eventually to work his way to New Orleans, whereupon he boarded a ship for Canada. Tom was able to use his ingenuity, based on his ability to read and write, to resist plantation slavery and find his own way to freedom. Likewise, his opposition allowed him to subvert his oppressed state into one of “privilege,” giving him autonomy because as “Tom always said: ‘Lou, I am going to be a free man yet, then we will need some education; no, let us never stop trying to learn.’”²⁶

Male slave narratives provided direct motifs of desire, resistance, autonomy, and ingenuity, but female slave narratives displayed a variation upon these same themes. Unfortunately, the majority of the history of African American enslavement has focused on slave life, not on education, and historians have noticeably gendered that little history dealing with education. According to Ronald E. Butchart in “‘Outthinking and Outflanking the Owners of the World’: Historiography of African American Education,” “the history of black female education is even more neglected,” and almost no historian has employed a gender analysis of black education.²⁷ Most gendered history of African Americans concerns feminist history of black women that uses a lens of race and gender. An

early feminist analysis of antebellum black women was Deborah Gray White's *Ar'n't I a Woman*.²⁸ She categorized the inaccurate interpretations of female roles into the "Mammy," "Jezebel," and "Sapphire" typecasts. Yet free black women writing their narratives rarely fit into the conformed category of the dominant, caring Mammy, the sexy, aggressive Jezebel, or the indomitable, argumentative Sapphire. Historians cannot typecast these real women into one-dimensional characters but must see them for their prerogatives, in the time in which they lived, and as a product of social constructs.²⁹

Since this feminist analysis, other historians have used gender and race to view African American women living during the antebellum era. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese in *Within the Plantation Household* discussed the gender spheres, which separated men and women into the public and private sector, respectively.³⁰ Nevertheless, feminist historians have moved a step farther from the domesticity analysis to view women in the public sphere as they attempted to change the hierarchy of privilege and oppression. For Martha Jones, race and gender intersect in experiences of oppression, but "African American activism occurred not within a distinct female sphere but in those spaces that men and women shared."³¹ Consequently, African American women's education also had to fit within the public and private spheres all the while it questioned gender roles and race constraints.

Women experienced slavery in unique ways as compared to their male counterparts, and female slave narratives revealed disparate opinions of education. While men and women shared a desire to learn and to resist slavery, more women described transferring education from parents to children. More women fought for their children's education over their own. Harriet Jacobs' narrative, despite her not being from the Chesapeake region, is a quintessential slave narrative of maternal selflessness. People read her story throughout the country and influenced male white abolitionists and non-abolitionists to empathize with the plight of the female slave. Jacobs did not talk much of her own desire for education because her mistress taught her to read and write at a young age. Even though Jacobs' story is authentic, it is still extraordinary and does not reflect the reality that most women were illiterate. Likewise, many women did not work in the home. Only about ten percent of female slaves were servants. Those women who were servants and passed their apprenticeship to full status "might have spent their formative years in closer contact with the white family than with the black."³² Jacobs was one of

these slaves, and because of her accessibility, she fell into the gaze of her master Dr. Flint. She wished to have autonomy over her body, so she took Mr. Sands as her lover. Her proximity to the family and other white owners allowed her to traverse this more public sphere.³³

Her affair does not align her with the stereotypical “Jezebel,” though. Jacobs did become pregnant, and hoped Mr. Sands would buy his children and her and set them free. Ultimately, he did not give Jacobs freedom, but to see her children’s safety through, Jacobs hid in the attic for seven years. Jacobs discussed her discomfort little but instead described in detail longing for her children and hoping for a better life for them. Her nurturing ways directly related to the womanly ideals prescribed during the antebellum era. Yet her tendencies beg the question, “were her actions nature or nurture?” Did her actions derive from the historical time period’s focus on female domesticity, or was her need to nurture an example of a black woman proving her true womanhood, in a strictly biological sense?

Jacobs’ acts of resistance were not for her sake, but for her children. Her nurturing disposition may have stemmed from the historical period because slaveholders “demanded that the ‘servant’ women adopt their ideals of personal conduct, morality, marriage, and family.”³⁴ Southern white women may have wanted black women to adhere to these ideals, and black women themselves may have wanted to express their femininity in prescriptive ways; however, black women were seen as less than women. People often described them as “wenches,” and characterized them as Jezebels.³⁵ Nevertheless, black women still wanted others to see them as “good women,” especially when Jacobs stated, “the slave girl is reared in an atmosphere of licentiousness and fear. The lash and the foul talk of her master and his sons are her teachers. When she is fourteen or fifteen, her owner, or his sons, or the overseer, or perhaps all of them, begin to bribe her with presents. If these fail to accomplish their purpose, she is whipped or starved into submission to their will.”³⁶ She vehemently argued that her affair was not her fault, and in reality, she had no control over her sexuality. Without control over her sexuality, she could not feel like a whole woman because she had no authority over parts of her body making her uniquely feminine. To fill this void of feeling less than a woman, Jacobs may have employed matronly nature to prove to herself and others that while she could not control having children she could at least control how they were raised.

Jacobs’ intense motherly feelings exemplified a desire not for her education but for her children’s. When Mr. Sands suggested Ellen should be sent to Brooklyn, “it was promised that she should be well taken care of, and sent to school.”³⁷ Jacobs

consented to the move, and the promise of education most likely weighed on her decision. After she found freedom, she worked “diligently for [her] own support, and the education of [her] children.”³⁸ In most thoughts and actions, Jacobs put herself second and her children first, especially when it came to their education. Her nurturing disposition even extended beyond her own children. An old black man, who “had a most earnest desire to learn to read” begged Jacobs to teach him and offered to pay her in fruit.³⁹ Before consenting to teach him, she explained the anti-literacy laws and upon this news, the old man began to cry out of his desperation to read. He acknowledged that he willingly wanted to break the law—and consequently resist white hegemony—to learn to read. The old man’s desire for an education also exemplified other ex-slaves’ esteem of literate blacks.⁴⁰

Like Jacobs, Old Elizabeth described educating children, but Elizabeth did so while spreading the Word of God. At a young age, she converted to Christianity and years later in her thirties became a Presbyterian minister. However, Elizabeth exemplified the more submissive tendencies of women who lived during the antebellum era. According with most female narratives, Elizabeth did not acknowledge her own desire for education. In fact, her father read the Bible aloud to his children every Sunday morning. Elizabeth learned to read, but when it came time for her to speak or read aloud, she “shrank from it—so great was the cross to [her] nature.”⁴¹ In refusing to perform the more masculine duty of speaking aloud, Elizabeth took upon the more docile nature meant for white women. Jacobs knew that she could not “enjoy the full status of [her] gender,” but Jacobs and Elizabeth likewise attempted to internalize the social constructs of gender.⁴² Even though white and black women were racially separated, their gender “excluded [each race] from a host of male prerogatives.”⁴³ Elizabeth further noted the vast differences in gender when she acknowledged, “it was hard for men to travel, and what could women do? These things greatly discouraged [her], and shut up [her] way, and caused [her] to resist the Spirit.”⁴⁴ To Elizabeth, being a woman closed her off to her own choice of spirituality and her autonomy to speak the word of God.

Once Elizabeth overcame this fear, she wanted to spread the Word of God and teach children. She “established a school for coloured orphans, having always felt the great importance of the religious and moral agriculture of children, and the great need of it, especially amongst the coloured people. Having white teachers, [she] met with much encouragement.”⁴⁵ In addition to her feminine identity, Elizabeth displayed her nurturing character because as a woman in the nineteenth

century, people saw female teachers as the best teachers for children. All the same, her desire to spread the Word of God and teach related directly to African Americans' universal desire to become self-autonomous, and two ways in which they accomplished these goals were through setting up their own churches and creating schools.⁴⁶

The narrative of Amanda Smith exemplified this desire to gain an education once emancipated. Smith was born in 1837, and her father bought himself and his family while she was still young. They moved to Pennsylvania, where Smith received less than three months of schooling. To attend this school designed mainly for white children, Smith and her brother "walked five and a half miles each day, in going and returning, and the attention [they] received while there was only such as the teacher could give after the requirements of the more favored pupils had been met."⁴⁷ She put so much effort into attending school that she even went on a bitterly cold morning with several feet of snow on the ground. Smith was an exemplar of the other free African Americans who wanted to feel wholly human and a part of a greater national community in which they could actively participate.

Jacobs, Elizabeth, and Smith all portrayed feminine qualities and viewed education not as important to them as it was to teaching children. Elizabeth Keckley's narrative also fell within this ideology. Keckley was born a slave in Virginia, but eventually moved to St. Louis. While enslaved, she learned to read and write as well as acquired the skills of a seamstress. This type of employment, extremely restricted to only women, and her ability to sew says more than just the education she received. She ultimately had to acquire feminine skills as a woman, but as a black woman, she could only serve others. After she bought her freedom, however, she could employ herself instead of merely serving. In fact, Keckley had the fortitude and ingenuity to set up her own dressmaking shop in Washington, D.C., where many of her clients were wives of influential politicians, including Mary Todd Lincoln. Keckley's story reveals her absolute autonomy, even for being a black woman. As Jones suggests, once African American women reached the public sphere, they could vie for their independence and citizenship.⁴⁸

Keckley's story was an extraordinary one, and unfortunately, she did not speak much of her own education. Rather, she gave a great account of black schools in Washington, D.C. According to Stanley Harrold's *Subversives: Antislavery Community in Washington, D.C., 1828-1865*, slavery in Washington,

D.C. was weak and vicious because slaves constantly had the threat of masters selling them South. Once emancipated, they no longer had this threat and were able to take part in a school system designed to encourage their independence. According to Keckley, “the schools [were] objects of much interest. Good teachers, white and colored, [were] employed, and whole brigades of bright-eyed dusky children [were] there taught the common branches of education. These children [were] studious, and the teachers inform[ed her] that their advancement [was] rapid.”⁵⁰ Why did the young African American children achieve so much? Did they astound teachers because they could learn at all? From slave narratives, historians know that blacks could learn equally if not faster than whites, and surely, these teachers had great faith in their pupils. Perhaps these children became so studious and learned so quickly because they knew, whether from their parents describing the oppression of slavery or from their own experiences of oppression, that learning gave them independence and thus privileged them.

These children’s desire to learn epitomized the other blacks’ desire to gain an education to establish their own sense of self. Similarly, the various slave narratives show slaves’ inherent longing to resist slavery and give themselves autonomy and privilege. In 1870, seventy percent of African Americans in the South were illiterate, but in forty years, that illiteracy rate dropped to thirty percent. Coincidentally, “black females showed more striking advances than males in the four decades from 1870 to 1910.”⁵¹ During Reconstruction, an educational revolution occurred in the South with the help of white and black teachers alike. According to Anderson in *The Education of Blacks in the South*, “The ex-slaves’ educational movement became a test of their capacity to restructure their lives, to establish their freedom. Although they appreciated northern support, they resisted infringements that threatened to undermine their own initiative and self-reliance.”⁵²

While emancipation could not happen without the efforts of abolitionists, black education, while aided by white Northerners, had to be a result of African American determination. The themes present in the narratives help to explain blacks’ desire for education and the ways in which they found it, but the theme of desire and autonomy had to be extensions of the black community itself in the Reconstruction years. African Americans used education to give themselves privileges denied to them for centuries.

Notes

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3. *Ibid.*, 167.
4. *Ibid.*, 148.
5. Stanley Harrold, *Subversives: Antislavery Community in Washington, D.C., 1828-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003), 174.
6. Martha S. Jones, *All Bound Up Together: The Woman Question in African American Public Culture, 1830-1900* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 3-8.
7. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 195.
8. For information on black women in the nineteenth century see also Shirley Carlson, "Black Ideals of Womanhood in the Victorian Era," *Journal of Negro History* 77.2 (Spring 1992): 61-73; Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family from Slavery to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 1985).
9. Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, and American Slave. Written By Himself* (Boston: Anti-Slavery Office, 1845), 36.
10. *Ibid.*, 41.
11. *Ibid.*, 41.
12. Heather Andrea Williams, *Self-Taught: African American Education in Slavery and Freedom* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 15.
13. John Quincy Adams, *Narrative of the Life of John Quincy Adams, When in Slavery, and Now as a Freeman* (Harrisburg: Sieg, 1872), 13.
14. Adams, *Narrative of the Life of John Quincy Adams*, 13.
15. Carl F. Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780-1800* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 13-16.
16. Adams, *Narrative of the Life of John Quincy Adams*, 10.
17. *Ibid.*, 12.
18. *Ibid.*, 12.
19. *Ibid.*, 6.
20. Leonard Black, *The Life and Sufferings of Leonard Black, a Fugitive from Slavery. Written by Himself* (New Bedford: Benjamin Lindsey, 1847), 18-19.

21. Ibid., 18.
22. Ibid., 19.
23. Ibid., 19-20.
24. Louis Hughes, *Thirty Years a Slave: From Bondage to Freedom: The Institution of Slavery as Seen on the Plantation and in the Home of the Planter* (Milwaukee: South Side Printing Company, 1897), 100.
25. Ibid., 103.
26. Ibid., 101 and 100-105; Williams, *Self-Taught*, 22.
27. Ronald E. Butchart, “Outthinking and Outflanking the Owners of the World’: Historiography of African American Education,” *History of Education Quarterly* 28.3 (Autumn 1988): 361.
28. Deborah Gray White, *Ar’n’t I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1985).
29. Ibid., 14-27.
30. Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household*, 195.
31. Jones, *All Bound Up Together*, 3.
32. Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household*, 153.
33. Harriet Ann Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl. Written by Herself*, ed. by Lydia Maria Francis Child (Boston: Published for the Author, 1861).
34. Brenda E. Stevenson, “Gender Convention, Ideals, and Identity Among Antebellum Virginia Slave Women,” in *More than Chattel: Black Women and Slavery in the Americas*, ed. by David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 173.
35. Kathleen M. Brown *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonia Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 100-105.
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37. Ibid., 209.
38. Ibid., 5.
39. Ibid., 111.
40. James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 5; Robert C. Morris, *Reading, ‘Righting, and Reconstruction: The Education of Freedmen in the South, 1861-1870* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).
41. Elizabeth, *Memoir of Old Elizabeth, a Coloured Woman* (Philadelphia: Collins, 1863), 9.
42. Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household*, 194.

43. Ibid., 194.

44. Elizabeth, *Memoir of Old Elizabeth*, 9.

45. Ibid., 19.

46. Kaestle, *Pillars of the Republic*, 148; Jones, *All Bound Up Together*, 130-131.

47. Amanda Smith, *An Autobiography: The Story of the Lord's Dealing with Mrs. Amanda Smith, the Colored Evangelist: Containing an Account of Her Life Work of Faith, and Her Travels in America, England, Ireland, Scotland, India, and Africa as an Independent Missionary* (Chicago: Meyer & Brother Publishers, 1893), iv.

48. Jones, *All Bound Up Together*, 87-97.

49. Harrold, *Subversives*, 11.

50. Elizabeth Keckley *Behind the Scenes, or, Thirty Years a Slave, and Four Years in the White House* (New York: G.W. Carleton & Co., 1868), 143; For more information about black teachers see Adam Fairclough, "'Being in the Field of Education and Also Being a Negro... Seems... Tragic': Black Teachers in the Jim Crow South," *Journal of American History* 87 (June 2000): 65-91.

51. Tyack, *Learning Together*, 53.

52. Anderson, 12; Williams, 30; For more information on Reconstruction and gender see: Elsa Barkley Brown, "Negotiating and Transforming the Public Sphere: African American Political Life in the Transition from Slavery to Freedom," *Public Culture* 7(1994): 107-146; Laura F. Edwards, *Gendered Strife and Confusion: The Political Culture of Reconstruction* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997); Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988); Michele Mitchell, *Righteous Propagation: African Americans and the Politics of Racial Destiny after Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Heather Cox Richardson, *The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865-1901* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001); Hannah Rosen, *Terror in the Heart of Freedom: Citizenship, Sexual Violence, and the Meaning of Race in the Postemancipation South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 2009).

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