Notes

Introduction


2. Nancy F. Cott says of the Second Great Awakening (1798–1830s), “Conversion set up a direct relation to God’s authority that allowed female converts to denigrate or bypass men’s authority—to defy men—for God” (21). See “Young Women in the Second Great Awakening in New England.”

3. For example, Harriet Beecher Stowe published a particularly inflammatory statement by a well-known clergyman in Chapter 12 of Uncle Tom’s Cabin. Dr. Joel Parker excused slavery by saying that the evil practices found in it were the same as evil practices one might find in marriage, parenting, or other forms of employee-employer relations. Singled out for calumny in the best-selling book of its era, Dr. Parker sued Stowe for libel. A dispute raged in the pages of the New York Observer, a pro-slavery religious paper, provoking Dr. Parker to characterize Stowe as “unladylike” for engaging in such “coarse” debates (227). See Joan D. Hedrick’s Harriet Beecher Stowe: A Life, 225–32.

4. Raymond Williams elaborates upon Antonio Gramsci’s definition of hegemony, describing a belief as hegemonic if it is so deeply embedded in a culture that it escapes close examination and becomes “common sense.” The belief that slavery undermined the family and led to the abuses detailed in antislavery writings was an emergent and contested belief in the 1830s, but following Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin, that belief became increasingly hegemonic. See Marxism and Literature, 108–14.

5. I use the term “counter-hegemonic” to describe the Garrisonians’ use of elements of the dominant culture to push an agenda hostile to prevailing economic structures. Antonio Gramsci’s concept of hegemony is particularly relevant in this context because it avoids any totalizing theory of culture as the effect of necessary economic developments. Gramsci uses the term “hegemony” to describe the cultural activity that secures the nation’s consent to the current economic structures. For Gramsci, such superstructural activities, the domain of civil society, are not at all separate from economic structures or from the state but are in fact integral to both. Gramsci describes two superstructural “levels.” One level occurs in civil society through the
operation of the dominant class. This is hegemony. The other superstructural level occurs in the state, using essentially negative means to codify and enforce the cultural norms of the dominant class. The state uses “direct domination” to discipline those groups who do not “consent” to the cultural norms of the dominant class. Counter-hegemonic movements use elements of dominant culture that can be “rearticulated” to contribute to alternative views of economic and political organizations. See especially Selections from the Prison Notebooks, 12–13.


8. See James Oakes’ Slavery and Freedom: An Interpretation of the Old South. Oakes writes, “What little statistical evidence we have indicates that as many as one in three slave families in the South was broken by the force of the master—suggesting that perhaps 600,000 slave families were shattered between 1820 and 1860” (9). Oakes goes on to note that unlike other New World slave societies, American slave society in the nineteenth century withdrew from the slave trade and had a balanced sex ratio. “And most tragic of all, because a balanced sex ratio allowed American slaves to create a family life for themselves, the consequences of their legal kinlessness were uniquely appalling. For it made the disruption and breakup of slave families one of the endemic features of slavery in the American South” (35).

9. Stephanie Coontz argues that the pace at which production shifted out of the home peaked between 1815 and 1840. Furthermore, Americans understood that the factory system, in which production occurred outside of the home and workers did not own or control the means of production, was the “wave of the future” (164).


11. In just one of many examples, in Sweet Love’s Atonement and its sequel, Zenobia’s Suitors, slave owners twice try to pass the Spanish Zenobia off as a slave, and both light-skinned, female slaves in the novels are sold away from their families by close relatives (a foster mother and a son).

Chapter 1

1. See David Brion Davis, The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture.

2. See Sanchez-Eppler, Touching Liberty, 4–8. Under pressure from antislavery and feminist movements, Americans were forced to examine just which “persons” were entitled to the rights granted by the Bill of Rights and to
include racially and sexually explicit language into the Constitution. Prior to 1865, a white, male identity was implicitly assumed. See also Nancy Bentley’s analysis of the body of the “white slave” in “The Mulatto Hero in Antebellum Fiction” Subjects & Citizens: Nation, Race, and Gender from Oroonoko to Anita Hill, 195–216. Bentley writes, “The tacit rules of the domestic novel . . . are these: for women’s bodies and black bodies the infliction of violence or abuse can be a means by which the individual achieves a transcendent grace or enriched dignity and identity . . . But the idea that violence to a white man’s body would enhance his selfhood is nonsensical or heretical—despite the fact that the model for the passive power of martyrdom, Jesus Christ, was a white man” (196). Liberation for the black slave—and for women—in antebellum fiction often takes a spiritual form and requires the body’s humiliation and destruction.


4. I am indebted here to Augusta Rohrbach’s work, Truth Stranger Than Fiction: Race, Realism and the U.S. Literary Marketplace. Augusta Rohrbach, argues that antislavery literary culture brought together the humanitarian narrative, the rise of print culture, and industrial capitalism in a potent mix anticipating American literary realism. The humanitarian narrative depicts bodily suffering along with a strong injunction to stop such suffering. This narrative is premised on the idea that literature can and should play a powerful role in social reform. Moreover, she argues that antislavery literature, especially slave narratives and Garrison’s paper The Liberator, pressured readers to commit their money to their morals by juxtaposing antislavery stories and advertisements for antislavery commodities, pioneering the first commercial “tie-ins” in newspapers. Accounts in slave narratives of the importance of fund-raising to future efforts to liberate slaves further encouraged antislavery consumption.

Chapter 2

1. Lydia Maria Child, Letters from New York. Hereafter cited parenthetically as LNY. When I am referring to the column as it first appeared I place the title in quotation marks. When I refer to the collected letters, from which my quotes are taken, I italicize the book title.

2. The body of this chapter refers exclusively to those letters published in the National Anti-Slavery Standard, most of which were collected in the first edition of Letters from New York. Those published in the second series primarily appeared in the Boston Courier, a more mainstream paper, after Child had stepped down from editing the National Anti-Slavery Standard. She declared her intention to focus upon refining her literary skills, and the letters are considerably less political, though one records a trip to Blackwell Island, one endorses temperance, and one defends the explicit representation of evils by antislavery, temperance, and prison reform movements. Generally, children appear in this second series as reminders of the innate goodness of human nature; Child seldom remarks upon their class position.
3. Seth Koven and Sonya Michel coined the term “maternalist politics” to describe the rhetoric and political tactics of major Progressive Era reforms led by women. These leaders argued that it was the special province of women and mothers to protect the weak. See Koven and Michel (eds.), *Mothers of a New World: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States*.


6. See Jacques Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*; Christopher Lasch, *Haven in a Heartless World*; June Howard, *Form and History in American Literary Naturalism*; and Karen Sanchez-Eppler, “Playing at Class.” Both Howard and Sanchez-Eppler argue that Progressive Era reformers (Howard) and Child (Sanchez-Eppler) cast themselves as sensitive observers, capable of both sympathy and systemic analysis, in comparison with the working class, who, because they were brutalized, required expert guidance. The social field, in their view, thus arose to inflate reformers’ sense of self-importance and to protect the middle and upper classes from the “dangerous classes.” Child’s criticism of working-class isolation and her defense of Catholic schools—which taught children an alternative view of Catholicism and fought the Protestant bias in the mainstream curriculum—suggest she had a more generous estimate of the working class.

7. The most notorious woman Child helped and wrote about in the “Letters from New York” was Amelia Norman, a young, working-class woman who had been seduced by a wealthy man and then attempted to murder him when he abandoned her in a brothel. In the subsequent trial, Child championed Norman, publishing a defense of her in “Letters from New York,” which, according to Margaret Fuller, was used by Norman’s defense attorney to win her acquittal. Child expressly denied that economic motives might have propelled either Norman’s choice in a lover or her decision to become a “kept” woman. Removing class from consideration of the dynamics between Norman and Ballard, Child made this seduction tale a paradigmatic story of gender relations but not of Northern economic and social relations. Child’s ability to intervene through the press and the court took Norman’s fate out of the private, familial realm within which the tragic mulatta and Southern white woman were trapped. In addition to helping Amelia Norman, Child helped actress Jeannie Barrett control her alcoholism and resume her acting career, and she championed murderer John C. Colt’s alleged wife after he was executed. See Lydia Maria Child, “Uncollected Letter,” 368 and 370. See also, Carolyn Karcher, *The First Woman in the Republic: A Cultural Biography of Lydia Maria Child*.
8. Recent scholarship has called into question the theory that the Industrial Revolution ushered in a rift between the public sphere and the domestic or private sphere for middle-class Americans. Critics have shown how the lived experience of men and women regularly defied the culturally prevalent notion that public and private spheres should be as separate as possible. Child’s vision of feminine and masculine “souls” and her call for a more feminized public sphere makes her an appropriate example of Nina Baym’s reframing of the ideology of separate spheres: “Public and private spheres were metaphorical rather than actual places[;] . . . public and private were different ways of behaving in the same space” (American Women Writers and the Work of History, 1790–1860, 11). For more on this debate, see Alejandro Lugo and Bill Maurer (eds.), Gender Matters: Rereading Michelle Z. Rosaldo, and Monika M. Elbert (ed.), Separate Spheres No More: Gender Convergence in American Literature, 1830–1930.

9. Sanchez-Eppler argues that images of street children at play and “stories of street-children’s vulnerability and pathos” operate in concert with one another to both justify the exploitation of children and let the sympathetic, middle-class viewer off the hook. She specifically cites Child’s “Letters from New York” as an instance of middle-class paralysis toward working-class children. Her critique resembles Donzelot’s insofar as she considers the development of the social field—in this case Charles Loring Brace’s Children’s Aid Society—primarily a means of disempowering the working class and containing more radical impulses. See Sanchez-Eppler, “Playing at Class,” 838, 822, and Donzelot, The Policing of Families.

10. In The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act, Frederic Jameson uses the terms “magical narrative” and “imaginary resolution” to describe the operation of the romance genre. He argues that the romance provides an “imaginary resolution of the objective contradictions to which it thus constitutes an active response” (118). In Child’s early fiction, there is a contradiction between the didactic tale she wished to tell, the tale of hard-working, virtuous young girls who earn their way out of poverty, and the reality of low wages and limited opportunities for women. Child magically resolves this contradiction by making these poor girls the sisters and wives of middle-class characters. They “earn” their upward mobility through virtuous behavior, defined according to a middle-class ethic of hard work and conformity, rather than wages. See “The Cottage Girl” and “Louisa Preston” in particular.

11. See Lydia Maria Child, Lydia Maria Child: Selected Letters, 1817–1880, hereafter cited parenthetically as SL.

12. See letters 14, 18, 29, 31, 32, 44. Letter 31, on the execution of John C. Colt, and her uncollected letter from February 6, 1844, on the trial of Amelia Norman, are of particular interest.

13. The Five Points neighborhood was created in the early nineteenth century when city forefathers arranged to have a fresh water pond filled in to expand living space. The resulting marshy land lacked bedrock, and soon the buildings on top of it began to sink and to become infested with disease-carrying...
insects. See Tyler Anbinder, “We Will Dirk Every Mother’s Son of You”: Five Points and the Irish Conquest of New York Politics.”

14. Child’s portraits of Zeek, a clever fugitive slave, and his daughter, Julia Pell, a well-known evangelical preacher, attest to the creativity with which some poor city dwellers met severe challenges and developed full lives. See letter 11.

15. In 1830, Owen and Wright proposed a system of education in which the state would remove children from their homes and finance the education of all children in boarding schools. Housing children of the rich and the poor together would counter the negative effects of both poverty and excessive luxury, ennobling labor and reducing class stratification. See Richard William Leopold, Robert Dale Owen: A Biography, 87, 92–3.


17. The plight of New York’s newsboys became a celebrated cause in the 1850s, a decade after Child’s “Letters,” when abolitionist Charles Loring Brace founded a home for orphaned newsboys. Brace was encouraged in his work with the Children’s Aid Society by Frederick Law Olmsted, author of a famous indictment of slavery as an economic system, The Cotton Kingdom. Olmsted wrote to Brace in 1853, “Go ahead with the Children’s Aid and get up parks, gardens, music, dancing schools, reunions which will be so attractive as to force into contact the good and the bad, the gentlemanly and the rowdy. And the state ought to assist these sort of things” (qtd. in Laura Wood Roper, FLO: A Biography of Frederick Law Olmsted 94).

18. Child writes, “That the law of Love may cheer and bless even public establishments, has been proved by the example of the Society of Friends. They formerly had an establishment for their own poor, in the city of Philadelphia, on a plan so simple and beautiful, that one cannot but mourn to think it has given place to more common and less brotherly modes of relief. A nest of small households enclosed, on three sides, an open space devoted to gardens, in which each had a share. Here each poor family lived in separate rooms, and were assisted by the Society, according to its needs. . . . These paupers were oftentimes ministers and elders, . . . Everything conspired to make them retain undiminished self-respect.” (LNY, 194) While writing the “Letters from New York,” Child lived with Isaac T. Hopper’s Quaker family and was undoubtedly influenced by the family’s extensive involvement in reforms, including antislavery and prison reform. She wrote admiringly of both Isaac and his daughter, Abby Hopper Gibbons. By 1845, Abby and several other women formed the Female Department of the New York Prison Association, which, later that year, opened the first halfway house in the world designed to help a large number of female prisoners find employment and housing after their release from prison. See

19. For more on Child’s fear that Andrew Johnson’s administration was undercutting the promises of emancipation and for more on her primer, *The Freedmen’s Book*, see Karcher, *The First Woman in the Republic: A Cultural Biography of Lydia Maria Child*, 487–531.

20. Child’s responses to middle-class and working-class children are characteristic of what Jacques Donzelot describes as the modern disciplinary apparatus focused on children. Analyzing developments in France, Donzelot theorizes that the relationship between the state and the family and the very nature of the family underwent a dramatic transformation with the rise of industrial capitalism and the disciplinary apparatuses Child supported. He theorizes that two different family structures emerged from this transformation. On the one hand, medical doctors and advice writers collaborated with the middle-class mother, enhancing the importance of her social role. On the other hand, a burgeoning structure of educators, social workers, and truancy court officers converged on working-class children, often severely limiting the authority of working-class parents. While this social complex provided the bourgeois family with a “protected liberation” in which individual members were shielded from the arbitrary will of the head of the family and children from the “dangers” of servants’ influence, the working-class family was subjected to more intense scrutiny and limitation. The working-class’s contact with the social resulted in “supervised freedom,” a system of tutelage imposed from without, rather than through mothers leagued with a socializing apparatus. See Donzelot, *The Policing of Families*, 18–22 and 45–7.

21. While Olmsted sprinkled his surveys of the South with references to the South’s underdeveloped civil society, he elaborated on the significance of social institutions on pages 554–9 in *The Cotton Kingdom*.


**Chapter 3**

1. See “The Scarlet Letter and Revolutions Abroad” in Larry Reynolds’ *European Revolutions and the American Literary Renaissance*. Reynolds argues that the conservatives revived imagery from the French Revolution of 1789 to describe the events of 1848–1849 in Europe. These images, appearing in Democratic Party papers and used to describe President Zachary Taylor’s firing of political appointees, influenced Hawthorne’s own imagery in “The Custom House” and *The Scarlet Letter*. In addition, Hawthorne was reading Alphonse de Lamartine’s *History of the Girondists*, a history sympathetic to
the royal family during the French Revolution, at the very time that he began writing *The Scarlet Letter* (88).

2. David Brion Davis argues that many historians of slavery have exaggerated the guilt that defenders of slavery felt over the apparent contradiction between their ideals of liberty and democracy and their reality of slavery. Davis countered that many Americans had accommodated their moral code so that it muted any perceptible conflict between ideals and actions. For example, even today, many readers accept Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* as a model of self-sufficiency, forgetting that Crusoe was a Brazilian planter and slaveowner prior to his adventure on the island. By repressing certain elements in a narrative, Americans could reconcile their ideals to their actions. See David Brion Davis, “Slavery and the American Mind.”


4. “Old News” was originally published in 1835 in the *New England Magazine* and republished in *The Snow Image* (1851). It is premised on old newspapers dating back to the 1690s.

5. Ellen Meiksins Wood distinguishes between “societies with markets and trade, which have existed throughout recorded history, and the specificity of capitalism, where ‘the market’ is not an opportunity but an imperative” (289). Once western farmers began underselling smaller, less fertile New England farms and industrial production moved out of the household to more centralized factories in the United States, the market became an imperative for most Americans. Stephanie Coontz locates this transformation between 1815–1855. See Ellen Meiksins Wood, *Democracy against Capitalism*, and Coontz, *The Social Origins of Private Life*.

6. John Jentz discovers that the class composition of antislavery activists evolves throughout the Jacksonian period as upper-class patrons give way to more working-class advocates. See John Jentz, “The Antislavery Constituency in Jacksonian New York City.”

7. Child's post–Civil War novel, *Romance of the Republic*, represents an extension of the Garrisonian abolitionists' vision of a national family. While the Garrisonians were successful in destroying the image of paternalistic slaveholders among Northerners in the 1850s, following the Civil War, images of fratricidal (white) conflict replaced images of the slavemart as the primary threat to the nation. Child's novel was an unusual post–Civil War vision of national unification brought about through interracial marriage and adoption. More common visions include the racist novels of Thomas Dixon, culminating in D.W. Griffith's adaptation of a Dixon novel, “Birth of a Nation.” The new national metaphor became that of white “brothers” North and South reconciling by marrying one another's sisters and defeating African American political and social aspirations.

8. Raymond Williams uses the phrase “economic limits and pressures” to describe the relationship between economic forces and cultural phenomena,
including political discourse. Williams rejects a model of economic determinism in which cultural forms are the inevitable by-product of the economic base. He also rejects a Foucauldian model of discourse in which economic forces have little or no influence on the popular validity of various truth claims. See Raymond Williams, *Problems in Materialism and Culture*, especially 31–32.

9. See Jim O’Loughlin, “Articulating Uncle Tom’s Cabin.” O’Loughlin writes, “the cultural power of Stowe’s novel came from its connection of existing tropes and public concerns in a compelling narrative form” (593). Stowe successfully rearticulated popular cultural elements, putting them in the service of the antislavery cause, a strategy at which antislavery writers became especially adept.

10. See Philip Lapsansky, “Graphic Discord: Abolitionist and Anti-abolitionist Images,” for a comparison between the visual campaigns of abolitionists and anti-abolitionists. He argues the anti-abolitionists “carried the day” following the Civil War with their “clichéd dandified, malapropic blacks, grotesque black women, and white reforming harridans” (230).

11. Following the publication of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, there was a spate of anti-Uncle Tom novels, including Mary Eastman’s *Aunt Phillis’s Cabin* and J. Thornton Randolph’s *The Cabin and Parlor*. These too can be seen as rearticulations of antislavery signs, specifically the sign of the slave cabin. If the cabin represents the fragility of the black family under slavery, these anti-Uncle Tom novels suggest the best guarantor of the slave family’s stability, following George Fitzhugh’s logic, is the benevolent master. Such defenses were unusual, however, and proslavery forces more commonly circulated defenses in political-economic treatises like Thomas Dew’s or political speeches like John C. Calhoun’s.


13. To account for changes in the ways in which people feel and understand their experience, Raymond Williams uses the phrase “structures of feeling.” The phrase emphasizes the personal and present nature of social experience that is not wholly determined by changes in “institutions, formations, and beliefs” nor by “changing social and economic relationships” (131). Structures of feeling “do not have to await definition, classification, or rationalization before they exert palpable pressures and set effective limits on experience and on action” (132). See Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature*. Williams recognizes the difference between meanings and values actively felt and beliefs formally acknowledged. While Hawthorne was more anti-abolitionist than antislavery, an abhorrence for and obsession with antislavery depictions of the slave mother structured his feelings toward labor, gender relations, and the domestic sphere.

14. One indication of Nathaniel and Sophia Hawthorne’s suspicion of public, governmental incursions into the family came with their decision to educate their children at home. Sophia’s sister Elizabeth Peabody had long taught at private schools and run her own private school. Sophia’s other sister, Mary,
married Horace Mann, champion of the public school movement and the first secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education (1837–1848). Mann resigned from the board when he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives as an antislavery Whig. On the issues of slavery and public education, both “family issues,” Mann’s vision of government intervention was directly at odds with Hawthorne’s more conservative, Democratic vision. See T. Walter Herbert’s family biography of the Hawthornes, *Dearest Beloved: The Hawthornes and the Makings of the Middle-Class Family*, for an elaboration of the influence of middle-class ideology on relations between Nathaniel and Sophia Hawthorne and between the Hawthornes and their children.

15. For a detailed description of the products produced primarily by women and meant to induce antislavery loyalties, see Michael Bennett’s vivid “tour” of the National Anti-Slavery Bazaar in Chapter 1 of *Democratic Discourses: The Radical Abolition Movement and Antebellum American Literature*.

16. Fanny Fern and Susan Warner are just two examples of popular women authors who wrote under extreme financial pressure. Fern, an author Hawthorne admired, wrote explicitly about this pressure in *Ruth Hall*.

17. See Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*.

18. Hawthorne’s subsequent portrait of Zenobia and Hollingsworth in *The Blithedale Romance* makes just this point. In *The Blithedale Romance*, Hollingsworth pursues prison reform as a means of enhancing his own self-importance. Zenobia adopts his scheme to win Hollingsworth and makes dramatic speeches about women’s rights as a means of drawing attention to herself. Self-interest taints their motives. Ambition leads Hollingsworth to court the wealthy Zenobia, leading to a fatal mix of domestic and commercial aspirations.

19. This scene stands in stark contrast to another one Hawthorne might have drawn, one based on a family scandal. His own mother’s ancestors were similarly subject to public humiliation for sexual transgressions. In 1680, Anstiss and Margaret Manning were convicted of incest with their brother, who fled Salem. They were sentenced to sit on a high stool in the Salem meeting house wearing paper caps that read “incest.” The picture of these two women, similarly forced to face public humiliation while their male partner escaped, is, nevertheless, a far more degrading picture. They sit rather than stand; they are not called upon to speak; they make no sign of resistance. Hawthorne’s retelling of the scene in antislavery iconography has the effect of lending Hester much greater dignity. See Vernon Loggins, *The Hawthorne’s: Seven Generations of an American Family*. 88–93.

**Chapter 4**

1. Twelve Southern writers published *I’ll Take My Stand* in 1930 to protest the U.S. commitment to industrial capitalism and what they viewed as a materialistic and spiritually impoverished approach to life. They advocated a life close to the soil and traditional, hierarchical family and racial relations.
2. Lauren Berlant examines the operation of sentimentality and argues that it only temporarily permits women to break the prohibition against women speaking in the public sphere. “...[A]t moments of crisis persons violate the zones of privacy that give them privilege and protection in order to fix something social that feels threatening. They become public on behalf of privacy and imagine that their rupture of individuality by collective action is temporary and will be healed when the national world is once again safe for a return to personal life. Sentimental politics works on behalf of its own eradication” (647). See “Poor Eliza,” 635–68.

3. See Jessica Benjamin, Bonds of Love, for a full theorization of female masochistic desire. Paradoxically, Mary can achieve the recognition she desires from her husband, who represents all of the outside world, only by utterly effacing herself. When she had directly approached him, he had rejected her as a “shrew,” as a woman inappropriately adopting the prerogatives of masculinity. Benjamin explains that masochism “is a search for recognition through an other who is powerful enough to bestow this recognition. This other has the power for which the self longs, and through his recognition she gains it, though vicariously” (56). In Southworth’s text, Mary’s sister operates as a foil who is severely punished in the text for her aggressive behavior. See “The Married Shrew.”

4. Southworth sets the book in 1844–45, a period during which Child penned some of her “Letters from New York.” Given Southworth’s connection to the antislavery press, it is quite likely she would have read Child’s letters in their original context or in the reprinted book form and would have been familiar with her depiction of street urchins. Living in Washington, D.C., especially prior to 1850 when the slave trade was legal in the nation’s capital, Southworth was likely less sensitive to the urban exploitation of children than she was to the effects of slaveholding patriarchy on white women and children. Further shutting off potential criticisms of wage labor was the critical juncture during which Southworth wrote, in 1859, as John Brown forced the nation’s hand and, as Sacvan Bercovitch has argued, the possibility of sectional compromise receded into a discourse of “either/or,” a national system of slave labor or wage labor. See Sacvan Bercovitch, The Office of the Scarlet Letter.

5. Southworth writes the novel in the early years of the Newsboys’ Lodging Houses, established by the Children’s Aid Society in New York City. These lodging houses were meant to offer free housing and food as well as a domesticating influence to “street arabs,” children who were homeless and earning wages in the street. Karen Sanchez-Eppler analyzes the middle-class rhetoric on homeless boys and girls and finds that in Children’s Aid Society reports the newsboy is a figure of working-class play; while aid workers lament the absence of softening influences on such boys, they depict the boys’ work as a form of play, mitigating the sense that these boys are exploited. Homeless girls, on the other hand, are exclusively objects of pity or fear. Charles Loring Brace writes in one report, “With a boy ‘Arab of the streets,’ one always has the consolation that, despite his ragged clothes and bed in a box
or hay barge, he often has a rather good time of it, and enjoys many of the
delicious pleasures of a child’s roving life, and that a fortunate turn of events
may at anytime make an honest, industrious, fellow of him . . . . With a girl
vagrant it is different” (qtd. in Sanchez-Eppler 831–32).
7. Coverture is the legal doctrine, derived from English Common Law, that
held that the woman was absorbed into (covered by) the legal identity of
her husband by marriage. Her person, property, and wages became his, and
he entered into contracts, paid taxes, or served on juries on her behalf. It
governed women’s legal standing in the United States until 1848 when New
York passed the Married Women’s Property Laws, which enhanced the rights
and contractual powers of wives. Other states used New York as a model
and enacted incremental reforms throughout the last half of the nineteenth
century.
8. See Robert Jones, *The Hidden Hand, A Drama in Five Acts*. The role of Wool
was played with great success by Frank S. Chanfrau when the play moved
from the working-class Bowery to a middle-class Broadway venue (Odell,
317). Chanfrau was famous for playing Mose in *A Glance at New York*, an
Irish Bowery b’ hoy with a captivating, pugilistic working-class pride. He is
credited (or blamed by some middle-class theater critics) with democratizing
middle-class theaters when Chanfrau’s National Theater permitted working-
class patrons to sit anywhere in the theater rather than exclusively in the
pit. Chanfrau was a working-class hero, and it is significant that he took
on the role of Wool in this play about class mobility (Richardson, 277–78,
and Buckley, 459–61). Wool himself becomes a more important and con-
frontational character in the 1867 Robert Jones play. He takes on some of
the characteristics of the Bowery b’ hoy when he fights Craven Le Noir in the
forced marriage scene.
9. One indication that this novel resists the ideology of true womanhood
permeating Southworth’s other works is that despite *The Hidden Hand’s* pop-
ularity, she consistently claimed that another novel, a far more conventional
melodrama, *Ishmael; or, In the Depths*, was her favorite (Boyle, 67).
10. *The Hidden Hand* first appeared on stage in 1858 at the working-class Bow-
ery theater where Fanny Herring, an actress famous for her “breaches roles,”
played Capitola (Odell, 140). It then played in more middle-class venues
including the National Theater, Barnum’s Museum, and the Broadway
Boudoir (Odell).
11. Capitola became such a beloved character that a California seaside town and
race horses were named after her.

**Chapter 5**

1. Farley speculates that Brownson’s prejudice against factory girls stemmed
from the common assumption that factory operatives in New England
worked under conditions similar to those under which English factory operatives worked. In subsequent articles, Farley repeatedly cites the description of English factory operatives in “The Factory System,” a frequently quoted 1833 article from the English periodical *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*. Farley dwells upon the article’s depiction of child labor, the “waste of infants.” For Farley, the English system deserved its comparison to slavery as children were “purchased from their parents at a low price” to be ground up by machines (“Editorial: The Factory System,”). See also Farley, “Editorial: Health.”

2. Ava Baron argues that historians have looked for working-class resistance in union activism and strikes, to the exclusion of other forms of resistance that women more commonly use. The public relations campaign launched by the *Lowell Offering* was no less effective than the strikes of 1834 and 1836 in pressuring the corporations to improve work conditions and compensation. Moreover, the *Lowell Offering*’s campaign was wider in scope than the strikes, targeting not only the mill owners but a larger American audience. The writers hoped that by demonstrating the intelligence and dignity of female factory operatives, public pressure would discourage the owners from allowing work conditions to deteriorate further. See Ava Baron, “Gender and Labor History,” in *Work Engendered: Toward a New History of American Labor*.

3. See David Roediger, *Wages of Whiteness*, especially Chapter 4, “White Slaves, Wage Slaves and Free White Labor.” Some male labor leaders described female factory workers as slaves while resisting the label for themselves. Like male labor leaders, women did not refer to themselves as wage slaves but deferred such a scenario into the future if wages and work conditions deteriorated further. At the 1836 strike, Lowell women sang,

Oh! I cannot be a slave;  
I will not be a slave.  
For I’m so fond of liberty  
That I cannot be a slave.  (69)

4. One writer rebuts the phrase “white slave of the north” with a detailed summary of a factory woman’s day. She writes, “Much has been said of the factory girl and her employment. By some she has been represented as dwelling in a sort of brick-and-mortar paradise . . . Others have deemed her a mere servile drudge, chained to her labor by almost as strong a power as that which holds a bondsman in his fetters; and, indeed, some have already given her the title of ‘the white slave of the North.’ Her real situation approaches neither one nor the other of these extremes” (“A Week in the Mills” 217).

5. Concurrent with the *Lowell Offering*’s publication, William Lloyd Garrison, editor of the antislavery newspaper *The Liberator*, wrote many articles supporting Irish tenant farmers against English landlords and supporting English Chartists. Gerrit Smith wrote in the pages of the *Working Man’s*
Advocate that, while the slave’s oppression was far worse than that of the wage laborer, the two groups shared much in common. His experiment of selling land in Elba, NY, on easy terms to former slaves was aimed at helping them to establish independence as Brownson defined it. Douglass compared white shipyard workers in Baltimore to slaves who mistakenly viewed their black counterparts as threats. According to Douglass, the white workers failed to see that the slaveowners and capitalists played one group off the other to keep wages low.

6. Herbert Shapiro finds evidence that hundreds of Lowell’s factory women were members of the antislavery society there and signed antislavery petitions. Philip Foner adds that the Lowell Female Labor Reform Association, founded in January 1845, officially participated in antislavery meetings and circulated antislavery petitions. See Foner, Women and the American Labor Movement, and Shapiro, “Labor and Antislavery: Reflections on the Literature.”

7. In her study of “woman’s fiction” dominating American literature between 1820 and 1870, Nina Baym finds “scarcely any . . . novels of seduction” (26). Domestic ideology rejected the figure of the woman dominated by her emotions, the “inevitable sexual prey.” Sentimental heroines transcended their sexuality rather than falling victim to it. Michael Denning argues that the seduction story returns after 1870 with the important difference that it became a means of discussing class oppression. The seducer/rapist was of a higher class than the working girl, and the working girl usually just escaped his persecution. Neither notes the persistence of the seduction narrative in antislavery fiction that acts as a bridge to the class inflections Denning discovers in the later seduction tales. See Baym, Woman’s Fiction: A Guide to Novels by and about Women in America, 1820–1870, and Denning, Mechanic Accents: Dime Novels and Working-Class Culture in America.

8. In an interesting conjunction, Lydia Maria Child used the metaphor of a broom brought to life to describe women’s political awakening. Clergymen who urged women to become missionaries and form tract societies changed “a household utensil to a living energetic being and they have no spell to turn it into a broom again.” See Carolyn Karcher, The First Woman in the Republic: A Cultural Biography of Lydia Maria Child 322.

9. According to Carl Siracusa, Massachusetts was the most industrialized area outside of England by 1860. See A Mechanical People: Perceptions of the Industrial Order in Massachusetts, 1815–1850 16–39.

10. See Sean Wilentz, Chants Democratic 335–43.

11. Ibid. 341.

12. David Roediger in Wages of Whiteness says that the term “white slavery” was used far more frequently than “slavery of wages” or “wage slavery” before the Civil War, in part because the term did not challenge the enslavement of blacks in the South. He writes,

   Moreover, it should be obvious that for all but a handful of committed abolitionists/labor reformers, use of a term like white slavery was not
an act of solidarity with the slave but rather a call to arms to end the inappropriate oppression of whites. Critiques of white slavery took form, after all, alongside race riots, racially exclusive trade unions, continuing use of terms like boss and help to deny comparison with slaves, the rise of minstrel shows, and popular campaigns to attack further the meager civil rights of free Blacks. (68–9)

13. By 1846, however, one article made an extensive comparison between wagons bringing girls to the factories and slave ships, concluding, “Philanthropists may talk of Negro slavery, but it would be well first to endeavor to emancipate the slaves at home. Let us not stretch our ears to catch the sound of the lash on the flesh of the oppressed black while the oppressed in our very midst are crying out in thunder tones, and calling upon us for assistance” (“Recruitment of Female Operatives”).

14. See, for example, the denunciation of William Schouler, editor of the Lowell Courier and former publisher of the Lowell Offering, for not supporting the Lowell petition for a ten-hour workday. Calling him “the tool sent by the Lowell Corporations to the Massachusetts Legislator,” the editors led an attack on Schouler that culminated in his failure to be reelected to the legislature (“An Operative”).


16. See Viola 52–3. In antislavery feminist terms, the narrator pleads with women, “And need we the eloquence of man to enlist our charity in the cause of a wronged and suffering sister?” (53).

**Chapter 6**


2. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony discovered their gift for organizing and agitating within the antislavery movement, but after the Civil War the American Equal Rights Association split when it became clear that legislation enfranchising both women and black men would not pass Congress. When former abolitionists claimed it was the “Negro’s hour” and recommended dropping demands for women’s voting rights, Stanton and Anthony bolted from the organization. Anthony made invidious distinctions between the intelligence of African American men and that of white women, insisting that black men should not get the vote before women. William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, and Gerritt Smith, men who were now well past their prime and anxious to be able to declare victory and rest, considered their work done after passage of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. Phillips disbanded the American Anti-Slavery Society, and Garrison ceased publishing the Liberator. See McFeely, All on Fire 265–69, and Mayer, Frederick Douglass, 597–614.

3. In Sumner’s “Crime against Kansas,” he accuses Southerners of raping Kansas, making them even more brutal than Turks, popularly associated with misogyny and oppression: “It is the rape of a virgin Territory, compelling it
to the hateful embrace of Slavery; and it may be clearly traced to a depraved longing for a new slave State, the hideous offspring of such a crime, in the hope of adding to the power of slavery in the National Government. Yes, sir, when the whole world, alike Christian and Turk, is rising up to condemn this wrong, and to make it a hissing to the nations, here in our Republic, force, ay, sir, FORCE has been openly employed in compelling Kansas to this pollution, and all for the sake of political power.”

4. Lydia Maria Child, referring to the Tartars of the Central Asian region near Russia and Turkey, claimed that the “ceremony of marriage consists in placing the bride on a mat, and consigning her to the bridegroom, with the words, ‘Here, wolf, take thy lamb’” (“Letters from New York, No. 34” 360).


6. In antislavery literature, the African diaspora was frequently represented as a woman appealing to God (and the reader) through Christ-like imagery. The image drew upon Psalm 68:31, “Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.” Frances Ellen Watkins Harper’s poem “Ethiopia” is a good example of how antislavery writers adapted the trope: “Yes! Ethiopia yet shall stretch/ Her bleeding hands abroad; / Her cry of agony shall reach/ The burning throat of God.” Douglass himself published the poem in Frederick Douglass’ Paper on March 31, 1854, at the height of his antislavery agitation.

7. In 1892, Ida B. Wells printed an article defending three of her friends who had been lynched. While defending their store from armed white competitors who, jealous of the men’s success in the grocery business, had killed the men to eliminate competition. Under personal threat, she left town, and her paper, the Memphis Free Press, was destroyed. Alexander Manly’s press was destroyed in 1898 as the culmination of a hysterical response to his editorial in which he argued that poor white women had consensual affairs with black men. When the affairs became public, he argued, the black men were accused of rape and lynched to protect the honor of the white woman. See Wells, On Lynchings: Southern Horrors, A Red Record, Mob Rule in New Orleans; and Eric Sundquist’s “Introduction” to The Marrow of Tradition by Charles Chesnutt.

8. See also Frederick Douglass, “Vote the Regular Republican Ticket: An Address Delivered in Raleigh, North Carolina on July 25, 1872.”

9. Douglass would undoubtedly have been more pleased by the African American Civil War Memorial sculpted by Ed Hamilton in 1997 and erected in the capital. The front of the statue reveals four black soldiers (three infantry and one sailor), and the back depicts a young black man leaving his family for war.


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Works Cited


Abate, Michelle Ann, 77
Abbott, Josiah, 23
Adams, John Quincy, 11, 13–16
Addams, Jane, 34–5, 39–40
agrarianism, 26, 67–8, 138n1
American Notebooks, see Hawthorne, Nathaniel
Amistad, 13, 15
Andrews, William, 116
Anthony, Susan B., 1
antiabolitionist discourse, 45–50, 53n10, 137n11
antislavery discourse, 11–20, 50–3
biblical exegesis and, 12–15
natural rights theory and, 13–15
slave narratives and, 89–91
see also family protection campaign
antislavery feminism, 1–2, 12, 39–40, 45–50, 56–8, 60–1, 84, 87, 92, 115n16, 143n2, 143n16
antislavery movement, 1–8, 13, 39, 88
emancipation and, 34
industrial capitalism and, 3–5, 21–2, 22–4, 95–8, 140–1n1, 141n3
see also family protection campaign
Antislavery Record, The, cover, 51–2
antislavery sentimentality, 2, 8, 20, 43, 114, 128
Archer Moore, 1
Ashworth, John, 95–6

Bagley, Sarah, 99, 102–3
Baron, Ava, 86, 141n2

“Bartleby the Scrivener”, see Melville, Herman
Baym, Nina, 4–5, 133n8
Benjamin, Jessica, 139n3
Bennett, Michael, 138n15
Bentley, Nancy, 131n2
Bercovitch, Sacvan, 47–50, 55, 59–60
Berlant, Lauren, 139n2
Brown, Gillian, 93–5
Brownson, Orestes, 83–7, 95, 96

Calhoun, John C., 22–3
capitalism, see industrial capitalism
Certeau, Michel de, 58
Channing, William H., 103
Child, Lydia Maria, 6, 142n8
Douglass, Frederick and, 126–7
Juvenile Miscellany, 27–8
Letters from New York, 21–2, 25–34
Mothers Book, The, 134n16
naturalism and, 30
“Quadroon’s, The”, 24
Romance of the Republic, 128, 136n7
“Slavery’s Pleasant Homes”, 24
street child and, 6, 22, 26–34, 40
tragic mulatta and, 24–5, 40
Coontz, Stephanie, 5, 130n4
Cott, Nancy, 129n2
Curtis, Harriot, 88

Davis, David Brion, 13, 23n2
Davis, Rebecca Harding, 106
Dickens, Charles, 106
Donzelot, Jacques, 24, 36–8, 132n6, 135n20
Dorr, Rheta Childe, 39–40
Douglass, Frederick, 8, 34, 75–6, 87, 88
Child, Lydia Maria and, 126–7
“Color Question, The”, 113, 120
“Freedmen’s Monument to Abraham Lincoln, The”, 125
free labor ideology and, 115, 118–19, 127
“Inside View of Slavery, An”, 114
“Let the Negro Alone”, 118–19, 122, 124–5
“New National Era”, 117
“Our National Capital”, 117
“Recollections of the Anti-Slavery Conflict”, 123
“Unknown Dead, The”, 124
“We Are Here and Want the Ballot-Box”, 119–20, 121
“We Are Not Yet Quite Free”, 122
“We Welcome the Fifteenth Amendment”, 115
“Which Greeley Are We Voting For”, 119, 121–2

Economic rationalization, criticism of, 104–9
Evans, George Henry, 87, 99–101

Family protection campaign
Child, Lydia Maria and, 24–6, 37–8, 40
definition as an antislavery practice, 2, 6–7, 16–20, 56–8, 60–1
definition as an antislavery rhetoric, 1–8, 12, 15–20
Douglass, Frederick and, 114–15, 117, 128
Hawthorne, Nathaniel and, 43, 45–6, 49, 61
mill women and, 86–107, 109

relationship to economic change, 1–5
Southworth, Emma, D. E. N. and, 65–6, 76–7
Farley, Harriet, 83–6, 88, 95, 140–1n1
Fifteenth Amendment to Constitution, 115
Fitzhugh, George, 67
Fleishner, Jennifer, 46
free labor ideology, 6, 21–4, 26–7, 34–40, 64, 115, 118–19, 127–8

Ganter, Granville, 125
Garrisonian nonresistance, see nonresistance
Garrison, William Lloyd, 14, 23, 88n5
Genovese, Eugene, 15
Gramsci, Antonio, see hegemony
Grimke, Angelina, 1, 14, 58
Grimke, Sarah, 1, 14, 58

Harper, Frances Ellen Watkins, 1
Haskell, Thomas, 23
Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 6–7
American Notebooks, 48
antislavery hostility, 43, 45–7, 136n3
identification with Hester, 43
“Old News”, 45
Scarlet Letter, The, 43–9, 53–61
hegemony, 129n4, 129n5
Heinzen, Karl, 23
Hempstead, Martha, 11–12
Hidden Hand, The, see Southworth, Emma D. E. N
Howard, June, 132n6
Hughes, Langston, 113, 126
Hugo, Victor, 106

Industrial capitalism
commodity culture, 93–5
entrepreneurial individualism and, 27, 63–4, 66, 70, 73–6, 92–5, 118–19, 126
market imperative, 136n5
relationship to antislavery, 3–5, 21–2, 22–4, 95–8, 140–1n1, 141n3
social field and, 34–40
working-class consciousness and, 7, 23, 95–109, 142–3n12
see also free labor ideology

Jameson, Frederic, 133n10
Karcher, Carolyn, 132n7, 135n19
Kelley, Abby, 58
Kelley, Florence, 34
Ku-Klux Klan, 122–3

Lapsansky, Philip, 137n10
Larcom, Lucy, 98
Lasch, Christopher, 24, 36–8, 132n6
Letters from New York, see Child, Lydia Maria
Liberty Bell, The, 11–12, 18–20
Looby, Christopher, 65
Loring, Ellis Gray, 28, 29
lost cause, the, 123–4
Lowell Offering, The, 7, 83–109
antislavery activism and, 98, 142n6
origin, 83, 88
tragic mulatta and, 89–90
compared with male-dominated working-class newspapers, 98–104

machine culture, 104–9
Magdol, Edward, 23
Martin, Waldo E. Jr, 115–17
maternalist politics, 6, 22, 24, 27, 34–40
McFeeley, William S., 116–17
Melville, Herman, 107–9
minstrelsy, 76–80
Mott, Lucretia, 1

New York Ledger, 64, 66, 74, 81–2
nonresistance, 47, 114
Oakes, James, 130n8
O’Loughlin, Jim, 137n9
organic society, see agrarianism
Owen, Robert Dale, 31, 134n15

“Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids, The”, see Melville, Herman
Person, Leland, 53, 59
Phillips, Wendell, 1, 23, 34
Pierce, Franklin, 46

“Quadroon’s, The”, see Child, Lydia Maria
Reconstruction, 35, 114–28
Retribution, see Southworth, Emma D. E. N
Reynolds, Larry, 44, 135–6n1
Roediger, David, 86, 100
Rohrbach, Augusta, 81, 131n4
Sanchez-Eppler, Karen, 2, 130–1n2, 132n6, 133n9
Scarlet Letter, The, see Hawthorne, Nathaniel
seduction tale, 24, 25, 27, 90n7, 142n7
Seltzer, Mark, 108–9
sentimentality, 4–5, 66, 68–9, 72–3, 80, 91–3
see also antislavery sentimentality
sentimental masochism, 68–9
Sewall, Samuel, 11, 12–13, 97
Sklar, Kathryn Kish, 135n22
see also maternalist politics
slave narrative, 88–91
“Slavery’s Pleasant Homes”, see Child, Lydia Maria
Smith, Adam, 63
Smith, Gerrit, 23, 88, 100–1, 141–2n5
Southworth, Emma D. E. N., 7
“Better Way: Or, the Wife’s Victory, The”, 68–9
biography, 64, 80–1
Hidden Hand, The, 7, 63–7, 69–82
Hidden Hand: A Drama in Five Acts, The, 78, 81n8, 140n10
“Married Shrew, The”, 68
Retribution, 65–7
Stanley, Amy Dru, 3
Stansell, Christine, 26
Stanton, Elizabeth Cady, 1
Stauffer, John, 116
Steward, Ira, 23
Stone, Lucy, 1
Stowe, Harriet Beecher, 1, 65, 119, 126n3
street child, 6, 22, 26–7, 31–40, 69
Sue, Eugene, 106
Sumner, Charles, 23, 143–4n3
Tise, Larry, 13–14
tomboy, 77–80
tragic mulatta, 24–6, 37–8, 40, 65, 89–91, 126
Truth, Sojourner, 1
Twain, Mark, 80
Uncle Tom’s Cabin, 1, 139n4
Voice of Industry, 98–9, 101–4
Whittier, John Greenleaf, 65, 88
Williams, Raymond, 129n4, 136–7n8, 137n13
Winthrop, John, 67
Working Man’s Advocate, 98–104
Wright, Frances, 31, 134n15
Yazawa, Melvin, 67
Yellin, Jean Fagan, 25, 47–8