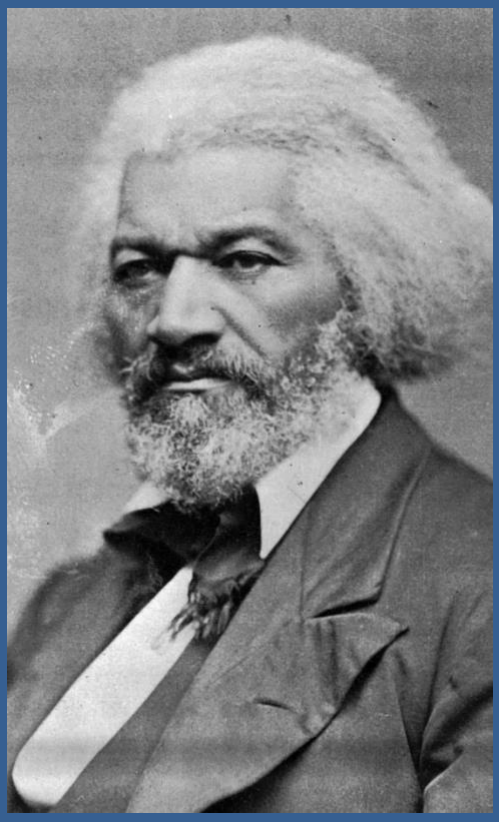
NEW NORTH STAR

Volume 2: 2020



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NEW NORTH STAR

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Our Aims and Scope

The ***New North Star*** is an open-access online journal featuring new scholarship on the activities and ideas of nineteenth century African American abolitionist Frederick Douglass and the world with which he interacted. Articles also are desired that assess Douglass's impact on events following his lifetime, including current events. The journal is looking for articles in a broad range of disciplines, from history to literature, communications to anthropology. As in the spirit of its namesake, works of fiction and poetry on topics pertinent to Douglass also will be considered for publication. The *New North Star* will feature interviews with authors of new scholarship on Douglass as well as reviews of that recently published literature. The journal is intended for teachers and students as well as scholars, hoping to help bridge the gap between new scholarship and the classroom. Articles describing new techniques on teaching about Douglass and his world are welcomed. The *New North Star* will be maintained by the staff of the Frederick Douglass Papers at IUPUI and hosted on that project's website. Instructions for submitting articles to the *New North Star* can be found on the journal's website.

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Ethos, Agency, and Pathos in Ida B. Wells's "Lynch Law in All Its Phases"

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In their introduction to *Rethinking Ethos: A Feminist Ecological Approach to Rhetoric*, Kathleen J. Ryan, Nancy Myers, and Rebecca Jones feature Utahan Terry Tempest Williams, a feminist environmental activist whose identity as a Native American Mormon woman creates notable challenges for her rhetorical practice, particularly her construction of ethos. "Like Williams," they generalize, "many women rhetors find that there is no comfortable ethos to employ if they want to shift the dominant discourse on a particular topic. Common, normalizing ethē (i.e., Mormon woman, mother, angel of the house, whore, bitch) ascribed to women do not lend themselves readily to public speaking. As such, new ethē must be created and defined to push against these socially determined ethē."[1] Emphasizing the complex, dynamic quality of rhetorical character as expressed in written and spoken texts, they argue, "Ethos is neither solitary nor fixed. Rather, ethos is negotiated and renegotiated, embodied and communal, co-constructed and thoroughly implicated in shifting power dynamics."[2]

Ryan, Meyers, and Jones also emphasize the vital role that place plays in the formation of a woman's ethos. This connection between place and ethos was essential to the ancient's understanding of the concept, of course.[3] However, because of their marginalized status, which compels them to work more diligently to construct authority in a world inherently skeptical of their right to participate in public rhetoric, women rhetors, we are coming to understand, rely particularly on specific locales for establishing credibility. Leaning mainly on Nedra Reynolds's work, Ryan, Myers, and Jones explore this position: "With a writer's acknowledgment of her location comes not only an authority to speak, but also a concomitant responsibility to speak from that position with the knowledge conferred by that location, where location refers to 'the space of the body, her geographical location, her shifting intellectual positions, her distance or closeness to others, to texts, to events.' "[4]

This study, a reading of Ida B. Wells's "Lynch Law in All Its Phases," presented at the Tremont Temple in Boston on 13 February 1893, is intended to enrich this discussion of women's construction of ethos with the variable of race.[5] As a relatively young, unmarried Southern African

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[1] Kathleen J. Ryan, Nancy Myers, and Rebecca Jones, eds., *Rethinking Ethos: A Feminist Ecological Approach to Rhetoric* (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 2016), 2.

[2] Ryan, Myers, and Jones, *Rethinking Ethos*, 11.

[3] See, for example, S. Michael Halloran, "Aristotle's Concept of Ethos, or If Not His Somebody Else's," *Rhetoric Review* 1, no. 1 (1982): 60; Michael J. Hyde, "Introduction: Rhetorically, We Dwell," *The Ethos of Rhetoric*, ed. Michael J. Hyde (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 2004): xiii; Nedra Reynolds, "*Ethos* as Location: New Sites for Understanding Discursive Authority," *Rhetoric Review* 11, no. 2 (1993): 327–328; Risa Applegarth, "Genre, Location, and Mary Austin's *Ethos*," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 41, no. 1 (2011): 48–49.

[4] Reynolds, "*Ethos* as Location," 335–36, quoted in Ryan, Myers, and Jones, *Rethinking Ethos*, 8.

[5] For previous accounts of Wells's speech, see Ida B. Wells, *Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells*, ed. Alfreda M. Duster (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 81; Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "Style and Content in the Rhetoric of Early Afro-American Feminists," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 72, no. 4 (1986): 434–45; Jacqueline Jones Royster, "To Call a Thing by Its True Name: The Rhetoric of Ida B. Wells," *Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women in the Rhetorical Tradition*, ed. Andrea A. Lunsford (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995), 167–184; Shirley Wilson Logan, *With Pen and Voice: A Critical Anthology of Nineteenth-Century African-American Woman*, (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1995).; Linda O. McMurry, *To Keep the Waters Troubled: The*

American woman delivering an oration before a Northern White public audience, Wells faces special constraints and—I will argue—leverages distinct opportunities that render her construction of ethos particularly significant. Wells's racial status magnifies other variables of marginalization, as well as the salience of physical and generic location. Strikingly, Wells locates her body, her material presence, in the terrifying world she describes—thus vivifying the mortal peril she faced—and on the platform she occupies as an orator. Her strategy of both descending directly into sites of violence while also establishing for herself a more general perspective overlooking specific locations yields credibility for an individual who, in the White world of the 1890s, inherently had virtually none. Wells's effort to "shift the dominant discourse"[6] on lynching, animated by a complex, flexible ethos, also demonstrates that the highly protean nature of the rhetorical construct applies not merely to a rhetor's output over a career, but also in a single rhetorical event. I wish to explore why Wells adopted this particular approach to her ethos, as well as the positive rhetorical consequences of her choices. In addition, I will trace Wells's efforts to kindle the emotions of her listeners, efforts that demonstrate her ability to transfer morally grounded anger and pity based in local conditions to the national lynching crisis she seeks to expose to her Northern audience.

The Orator and Her Oration

Ida B. Wells (1862–1931), a courageous young female journalist making her way in a racist world and a decidedly masculine, chauvinistic profession, became personally involved in the anti-lynching movement in 1892. In March of that year, several men in the Memphis African American community in which she lived and edited the local Black newspaper, the *Memphis Free Speech and Headlight*, were lynched, essentially for the crime of successfully competing with local White businesses. Furthermore, when Wells sought to use her newspaper to expose the crimes committed against her community, her printing press and office were destroyed by a White mob, and she escaped serious physical harm only because she was out of the state at the time.[7] Wells's intrepid response to this violence was to launch a one-woman crusade against lynching. Her pamphlet, *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases*, published that fall, captured with great precision the stark reality of the mass terrorism practiced upon African Americans. In addition, she embarked upon speaking tours, both in the Northern states and Europe.

Clearly, Wells's writing and speaking on behalf of African Americans flew in the face of Victorian norms. Writes Mia Bay, "Especially when it came to public appearances, middle-class

Life of Ida B. Wells, (Oxford, Eng.: Oxford University Press, 1998), 178–181; Paula J. Giddings, *Ida: A Sword Among Lions; Ida B. Wells and the Campaign Against Lynching* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008), 236–256; Angela D. Sims, "Nooses in Public Spaces: A Womanist Critique of Lynching—A Twenty-first Century Ethical Dilemma," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 29, no. 2 (2009): 81–95; Richard W. Leeman and Bernard K. Duffy, *The Will of a People: A Critical Anthology of Great African American Speeches* (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 2012), 149–175. For accounts of Wells's subsequent speaking tour in Britain, see Teresa Zackodnik, "Ida B. Wells and 'American Atrocities' in Britain," *Women's Studies International Forum* 28, no. 4 (2005): 259–273; Patricia A. Schechter, *Ida B. Wells-Barnett and American Reform: 1880–1930* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 24–26.

[6] Ryan, Myers, and Jones, *Rethinking Ethos*, 2.

[7] For further discussion of the tragedy in Memphis and Wells's efforts to expose the wrongdoing, see Lisa A. White, "The 'Saddle-Colored Sapphira' Versus The 'Slimy Rattlesnake': The Rhetorical Melee of Ida B. Wells and Edward Carmack On the Subject of Lynching," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 62, no. 4 (2003): 310–331; Wells, *Crusade* 47–67; Mia Bay, *To Tell the Truth Freely: The Life of Ida B. Wells* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2009), 82–108; McMurry, *Waters Troubled*, 130–149; Schechter, *Ida B. Wells-Barnett*, 75–79.

African American women were silenced by the ideals of womanhood that made it all but impossible to challenge the racism and sexism without compromising their own claims to femininity."[8] Nonetheless, as I explore below, Wells—whom the African American *Indianapolis Freeman* dubbed (with a telltale combination of condescension and admiration) "this plucky little race lady from the South"[9]—skillfully confronted these significant rhetorical constraints through a variety of strategies, including her artful construction of ethos.[10]

Wells's speech at the Tremont Temple was not her first public speaking engagement. In fact, she identifies her initial speech as an address to African American women in New York that she reflects upon in a memorable passage in her autography,[11] although the precise text of the speech is no longer extant. The Tremont Temple oration, however, was particularly significant because it was Wells's first opportunity to address a White audience, the very people who held nearly all the power in late nineteenth-century American society and whose support she most needed to effect significant change. Wells identifies this speech as essentially the same text she read in New York and on other occasions,[12] although—as Linda O. McMurry notes[13]—she adjusted it to reflect current events and to meet the needs of her audiences. Paula Giddings characterized the Tremont Temple oration as a product of "her now-perfected rhetorical approach."[14]

The speech was admired by the audience in attendance and received positive coverage in both the White and African American papers of the day. The Kansas City *American Citizen*, a Black publication, recirculates coverage from the White *Boston Herald*, which provides a glowing resolution produced by the audience of the speech that calls attention to Wells's "pathetic and unimpassioned recital of the horrible atrocities perpetrated in various parts of the South with alarming and growing frequency upon the members of the colored race" and "desires to express its thanks to the cultivated Christian lady for the important information she imparted, our admiration of her intelligent, reasonable and heroic advocacy of the rights of American Citizens and our sympathy with her and her people in the injustice they are suffering." The explicit promise embedded in the resolution demonstrates the positive effect of Wells's rhetoric upon the audience present: "We pledge to [the colored race] our best endeavors to arouse public sentiment in indignant condemnation of the increasing prevalence of lynch law in our land, to the end that these symptoms of barbarianism may soon cease to disgrace our American civilization."[15]

Just as this reproduced pledge demonstrates the speech's significant effect on the audience in attendance, its publication in the press exemplifies the further circulation of Wells's key arguments within African American and White society.[16] Wells also notes that the *Boston*

[8] Bay, *Tell the Truth*, 118.
[9] "How Some Women Reason," *Indianapolis Freeman*, 4 March 1893, 4.
[10] For further discussion of the sexism Wells faced as a professional journalist, see Bay, *Tell the Truth*, 70, 75–76, 80, 112, 151; Patricia A. Schechter, " 'All the Intensity of My Nature': Ida B. Wells, Anger, and Politics," *Radical History Review* 70 (1998): 65–66; Glen McClish, "The Instrumental and Constitutive Rhetoric of Martin Luther King Jr. and Frederick Douglass," *Rhetorica* 33, no. 1 (2015): 66.
[11] Wells, *Crusade*, 78–80.
[12] Wells, *Crusade*, 82.
[13] McMurry, *Waters Troubled*, 178.
[14] Giddings, *Sword Among Lions*, 254.
[15] "On Lynch Law. Miss Ida C. [sic.] Wells Lecture in The Charles Street M. E. Church." *American Citizen*, 25 February 1893, 1.
[16] It is significant that the *American Citizen* article begins with coverage of a different speech delivered by Wells at an African American Boston venue, the Charles Street M. E. Church, a couple of days after the Tremont Temple oration. The *Herald* article, it is reported, "gives Miss Wells much praise" and attests to the effectiveness of her

Transcript and Advertiser "gave the first notices and report of my story of any white northern papers."[17] Furthermore, the oration was subsequently published in *Our Day: A Record and Review of Current Reform*, edited by Joseph Cook, pastor of Tremont Temple. As a result of increased interest in African American rhetoric in the late twentieth century, it has been reproduced in print numerous times and is readily available today on the internet.[18] Thus, although Wells wrote discouragingly of the speaking tour of which this speech was a part ("Only in one city—Boston—had I been given even a meagre hearing, and the press was dumb"[19]), the speech has come to occupy a place in the history of American rhetoric.

Marginalized Women's *Ethē* and the Salience of Ethically Based Emotion in Persuasion

As the publication of Ryan, Myers, and Jones's collection and my introductory remarks suggest, a growing number of scholars of rhetoric are focusing on the complexity of ethos construction for women, whose marginalization requires them to develop innovative strategies for establishing their characters as authoritative female rhetors within their writings and speeches. Furthermore, for many such scholars, an attention to location is vital to establishing ethos in communities predisposed to challenge women's credibility. Drawing on the work of Nedra Reynolds to study the autobiographical writings of pioneer women's writing, for example, Julie Nelson Christoph argues that "it is crucial to look closely at the particular ways in which writers establish authority for themselves through defining and redefining their evolving positions in particular communities—that we look not only at *texts* but also at material, social, and political *con*texts."[20] Christoph features what she calls women's "strategies of placement," specifically "identity statements," "moral displays," and "material associations." Christoph explains that identity statements are those places in the text "in which a writer explicitly refers to some facet of her self-identity as a person affiliated with a particular place or community, saying in effect, 'I am a ___.' " Closely related to identity statements, moral displays "attempt to connect with the moral standards of the community and to establish truth through demonstrating similar values." Material associations, on the other hand, are references by writers "to specific elements of their material and social conditions," which Christoph believes are "particularly significant to how [writers] convey *ethos*."[21]

Like Christoph, Risa Applegarth explores links between location and ethos for women rhetors. In particular, she demonstrates how early twentieth-century nature writer Mary Austin, who competed for readers in a field of writing dominated by men, "drew on her location in the deserts of the U.S. west in order to create a persuasive ethos within a particular genre: the literary

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rhetoric, stating, "Already public sentiment is being deeply roused in the North over the southern troubles arising from the practice of lynch law." This second speech is also reported in the *Indianapolis Freeman*, but is not elaborated upon. The *Freeman* article does not make mention of the Tremont Temple Oration. "On Lynch Law," *American Citizen*, 25 February 1893, 1; "Ida B. Wells Lectures," *Indianapolis Freeman*, 25 February 1893, 5.

[17] Wells, *Crusade*, 81.

[18] See, for example, Mildred I. Thompson, *Ida B. Wells-Barnett: An Exploratory Study of an American Black Woman* (Brooklyn: Carlson, 1990); Phillip S. Foner and Robert James Branham, *Lift Every Voice: African American Oratory, 1787–1900* (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1998), 745–60; Leeman and Duffy, *Will*, 158–73; Logan, *With Pen*, 80–99.

[19] Wells, *Crusade*, 86.

[20] Julie Nelson Christoph, "Reconceiving *Ethos* in Relation to the Personal: Strategies of Placement in Pioneer Women's Writing," *College English* 64, no. 6 (2002): 668.

[21] Christoph, "Reconceiving Ethos," 670–71.

nature essay."[22] Her review of the previous scholarship on place and ethos demonstrates the inherent links between them:

> These scholars suggest that in ancient as well as contemporary contexts, rhetors learn to enact culturally specific notions of "good will, good sense, and good moral character" through their participation in particular communities and their habituation, within *places,* to shared norms that make *ethos* effective. Such scholarship understands *ethos* as location, grounded in material spaces and drawing persuasive power from the shared symbolic resonance of such spaces.[23]

In addition to physical space, Applegarth also considers rhetorical genre to be an important location women rhetors consider in order to establish ethos. More specifically, she argues that "by recasting *ethos* as *location within and among genres*, I offer a reformulation that captures possibilities for as well as limitations on a rhetor's capacity to shape *ethos* strategically."[24] Applegarth also reminds us that, as a construct comprising both given and selected variables, "*ethos* is a situated practice, neither fully and freely chosen nor yet thoroughly determined, but shaped through the interaction between individual rhetors and the social and material environments within which they speak."[25]

Drawing specifically on Reynolds, Applegarth, and Christoph in her study of Genevieve Stebbins, Suzanne Bordelon explores how this nineteenth-century American elocutionist established her ethos in a field dominated by Francois Delsarte and a host of male writers and teachers. Bordelon demonstrates how Stebbins, in her famous textbook, *The Delsarte System of Dramatic Expression*, establishes her ethos by attending to elements of location, both spatial/physical and generic. She concludes that Stebbins, through "strategies of location—which included physical, social, genre, and textual placement—militates against her marginalized embodied position to construct a powerful *ethos*."[26]

Extending Bordelon's analysis, which features the ethos of a nineteenth-century White woman and, necessarily, concepts of the body "limited to white, middle-class women,"[27] I explore the rhetorical constraints and opportunities available for a woman of color speaking in the same era. Although these constraints, I will argue, are significantly more challenging for Wells than for rhetors such as Austin and Stebbins, who rely on their status as members of the dominant culture, the former figure manages the rhetorical context in ways that demonstrate the potential to confront and overcome disadvantage and even peril. Through this approach to the construction of ethos, I aim to demonstrate that Wells's ostensibly uneven, frequently shifting ethos can be powerfully strategic, rather than merely uncontrolled or erratic.[28]

In addition to establishing her credibility as a Southern African American woman speaking to an audience comprising Northern Whites during the period of time known as the "nadir" of

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[22] Applegarth, "Mary Austin's *Ethos*," 43.
[23] Applegarth, "Mary Austin's *Ethos*," 43.
[24] Applegarth, "Mary Austin's *Ethos*," 44.
[25] Applegarth, "Mary Austin's *Ethos*," 49.
[26] Suzanne Bordelon, "Embodied *Ethos* and Rhetorical Accretion: Genevieve Stebbins and the *Delsarte System of Expression*," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 46, no. 2 (2016): 127.
[27] Bordelon, "Embodied *Ethos*," 127.
[28] For additional discussion of the challenges faced by African American women in the construction of ethos, see Coretta Pittman, "Black Women Writers and the Trouble with Ethos: Harriet Jacobs, Billie Holliday, and Sister Souljah," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 37, no. 1 (2007): 43–70.

African American rights, Wells has little hope in succeeding as a rhetor unless she is able to *move* her listeners—detached from the daily horrors of lynch law—to experience the pity, fear, righteous anger, and sense of loss felt by the African Americans it has terrorized. Recent scholarship on pathos, built on careful reassessments of rhetorical theory, both classical and modern, has increased our understanding of the essential role emotion plays in persuasion. When considering the components of argument, Laura Micciche reminds us, we should not approach emotions as "additive—which assumes that reason, logic, and rationality are normative, staple ingredients—but as integral to communication, persuasion, attachments of all sorts, and to notions of self and other."[29] Such emotions are not automatic, arbitrarily evoked impulses, referenced in order to garnish an argument, feelings that "reside *in* things and people," or appeals "that can be isolated and identified" as independent entities, but deeply felt experiences that emerge relationally, co-constructed between rhetor and audience.[30] Thus, pathos results from the performative nature of the speech or text, and is not some static entity, inserted preformed and packaged into one's text for extra effect. Furthermore, Ellen Quandahl—drawing on the work of Lynn Worsham and others—emphasizes the vital link between the emotions and our ethical natures, explaining that the former "bind the individual to ethical commitments and to the sense of how things are and ought to be. People are ethicized and emotionalized at once, and so what are to them good reasons have the force of 'goodness' because goodness involves what one has experienced and what one feels."[31] This approach to pathos will provide us with a better understanding of Wells's rhetorical challenge in her speech at Tremont Temple; in effect, she must establish credibility as a marginalized speaker in order to coproduce powerful, ethically grounded emotions that enable White listeners to experience the devastation of lynch law, an experience that could mobilize them to support the anti-lynching movement.

"Lynch Law in All Its Phases"

Introductory Conservatism

Wells begins her oration with considerable humility, explaining that she comes "before the American people to-day through no inclination of my own, but because of a deep-seated conviction that the country at large does not know the extent to which lynch law prevails in parts of the Republic, nor the conditions which force into exile those who speak the truth."[32] As Jacqueline Jones Royster puts it, "Wells creates a comfortable seat for an audience with Christian and American values who happen (by whatever circumstance) not to know the truth, and she invites them to sit and to listen—all in one sentence."[33] She downplays her own authority while extending goodwill to her audience: "far-sighted Americans" capable of "thoughtful consideration" and whose inaction concerning lynching is assumed to be the result not of racism or ill will, but simply a lack of awareness of the magnitude of the problem.[34] She is a somewhat hesitant witness, speaking before an audience of gracious Americans who in simple terms could benefit from her

[29] Laura R. Micciche, *Doing Emotion: Rhetoric, Writing, Teaching*, (Portsmouth, N.H.: Boynton/Cook, 2007), 24.
[30] Micciche, *Doing Emotion*, 50.
[31] Ellen Quandahl, "On a Rhetorical *Technē* of the Moral-Emotions," *Rhetorical Agendas: Political, Ethical, Spiritual*, eds. Patricia Bizzell, Lawrence Erlbaum (2006), 154.
[32] Ida B. Wells, "Lynch Law in All Its Phases. Address at Tremont Temple in the Boston Monday Lectureship. February 13, 1893, by Miss Ida B. Wells, formerly editor of the *Free Speech*, Memphis, Tenn.," *Our Day: A Record and Review of Current Reform* 11 (Jan.–June 1893): 333.
[33] Royster, "Rhetoric of Ida B. Wells," 178.
[34] Wells, "Lynch Law," 333.

insider knowledge. Leeman and Duffy write, "It was important that [Wells] do everything possible to suggest that she had accepted the role of advocate only reluctantly, forced by circumstances to speak the truth because there was no one else in a position to speak as effectively to the issue at this time."[35] In this way, she establishes the respectful, deferential ethos of a doubly marginalized speaker, which harkens back to the rhetorical characters that inform the petitionary rhetoric of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century African American advocates such as Prince Hall, Absalom Jones, and Richard Allen.[36]

Furthermore, Wells quickly unveils a deliberately Anglocentric rationale for the speech centered on preserving "distinctive American institutions" and exposing lynching as "attacks imperiling . . . the foundation of government, law and order." Efficiently referencing the Gettysburg Address ("a government of the people, by the people and for the people"), the "Star-Spangled Banner" ("the land of the free and home of the brave"), and the Declaration of Independence ("life, liberty and happiness"), Wells establishes the conservative foundation for her speech, suggesting that the following discourse concerning lynch law will ultimately reveal perils that concern Whites just as much as African Americans. Declaring that she will not build her argument against lynch law from "a standpoint of sentiment" or even "a standpoint of justice to a weak race," she initially emphasizes the preservation of White culture and power.[37] For although she hopes that mob rule and attacks on innocent African Americans should in and of themselves deeply concern White Northerners—and she says as much in her opening words—at the outset she chooses to direct attention to the concern that such lawlessness undermines the traditions and values that ultimately protect Whites. If, as Ryan, Myers, and Jones suggest, "Individuals, audiences, values, written texts, and physical locations all constitute 'dwelling places' " related to the establishment of ethos,[38] Wells dwells in, and establishes her credibility through, traditional White power and privilege, as instantiated in traditional symbols of such power.

It is important to note, of course, that members of her audience would no doubt know Wells was no neophyte activist, but the bold author of the powerful exposé *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases*, and this element of her reputation somewhat militates against, or at least complicates, the deferential, cautious ethos constructed in the introductory moments of her speech. Nonetheless, it is one thing for a nineteenth-century White person to read an African American woman's prose, whether timorous or highly assertive, but it is quite another to witness her address a live audience of White men and women in a public forum. Such an audience may be sympathetic to her cause, yet not entirely comfortable with the power dynamics and role reversals—particularly concerning gender and race—inherent in the situation. Thus, despite the fact that many members of her audience would recognize her activist character in advance of her speech, the particular

[35] Leeman and Duffy, *Will*, 153.

[36] See Jacqueline Bacon and Glen McClish, "Descendents of Africa, Sons of '76: Exploring Early African-American Rhetoric," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (2006): 1–29. In her study of female African American rhetors, Karlyn Khors Campbell argues that "in striking contrast to most other early feminist rhetoric, Wells's speech contains few indicators or markers of 'femininity' or 'womanliness.' " Likewise, Leeman and Duffy describe her rhetorical style as "confrontational and 'masculine.' " Whereas it is certainly true, as Campbell notes, that the speech contains instances of language that is "blunt," "authoritative," and "sarcastic," a reading of the speech as it unfolds in time reveals a shifting ethos, distinguished by—among other characteristics—instances of discourse informed by her female subject position, as I seek to demonstrate here. For the same reason, my treatment of the speech also differs from Shirley Logan's study of the oration, which suggests that Wells effects male objectivity while deemphasizing emotion. Campbell, "Early Afro-American Feminists," 440; Leeman and Duffy, *Will*, 149; Shirley Wilson Logan, "Ida B. Wells, 'Lynch Law in All Its Phases' (13 February 1893)," *Voices of Democracy* 2 (2007): 50.

[37] Wells, "Lynch Law," 333.

[38] Ryan, Myers, and Jones, *Rethinking Ethos*, 7.

rhetorical context in which she found herself—particularly her physical presence before a live audience—seems to have necessitated a more cautious beginning than her powerful print presence might suggest.

Having established her initial ethos by inhabiting the traditional texts and institutions of White America, Wells frames her discussion in terms of the larger issue of "the race problem or negro question," a distinctly White, late nineteenth-century construction that placed the blame for African American poverty, illiteracy, and crime directly on the shoulders of the former slaves and their descendants. This formulation, in fact, is most likely the perspective adopted by many of her listeners, ostensibly sympathetic Whites who nonetheless viewed African Americans of the source of many, if not all, of their problems. Addressing this approach to the plight of Black America, Wells explicitly identifies the moral ground or mindset from which she must move her audience if her rhetoric is to succeed. Characterizing the "race problem" as "the Banquo's ghost of politics, religion, and sociology which will not down at the bidding of those who are tormented with its ubiquitous appearance on every occasion"—a distinctly Shakespearean anthimeria suggesting its destructive tenacity—Wells fortifies her ethos by locating herself within *Macbeth*, a quintessential tragedy of the White literary pantheon. From this position, then, she has established sufficient credibility to rather assertively expose the destructive power of the White-formulated "negro question," the rationale for systematic oppression of Southern Blacks, manifest most viciously in the "lynching bees" that commonly occur throughout the region.[39] Wells also calls attention to Southern Whites' suspect rationalization of lynching as retribution for the purported epidemic of abuse and rape of White women by Black men. This small section of the speech, distinguished by a more assertive ethos, contrasts with the deferential opening, suggesting that the somewhat reluctant speaker who begins the speech will evolve significantly over its course.

Wells's Embodied Account of the Memphis Tragedy

Wells's complex, dynamic ethos inhabits iconic White texts while also enabling her to oppose dominant White thinking concerning racial inequality. With this ethos in place, she launches an extended personal narrative—including her upbringing in the South, her work as a teacher and dismissal from service, her editorship and part ownership of the *Memphis Free Speech*—that culminates in the tragic events that recently transpired in Memphis: the murder of three young men and the takeover of their popular business, People's Grocery,[40] the subsequent destruction of her press, and the threats on her life that necessitate her flight from the South. At this point in her speech, Christoph's "strategies of placement" become particularly germane to Wells's ethos work. "Born and reared in the South," Wells begins this section of the speech, "I had never expected to live elsewhere." With this explicit "identity statement," she establishes ethos through regional location. Wells then employs a "moral display" in order to emphasize her subject position within the narrative as an African American who idealistically placed stock in the doctrines of self-help and moral improvement that many late nineteenth-century Blacks such as Booker T. Washington, William Simmons, Thomas E. Miller, and Robert Smalls held were central to racial advancement. "Until this past year," Wells confesses, she believed "that when wealth, education and character became more general among us," prosperity and "justice" would be "accorded to all alike."[41] This placement strategy, of course, firmly aligns Wells with the

[39] Wells, "Lynch Law," 333.
[40] The African American establishment whose commercial success threatened local White businessmen.
[41] Wells, "Lynch Law," 334.

conservativism with which she began her speech, though—as her audience soon discovers—she quickly works to complicate it.

First, however, Wells pivots from morality back to identity, directly discussing her professional position as a Memphis journalist: "Three years ago last June, I became editor and part owner of the *Memphis Free Speech*. As editor, I had occasion to criticise . . ." This occupational affiliation is central to Wells's ethos, both at this moment in the speech and throughout the remainder of her performance, since it calls into being a respected public voice or mode of address for this doubly marginalized speaker to assume. Simply put, she stands before her White Northern audience and speaks *as a journalist*. This enables her—in Applegarth's terms—to inhabit the genre of journalism, a discourse that empowers her to speak authoritatively about the details of the murders and destruction that befalls the African American community of Memphis. Wells's explicitly embodied, eyewitness perspective enables her to specifically describe the thriving Black community in Memphis before the murders, her efforts to build a successful, socially responsible publishing business, the murders and mayhem that ravage the Black community, as well as its pragmatic response in the aftermath of the tragedy, which includes a mass exodus to the West and her eventual exile from the region. She also emphasizes her identity as an educator, stating, "I was in the employ of [the Memphis school] board at that time." This teaching role, in fact, inhabits her professional status as a journalist and furthers her conservative moral position. She reveals that as "advertising agent, solicitor, as well as editor," she had ample opportunity to encourage the African American community to embrace the doctrine of self-help. "Wherever I went among the people," she recalls, "I gave them in church, school, public gatherings, and home, the benefit of my honest conviction that maintenance of character, money getting and education would finally solve our problem."[42]

Emphasizing that the doctrine of self-help to which she initially adhered and for which she marshaled her press to advocate is not in itself futile, Wells provides evidence of its initial success among the African American community of Memphis. Here, strikingly, Wells's identity statements shift from "I" to "we," thus utilizing anaphora to demonstrate solidarity with the local inhabitants of the neighborhood and her firm placement within the community:

> We had nice homes, representatives in almost every brand of business and profession, and refined society. We had learned that helping each other helped all. . . . With all our proscription in theatres, hotels and railroads, we had never had a lynching and did not believe we could have one. . . . We had confidence and pride in our city. . . . We were content to endure the evils we had, to labor and to wait.[43]

Her location in the African American community of Memphis, which is both physical and moral, warrants her credibility as a speaker or, more precisely, a spokesperson.

With the murders of the three innocent Black members of the community and the subsequent lawless treatment of the African Americans in the city, however, it becomes clear to Wells that mere hard work and morality are not enough to secure safety and peace for African Americans in the racist South, and she employs the next section of her speech to convey this conviction to her audience. Wells the eyewitness journalist provides vivid detail of the initial confrontation at the People's Grocery, in which a White competitor assaults Cal McDowell, who

[42] Wells, "Lynch Law," 334.
[43] Wells, "Lynch Law," 334.

subsequently "gave him a good thrashing."[44] This violent exchange provokes another, more serious encounter at the store in which defensive shots were fired by the African Americans, which led to their arrest and eventual murder at the hands of a hysterical White mob.

One of the particularly powerful elements of Wells's account of the tragic assault on the Memphis Black community is, as Shirley Logan has discussed, her deployment of strategies such as *enargeia*, which vividly locate her within this persecuted subculture.[45] Consider, for example, Wells's description of the family of murdered African American Tom Moss:

> The baby daughter of Tom Moss, too young to express how she misses her father, toddles to the wardrobe, seizes the legs of the trousers of his letter-carrier uniform, hugs and kisses them with evident delight and stretches up her little hands to be taken up into the arms which will nevermore clasp his daughter's form. His wife holds Thomas Moss, Jr., in her arms, upon whose unconscious baby face the tears fall thick and fast when she is thinking of the sad fate of the father he will never see, and of the two helpless children who cling to her for the support she cannot give.[46]

In this plaintive passage and others resembling it, Wells—who as a pillar of the community knew this family intimately and was present at such moments in their lives—places her audience on the scene with her, inviting them to witness the tragic effect of an innocent man's murder on his family. Her attention to the overpowering sadness experienced by the young widow and mother, as well as the unknowing innocence of her children, which epitomize and render authentic the emotional toll paid by the Memphis African American community, kindle sympathetic emotions of sadness and loss, but also righteous anger at the White perpetrators and strong feelings of responsibility—something needs to be done. Thus sparked by Wells, these emotions are intended to stoke in her audience corresponding feelings of sympathy, sadness, loss, anger, and responsibility, feelings firmly rooted in the very ethical tradition located in texts such the National Anthem, the Gettysburg Address, and the Declaration of Independence, which Wells references at the outset of her speech. Such emotions, co-constructions of speaker and audience, to use Micciche's characterization, constitute powerful arguments profoundly integrated with—rather than merely added to—other forms of proofs marshaled by the rhetor.

Thus, although Wells's initial move is to downplay the rhetorical value of "standpoints" of "sentiment" and "of justice to a weak race,"[47] she has at this point in the speech established the credibility required to occupy such emotional-ethical locations ("standpoints") with some hope of success. In effect, Wells's marginalized status requires her to work gradually into—to earn, in effect—these powerful means of persuasion, initially downplaying but eventually evoking emotions and emotion-based arguments in service of social justice rhetoric. Wells's careful movement toward strong emotions is particularly important considering the norms of the era, which required women to avoid expressing vehemence associated with men. Discussing the

[44] Wells, "Lynch Law," 335.
[45] Logan, "Ida B. Wells," 58.
[46] Wells, "Lynch Law," 337.
[47] Wells, "Lynch Law," 333.

rhetorical challenges Wells faced, both Patricia Schechter[48] and Bay[49] cite Carol and Peter Stearns's point that "anger and femininity were antithetical" in the Victorian era.[50]

In addition, Wells utilizes the self-effacing strategy of *occultatio* to humbly magnify the pathos of the tragedy she describes while once again placing herself, as journalistic eyewitness and reflector of ethically grounded emotion, at the center of the scene. "I have no power to describe the feeling of horror," she proclaims, "that possessed every member of the race in Memphis when the truth dawned upon us that the protection of the law which we had so long enjoyed was no longer ours."[51] Through a rhetoric of immediacy, humility, and professional instinct, Wells builds a case not so much for the defense of White institutions, her initially stated intention, but for the value of the Black lives both destroyed and under threat in Memphis and—as she will soon demonstrate—across the South. This diachronic approach to Wells's use of pathos, in effect, glosses what Leeman and Duffy identify as "the employment of language that was paradoxically dispassionate even as Wells's expressed strong, emotional appeals."[52]

Wells's eyewitness testimony, which informs this section of the speech and reflects her career as journalist and local community member, helps to effect a feminine, place-specific ethos that would have been expected, almost demanded, of her, as a late nineteenth-century woman of color speaking before an audience dominated by Whites. Thus, at this point in the speech, Wells's highly situated ethos supports her explicitly personal perspective on the issue at hand, her profession, and her intimate connection to Memphis, the specific locale in question. In addition, her speech-based character provides an effective platform from which to build powerful, value-based emotional appeals that invigorate her case against Southern White terrorism against African Americans.

Wells further enhances her narrative of the tragic plight of the African American community in Memphis by including telltale selections from newspapers that she and her White attackers published in response to the ongoing crisis. To demonstrate that there was widespread knowledge in the White community of the identity of the murderers, for example, she provides this account of the press's response: " 'It was done by unknown men,' said the jury, yet the [White owned and managed] *Appeal-Avalanche*, which goes to press at 3 a.m., had a two-column account of the lynching. The papers also told how McDowell got hold of the guns of the mob, and as his grasp could not be loosened, his hand was shattered with a pistol ball and all the lower part of his face was torn away."[53] Here, with the precision of an able reporter, she marshals the journalistic record to demonstrate that the White community clearly understood who committed this criminal act.

In order to vivify the war of words that leads to her exile from the South, Wells inserts the text of the provocative 21 May 1892 *Free Speech* editorial debunking the widespread claim, discussed above, that African American men pose a major threat to White women and are thus responsible both for their slaughter at the hands of White mobs and for the wretched conditions under which they live. The editorial's take on "the race problem" includes an intrepid challenge to White society that would come as a significant jolt to the White audience of her speech, unaccustomed, perhaps, to such *parrhesia* concerning the morality of White women delivered by

[48] Schechter, "All the Intensity," 57.
[49] Bay, *Tell the Truth*, 118.
[50] Carol Zisowitz Stearns and Peter N. Stearns, *Anger: The Struggle for Emotional Control in America's History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 47.
[51] Wells, "Lynch Law," 337.
[52] Leeman and Duffy, *Will*, 151.
[53] Wells, "Lynch Law," 336.

an African American woman, even though it comes second-hand through an editorial: "Nobody in this section of the country believes the old threadbare lie that negro men rape white women. If Southern white men are not careful they will overreach themselves, and public sentiment will have a reaction. A conclusion will then be reached which will be very damaging to the moral reputation of their women."[54] Wells then meticulously traces the recirculation of this statement in the White press, as it is reprinted and commented on in *The Daily Commercial* and the *Evening Scimitar* in order to whip up White anger. Their success in stimulating the White population to lawlessness is documented in yet another journalistic artifact Wells includes in her speech, a sustained article from *The Commercial* detailing—from the White perspective, of course—their community's attack on the *Free Speech* and its allies.

Following her presentation of this lengthy article, Wells deftly reinterprets the events reported in the White account from her own perspective, which—like the original editorial from the *Free Speech* that so angered the White establishment—gives the lie to racist reasoning. In her own account of the events reported in *The Commercial* article, she unpacks the brute violence and intimidation that lurk just beneath the surface of the White version. Wells's layering of this series of escalating accounts (both from the White press and of her own) of the mob murder of innocent African Americans and its meaning in Memphis enables her, through a sophisticated rhetoric strategy of accretion, to explore and ultimately expose the pernicious discourse and the physical violence inflicted upon its Black community. As Bordelon has demonstrated in her study of Genevieve Stebbins, although accretion has been characterized as a strategy used by men to reframe women's rhetoric, artful women have also used the strategy to reframe or contextualize men's discourse to their own advantage.[55] Wells's multilayered account of the press's treatment of her own rhetoric enables her to exercise explicit control over the narrative itself, while still accounting for its many voices. This ownership further establishes the ethos of the situated expert witness and interpreter of news, who ferrets out the truth with the eyes and ears of a master journalist on location.[56]

Having established her subject position within—but by no means overwhelmed by—the horror of lynch law and presented through rhetorical accretion her treatment of the multiple journalistic accounts concerning the purported rapes of White women at the hands of African Americans, Wells includes a highly personal passage in which she discloses that she is indeed the author of the 21 May 1892 editorial in the *Free Speech* that spurs the angry outpouring in the White community and the destruction of her press, as well as the fact that she escapes the deadly violence of the White community of Memphis only because she was in New York during the window of time in question and was warned by friends not to return. Given all that she witnessed and experienced, she is now able to (re)present the motivation for her aggressive activism on behalf of African Americans, which she initially formulated dispassionately in her opening statement, discussed above, in highly personal, emphatic terms: "Knowing the many things that I do, and . . . seeing that the whole race in the South was injured in the estimation of the world because of these false reports, I could no longer hold my peace, and I feel, yes, I am sure, that if it had to be done again . . . I would do and say the very same again."[57] Here is the reporter speaking of a moral

[54] Wells, "Lynch Law," 338.
[55] Bordelon, "Embodied *Ethos*."
[56] For a related study of the power of Wells's quotation practice in her pamphlets, see Simone W Davis, "The 'Weak Race' and the Winchester: Political Voices in the Pamphlets of Ida B. Wells-Barnett," *Legacy* 12, no. 2 (1995): 77–97.
[57] Wells, "Lynch Law," 341.

imperative to bring the truth, regardless of the personal cost her forthrightness may exact. Wells builds her case for speaking from the ground up, with all specific details directly before her audience. Furthermore, her strong sense of responsibility, grounded in the outrage caused by the atrocities in Memphis, which for her culminate in the extreme danger to her person that compels her exile, models for her audience how ethically based emotions stimulate intrepid moral action, the precise process she hopes will be reproduced in her audience.

Wells as Sectional Journalist

Wells's ethos further evolves as she transitions her speech into a regionwide account of the lynching crisis. As the skilled reporter, she proceeds to focus on specific cases and outrages, thus continuing to locate her character as a speaker in the journalistic enterprise. Her audience is exposed to the grim deaths of Ed Coy of Texarkana, Texas, Henry Smith of Paris, Texas, an unnamed man from Indianola, Mississippi, two women accused of poisoning White women, and so forth, yet she is no longer the eyewitness reporter, but the expert compiler and analyst of second-hand reports and evidence. Wells's ethos in this section of the speech more closely resembles the authorial character that distinguishes *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases*, in which she does not situate herself as a witness-agent within the accounts and chooses not to employ what could be called a feminine style of presentation. Although in this section of the speech Wells employs the ethos of an outsider rather than a personally involved reporter tied to a particular place, a compiler rather than a leading actor in her account, her presentations of regional murders are graphic and emotionally powerful, and through them her audience best experiences the magnitude of the violence inflicted on Southern African Americans. Furthermore, although she is not an eyewitness to the atrocities she recounts in this section of the speech—since she inhabits the role of the professional journalist reporting on a regionwide crisis—she is not in any sense of the word impartial toward or detached from the violence. Her vehemence, anger, and outrage are carefully controlled, yet rise to a level unattempted in earlier sections of the speech—she willingly supplies the sense of "great indignation"[58] that she points out is currently not aroused by the stories and trumped-up reports that emerge from the South.

For example, Wells's audience is invited to co-construct her contempt as she reports on the very different response stimulated by the murder of eleven (White) Italians in New Orleans: "A feeling of horror ran through the nation at this outrage. All Europe was amazed. The Italian government demanded thorough investigation and redress, and the Federal Government promised to give the matter the consideration which was its due."[59] Her harsh irony is palpable when she compares the current violence of Southern Whites with that of the torture perpetrated by ancient pagans and much-maligned Catholic Inquisitors: "We have turned heretofore to the pages of ancient and medieval history, to Roman tyranny, the Jesuitical Inquisition of Spain for the spectacle of a human being burnt to death. In the past ten years three instances, at least, have been furnished where men have literally been roasted to death to appease the fury of Southern mobs."[60] Precise statistics are also supplied to provide an exact accounting of the scope of the crisis and to detail the nature and frequency of the occurrence of the accusations made against the victims.[61] As

[58] Wells, "Lynch Law," 341.
[59] Wells, "Lynch Law," 341.
[60] Wells, "Lynch Law," 342.
[61] Leeman and Duffy note, "Rhetorically, the precision of Wells's statistical evidence stands in stark contrast to the apologists' sweeping and typical declarations that lynching is an 'understandable' response to the crime of rape, which Wells also cites specifically in her speech so that the differences between her evidence and their claims cannot be overlooked." Leeman and Duffy, *Will*, 154–155.

a whole, this section of the speech demonstrates the development of Wells's ethos from the witness-reporter-agent, who inhabits a particular community and performs its emotional responses to tragedy and outrage, to the regional expert and national reporter-compiler: the former ethos provides moral, community-based grounding for the latter, which expands the scope and authority of the former. In much the same manner, the carefully situated pity, moral indignation, and other strong emotions—amplified by strategies such as *enargeia*—that distinguish Wells's co-construction of emotion in the Memphis section of the speech constitute a kind of pathos-based moral lens that magnifies the emotions the audience experiences when Wells exposes them to the less thoroughly contextualized cases of Ed Coy, Henry Smith, and the other victims. The audience is invited to view them as they saw Tom Moss and is implicitly urged to imagine the mourning family they left behind. Wells concludes this section with a well-placed *zeugma* demonstrating the ubiquity and breadth of the crime: "It will be thus seen that neither age, sex nor decency are spared."[62]

Appropriating the Platform Ethos of the Nineteenth-Century Male Orator

Having presented this broad compilation of the devastating effects of lynch law, based on vivid eyewitness accounts, horrific details from murders across the South, and statistical evidence, Wells orients her audience toward action and steps away from her reporter persona. In doing so, she appropriates an oratorical character more typical of a nineteenth-century male, such as her elder colleague Frederick Douglass, as she launches a series of more general arguments, claims, and refutations concerning the tragedy of lynching and the need for action. This is not the ethos distinguished by identity statements, personal references, the feminine rhetorical style, the deference with which she begins, or the journalistic persona that inhabits much of the speech, but the bold character of the platform orator, supported by oratorical topoi and rhetorical strategies more typical of masculine speechmaking.

However, even here Wells does not go so far as to adopt the sage ethos of Douglass's late oratory. As he accrued the status of a seasoned male veteran of many decades of social justice activism (collecting unofficial titles such as the "Nestor of Freedman" and the "Sage of Cedar Hill" along the way), he become empowered to fashion a detached, worldly ethos on behalf of his argument, inhabiting the genre of the public lecture in a rather abstract, timeless fashion. Specifically in his famous oration condemning lynching, "Lessons of the Hour," delivered a little less than a year after Wells's Tremont Temple speech, Douglass—as I have noted in an earlier study—"deemphasized the personal, specific details of individual injustices or acts of brutality in order to focus on general arguments, identify key lines of reasoning, and scrutinize the nature of evidence as well as the assumptions undergirding arguments." Furthermore, he "assumed the role of general advocate or dialectician, rather than eyewitness or aggrieved party, skillfully employing metadiscourse to highlight for his audience the intellectual trajectory of his rhetoric."[63]

Nonetheless, Wells—at this late stage in the speech—inhabits the site of conventional male oratory, rather than the embedded reporter or the sectional journalist. For example, in order to establish this more traditional platform ethos, she marshals an impressive pair of periodic sentences, the first right-branching and the second left-branching, both structured through

[62] Wells, "Lynch Law," 343.

[63] Glen McClish, "Frederick Douglass's 'The Lessons of the Hour' and the Ethos of the Sage," "Frederick Douglass's Rhetorical Legacy," eds. Jonathan P. Rossing and John R. McKivigan, *Rhetoric Review* 37, no. 1 (2018): 52.

anaphoric clauses. Through this passage, she equates contemporary disbelief in the seriousness of lynch law with misguided antebellum assurances that slavery was unnecessarily demonized:

> In a former generation the ancestors of these same people refused to believe that slavery was the "league with death and the covenant with hell." Wm. Lloyd Garrison declared it to be, until he was thrown into a dungeon in Baltimore, until the signal lights of Nat Turner lit the dull skies of Northampton Country, and until sturdy old John Brown made his attack on Harper's Ferry. When freedom of speech was martyred in the person of Elijah Lovejoy at Alton, when the liberty of free discussion in the Senate in the Nation's Congress was struck down in the person of the fearless Charles Sumner, the Nation was at last convinced that slavery was not only a monster but a tyrant.[64]

With this moral equivalence eloquently established, Wells turns the stylistic tables, declaring succinctly, "*The very same forces are at work now as then*."[65] She authoritatively reviews the destructive actions of Southern White men since the end of the Civil War, employing *antimetabole* to deftly characterize their successful efforts to deny African Americans of basic human rights: "Having destroyed the citizenship of the man, they are now trying to destroy the manhood of the citizen." She also presents a key assertion concerning political motive, claiming that Northern public sentiment—which, by "its silence in press, pulpit and in public meetings," seeks "to heal the breach" caused by the late war—has "encouraged this state of affairs, and public sentiment is stronger than law."[66]

This position leads directly to Wells's central claim, framed by the previously established analogies to antebellum conditions: "A public sentiment strong against lawlessness must be aroused . . . When a sentiment against lynch law as strong, deep and mighty as that roused against slavery prevails, I have no fear of the result."[67] It is significant that this central claim is explicitly stated in the section of the speech in which she appropriates that platform ethos typical of male speakers of the era, for it is here that the journalist—first embedded and then sectional—becomes the orator. Furthermore, the specific construction of her thesis—particularly the terms "sentiment" and "aroused," as well as her previous declaration that "sentiment is stronger than law"—demonstrates that, indeed, the kindling of emotion is central, rather than peripheral, to Wells's rhetorical project, as well as her general view of civic activism and political action. Unless she is able to move her audience in the classic Ciceronian sense (*permovere*), her speech, and the movement it exhorts her audience to join, will fail. Significantly, this call for the arousal of sentiment explicitly overrides her initial statement that she will not build her case from "a standpoint of sentiment,"[68] once again demonstrating the dynamic nature of Wells's ethos, which evolves from constrained to impassioned. This emphasis on the salience of emotional proof suggests Wells's keen understanding of rhetoric as a *technē* or art. Demonstrating her keen understanding of the political machinations of Southern politics and a willingness to speak frankly about them, Wells engages in proleptic discussion of the ostensible goodwill of politicians who

[64] Wells, "Lynch Law," 344.
[65] Wells, "Lynch Law," 344.
[66] Wells, "Lynch Law," 345.
[67] Wells, "Lynch Law," 346.
[68] Wells, "Lynch Law," 333.

offer rewards "for the apprehension of lynchers."[69] Although such offers seem well intentioned, she explains the backstories that discredit the White political figures involved.

Wells's Bimodal Peroration

Then, rather suddenly, in the midst of a sharp critique of the Republican party, which she argues has cynically forsaken its long tradition "as the champion of human liberty and human rights,"[70] Wells pulls back from this masculine, Douglass-like oratorical voice and reprises the deference of the speech's first lines ("I am before the American people today through no inclination of my own"[71]): "I am no politician . . . I long with all the intensity of my soul for the [William Lloyd] Garrison, [Frederick] Douglass, [Charles] Sumner, [John Greenleaf] Whittier, and [Wendell] Phillips who shall rouse this nation."[72] With this striking identity statement (formed in the negative), Wells reminds the listener once again of her status as a woman of color performing a public role usually reserved for powerful White men or the exceptional African American male. Having moved from a reluctant advocate of White institutions and traditions, to confident, intrepid local reporter, to expert journalistic compiler of sectional atrocities, and finally to eloquent platform orator, she returns for the moment to where she began, as if assuring her White audience that she understands late nineteenth-century conventions of race and gender and that she does not intend—in this speech, at least—to entirely reject or supplant them.

To complete this sentence, however, and for the remainder of her speech, Wells reappropriates a more conventional form of platform eloquence and the ethos that informs it:

> . . . to a demand that from Greenland's icy mountains to the coral reefs of the Southern seas, mob rule shall be put down and equal and exact justice be accorded to every citizen of whatever race, who finds a home within the borders of the land of the free and the home of the brave. Then no longer will our national hymn be sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, but every member of this great composite nation will be a living, harmonious illustration of the words, and all can honestly and gladly join in singing:
>
> My country! 'tis of thee,
> Sweet land of liberty
> Of thee I sing.
> Land where our fathers died,
> Land of the Pilgrim's pride,
> From every mountain side
> Freedom does ring.[73]

The closing quotation from a well-known American hymn and the sweeping geographical references—which for later audiences uncannily predict King's "I Have a Dream" speech— along with the quotation from 1 Corinthians 13:1 and the repetition of the line from the "Star-Spangled Banner," work together to arouse the morally based sentiment Wells believes is essential for dismantling lynch law.[74] In these final moments of the speech, there is little hesistance, personal

[69] Wells, "Lynch Law," 346.
[70] Wells, "Lynch Law," 346.
[71] Wells, "Lynch Law," 333.
[72] Wells, "Lynch Law," 347.
[73] Wells, "Lynch Law," 347.
[74] For further discussion of these allusions, see Robert James Branham, " 'Of Thee I Sing': Contesting 'America,' " *American Quarterly* 48, no. 4 (1996): 640–642.

identification, or political conservativism (such as the "distinctive American institutions" and "the foundation of government, law and order" with which she began[75])—only the powerful oratorical burst of emotion intended to kindle like feelings in her audience.

In this sense, the ethos present in the final moments of the speech is distinctly bimodal. Although the confident character of the platform orator dominates the peroration, the deferential female persona is inhabited briefly, reminding the audience that Wells's oratorical character, although transgressive of the rhetorical norms governing it, is not entirely in rebellion. As a speaker, Wells balances these two sides, thus suggesting, but not entirely committing to, radical rhetorical change.

Conclusion

Wells's speech constitutes a sophisticated journey of change and adaptation, enabled by a complex, shifting ethos reflecting the constraints and possibilities faced by women rhetors of the era—particularly those of color—and the evocation of powerful emotions, co-constructed by rhetor and audience. Feminist rhetorical analysis, as represented by the work of Ryan, Myers, and Jones, as well as Christoph, Reynolds, Applegarth, and Bordelon, helps to shed new light on the ethos management of marginalized nineteenth-century African American women such as Wells. She begins, as she must, simply and humbly, with the help of an ethos constructed through identity statements and personal narrative, an ethos located in a specific community's culture and values and in the genre of community journalism. She tells the story of a woman who was "born and reared in the South," who "had never expected to live elsewhere," who set up shop in Memphis as a teacher and journalist, yet eventually flees her homeland for the North. She establishes her initial belief in "the doctrine of self-help, thrift and economy,"[76] which she had faith would bring equality to African Americans, only to demonstrate the futility of this belief in locales across the South, where burgeoning Black success becomes an intolerable threat to White supremacy that is countered by ruthless terrorism. The Southern teacher and editor becomes a sectional journalist, then a reluctant yet impassioned national spokeswoman for social justice for African Americans, and her oration enacts her evolving consciousness and professional-civic role as a powerful argument for her overall case. Through this narrative of change, Wells invites her audience of "observing and thoughtful" Whites—who begin in the comfortable complacency and the covert racism inherent in the mindset that characterizes racial injustice in America as the "negro question"[77]—to evolve with her, to co-create the emotions or "sentiments" that fuel the movement intended to end lynch law in America and to establish equal rights for African Americans. Her own metamorphosis, detailed in her oration, vivifies and hence humanizes the change Wells urges in her White audience. Thus, she stands before her audience in Tremont Hall as the embodiment of her argument, modeling the change she wishes to effect—in a less dramatic sense—in her audience.

Wells's oration at Tremont Temple reminds us that, for nineteenth-century women, ethos construction relies upon tangible associations with locations, communities, professions, habitats, and genres of discourse. Furthermore, the speech demonstrates that for women of color, the responsibility of establishing these linkages, of constructing an ethos that explicitly situates the speaker and avoids the strategy of presenting a national character unmoored from community,

[75] Wells, "Lynch Law," 333.
[76] Wells, "Lynch Law," 334.
[77] Wells, "Lynch Law," 333.

location, or specific identify, may be even stronger. Yet, as Ryan, Myers, and Jones—with whom we began this exploration—so clearly state, the "feminist rhetorical perspective challenges us to examine women's ethos with the acknowledgment that it is culturally socially restrictive for women to develop authoritative ethē, yet acknowledges that space can be made for new ways of thinking and artful maneuvering."[78] Wells demonstrates this ability to establish such new space, for if expectations concerning ethos can constrict the rhetor's choices, and particularly those of a nineteenth-century woman of color, then they can also be profitably tested and transgressed by the artful rhetor who understands their dynamic properties and potential. For example, just as accretion can be powerfully employed by woman rhetors, who have conventionally been disadvantaged by the strategy in the hands of men, so women of color can construct dynamic *ethē* comprising unconventional characteristics, including those more commonly employed by male rhetors.

In particular, Wells demonstrates that the ethos of a woman of color who wishes to challenge boundaries and establish an authoritative voice need not be a static entity, but may—perhaps should—evolve with the shifting requirements of complex speeches, particularly those that must manage constraints placed upon rhetors by resistant or potentially unsympathetic audiences. Wells's art enables her both to affirm and transcend the expectations and possibilities that initially inscribe her, and thus the rhetorical mechanisms she employs are worthy of our careful study. She demonstrates that rhetorical negotiation and renegotiation of cultural conventions occur not merely from text to text and from rhetor to rhetor, but *within* individual rhetorical creations. In this way, her speech reinforces the importance of approaching texts not as atemporal artifacts that can be dissected—specimen like—for meaning, but as vibrant rhetorical performances unfolding in time.

Wells's speech also reminds us of the primary importance of pathos as a co-constructed means of persuasion and group identity, for indeed the performance relies on her ability to effect a powerful emotional connection between the victims and her audience. Demonstrating a perspective on the emotions akin to those described by scholars such as Micciche and Quandahl, Wells attempts to kindle emotions in her audience fueled by values held in common. Clearly, Wells marshals copious statistical evidence to support her claims concerning the widespread nature of lynching, but it is ultimately shared emotions that culminate her argument. As the language of the resolution reproduced in the *Boston Herald* and subsequently recirculated in the *American Citizen* article featured above demonstrates, the reactions of those who heard and reported on the oration bear this out. Indeed, the declaration emphasizes how her audience thanked her for her "heroic advocacy of the rights of American Citizens" and expressed their "sympathy with her and her people in the injustice they are suffering." Furthermore, it includes the audience's pathos-laden promise—in language echoing Wells's explicit references to the emotions she evokes ("A public sentiment strong against lawlessness must be aroused"[79])—to extend the reach of their co-constructed feelings: "We pledge to [the colored race] our best endeavors to arouse public sentiment in indignant condemnation of the increasing prevalence of lynch law in our land, to the end that these symptoms of barbarianism may soon cease to disgrace our American civilization."[80]

In her study of anger in Wells's writing, Schechter, building on the work of Audre Lorde, declares, "Anger can be the beginning of knowledge and politics."[81] Extending this line of exploration, I have suggested that in "Lynch Law in All its Phases," Wells's co-construction of

[78] Ryan, Myers, and Jones, *Rethinking Ethos*, 2.
[79] Wells, "Lynch Law," 346.
[80] "On Lynch Law," *American Citizen*, 25 February 1893.
[81] Schechter, "All the Intensity," 67.

strong emotions, including anger, skillfully constitutes her audience's collective consciousness, enhancing their understanding of Southern atrocities and calling them into community as nascent activists.

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Frederick Douglass in Japan: Reception and Research from the 1930s to the Present

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Introduction: Overview of Black Studies in Japan

In Japan, the Meiji Restoration of 1868 is regarded as the beginning of the nation's modernization. From that time, Japan closely observed Western countries such as the United States, Great Britain, Germany and France. Japan sometimes saw them as models of civilization and at other times cautiously viewed them as belligerent White nations. In the case of relations between Japan and the U.S., racial tension became particularly high in the 1920s because of the League of Nations' rejection of the Racial Equality Proposal of 1919 put forward by the Japanese government, and the Exclusion Act of 1924 against Japanese immigrants with the rise of anti-Japanese feeling in the U.S., exemplified particularly in the "Yellow Peril" hysteria. In this historical context, some Japanese scholars and journalists came to pay close attention to the "race problem" in the U.S., and they started to introduce "black issues" to Japan from just prior to the early 1900s.[1] The predecessor for reporting on racial issues to the Japanese people was the introduction of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in *Kokumin Shinbun* (People's newspaper) in 1896.[2] During the 1920s and 1930s, some distinguished Black intellectuals and authors even visited Japan, including James Weldon Johnson in 1929, Langston Hughes in 1933 and W. E. B. Du Bois in 1936.[3]

After Japan's defeat in World War II in 1945, with the wave of "democratization" that swept through Japan primarily led by American occupation forces, liberal Japanese intellectuals once again came to have an interest in racial issues in the U.S. and questioned the nature of American democracy. In the 1950s, serious academic attention began to be paid to African American history and literature in Japan. Certainly, the civil rights movement in the U.S. as well as the decolonization movement of Africa influenced Japanese scholars, and in 1954 there was established *Kokujin Kenkyū no Kai*, or the Association of Negro Studies, currently *Kokujin Kenkyū Gakkai*, or the Japan Black Studies Association. Since then, the association has been collectively devoted to the global study of Black history and culture. This article takes as its context Black studies in Japan, and reviews the reception and research of Frederick Douglass, focusing on the period from the 1930s to the present.[4]

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[1] Furukawa Hiromi, *Afuro Amerika Bungaku no Kenkyū: Rūtsu to Souru o Motomete* [A Study of Afro-American Literature: In Search of Its Roots and Soul] (Kyoto: Kyoto Women's University, 1989); Tsunehiko Kato, "The History of Black Studies in Japan: Origin and Development," *Journal of Black Studies* 44, no. 8 (November 2013): 829–845; Yuichiro Onishi and Fumiko Sakashita, eds., *Transpacific Correspondence: Dispatches from Japan's Black Studies* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019). In East Asia, traditionally the family name precedes the given name. This article follows this cultural convention.

[2] Furukawa, *Afuro Amerika Bungaku no Kenkyū*, 219.

[3] Furukawa, *Afuro Amerika Bungaku no Kenkyū*, 223–224.

[4] This article is primarily based on my presentation "Frederick Douglass in Japan: Reception and Research from the 1930s to the Present," given at the international conference Frederick Douglass Across and Against Times, Places, and Disciplines, held in Paris on 11–13 October 2018, commemorating the bicentennial of Douglass's birth.
For bibliographical information in Japanese, see my "Nihon ni okeru Furederikku Dagurasu Kenkyū Gaikan" [An Overview of Frederick Douglass Studies in Japan], *Treatises and Studies by the Faculty of Kinjo Gakuin University: Studies in Humanities* 13, no. 2 (March 2017): 28–40.

Douglass Studies in Japan from the 1930s to 1960s

W. E. B. Du Bois, who had a favorable opinion of the country partly due to its victory against Russia in 1905, visited Japan for two weeks in early December of 1936. Although Du Bois came to Japan as a private citizen, he met a number of influential political leaders and intellectuals during his stay. He also visited universities, newspaper companies, and cultural institutions, delivering several speeches on racial issues in the global context.[5] On 4 December at Kobe College, a women's university founded by Christian missionaries from America, Du Bois delivered a lecture on Frederick Douglass, which is probably the first time Frederick Douglass was formally and academically introduced in Japan.[6] He also gave a speech entitled "The Life of Mr. Douglass, a Great Black Leader" ("Kokujin Daishidōsha Dagurasu Shi no Shōgai") at Ryukoku University, a famous Buddhist university in Kyoto.[7]

As early as 1915 to 1925, several academic books on racial issues were published in Japan, however, there was only one mention of Douglass in Mitsukawa Kametarō's *Jinshu Mondai* (Racial issues) in the brief portion overviewing the history of Black abolitionists and their contributions.[8] While there was rather less interest in Douglass before and during World War II, Japanese scholars were quite interested in Booker T. Washington, publishing translations of his autobiography, *Up from Slavery*, as well as a biography and a scholarly volume devoted to him.[9] Even though the two Black leaders had in common the experience of being enslaved, Japanese intellectuals did not pay particular attention to Douglass, partly because he was not a contemporary to that time. They focused only on the aspect of Washington's contribution that related to education and industrial training, from a pragmatic perspective. In short, they neglected the racial issues or the racial struggle that Washington had been through but spotlighted the practical aspect because the element of basic education and industrial training might be serviceable to Imperial Japan and its push for modernization.

After Japan's defeat in World War II, the occupation of Japan was initiated by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, technically led by U.S. forces from 1945 to 1952. In 1948, a magazine titled *Amerika Kyōiku* (American education), first published in December of 1946, carried an abridged translation of selected chapters from Douglass's *My Bondage and My Freedom*,

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[5] Furukawa Hiromi and Furukawa Tetsushi, *Nihonjin to Afurikakei Amerikajin: Nichibei Kankeishi ni okeru Sono Shosō* [Japanese and African Americans: Historical Aspects of Their Relations] (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 2004), 125–128.

[6] *Megumi* [Grace] (Journal of the Kobe College Alumnae Association) no. 30 (July 1937): 8; David Levering Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois: The Fight for Equality and the American Century 1919–1963* (New York: A John Macrae Book, 2000), 415. The text of this lecture has not yet been discovered in Japan.

[7] *Ryūkoku Daigaku 350 Nenshi* [350 Years of Ryukoku University History] (Complete History Version) 1 (March 2000): 750.

[8] Inada Shūnosuke, *Jinshu Mondai* [Racial Issues] (Tokyo: Yūhikaku, 1915); Kobayashi Seisuke, *Beikoku to Jinshu teki Sabetsu no Kenkyū* [A Study of the United States and Racial Discrimination] (Tokyo: Bunsendō, 1919); Ayakawa Takeji, *Jinshu Mondai Kenkyū* [A Study of Racial Issues] (Tokyo: Kurahashi Shoten, 1925); Mitsukawa Kametarō, *Jinshu Mondai* [Racial Issues] (Tokyo: Nikei Meicho Kankō Kai, 1925), 302.

[9] Sasaki Hideichi, abridged translation of *Up from Slavery* (Tokyo: Meguro Shoten, 1919); Takiura Bun'ya, *Būka Washinton: Dorei agarino Ijin, Shin Bunmei no Kensetsusha* [Booker T. Washington: A Great Figure Up from Slavery, Builder of a New Civilization] (Kyoto: Tanjun Seikatsu Sha, 1927); Sasaki Hideichi, complete translation of *Up From Slavery*, *Kokuijin Būka Washinton Jiden* [Great Black Man: Autobiography of Booker T. Washington] (Tokyo: Koyama Shoten, 1939). In 1934 Nasu Shōhei published the annotated version of *Up from Slavery* as an English textbook for higher education in Kobe. See Furukawa, *Afuro Amerika Bungaku no Kenkyū*, 222–223. Also, Okimoto Itaru translated and published *Dorei yori Mi o Okoshite: Būkā Tī Washinton Jijoden* [Up from Slavery: Autobiography of Booker T. Washington] (Tokyo: Shūyōdan, 1931).

"Chapter X: Life in Baltimore" and "Chapter XI: A Change Came O'er the Spirit of My Dream" (see fig. 1). The translator, Katō Ken'ichi, was an English educator and academic who introduced numerous works of British and American literature to the English education arena in postwar Japan. The magazine had been censored by General Headquarters (GHQ) and its editorial policy was assessed as "center" and "liberal" by the examiner.[10] The magazine exemplified America's democratic educational practice and carried a series of translations of American literary works. It showcased the "American spirit" with works by Walt Whitman, Timothy Flint, Richard Henry Dana, and others. One of the series of translations included Douglass's *Bondage and Freedom*. It was only a nine-page summarized translation,[11] however, it is worthy to note that the translation was published no more than three years after Japan's defeat in World War II. The issue that carried the translation passed the censor without any correction.[12] Regardless, it was not until the 1950s that serious and rigorous research on or translation of Douglass began in Japan.

In response to the publication of Philip S. Foner's *The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass* in 1950, Honda Sōzō, one of the most notable scholars of American slavery and Black history, published an essay on Foner's work in 1953;[13] this marked the beginning of serious Frederick Douglass studies in Japan. Honda also published another essay on Douglass in 1955.[14] He compared Abraham Lincoln and Douglass and positioned the latter as a forerunner of the progress of American history from the perspective of Marxist historical materialism.[15]

There were a certain number of experts on American history and literature in Japan who maintained an academic interest in Black studies at this time. However, American literature specialists, in comparison to their American history counterparts, sometimes lacked a sincere and fair perspective on African American literature, even though literary studies had been dominant in Black studies in Japan during the pre-war era.[16] Consequently, there were fewer works on Douglass from the field of American literature during the 1950s; only two essays were written by scholars of literature, both of which briefly mentioned Douglass.[17] However, since the civil rights movement in the U.S. began influencing Japanese experts on American literature, during the 1960s and 1970s the number of academic articles on Douglass's literary works and translations of his autobiographies gradually increased. In 1962, Tobita Shigeo, a scholar of American literature, translated an abridged version of Douglass's speech on lynching, based on an article carried in the

[10] Censorship Documents regarding *Amerika Kyōiku* [American Education], Gordon W. Prange Collection and Archives at the University of Maryland College Park Libraries.
[11] Frederick Douglass, "Furederikku Dagurasu 'Watashi no Dorei Seikatsu to Watashi no Jiyū Seikatsu" [Frederick Douglass, "My Bondage and My Freedom"], trans. Katō Ken'ichi, *Amerika Kyōiku* 3, no. 6–7 combined edition (October 1948): 52–60.
[12] Censorship Documents regarding *Amerika Kyōiku*, Gordon W. Prange Collection and Archives at the University of Maryland College Park Libraries.
[13] Honda Sōzō, "Fōnā hen 'Furederikku Dagurasu no Shōgai to Chosakushū ni yosete: Amerika Kokujin Mondai no Shiten kara" [On "The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass" ed. Philip S. Foner], *Keizai Kenkyū* [Studies in Economics] 4, no. 4 (October 1953): 310–315.
[14] Honda Sōzō, "Furederikku Dagurasu to Namboku Sensō" [Frederick Douglass and the Civil War], *Rekishi Hyōron* [History Review] no. 67 (June 1955): 31–58.
[15] For more on the relation between Japanese historians and Marxism, see Ayumu Kaneko, "From Localized Marxism to Americanized Sophistication and Beyond: Studies of Black History in Postwar Japan," in *Transpacific Correspondence*, eds. Onishi and Sakashita, 111–140.
[16] Kaneko, "From Localized Marxism to Americanized Sophistication and Beyond," 111.
[17] Akamatsu Mitsuo, "Dorei Taikenki (Slave Narratives) ni tsuite" [On Slave Narratives], *Kokujin Kenkyū* [Black Studies] no. 5 (October 1958): 3–10; Ōta Yoshisaburō, "Kokujin Mondai to sono Beibungaku eno Tōei" [Black Issues and Their Reflection in American Literature], *Eigo Seinen* [The Rising Generation] 104, no. 1 (January 1958): 34–73.

Christian Recorder and issued on 11 August 1892. Hwang Insoo,[18] an ethnic Korean scholar of American literature born under Japan's colonial rule of the Korean peninsula, undertook a combined translation of Douglass's two speeches on slavery: "Slavery and Slave Power," a speech delivered in Rochester, New York, on 1 December 1850, and "An Antislavery Tocsin," a speech delivered in Rochester, New York, on 8 December 1850.[19]

In 1963, the first complete Japanese translation of *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself* was published by Karita Motoshi, a scholar of British and American literature, who had translated many literary works of acclaimed authors such as Geoffrey Chaucer, Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, Henry Adams, Emily Dickinson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, Saul Bellow, Mark Twain, and J. D. Salinger. This first Japanese translation of *Narrative* was included in an anthology of world-famous non-fiction writings (see fig. 2).[20] In the afterword to his translation, Karita pointed out that the very essence of what Douglass had illustrated in his narrative was human dignity and the passion fueling his struggle to attain freedom and fulfill his aspirations, which appealed to people of the modern age.[21]

Douglass Studies in Japan from the 1970s to 1990s

In 1970, a translation of selected chapters from *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* was published by Inazawa Hideo (see fig. 3), a scholar of American literature who had conducted specialized research on John Steinbeck and Truman Capote, and also translated Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery* in 1969.[22] In his afterword to the book, Inazawa elaborated on how *Life and Times* served as an excellent textbook of American history.[23] However, Inazawa's translation of *Life and Times* only included the portion from "Chapter I: Author's Birth" to "Chapter XV: Covey, the Negro Breaker," thus, regrettably, significant parts of the memoir, from the Civil War through the end of the nineteenth century, were omitted.

In the 1980s Honda Sōzō had published a few works on Douglass, including the biography *Watashi wa Kokujin Dorei Datta: Furederikku Dagurasu no Monogatari* (I was a Black slave: A story of Frederick Douglass) (see fig. 4 and 5).[24] This book was aimed at a young readership, such as high schoolers or college students, and received a juvenile literature award.[25] It is the only work that illustrated Douglass's importance in the larger context of American history and literature.

[18] Hwang is one of the three translators of the 1965 Japanese edition of Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk*.

[19] Frederick Douglass, "Shikei ni tsuite" [On Lynching], trans. Tobita Shigeo, in *Niguro Essei Shū* [Collection of Negro Essays], eds. Hashimoto Fukuo and Hamamoto Takeo (Tokyo: Hayakawa Shobō, 1962) 23–26; Frederick Douglass, "Dorei Seido o Ronzu" [On Slavery], trans. Hwang Insoo, ibid., 9–22.

[20] Frederick Douglass, "Aru Kokujin Dorei no Hansei" [Narrative of a Slave Life], trans. Karita Motoshi, in *Aru Kokujin Dorei no Hansei / Shitsūki / Kuroi Hi / Urakami Kirishitan / Tabi no Hanashi*, eds. Nakano Yoshio, Yoshikawa Kōjirō and Kuwahara Takeo (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1963): 3–114.

[21] Karita Motoshi, afterword to "Aru Kokujin Dorei no Hansei," by Frederick Douglass, trans. Karita Motoshi, 110–114.

[22] Frederick Douglass, *Waga Shōgai to Jidai* [Life and Times of Frederick Douglass], trans. Inazawa Hideo (Tokyo: Masago Shobō, 1970); Booker T. Washington, *Dorei yori Tachiagarite* [Up from Slavery], trans. Inazawa Hideo (Tokyo: Masago Shobō, 1969).

[23] Inazawa Hideo, afterword to *Waga Shōgai to Jidai*, by Frederick Douglass, trans. Inazawa Hideo, 202–203.

[24] Honda Sōzō, "Furederikku Dagurasu no Haka" [The Grave of Frederick Douglass], *Rekishi Hyōron* no. 373 (May 1981): 55–57; Honda Sōzō, "Furederikku Dagurasu Kenkyū no Ichi Danshō: Dagurasu no Shusseinen no Kakutei o Megutte" [A Historical Essay on the Birth of Frederick Douglass], *Hitotsubashi Ronsō* [The Hitotsubashi Review] 88, no. 1 (July 1982): 1–19; Honda Sōzō, *Watashi wa Kokujin Dorei Datta: Furederikku Dagurasu no Monogatari* [I was a Black Slave: A Story of Frederick Douglass] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1987).

[25] It won the thirty-fifth *Sankei Jidō Shuppan Bunka Shō*, or the Sankei Juvenile Literature Award, in 1988.

Although his version of the narrative only covers the period from Douglass's birth until the enactment of the Thirteenth Amendment, which proclaimed the abolition of slavery in 1865, even now there is no work which outshines Honda's biography of Douglass in Japan.[26]

Although there had been some exceptions, as mentioned above, the prevailing attitude toward African American literature in the mainstream English literary associations in Japan was indifference or cynicism, continuing through the 1970s. It was not until the 1980s that the atmosphere began to change. The change was brought about by the rise of feminism and subsequently the emergence of African American women writers such as Alice Walker and Toni Morrison. Then, a drastic change took place in 1993, when Morrison won the Nobel Prize in literature. Soon after that, *Nihon Amerika Bungakkai*, or the American Literature Society of Japan (established in 1956, with the predecessor of the society formed in 1946) held a panel on Morrison's works for the first time. According to Katō Tsunehiko, former president of the Japan Black Studies Association, the room for the panel was packed. This was probably the symbolic moment when the study of African American literature was recognized as a "legitimate" field of study in American literature in Japan.[27]

From the 1980s to the present, there has been a gradual increase of academic publishing on Douglass, especially in the field of American literature. The topics of these works vary: analysis from the tradition of slave narratives; close study of each of his autobiographies and his solo novella, "The Heroic Slave," or his famous speeches; comparative studies with his contemporaries such as Martin R. Delany, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Jacobs, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Herman Melville; as well as the relationship of Douglass with Christianity, women's rights, and other issues.

In 1993, Okada Seiichi, a scholar of American literature who was known primarily for editing numerous English textbooks, published his version of the Japanese translation of *Narrative* (see fig. 6).[28] This was the second translation of *Narrative*, but the significant difference is that the first had been included in an anthology of world-famous non-fiction writings, while Okada's version was published as a single-volume book. In his afterword to the book, Okada clearly and concisely overviewed the history of abolitionism and explained the activities of Black and White abolitionists for Japanese readers.[29]

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[26] My first encounter with Frederick Douglass was occasioned by this biography of Douglass written by Honda Sōzō, *Watashi wa Kokujin Dorei Datta: Furederikku Dagurasu no Monogatari* (I was a Black Slave: A Story of Frederick Douglass), when I was sixteen, in 1993. Being a high school student without any knowledge of Douglass or slave narratives, I was deeply moved and intrigued by Douglass, as well as African American history and culture. For me, they shone with the very essence of human dignity, beauty and resilience, and they still do. Since then, I have been studying and researching about Frederick Douglass primarily in the field of American literature. At that time during my teenage years, being one of the historical byproducts of Japanese colonialism, *Zainichi*, I was struggling to establish my identity in the sometimes hostile society of Japan. Postwar Japan lost its colonial territories, but it could not rid itself of the legacy of racialized colonialism. Korean people in the Japanese mainland before World War II had been forced to become second-class nationals of the Japanese Empire, but after the war they were legally excluded from the new Japanese nationality and given the marginalized status of special permanent residency, which made ethnic Koreans in Japan *Zainichi* in Japanese. I was born as a *Zainichi*, though I was raised, educated, and have lived all my life within Japanese culture. Despite Japan's rapidly diversifying society, cultural sensitivity hasn't quite kept pace and I still find myself sometimes being displaced, or worse, discriminated against. Through Frederick Douglass and African American history and culture, I have acquired my own motive force to live and survive in this global arena.

[27] Kato, "The History of Black Studies in Japan," 841.

[28] Frederick Douglass, *Sūki naru Dorei no Hansei: Furederikku Dagurasu Jiden* [Extraordinary Life of a Slave: Autobiography of Frederick Douglass], trans. Okada Seiichi (Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppan Kyoku, 1993).

[29] Okada Seiichi, afterword to *Sūki naru Dorei no Hansei*, by Frederick Douglass, trans. Okada Seiichi, 169–195.

In 1995, the Japan Black Studies Association held its forty-first annual conference in Kyoto, which included a symposium commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of Douglass's death. The chair was Honda Sōzō and three presenters gave papers on Douglass: Akamatsu Mitsuo, "Frederick Douglass in Plays"; Miyai Setsuko, "Right Is of No Sex…Truth Is of No Color—Frederick Douglass and the Women's Rights Movement"; and Takenaka Kōji, "Frederick Douglass and Religion in Slavery."[30] According to Kitajima Gishin, former president of the Japan Black Studies Association and then editor in chief of the association's journal, *Kokujin Kenkyū* (Black studies), there was active discussion and it marked a very significant moment for commemorating Douglass.[31]

In 1998, *Eibungaku Kenkyū* (Studies in English Literature), one of Japan's most prestigious peer-reviewed academic journals (issued by *Nihon Eibungakkai*, or the English Literary Society of Japan, established in 1928, with the predecessor of the society formed in 1917), published the first essay in the journal's history that included the name "Frederick Douglass" in its title: Tsuneyama Nahoko's "Amerikan Osero: Furederikku Dagurasu to Kokujin Taishū Engeki no Dentō" (American Othello: Frederick Douglass' narrative and the 19th century African-American entertainment culture).[32] Tsuneyama, highlighting Douglass's link to Othello in *Life and Times* and mainly focusing on his descriptions in *Narrative*, demonstrated that the play *Othello* was naturalized through a uniquely American literary institution, the autobiography. She analyzed Douglass in light of his contemporary Black minstrel players and Eugene O'Neill's modernist play *All God's Chillun Got Wings*. Tsuneyama clarified the Black figure of an "Anglophilic trickster," outwitting White people under the mask of submission.

Douglass Studies in Japan from the 2000s to Bicentennial

After the 2000s, there was a sharp rise in the number of academic works on Douglass in the field of American literature. Also, there was a noteworthy increase of mentions and entries of Douglass in English educational materials or dictionaries and encyclopedias targeting English learners or ordinary readers. For example, Furomoto Atsuko, former vice president of the Japan Black Studies Association and noted scholar of African American and Caribbean literature as well as a translator, wrote an article on Frederick Douglass and the history of slave narratives in the magazine-style encyclopedia, *Sekai no Bungaku* (World literature), aimed at a general readership.[33] Saitō Yoshifumi, one of the most outstanding English educators and experts on British and American literature, and Kamioka Nobuo, a prolific translator of modern American literature and a famous Americanist, coauthored *English Masters' Reader* in 2004. The book featured an excerpt from chapter six of *Narrative*, the part in which Douglass came to realize that learning to read and write could lead him to freedom, as an outstanding model of the composition of English prose written by literary figures. In addition, the book included an audio CD. Later in

[30] Abstracts of the symposium are carried in *Kokujin Kenkyū* no. 65 (December 1995): 25–30.
[31] Kitajima Gishin, editor's postscript to *Kokujin Kenkyū* no. 65: 61.
[32] Tsuneyama Nahoko, "Amerikan Osero: Furederikku Dagurasu to Kokujin Taishū Engeki no Dentō" [American Othello: Frederick Douglass' Narrative and the 19th Century African-American Entertainment Culture], *Eibungaku Kenkyū* [Studies in English Literature] 75, no. 2 (December 1998): 237–251.
[33] Furomoto Atsuko, "Furederikku Dagurasu hoka 'Dorei Taikenki' no Keifu" [Lineage of "Slave Narratives": Frederick Douglass and Others] in *Sekai no Bungaku* [World Literature] (Shūkan Asahi Hyakka) no. 34 (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbun Sha, 2000): 108–111.

2006, Kamioka published a book on America's great speeches, which included Douglass's "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" also including an audio CD.[34]

In this era, one thing can be particularly noted: studying Douglass from the perspective of American literature is not as marginal as it used to be. Therefore, compared to the pioneers of African American literature in Japan, there have been many, including not only experts in American literature but also younger scholars, who have had the great fortune of being able to begin or continue their own concentrated research on Douglass. For instance, this essay's author, Park Soonyoung, a third generation ethnic Korean scholar of American literature, published a comparative study of the ideal Black heroic figure in Douglass's "The Heroic Slave" and Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *Dred* in 2003. She is the first scholar in Japan to earn a PhD on Douglass, with a thesis entitled "Frederick Douglass and His Strategic Application of Masculinity to African American Liberation" in 2007.[35] Since then, Park has undertaken continuous research on Douglass.[36] Park's current topic is Frederick Douglass's "eternalization" of his self-image. She argues that by continuing to revise and retell his life story three times, Douglass intended to eternalize his ideal self-image as "a respectable black man" in his autobiographies. Unlike journalistic pieces such as newspaper articles or his self-published editorials, Douglass saw that

[34] Saitō Yoshifumi and Kamioka Nobuo, recording with Peter Barakan and Christina Laffin, *Eigo Tatsujin Dokuhon* [English Masters' Reader] (Tokyo: Chūōkōron Shinsha, 2004): annotation 17–18, excerpt and its translation 19–21; Kamioka Nobuo, recording with Roger Pulvers and Xanthe Smith, *Meienzetsu de Manabu Amerika no Rekishi* [Learning American History through Great Speeches] (Tokyo: Kenkyūsha, 2006): speech and its translation 36–39, annotation 40–43.

[35] Park Soonyoung, "Shōsetsu o Tōshiteno Taiwa: Douglass to Stowe no Shōsetsu ni Kyōtsū suru Kokujin Hīrō Zō to Doreisei Haishi Undō no Hōkōsei" [Conversation through Novels: Douglass's and Stowe's Ideal Black Heroic Figure in their Novels and the Course of Action of Abolitionism], *Amerika Bunka Kenkyū no Kanōsei* [Possibility of Studies in American Culture] no. 1 (April 2003): 11–20; Park, "Frederick Douglass and His Strategic Application of Masculinity to African American Liberation" (PhD diss., Osaka University, June 2007).

[36] Park Soonyoung, "Doreisei Haishi Undō ni okeru Frederikku Dagurasu no Retorikaru Sutoratejī" [Frederick Douglass's Rhetorical Strategy in the Abolition Movement], in *Kokujin Kenkyū no Sekai* [The World of Black Studies], ed. Japan Black Studies Association (Chiba: Seiji Shobō, 2004): 3–11; Park, "Furederikku Dagurasu no 'Masukyuriniti' Senryaku: *Narrative* o Chūshin ni" [Frederick Douglass's Strategic Use of "Masculinity" in His *Narrative*], *Kokujin Kenkyū*, no. 74 (March 2005): 70–74; Park, "Songen o Kaketa Tatakai: Furederikku Dagurasu no 'Fight with Covey' o Megutte" [On Frederick Douglass's "Fight with Covey"], *Amerika Bunka Kenkyū no Kanōsei* no. 3 (May 2005): 11–18; Park, "Furederikku Dagurasu no Masukyuriniti Gensetsu: Anteberamu ki kara Namboku Sensō ki o Chūshin ni" [The Masculinity Discourse of Frederick Douglass: From the Antebellum to the Civil War Period], *Amerika Bunka Kenkyū no Kanōsei* no. 4 (May 2006): 11–20; Park, "Furederikku Dagurasu to Dorei no Uta" [Frederick Douglass and Slave Songs], in *Eigo Bungaku to Fōkuroa: Uta, Matsuri, Katari* [English Literature and Folklore: Songs, Festivities and Narratives], eds. Furomoto Atsuko and Matsumoto Noboru (Tokyo: Nan'undo Phoenix, 2008): 78–91; Park, "Transcription of Frederick Douglass's Unpublished Handwritten Manuscripts about Toussaint L'Ouverture with an Introduction," *Studies in Western Literature* (Otani University Western Literature Society) no. 30 (June 2010): 1–26; Park, "Silence and Eloquence in Frederick Douglass's 'The Heroic Slave' and Herman Melville's 'Benito Cereno': A Preliminary Study," *Journal of English Literature Association* (Otani University English Literature Society) no. 37 (2011): 1–22; Park, "Jinshu no Kabe o Koeru Kokoromi: Furederikku Dagurasu kara Baraku Obama e" [In Search of a Post-Racial Society: From Frederick Douglass to Barack Obama], in *Baraku Obama no Kotoba to Bungaku: Jiden ga Kataru Jinshu to Amerika* [Barack Obama and His Language and Literature: Autobiography on Race and America], ed. Satouchi Katsumi (Tokyo: Sairyūsha, 2011): 87–130; Park, "Frederick Douglass's Strident View on Black Masculinity in His Later Years," *Annual Memoirs of the Otani University Shin Buddhist Comprehensive Research Institute* no. 30 (March 2013): 141–155; Park, "Martin R. Delany and His Vision of Black Liberation in the Antebellum Period," *Treatises and Studies by the Faculty of Kinjo Gakuin University: Studies in Humanities* 11, no. 2 (March 2015): 112–122; Park, "Dorei Taikenki kara Jiden e: Furederikku Dagurasu ni okeru Katari no Jiyū" [From Slave Narrative to Autobiography: Frederick Douglass's Self-Emancipation in Authorship], *Kokujin Kenkyū* no. 85 (March 2016): 26–34.

autobiography, as a form of literature, could survive over time. Also, focusing on the relation between Douglass and photography, Park has elucidated Douglass's strategic use of three voices: oration as physical, autobiography as readable, and photography as visual voice; all three voices are moreover in a reciprocal and complementary relationship. She concludes that Douglass continues to exercise his authorship, power and influence over his self-image at the present time, which she terms the "eternalization" of the self-image of Frederick Douglass.[37]

Another important academic figure within the younger generation who researches Douglass is Hori Tomohiro, who earned a PhD on Douglass from Louisiana State University, with a thesis entitled "Contingent Constellations: Frederick Douglass and the Fact Freedom" in 2011. Reading *Narrative* and *Bondage and Freedom* alongside theories of freedom including, among others, those of Immanuel Kant and G. W. F. Hegel, Hori examines the process through which the young American slave Douglass discovers the idea of freedom and turns it into the primary object of his pursuit, to the point that he stakes his life on it in his famed battle with the overseer Edward Covey. Hori concludes that Douglass diverges from the Hegelian theory of freedom on important points such as the primacy of the state over individual liberty, among others. Hori has also written scholarly articles on Douglass.[38] Currently he is working on a complete translation of *Bondage and Freedom*, which has never been done in Japan.[39]

Among other experts on American literature with a long career, Ara Konomi contributed to Douglass studies in Japan in both literary and historical fields, publishing a book on African American literature that included her analysis of Douglass's works and introduced his speeches as historical material with annotation. In 2008, *Amerika no Kokujin Enzetsu Shū* (Anthology of African American speeches) included a translation of "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" (see fig. 8).[40]

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[37] Park Soonyoung, "Frederikku Dagurasu no Jiden ni okeru Kakikae: Jikozō no Kōchiku/ Saikōchiku to 'Eienka' e no Kokoromi" [Changes in Description in Frederick Douglass's Autobiographies: Construction/Reconstruction and Eternalization of Self-Image], *Eibungaku Kenkyū* no. 95 (December 2018): 35–51; Park, "Frederick Douglass and His Strategic Use of Photography as Visual Voice," *Treatises and Studies by the Faculty of Kinjo Gakuin University: Studies in Humanities* 16, no. 1 (September 2019): 95–109.

[38] Hori Tomohiro, "Furederikku Dagurasu to Josaia Henson: 19 Seiki Chūyō no 'Hankō tekina Dorei' Zō ni kansuru Ichi Kōsatsu" [Frederick Douglass and Josiah Henson: A Study of the Representation of Defiant Slaves in Mid-Nineteenth Century American Culture], *Jinbun Shakai Ronsō* [Studies in the Humanities Cultural Sciences] no. 30 (August 2013): 15–27; Hori, "19 Seiki Chuyō ni okeru 'Teikō suru Dorei' no Hyōshō: Furederikku Dagurasu to Harietto Bīchā Sutou no Kantekisuto teki Taiwa" [Representation of "Resisting Slaves" in Mid-Nineteenth Century: An Intertextual Conversation between Frederick Douglass and Harriet Beecher Stowe], in *Amerikan Baiorensu: Mieru Bōryoku, Mienai Bōryoku* [American Violence: Violence Seen and Unseen], eds. Gonda Kenji and Shimokōbe Michiko (Tokyo: Sairyūsha, 2013): 175–200; Hori, "Amerikano Dorei mo Sūkō o Utau: Furederikku Dagurasu ni okeru Romantishizumu no Bigaku to Jiyū no Rinri" [The American Slave, Too, Sings the Sublime: Romantic Aesthetics and the Ethics of Freedom in Frederick Douglass], *Jinbun Shakai Ronsō* no. 35 (February 2016): 21–35.

[39] Hori has already published first four chapters of his translation of *Bondage and Freedom*. Frederick Douglass, "Hon'yaku: Furederikku Dagurasu Cho 'Watashi no Reizoku to Watashi no Jiyū' (1855) Dai 1 shō-Dai 2 shō" [Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855), chaps. 1–2], trans. Hori Tomohiro, *Jinbun Shakai Kagaku Ronsō* [Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences] no. 6 (February 2019): 47–56; Frederick Douglass, "Hon'yaku: Furederikku Dagurasu Cho 'Watashi no Reizoku to Watashi no Jiyū' (1855) Dai 3 shō-Dai 4 shō" [Frederick Douglass *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855), chaps. 3–4], trans. Hori Tomohiro, *Jinbun Shakai Kagaku Ronsō* no. 7 (August 2019): 19–34.

[40] Ara Konomi, *Kokujin no Amerika: Tanjō no Monogatari* [Black People's America: A Story of Their Birth] (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1997); Ara, "Sureibu Pawā kara Burakku Pawā e: Furederikku Dagurasu 'Dorei ni totte no Shichigatsu Yokka towa Nani ka?" [From Slave Power to Black Power: Frederick Douglass "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?"], in *Shiryō de Yomu Amerika Bunka Shi 2: Dokuritsu Sensō kara Namboku Sensō made 1770s–1850s* [United States Cultural History: Reading Historical Sources], eds. Kamei Shunsuke, Suzuki Kenji and Ara Konomi

In 2009, the second translation of *Narrative* by Okada Seiichi from 1993, which had long been out of print, was reprinted (see fig. 6) because the 2008 election of President Barack Obama stimulated interest about African American history in Japan, not only among intellectuals but also non-academics. In fact, translations of Obama's writings sold well and quite a number of books on Obama were published in Japan after 2008.

The third translation of *Narrative* by the historian Higuchi Hayumi, in collaboration with seminar students at her university, came out in 2016 (see fig. 7).[41] According to Higuchi, she first started reading *Narrative* in her seminar course to promote her students' understanding of slavery in the context of American history as well as the humanity that Douglass championed in his narrative. Their translation project took five years.[42]

In June of 2018, the Japan Black Studies Association organized a symposium, the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial, at the sixty-fourth annual conference of the association held in Tokyo (see fig. 9). It included three American literature scholars: the chair and presenter Ara Konomi, Hori Tomohiro, and Park Soonyoung (the present author). In her presentation, "The Meaning of Haiti for Frederick Douglass," Ara—focusing on the Back-to-Africa movement, which promoted Black people in the United States going back to their "home" country and building their own independent nation—analyzed Douglass's political position of absolute opposition to the movement, and illustrated how his position and behavior politically affected the lives of African Americans in the twentieth century. In his presentation, "Rationalism and Self-Reliance: Frederick Douglass in the Nineteenth-Century American Deist Culture," Hori examined the formation and development of Douglass's rationalism in terms of the dissemination of deist culture since the Enlightenment and specifically elucidated the tenuous but striking interrelation between Douglass and the White intellectual Ralph Waldo Emerson. In her presentation, "Frederick Douglass's Genealogical Self-Fashioning and Reconstruction of Racial Relations in His Autobiographies," Park delineated Douglass's strategy of affirming the freedom and restoring the humanity of African Americans, focusing on his genealogical self-fashioning and his attempt to reconstruct racial power relations. In addition, she elucidated his strategic use of photography as a means of eternalization of his self-image.[43]

Concluding Remarks

Although Black studies in Japan goes back to as early as the end of the nineteenth century, Frederick Douglass studies in Japan has had a more than half-century career, and a number of articles and translations have been published in both Japanese and English, as mentioned above. Among Douglass's three autobiographies, only *Narrative* has been translated three times as a complete translation. Apparently, *Bondage and Freedom* and *Life and Times* require more time and minute knowledge of American history. However, American history specialists are not likely

(Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppan Kai, 2005): annotation 69–72, translation 73–81; Frederick Douglass, "Dorei ni totte no Shichigatsu Yokka towa Nani ka?" [What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July], trans. Ara Konomi in *Amerika no Kokujin Enzetsu Shū: Kingu, Marukomu X, Morisun hoka* [Anthology of African American Speeches: King, Malcom X, Morrison and others], trans. and ed. Ara Konomi (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2008): 49–98.

[41] Higuchi Hayumi trans. and ed., Namboku America Shi Kenkyū Kai, Department of History, School of Letters, Senshu University, trans. *Amerika no Dorei Sei o Ikiru: Furedrikku Dagurasu Jiden* [Living American Slavery: The Autobiography of Frederick Douglass] (Tokyo: Sairyū Sha, 2016).

[42] Higuchi Hayumi, afterword to *Amerika no Dorei Sei o Ikiru: Furedrikku Dagurasu Jiden*, by Frederick Douglass, trans. and ed. Higuchi Hayumi, 171–185.

[43] Abstracts of the symposium are carried in *Kokujin Kenkyū* no. 88 (March 2019): 12–24.

to translate these autobiographies because they focus on fact-oriented documents and value primary sources, and partly because all three works of Douglass are classified as autobiography, not historical documents. In fact, almost all translations of Douglass's works in Japan were done by the historians' American literature counterparts, with one exception, Higuchi Hayumi's version of *Narrative* in 2016. Moreover, translators in the literary field have admitted their reluctance to translate those two works because they would require much time and very detailed knowledge of American history; consequently, there is no complete translation of *Bondage and Freedom* or *Life and Times*, despite the fact that scholars have been aware of the significance of these works. For instance, Inazawa Hideo wrote in the afterword to his shorter version of the translation of *Life and Times* in 1970 that he hoped someday the younger generation would undertake a full translation.[44] In that bibliographical and historical context, Hori Tomohiro's ongoing project to translate *Bondage and Freedom* marks quite a significant moment in Frederick Douglass studies in Japan.

From 11 to 13 October of 2018, the present author took part in the international conference Frederick Douglass Across and Against Times, Places, and Disciplines, held in Paris, commemorating the bicentennial of Douglass's birth.[45] The author, the only presenter from Asia, gave a presentation about an overview of Frederick Douglass studies in Japan on the session entitled "Displacing Douglass." The center of Frederick Douglass studies is the United States; however, the author believes that studies of the life and works of Douglass should and will continue to progress and be critically engaged with more global perspectives and contexts in the current age of globalization in the twenty-first century.

[44] Inazawa Hideo, afterword to *Waga Shōgai to Jidai*, by Frederick Douglass, trans. Inazawa Hideo, 214.

[45] For more detailed information on the conference, see Park Soonyoung, "Furederikku Dagurasu Seitan 200 Shūnen Kinen Kokusaikaigi 'Frederick Douglass across and against Times, Places, and Disciplines' ni Sanka shite" [A Conference Report on "Frederick Douglass across and against Times, Places, and Disciplines" in Paris], *Kokujin Kenkyū* no. 88 (March 2019): 130–132.

Figures

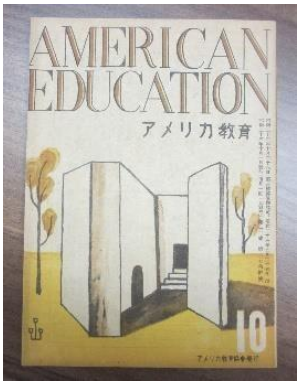

FIGURE 1. *Amerika Kyōiku* [American Education] 3, no. 6-7 combined edition (October 1948).

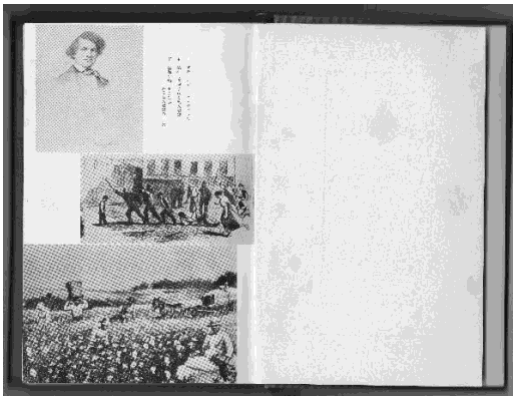

FIGURE 2. Frontispiece of first translation of *Narrative* translated by Karita Motoshi (1963).

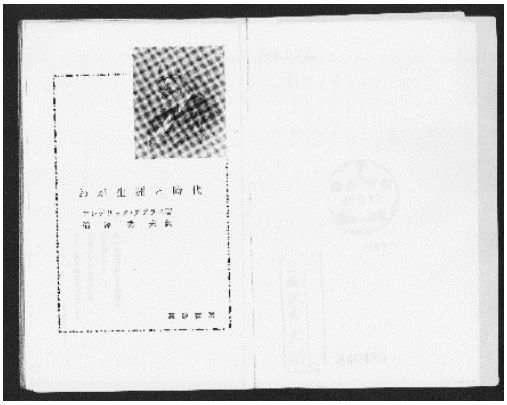

FIGURE 3. Frontispiece of abridged translation of *Life and Times* translated by Inazawa Hideo (1970).

FIGURE 4. Honda Sōzō, *Watashi wa Kokujin Dorei Datta: Furederikku Dagurasu no Monogatari* [I was a Black Slave: A Story of Frederick Douglass] (1987).

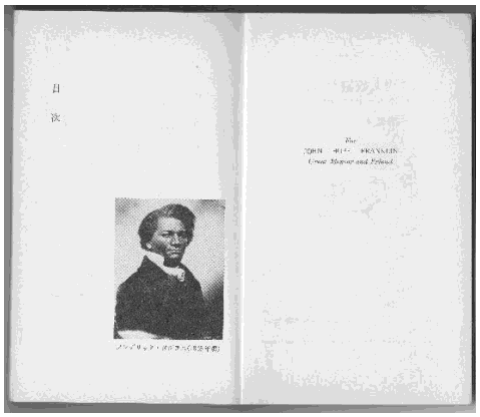

FIGURE 5. Frontispiece of *Watashi wa Kokujin Dorei Datta.*
On the right page it reads "*For* / JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN / *Great Mentor and Friend*."

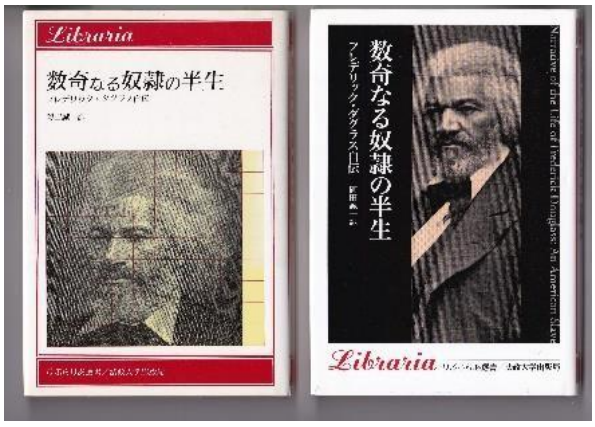

FIGURE 6. Second translation of *Narrative* of 1993 (left), reprinted version of 2009 (right) translated by Okada Seiichi.

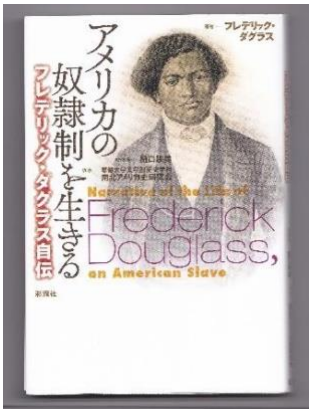

FIGURE 7. Third translation of *Narrative* translated by Higuchi Hayumi, et al. (2016).

FIGURE 8. *Amerika Kokujin Enzetsu Shū* [Anthology of African American Speeches] edited and translated by Ara Konomi (2008).

FIGURE 9. “Frederick Douglass Bicentennial” held by Japan Black Studies Association in Tokyo (June 23, 2018). (Photo courtesy of Furukawa Tetsushi)

New North Star, 2020; 2:33–44

"The Most Wonderful Man that America Has Ever Produced": Frederick Douglass and His Contemporary Biographers

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It is almost a truism among students of Frederick Douglass, the iconic nineteenth-century African American, that he was obsessed with self-presentation. This trait is probably best displayed in his careful management of the details he divulged about his life when he fashioned his three different autobiographies. Douglass did the same in shorter autobiographical presentations in other writings and numerous speeches, and in how he fashioned his visual representations through self-conscious posing for hundreds of photographs taken in his lifetime.[1]

One facet of this careful image management that has not received adequate scholarly examination is Douglass's interactions with his foremost contemporary biographers, Fredric May Holland and James M. Gregory, as well as several authors of shorter biographical sketches like Lydia Maria Child, William Wells Brown, and Irvine Garland Penn. In Douglass's correspondence and writings, there is revealing information about how most of these authors approached Douglass in advance and, given that opportunity, how he advised and in some cases assisted their research by sending them a highly selective sampling of pertinent materials in his possession. Just as Douglass conscientiously guarded his contemporary political capital and ultimate historical legacy in his autobiographical writings, he appears to have attempted to do likewise in the ways that he guided biographers during his lifetime.

The earliest Douglass biography[2] appeared in 1865 in *The Freedmen's Book*, a compilation of short stories, essays, poems, and biographical sketches, edited by Lydia Maria Child. A veteran writer on behalf of abolitionist, women's rights, and other reform causes, Child sought to showcase the accomplishments of African American men and women in this book intended as a primer for newly liberated slaves of all ages who attended schools set up by the various freedmen's aid societies and the newly created federal Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, better remembered as the Freedmen's Bureau. Modern scholars have observed that much of Child's book was "firmly grounded in the well-meaning tenets of Romantic education," yet fault it for "at times infantilizing African-American adults."[3]

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[1] The best recent treatment of this facet of Douglass's personality is found in Robert S. Levine, *The Lives of Frederick Douglass* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2016), 1–6, 25–30. For photographs, see Celeste-Marie Bernier, John Stauffer, and Zoe Trodd, eds., *Picturing Frederick Douglass: An Illustrated Biography of the Nineteenth-Century's Most Photographed American* (New York: Liveright, 2015) and Celeste-Marie Bernier and Bill E. Lawson, eds. *Pictures and Power: Imaging and Imagining Frederick Douglass, 1818–2018* (Liverpool, Eng.: Liverpool University Press, 2017).

[2] A case might be made that James McCune Smith's introduction to Douglass's second autobiography, *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855), had many elements of a biographical sketch. He supplied some details on Douglass's abolitionist career not discussed in the autobiography and assessed his speaking and writing style. John W. Blassingame, John R. McKivigan, and Peter P. Hinks, eds., *The Frederick Douglass Papers*, Series 2: *Autobiographical Writings*, 3 vols (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1999–2011), 2:19.

[3] Carolyn L. Karcher, *The First Woman of the Republic: A Cultural Biography of Lydia Maria Child* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1994), 496–502; Deborah Pickman Clifford, *Crusader for Freedom: A Life of Lydia Maria Child* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 272–74; Jessica Enoch, *Refiguring Rhetorical Education: Women Teaching African American, Native American, and Chicano/a Students, 1865–1911* (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008), 52; Lesley Ginsberg, "Race and Romantic Pedagogies in the Works of Lydia Maria Child,"

Child wrote Douglass for permission to include a sketch of his life in her volume, which he readily granted, stating, "I have always read with grateful pleasure what you have from time to time written on the question of slavery."[4] This statement was diplomatically phrased because Child was a follower of William Lloyd Garrison, whose abolitionist organization had acrimoniously banished Douglass from their camp when he endorsed antislavery political action in the early 1850s. Some of that hostility had ebbed during the Civil War, when abolitionists of all factions had rallied behind the Union cause, but Douglass could not be certain of Child's opinion of him. Douglass's longtime friend James McCune Smith, the New York physician, also had called out Child while editor of the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* in the 1840s for her condescending attitude toward free Blacks.[5]

It is impossible to measure the impact of Douglass's ingratiation upon the contents of Child's twenty-page sketch of Douglass's life, which focused mainly on his slave youth and initial response to becoming free. Child seems to have relied largely on Douglass's first autobiography, the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845), and, like that book, gave only cursory attention to his abolitionist career after escaping slavery in September 1839. By her emphasis, Child diplomatically avoided discussing the dispute over tactics that had separated Douglass from the Garrisonians. Child did praise Douglass as an eloquent speaker and his *Narrative* as "ably written." She also published in her primer a short statement of unknown derivation by Douglass that touted the accomplishments of African Americans while complaining that few Whites seemed prepared to acknowledge them.[6]

Douglass's second noteworthy biographer was William Wells Brown. Born a slave in Lexington, Kentucky, Brown spent much of his youth near St. Louis, Missouri, before fleeing slavery in 1834. He had been employed as a lecturer for the Western New York and Massachusetts Anti-Slavery societies between 1843 and 1849, and been active in many reform movements, advocating temperance, women's rights, and prison reform, as well as abolition. Brown published a number of historical books concerning Blacks and slavery, beginning in 1847 with his autobiography, *Narrative of William W. Brown, A Fugitive Slave.* His first history, *The Black Man, His Antecedents, His Genius, and His Achievements,* appeared in 1863 and ran through ten editions in three years. His best-known literary production was the novel *Clotel,* written while touring Great Britain in the early 1850s.[7]

Brown had entered the abolitionist ranks in the early 1840s, at nearly the same moment as Douglass, but his reputation rose more slowly. The two men had occasionally shared the same platforms, and Douglass had praised Brown in his newspaper columns. Although Brown remained a faithful Garrisonian in the 1850s, personal rather than ideological issues drove a deep wedge between him and Douglass. Brown publicly charged that Douglass had disparaged him in correspondence with his English antislavery friends, and the two men were estranged until 1862,

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in *Romantic Education in Nineteenth-Century American Literature: National and Transatlantic Contexts,* ed. Monika M. Elbert and Lesley Ginsberg (New York: Routledge, 2014), 139, 148–49.

[4] Douglass to Lydia Maria Child, 30 July 1865, in John R. McKivigan, ed., *The Frederick Douglass Papers,* Series 3: *Correspondence,* 2 vols. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2009–), 2:491–93.

[5] Karcher, *First Woman,* 278–79, 527; James M. McPherson, *The Struggle for Equality: Abolitionists and the Negro in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964), 104–06.

[6] Lydia Maria Child, *The Freedmen's Book* (1865; Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1869), 156–76, 93.

[7] Ezra Greenspan, *William Wells Brown: An African American Life* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2014); R. J. M. Blackett, *Beating Against the Barriers: The Lives of Six Nineteenth-Century Afro-Americans* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986), 45, 48, 95–96, 101–02; Jane H. Pease and William H. Pease, *They Who Would Be Free: Blacks' Search for Freedom, 1830-1861* (New York: Atheneum, 1974), 35, 42, 50–51.

when they came together to pressure the Lincoln administration to adopt emancipation as a Civil War goal.[8]

Brown portrayed Douglass first in his *The Black Man,* technically earning him, rather than Child, the accolade of Douglass's first biographer. Douglass praised Brown's book effusively in *Douglass' Monthly,* arguing, "It should find its way into every school library—and indeed, every home in the land—especially should every colored man possess it."[9] Brown substantially redrafted his biographical sketch of Douglass for his longer history of African Americans, *The Rising Son; or, The Antecedents and Achievements of the Colored Race* (1874). Brown's later account of Douglass's life was included in a section at that book's conclusion, entitled "Representative Men and Women," which contained short biographies of eighty-one African Americans. Only Benjamin Banneker was accorded more space than Douglass by Brown.[10]

Speaking from shared personal experience, Brown began his piece with the declaration "Born and brought up under the institution of slavery, which denied its victims the right of developing those natural powers that adorn the children of men, and distinguish them from the beasts of the forest,—an institution that gave a premium to ignorance, and made intelligence a crime, when the possessor was a negro,—Frederick Douglass is, indeed, the most wonderful man that America has ever produced, white or black"[11]

While Child had mildly praised Douglass's *Narrative,* Brown observed that the book had given "a new impetus to the black man's literature. All other stories of fugitive slaves faded away before the beautifully written, highly-descriptive, and thrilling memoir of Frederick Douglass."[12] As an abolitionist lecturer, Brown contended that Douglass "made more persons angry, and pleased more, than any other man. He was praised, and he was censured. He made them laugh, he made them weep, and he made them swear. . . . He awakened an interest in the hearts of thousands who before were dead to the slave and his condition."[13] Brown described Douglass as "one of the best mimics of the age, and possessing great dramatic powers; had he taken up the sock and buskin, instead of becoming a lecturer, he would have made as fine a Coriolanus as ever trod the stage."[14]

One new facet of Douglass's career that had not been a subject of Child's biographical sketch was his achievements as a journalist. This was perhaps because Douglass's founding of his own newspaper had been a precipitant of his eventual ideological break from Child's Garrisonian faction. Brown, to the contrary, regarded this as an important landmark. In his sketch of Douglass, he added an effusive assessment of Douglass as a journalist:

> The commencement of the publication of the 'North Star' was the beginning of a new era in the black man's literature. Mr. Douglass's well-earned fame gave his paper at once a place with the first journals in the country; and he drew around him a corps of contributors and correspondents from Europe, as well as all parts of America and the West Indies, that made its columns rich with the current news of the world. . . . Of all his labors . . . we regard Mr. Douglass's efforts as publisher and editor as most useful to his race. For sixteen years,

[8] Greenspan, *William Wells Brown,* 112, 123, 161, 194–95, 318–20, 336–38.
[9] As quoted in Greenspan, *William Wells Brown,* 388.
[10] William Wells Brown, *The Black Man: His Antecedents, His Genius, and His Achievements* (New York: R. F. Wallcut, 1863), 180–87; William Wells Brown, *The Rising Son: The Antecedents and Advancement of the Colored Race* (1873; Boston: A. G, Brown & Company, 1882), 435–40.
[11] Brown, *Rising Son,* 435–36.
[12] Brown, *Black Man,* 180; Brown, *Rising Son,* 436.
[13] Brown, *Black Man,* 182; Brown, *Rising Son,* 437.
[14] Brown, *Black Man,* 182–83; Brown, *Rising Son,* 438.

> against much opposition, single-handed and alone, he demonstrated the fact that the American colored man was equal to the white in conducting a useful and popular journal.[15]

The reconciliation between the two African American abolitionists during the Civil War and the praise that Douglass gave to *The Black Man* probably influenced Brown to offer such a high appraisal of his subject's abilities and achievements in *The Rising Son.*[16]

Douglass's next biographer was the Black educator Irvine Garland Penn, who published *The Afro-American Press, and Its Editors* in 1891 to promote the welfare of African American journalism. Born in 1867, Penn grew up in Lynchburg, Virginia, and dropped out of high school to begin writing for a number of Black newspapers. He returned to school and eventually earned his master's degree from Rust College. Penn then settled in Lynchburg and became a teacher and eventually a high school principal there. He continued his interest in journalism, leading him to write the *Afro-American Press,* published by Willey and Company in 1891.[17]

The first part of Penn's book contained short histories of newspapers and magazines edited by African Americans, beginning with the pioneer *Freedom's Journal* in the 1820s and continuing to those still in print in the 1880s. Most of Penn's work was devoted to biographical sketches of active African newspaper editors and journalists, but because Douglass had formally retired from that field, Penn described him in an introductory section of the book focused on the pre–Civil War era.[18]

About Douglass and his first newspaper, Penn wrote, "The North Star was conducted on a much higher plane than any of the preceding publications. Mr. Douglass had by his eloquent appeals on behalf of the Abolition cause, created a wide-spread sentiment, and he was known as an orator. While much of his time was spent on the rostrum in behalf of Abolition, yet many say his best and most effective work for freedom was as editor, in the publication of the North Star at Rochester, New York."[19]

Penn portrayed Douglass as possessing a wide array of talents: "Mr. Douglass was what is hard to find in any one man,—a good speaker, as well as effective, able, and logical writer. There is no man to-day who is a Douglass with the quill and upon the rostrum."[20] Penn reproduced almost a full page from Brown's *Rising Son* sketch of Douglass, concluding with the claim that "Frederick Douglass' ability as an editor and publisher has done more for the freedom and elevation of his race than all his platform appeals."[21]

No correspondence has survived between Douglass and Penn prior to publication of the *Afro-American Press.* However, the two men had been in contact because Penn had received and published in his book Douglass's answers to a series of question regarding the current health of the Black press. After the first printing of the *Afro-American Press,* Douglass had prepared a two-page endorsement to be added to later editions, which declared that the book "shows that, whatever else may be said of the colored race in the United States, they are guilty of no mental indifference, inactivity, or moral stagnation." Perhaps embarrassed by Penn's ebullient praise, Douglass chided

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[15] Brown, *Rising Son,* 439–40.

[16] Notably, Douglass omitted Brown from his discussion of other prominent Blacks in the abolitionist movement in his final autobiography, *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (1881).

[17] Joanne K. Harrison and Grant Harrison, *The Life and Times of Irvine Garland Penn* (Bloomington, Ind.: Xlibris, 2000).

[18] Harrison and Harrison, *Irvine Garland Penn,* 15–55, 231.

[19] Irvine Garland Penn, *The Afro-American Press and Its Editors* (Springfield, Mass.: Willey & Company, 1891), 68.

[20] Penn, *Afro-American Press,* 68.

[21] Penn, *Afro-American Press*, 69; Brown, *Rising Son,* 439.

the still only twenty-four-year-old Penn: "It is due to the author to say that his work would perhaps have been a little more complete and much more useful had he dealt less in indiscriminate praise. All his geese are swans!" In particular, Douglass felt Penn afforded equal attention to short-lived Black-edited newspapers as to those (such as his own) "which [had] battled for existence for a dozen years and at last achieved a well won success."[22]

After publication of his positive appraisal of Douglass in his book, Penn became a political ally and friend of the ageing leader. Penn would contribute a chapter to the iconic protest *Why the Colored Man Is Not in the World's Columbian Exposition* (1893), edited by Douglass and anti-lynching activist Ida B. Wells.[23] Penn felt confident enough in Douglass's friendship that he privately asked for a one-hundred-dollar loan in 1894 when he experienced a temporary financial reverse.[24]

Douglass's next biographer, Frederic May Holland, was a Harvard-educated Unitarian minister turned free thinker, greatly influenced by Theodore Parker. Holland gave up the pulpit after short stays in churches in various small Midwestern cities and settled in Concord, Massachusetts, to become a writer. A hard worker, he produced a long list of books and articles on literary and philosophical topics.[25] The biography of Frederick Douglass was far from Holland's usual topics. William Carlos Martyn, himself a minister turned biographer of Garrison and a dozen other nineteenth-century figures, recruited Holland for a biography series published by Funk & Wagnalls. Martyn placed Holland under a rushed scheduled to complete his manuscript.[26] The timing of the project was not fortuitous; Douglass had just accepted an appointment from Republican president Benjamin Harrison to serve as United States minister plenipotentiary to the Republic of Haiti. Holland first contacted Douglass in July 1889 and the latter was scheduled to depart for Port-au-Prince in September.[27]

Unfortunately, no copy of the first exchange of correspondence between Holland and Douglass has survived. The oldest extant letter records Holland replying enthusiastically to Douglass: "Of course I shall need all the help you will give." He requested that Douglass provide him copies of his lectures on woman suffrage and Abraham Lincoln, both topics of interest to future readers. Douglass appeared to have advised Holland to consult a copy of the 1881 edition of his third autobiography, *Life and Times*, and then sent him pamphlets of several of his speeches, which Holland promised "shall be carefully used and faithfully returned."[28]

A few days later, Holland wrote again, relating that he had acquired *Life and Times* and found it very useful for details on Douglass's slave days. Holland indicated that he had questions

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[22] Two drafts of this endorsement exist in manuscript form in the Library of Congress collection of Douglass's papers, but no printing of the book including that statement has been located. Miscellany File, reel 16, frames 445–47, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.

[23] Ida B. Wells et al, *The Reason Why the Colored American is Not in the World's Columbian Exposition* (Chicago: Ida B. Wells et al, 1893), 40–61.

[24] Penn to Douglass, 29 January, 15 May 1894, General Correspondence File, reel 7, frames 543–44, 774–75, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.

[25] Some of Holland's other titles included, *The Reign of the Stoics* (New York: C. P. Somerby, 1879), *Stories from Robert Browning* (London: G. Bell, 1882), and *The Rise of Intellectual Liberty from Thales to Copernicus* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1885); *Boston Christian Register*, 28 May 1908.

[26] Frederic May Holland to Douglass, 2 August 1889, General Correspondence File, reel 4, frames 007–008, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.

[27] Due to trouble in arranging transportation with the U.S. Navy, Douglass did not depart for Haiti until 1 October 1889. William S. McFeely, *Frederick Douglass* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1991), 336–39.

[28] Frederic May Holland to Douglass, 28 July 1889, General Correspondence File, reel 5, frames 496–98, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.

for Douglass on antislavery politics and the controversy that occurred in the 1850s over a proposed industrial college for Blacks.[29] The very next day, Holland wrote again, regretting that his health would not permit him to visit Washington to interview Douglass in person, which he claimed would "deliver you from being asked many questions, which I shall be able in time to answer without troubling you."[30] He agreed with Douglass's observation, made in a lost letter, that "my main attention will be given to your career as an anti-slavery orator."[31] Holland said that his "main reliance" would be on the pamphlet texts of speeches Douglass had already sent and the manuscripts of other unpublished lectures that he hoped to receive. Obviously a quick study, Holland included a list of proposed chapter titles.[32]

In one of the few surviving letters from Douglass to Holland, the subject expressed regret to the biographer that he could not supply any manuscript speech texts: "It will take some time to have them revised and corrected from the newspaper reports, and even from my own manuscript, and as my going abroad involves considerable correspondence, I cannot give all the time to the matter I propose to send you."[33] Douglass promised to send as many as he could: "You shall have any lecture on Self Made Men, with such other papers as I think may serve you."[34] The subject, obviously, was intent on retaining a significant level of control over what he desired the biographer to examine. Douglass then supplied answers to many of the questions that Holland had previously posed to him. A few weeks later, Douglass departed for his diplomatic post in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

What followed was a nearly year-long break in correspondence (8 August 1889–30 July 1890). While Douglass was overseas, Holland worked prodigiously on the biography. Not only did he go through the materials Douglass supplied him, quoting copiously, but Holland solicited positive comments about Douglass from his old abolitionist associates. Only two weeks after Douglass returned to his home in the United States capital on a vacation to escape the heat of the Caribbean summer, Holland wrote to welcome him home. He promised Douglass the prompt return of all the materials the latter had supplied him. "I am sorry," Holland wrote, "to let them go, though I should not use them further for the book. That I finished some months ago, having enjoyed the work greatly and much improved my knowledge of American history."[35] Holland also said he could attempt to get the manuscript back from Funk & Wagnalls: "I should be glad to have you see it, if you wish."[36] He obtained a letter from his editor, Carlos Martyn, stating that the book would be published that fall following manuscripts of biographies of Wendell Phillips, Horace

[29] Holland to Douglass, 1 August 1889, General Correspondence File, reel 5, frames 505–07, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.
[30] Holland to Douglass, 2 August 1889, General Correspondence File, reel 4, frames 007–008, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.
[31] Holland to Douglass, 2 August 1889, General Correspondence File, reel 4, frames 007–008, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.
[32] Holland to Douglass, 2 August 1889, General Correspondence File, reel 4, frames 007–008, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.
[33] Douglass to Holland, 8 August 1889, General Correspondence File, reel 5, frames 514–16, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.
[34] Douglass to Holland, 8 August 1889, General Correspondence File, reel 5, frames 514–16, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.
[35] Holland to Douglass, 30 July 1890, General Correspondence File, reel 5, frames 723–24, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.
[36] Holland to Douglass, 30 July 1890, General Correspondence File, reel 5, frames 723–24, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.

Greeley, and William E. Dodge from the series "ahead of it."[37] J. F. Dillent, an editor at Funk & Wagnalls, encouraged Holland to "take advantage of Mr. Douglass' supervision" in revising the manuscript before publication "for the holiday season, that is December."[38] While still endeavoring to get the manuscript for Douglass to review, Holland wrote that he hoped his subject would not find evidence that it had been "badly hurried."[39]

In a lost letter sent sometime in August 1890, Douglass expressed his confidence in Holland's work, apparently without having examined it. Holland then requested a statement by Douglass to add to the manuscript still not set in type: "The life would be much more valuable if I could bring it down to date, by quoting your denial of the statement, still current in New York, that you that you were not cordially received by the Haytian government. Not to deny this is to admit it."[40] After laboring over several drafts, Douglass sent Holland a four-page account of his first year of diplomatic interaction with the Haitian government, which he characterized as "entirely cordial." Douglass blamed "certain papers in New York City and elsewhere for creating false rumors because they believed only a white man capable of representing the United States as an ambassador."[41]

In a letter dated 27 September 1890, Holland assured Douglass that he would be pleased by the forthcoming biography: "It is of course a biographer's duty to get all the information he can but not to put it all into print. I have not applied to any one who does not feel kindly and respectfully towards you; and I have heard nothing which seems prompted by prejudice or malice."[42] Holland referred to an address by Douglass at a recent abolitionist reunion in Boston that he had attended, possibly the only occasion that the biographer had seen his subject in the flesh.[43]

First published in late fall 1890, Holland's biography displayed evidence of thorough research into its subject's life. The originally projected twelve chapters had expanded to fifteen, with the emphasis heavily on Douglass's abolitionist career through the conclusion of the Civil War. Entitled *Frederick Douglass: The Colored Orator,* the volume quotes at considerable length from a wide range of Douglass's public speeches; Holland had heavily utilized the pamphlet and manuscript texts of addresses supplied to him by Douglass.[44] Holland also quoted frequently from all three of Douglass's autobiographies[45] and from letters Douglass wrote him while the biography was being written, including direct answers to the author's queries about specific issues.[46] Holland allowed more voices to speak in the volume. He researched and found numerous reports regarding

[37] Carlos Martyn to Holland, 5 August 1890, General Correspondence File, reel 5, frame 738, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.
[38] J. F. Dillent to Holland, 5 August 1890, General Correspondence File, reel 5, frame 737, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.
[39] Holland to Douglass, 1 September 1890, General Correspondence File, reel 5, frames 745–46, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.
[40] Holland to Douglass, 1 September 1890, General Correspondence File, reel 9, frames 068–069, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.
[41] Frederic May Holland, *Frederick Douglass: The Colored Orator* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1891), 385–89; Douglass to Holland, 10 September 1890, General Correspondence File, reel 9, frames 063–067, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.
[42] Holland to Douglass, 27 September 1890, General Correspondence File, reel 9, frames 069–070, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.
[43] Holland quoted from that address on 22 September 1890 in Tremont Temple in his biography. Holland, *Frederick Douglass*, 390.
[44] Holland, *Frederick Douglass*, 191–94, 194–98, 207–10, 233–39, 250–55, 257–61, 268–69, 270–71, 290–94, 297–98, 320–23, 330–31, 335–38, 381.
[45] Holland, *Frederick Douglass*, 84–85, 103–06, 112–13, 130–32, 201, 262–64, 301–06, 338.
[46] Holland, *Frederick Douglass*, 201–02, 385–89.

Douglass in copies of Garrison's *Boston Liberator*.[47] Garrison's letters, compiled and published by his sons, also are quoted by Holland.[48] As promised, Holland had tracked down two of the dwindling ranks of abolitionists, Sally Holley and Lucy N. Coleman, for testimonials to Douglass's abilities.[49] Conspicuously absent from Holland's work are quotations from any of Douglass's newspapers or his 1853 novella, *The Heroic Slave*.[50]

The biography by Holland offers only scattered interpretations of its subject. Holland observed that the young Douglass had been exposed to "some of the best, as well as the worst, aspects of slavery."[51] At Douglass's coaching, Holland adopted a critical view of the Garrisonians' nonresistant tactics and a positive one toward political abolitionists. On the politics of emancipation during the Civil War, Holland relied mainly on Douglass's *Life and Times,* which expressed a more favorable attitude toward Abraham Lincoln than Douglass voiced at other periods.[52] In his interpretation of post–Civil War years, Holland often seemed oblivious to the problems created for African Americans by the failure of Reconstruction: "The twenty-five years since April 1865, occupy but three chapters; for this last period is by no means as rich as its predecessor in great events. It has been one of those happy times, when but little takes place which is intensely interesting, and Douglass has had but little chance to make history, though he has done much to make presidents."[53] While Holland does briefly quote Douglass's speeches attacking the rise of lynching in the 1880s and 1890s,[54] he also injected his own more regressive opinion that the South's "memory of the misrule of the carpet-baggers will grow fainter; and she finally will be able to see that even the illiterate voter is not so dangerous a citizen in a republic as the man who has not this reason to interest himself in its welfare."[55]

While that latter remark certainly would not have pleased Douglass, on the whole, he strongly approved of Holland's work. In 20 April 1891, Holland responded to a now lost letter from Douglass. Holland declared, "I am delighted to find that you and Mrs. Douglass like the book. My great anxiety has been [that] I should fail to make proper return for your aid and hospitality. I have never said so much about that as I really feel."[56] In correspondence with his daughter Rosetta, Douglass described the new biography as "the best written sketch of my life yet written by any outsider and says things of me that I never could had said myself, although they may be true. He has done me right . . . about my differences with the Garrisonians and for that he is entitled to my thanks."[57] Douglass purchased and distributed the volume widely. Holland's

[47] Holland, *Frederick Douglass*, 113, 115–16, 119–20, 279, 313.
[48] Holland, *Frederick Douglass*, 154–57, 163–64.
[49] Holland, *Frederick Douglass*, 93–94, 221–24, 226–29, 318–20.
[50] These works are mentioned only in passing, perhaps because Douglass was unable to supply Holland with access to them. Holland, *Frederick Douglass*, 220.
[51] Holland, *Frederick Douglass*, 31.
[52] Holland, *Frederick Douglass*, 303–06. For Douglass's shifting appraisal of Lincoln, see Levine, *Lives of Frederick Douglass*, 179–239.
[53] Holland, *Frederick Douglass*, 399.
[54] Holland, *Frederick Douglass*, 358, 374–79.
[55] Holland, *Frederick Douglass*, 381–82. Holland's conservatism on this issue increased after Douglass's death. In 1900, he wrote in a new book—ironically entitled *Liberty*—that the North had made a mistake in enfranchising uneducated freedmen and expressed "deep regret that emancipation was not gained peaceably and gradually." Frederic May Holland, *Liberty in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1899), 124.
[56] Holland to Douglass, 20 April 1891, General Correspondence File, reel 6, frames 78–80, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.
[57] Douglass to Rosetta Douglass Sprague, 4 April 1891, General Correspondence File, reel 32, frames 187–88, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress. Also see Douglass to Lewis H. Douglass, 30 March 1891, General Correspondence File, reel 32, frames 185–86, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.

biography also inspired Douglass to revise his *Life and Times* in 1892 after he finished his service as ambassador to Haiti.[58] In the expanded second edition of *Life and Times,* Douglass praised the "scrupulous justice done me" in Holland's biography, but acknowledged his desire to make an additional "recital of my life." In an observation that Robert Levine also has highlighted, Douglass confessed that "like most men who give the world their autobiographies I wish my story to be told as favorably towards myself as it can be with a due regard to truth."[59]

Holland's background as a retired White minister turned writer stands in considerable contrast to that of Douglass's final contemporary biographer, James Monroe Gregory, a politically active African American and Howard University professor. Gregory was born in Lexington, Virginia, in 1851 to free Black parents who removed their family to Cleveland, Ohio, in 1859. Growing up and being educated in a number of Midwestern communities, Gregory then attended the Preparatory Department of Oberlin College for two years while also volunteering as a teacher of freedmen during the summers. General O. O. Howard, head of the Freedmen's Bureau, persuaded the still teenaged Gregory to become an instructor at the preparatory school attached to the newly launched Howard University while simultaneously finishing his bachelor's degree there. Graduating in 1872, Gregory remained on at Howard, first as a faculty member teaching Latin and then as dean of the collegiate department. Douglass was a trustee of Howard during these years and certainly took note of the aspiring young African American academic.[60] Douglass hosted an informal Sunday afternoon salon at his Cedar Hill home that Gregory and many other Black Howard instructors regularly attended.[61] Both men also attended services at the First Congregational Church in Washington, presided over by the Reverend Jeremiah E. Rankin, who became Howard's president in 1890.[62]

Although of different generations, Douglass and Gregory were both prominent leaders in the African American community of the District of Columbia; Gregory appeared on the same stage as Douglass at many events.[63] Most noteworthy, Gregory had introduced the elder leader at the famous 1883 public meeting where Douglass had denounced the U.S. Supreme Court for its overturning of the 1875 Civil Rights Act.[64] At that gathering, Gregory had described Douglass as "the one leader to whom the colored people had always looked in every emergency, and who had always been found equal to every emergency."[65]

It has not been possible to confirm when Gregory launched his biography of Douglass. His publisher was the small firm of Willey & Company, based in Springfield, Massachusetts. The company was operated by English immigrant printer John Stephen Willey along with his wife,

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[58] I agree with Robert Levine that the success of Holland's book helped inspire Douglass to undertake the 1892 revision of his *Life and Times*. Levine, *Lives of Frederick Douglass,* 303. Also see Douglass to Rosetta Douglass Sprague, 4 April 1891, General Correspondence File, reel 32, frames 187–88, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.

[59] John R. McKivigan, ed., *The Frederick Douglass Papers,* Series 2: *Autobiographical Writings*, 3 vols. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1999–2012), 3:379, 377; Levine, *Lives of Frederick Douglass,* 303.

[60] John W. Blassingame and John R. McKivigan, eds., *The Frederick Douglass Papers,* Series 1: *Speeches, Debates, and Interviews*, 5 vols. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1979–92), 5:170; Rayford W. Logan, *Howard University: The First Hundred Years, 1867–1967* (New York: New York University Press, 1969), 36, 38, 77–79, 92, 110–11.

[61] James Monroe Gregory, *Frederick Douglass, the Orator* (Springfield, Mass.: Willey & Company, 1893), 209; John Muller, *Frederick Douglass in Washington, D.C.: Lion of Anacostia* (Charleston, S.C.: The History Press, 2012), 111.

[62] Logan, *Howard University,* 110–11.

[63] Blassingame and McKivigan, *Douglass Papers,* ser. 1, 5:52, 170, 213

[64] Blassingame and McKivigan, *Douglass Papers,* ser. 1, 5:110.

[65] *Proceedings of the Civil Rights Mass-Meeting Held at Lincoln Hall, October 22, 1883; Speeches of Hon. Frederick Douglass and Robert G. Ingersoll* (Washington, D.C.: C. P. Farrell, 1883), 45.

Catherine. Mainly a publisher of religious volumes, Willey & Company had also printed Penn's *Afro-American Press* and Alexander Crummell's *Africa and America: Address and Discourses*, both in 1891. Although small, the firm advertised itself in the 1890s as the publisher of "great Race Books."[66]

Douglass had resigned his diplomatic post in Haiti in July 1891 and returned to his Cedar Hill home in the Anacostia neighborhood of the District of Columbia. He traveled very little for the remainder of that year. In 1892, by contrast, Douglass conducted a speaking tour of the Northeast in March and of Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama in May; attended the Republican National Convention in Minneapolis in June; and campaigned for Harrison's reelection in New York in October.[67] Despite the increased travelling by Douglass, Gregory would have had numerous opportunities to meet and interview his subject at various locations in Washington. This fact probably accounts for the dearth of Gregory–Douglass correspondence compared to the large body exchanged between Holland and Douglass.

The one surviving letter was written on 6 March 1893, shortly before Douglass relocated to Chicago for a year-long residence there as commissioner of the Haitian government's pavilion at the World's Columbian Exposition. This letter reveals that Gregory had shown the biography manuscript to Douglass before submitting it to Willey and offered to "make any corrections you may suggest."[68]

Other clues about Douglass's direct influence on Gregory's work can be inferred from the book itself. The volume had an introduction written by William S. Scarborough, professor at Wilberforce College. When the biography was first announced, Scarborough noted that "all became expectant, and felt that a worthier chronicler or a worthier sire could not be found."[69] Scarborough and Douglass were political allies and the former man's statement hints that while composing the biography Gregory was subjected to social pressure from Douglass's wide circle of admirers to make his appraisal positive. Scarborough reinforced the book's emphasis on Douglass's skill as an orator, comparing him favorably to classical Greeks like Themistocles, Pericles, and Demosthenes, and to great American speakers such as Charles Sumner, James G. Blaine, Roscoe Conkling, William Lloyd Garrison, and Wendell Phillips.[70] Another relevant clue in the book is found in Gregory's short preface, where he declared that Douglass's "speeches and lectures have been carefully examined, and the best selections from these incorporated in the biography."[71] Most likely, Douglass had supplied Gregory with the same carefully selected and edited materials returned to him by the conscientious Holland.

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[66] Penn to Douglass, 14 September 1892, General Correspondence File, reel 6, frames 667–69, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress; Harrison and Harrison, *Irvine Garland Penn*, 39; 1860 U.S. Census, New York, Oneida County, 80; 1905 New York State Census, New York County, 25; 1910 U.S. Census, New York, New York County, 147; *The National Corporation Reporter: A Weekly Journal Devoted to the Interests of Business and Municipal Corporations, Finance and Commerce* (Chicago: The United States Corporation Bureau, 1893–1894), 249; *Massachusetts Birth Records, 1840–1915*, Ancestry.com; *U.S. City Directories, 1822–1995*, Ancestry.com; *New York, New York City Marriage Records, 1829–1940*, FamilySearch.org; *New York, New York City Municipal Deaths, 1795–1949*, FamilySearch.org; FindAGrave.com.

[67] Blassingame and McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 1, 5:xxvi–xxviii.

[68] James M. Gregory to Douglass, 6 March 1893, General Correspondence File, reel 9, frame 092, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.

[69] Gregory, *Frederick Douglass*, 5.

[70] Gregory, *Frederick Douglass*, n.p.

[71] Gregory, *Frederick Douglass*, n.p. For Scarborough's friendship with Douglass, see William S, Scarborough to Douglass, 21 May 1891, General Correspondence File, reel 6, frames 108–09, Douglass Papers, Library of Congress.

Gregory's book was much shorter and less analytical than Holland's. More than half of Gregory's work was composed of direct quotations from Douglass's speeches, autobiographies, and journalism; some of Douglass's shorter works are quoted in their entirety. Many of these selections also had been featured in Holland's book, but interesting new additions by Gregory included a long lecture by Douglass on his travels in Europe and Egypt in 1886–87, excerpts from several of his District of Columbia Emancipation Day orations in the 1880s, a memorial service for Ulysses S. Grant, and Douglass's address to the 1883 National Convention of Colored Men in Louisville, Kentucky.

While Holland strove to examine the full range of Douglass's public career, Gregory's biography seems explicitly focused on assessing his subject's abilities as a public speaker. Gregory observed the significant change in Douglass's speaking style after the Civil War, when he shifted from mainly speaking extemporaneously to reading from prepared manuscripts. Gregory conceded a diminishment in Douglass's eloquence, but observed that the new technique led him "to investigate more extensively the subjects on which he wrote, and to take more time for preparation; and thus made his speeches more complete."[72] Gregory compared the later speeches by Douglass to those of Webster and Burke. Like those "great masters," Douglass's orations had "so much beauty of expression, elegance of diction, dignity of thought, and elevation of moral feeling that the most happy and lasting effect is produced upon the mind of the reader."[73]

One area in which Gregory's biography exceeded Holland's was in its intimacy with its subject. Gregory's biography contained interesting chapters on Douglass's children, most of whom he knew personally, and on his subject's home life in Cedar Hill. Gregory also offered readers more insight than had Holland on Douglass's personality. Among Gregory's observations was that Douglass was "of a bright and buoyant disposition at home as well as in the public [. . .] a man of temperate habits and strict in his business engagements [. . .] frank and fearless in expressing his views even though they bring him into sharp antagonism with those who hold different opinions."[74] Gregory adopted Douglass's oft-repeated paean to self-made men and showed how it fit its author, a former slave, better than most others, concluding, "If Mr. Douglass had enjoyed the same advantages enjoyed by his white contemporaries, and if the same opportunities for advancement had been open to him, what public position in this country might he not have filled, not even excluding the presidency?"[75] Combining his two emphases on Douglass as a speaker and as an exemplary leader, Gregory concluded the biography with the declaration "He will always be an inspiration to the struggling youth who are ambitious to win distinction, and he will always be regarded as a model of true eloquence."[76] Almost without question, Gregory was one of those ambitious young African Americans inspired by Douglass. A financial scandal unfortunately cut short Gregory's career at Howard only two years after Douglass's death in 1895. He eventually resumed teaching in Bordentown, New Jersey, but never authored a second book or wielded political influence.

There are two significant conclusions that can be reached from this brief survey of Douglass's relations with his five contemporary biographers. We know that Douglass was very concerned about his historical legacy, and in every case except Brown's we have evidence that Douglass worked to guide these biographers' assessment of his life. He did so by corresponding

[72] Gregory, *Frederick Douglass*, 94.
[73] Gregory, *Frederick Douglass*, 95.
[74] Gregory, *Frederick Douglass*, 211–12.
[75] Gregory, *Frederick Douglass*, 214.
[76] Gregory, *Frederick Douglass*, 215.

cordially with most of them, by answering their questions about facets of his past life, and, most importantly, by supplying those authors with what he felt were his best speeches and writings. By this strategy, Douglass helped ensure that his image in contemporary biographies was in line with that in his own autobiographical writing.

The second conclusion is that Douglass's handling of his later biographers, Holland and Gregory, through retaining control over their access to his documentary record, caused a probably unintended shift in the assessment of his contribution to the abolitionist and civil rights movements. Douglass's first biographers, Child, Brown, and Penn, all had given greater credit to their subject's achievements as an autobiographer and journalist than as an orator. With Holland and Gregory, the focus shifted dramatically to Douglass's oratorical accomplishments. It was not that Douglass deprecated his own achievements as a journalist; in *Life and Times,* he declared, "If I have at any time said or written that which is worth remembering or repeating," it was in his newspapers.[77] Instead, there was a practical reason for the shift in biographical emphasis to his oratory. As a consequence of an arson fire in 1872 that destroyed the copies of his three Rochester-based newspapers, Douglass could not supply Holland and Gregory with samples of his editorial works as he did his speeches. Even in his last autobiography, Douglass quoted principally from his speeches because they were most readily available to him. The next generation of Douglass biographers in the early decades of the twentieth century, Charles Chesnutt, Booker T. Washington, and W. E. B. Dubois, all picked up that theme, and Douglass's oratory becomes the talent they most heavily praised.[78] This emphasis on Douglass as an unmatched abolitionist public speaker would dominate scholarship for the next half-century or longer. Douglass's obsession with shaping his historical legacy ironically contributed to some of his greatest accomplishments, those as a writer and journalist, being significantly undervalued until the rediscovery of his *Narrative* in the 1960s.

[77] McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 2, 3:207.
[78] Levine, *Lives of Frederick Douglass*, 16–25.

New North Star, 2020; 2:45–60

Frederick Douglass in the United Kingdom: From the Free-Soil Principle to Free-Soil Abolition

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When Frederick Douglass embarked for the United Kingdom from Massachusetts in August 1845, he was, by and large, a faithful Garrisonian abolitionist. As a confidant of William Lloyd Garrison and a member of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, Douglass preached disunionism, practiced an anti-political come-outerism, and embraced moral suasion as a means of changing hearts and minds.[1] Soon after Douglass's return to the U.S. in April 1847, the personal affinity that Douglass and Garrison had built over the 1840s broke down during a lecture tour of the Midwest, and in the months following, their schism took on explicitly ideological and geographic registers, as Douglass moved from Massachusetts, the center of Garrisonian abolition (the "old organization"), to the burned-over district of western New York, where he quickly partnered with members of the "new organization," a distinctly political abolitionism that was growing in reach and influence.[2] Once he had settled in western New York in late 1847, Douglass further signaled his break from Garrisonianism by founding his own newspaper and by attending political conventions. By 1851, Douglass was ready to formally announce his "change of opinion" with regard to a central component of Garrisonian abolition: that the U.S. Constitution was inherently pro-slavery and that any attempt to seek abolition through political means was doomed to failure. Writing in the *North Star*, Douglass claimed instead that "it is the first duty of every American citizen . . . to use his *political* as well as his *moral* power" to seek the overthrow of the Slave Power.[3] Whereas most scholarship on Douglass's departure from Garrisonianism and his embrace of political abolition attends to the years following his trip to the U.K.,[4] this article joins

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[1] See, for instance, David W. Blight, "Garrisonian in Mind and Body," chap. 3 in *Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2018), 116–37. For scholarship that identifies the ways in which Douglass challenged or otherwise resisted Garrisonian ideology and practice during the years prior to his trip abroad, see Waldo E. Martin, *The Mind of Frederick Douglass* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 23–28, and Gary S. Selby, "The Limits of Accommodation: Frederick Douglass and the Garrisonian Abolitionists," *The Southern Communications Journal* 66, no. 1 (2000): 52–66.

[2] Aileen S. Kraditor, *Means and Ends in American Abolitionism: Garrison and His Critics on Strategy and Tactics, 1834–1850* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1969).

[3] "Change of Opinion Announced," *North Star,* 15 May 1851.

[4] For scholarship that presents the personal schism with Garrison as precipitating Douglass's political shift, see Benjamin Quarles, *Frederick Douglass* (New York: Atheneum, 1968), viii–ix, 70–79; Philip S. Foner, "Frederick Douglass," in *The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass, vol. II: Pre–Civil War Decade, 1850–1860* (New York: International Publishers, 1950), 48–66; William H. Pease and Jane H. Pease, "Boston Garrisonians and the Problem of Frederick Douglass," *Canadian Journal of History* 2, no. 2 (1967): 29–48; David W. Blight, *Frederick Douglass's Civil War: Keeping Faith in Jubilee* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 26–58; John R. McKivigan, "The Frederick Douglass–Gerrit Smith Friendship and Political Abolitionism in the 1850s," in *Frederick Douglass: New Literary and Historical Essays*, ed. Eric J. Sundquist (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 205–32; William S. McFeely, *Frederick Douglass* (New York; Norton, 1991), 146–62; Henry Mayer, *All on Fire: William Lloyd Garrison and the Abolition of Slavery* (New York: Norton, 1998), 371–74.

work by Paul Giles and James Oakes in approaching the trip to the U.K. as not simply the beginning of the end of Douglass's Garrisonianism, but also as the start of Douglass's investment in political abolitionism.[5] While it is apparent that Douglass chafed under the paternalism of British Garrisonians,[6] it is also apparent—though far less recognized—that Douglass, during his U.K. tour, started to take seriously political abolition.

I argue in what follows that Douglass's speeches and writings from his trip abroad articulate foundational elements of Free-Soilism, which, at its core, presented "free soil" as not simply landscapes free from bondage but also, and more importantly, as the means by which to destroy the Slave Power. Free-Soilism was the central ideological position of political abolition in the 1840s and 1850s, the banner of which was carried by the Liberty Party, the Free-Soil Party, and ultimately, the Republican Party. In general, Free-Soilers argued that the Slave Power controlled the federal government, which in turn propped up what Free-Soilers recognized as an unsustainable system that would collapse without federal support for its territorial expansion.[7] As Walter Johnson explains, the decreasing productivity of soils in the Old and Deep South, coupled with enslavers' increasing debts, meant that "in order to survive, slaveholders had to expand."[8] Free-Soilers, therefore, organized and agitated around ending the federal government's facilitation and encouragement of the Slave Power's growth, operating from the position that whereas the government was incapable of abolishing slavery in states where it was protected by state law, it could nonetheless stop slavery's growth into western territories. If the Slave Power were fully surrounded and hemmed in by free soil, and were thus unable to find a lifeline in the western territories, then—Free-Soilers believed—its thorough destruction would be imminent.[9]

Douglass's arrival in the U.K. came at the precise moment that free soil became a geopolitical flash-point within the struggle over slavery. The U.S. had just invaded Mexico, an

[5] Giles argues that Douglass's thinking about politics became far more sophisticated during his time in the U.K., in part through the influence of distinctly political abolitionists in the U.K. Paul Giles, "Narrative Reversals and Power Exchanges: Frederick Douglass and British Culture," *American Literature* 73, vol. 4 (2001): 779–810. See also Giles, "Douglass's Black Atlantic: Britain, Europe, Egypt," in *The Cambridge Companion to Frederick Douglass*, ed. Maurice Lee (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 132–45. Oakes claims that Douglass likely recognized during the U.K. trip that he had to take his message beyond the realm of Garrisonians in large part because the war against Mexico sparked an interest in politics that had previously lain dormant. James Oakes, *The Radical and the Republican: Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, and the Triumph of Antislavery Politics* (New York: Norton, 2007), 13–16.

[6] As Douglass's biographers have documented, Douglass resented the extent to which his U.K. hosts and handlers sought to influence his public message and keep it in line with Garrisonianism. See Blight, *Frederick Douglass*, 142–49.

[7] See David Brion Davis, *The Slave Power Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969) and Leonard L. Richards, *The Slave Power: The Free North and Southern Domination, 1780–1860* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000).

[8] Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013), 14. See also Edward E. Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2014) and Adam Wesley Dean, *An Agrarian Republic: Farming, Antislavery Politics, and Nature Parks in the Civil War Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 11–70.

[9] James Oakes, *Freedom National: The Destruction of Slavery in the United States, 1861–1865* (New York: Norton, 2013). For more on Free-Soilism ideologically and the third-parties that supported it, see Frederick J. Blue, *The Free Soilers: Third Party Politics, 1848–54* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973); Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Richard H. Sewall, *Ballots for Freedom: Antislavery Politics in the United States 1837–1860* (New York: Norton, 1980); and Jonathan H. Earle, *Jacksonian Antislavery and the Politics of Free Soil, 1824–1854* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

event which made apparent the Slave Power's territorial appetites as well as government support for its expansion, thereby necessitating that antislavery activists scale-up their attempts to circumscribe that growth. Douglass thus demonstrates an interest in Free-Soilism, in particular, at a time when, according to Jonathan Earle, "free soil took on far greater significance as a political movement devoted to barring slavery from the new territories."[10] As this essay seeks to demonstrate, Douglass repeatedly invokes and interrogates two of the main pillars of the movement: the free-soil principle and the cordon of freedom. A theory and a tactic, respectively, the free-soil principle and the cordon of freedom were central to Free-Soilism in so far as they presented certain topographies as antithetical to bondage and presumed that if such territory surrounded the Slave Power that it would be incapable of expanding and would quickly collapse. In what follows, I demonstrate that Douglass—during the first half of his trip, especially—repeatedly alludes to both the free-soil principle and the cordon of freedom in ways that show surprising approbation from a Garrisonian.[11] But rather than simply supporting Free-Soilism during his time abroad, Douglass's invocations of the free-soil principle and the cordon of freedom reveal a distinct ambivalence about antislavery politics, ambivalence that should be recognized not simply as lingering Garrisonian hostility to antislavery politics but rather as a commitment to transform Free-Soilism so as to make it more thoroughly abolitionist and anti-racist. Douglass's interests in and distinct articulations of the free-soil principle and the cordon of freedom during his time in the U.K., I argue, should be recognized as far more than initial and preliminary moves along Douglass's journey toward political abolition. Instead, we can see in Douglass's treatment of both of these foundational elements of Free-Soilism a commitment on Douglass's part to radicalize Free-Soilism, replacing its decidedly antislavery goals and liberalism with the antiracism, transnationalism, immediatism, and revolutionary horizon of abolition.[12] This commitment becomes especially visible in the 1850s, when Douglass publicly identifies as a political abolitionist while also explicitly critiquing the movement, a position which, this essay suggests, Douglass held from the very beginnings of his departure from Garrisonianism.[13]

The Case of James Somerset and the Free-Soil Principle

In October 1769, Virginia merchant and slaver Charles Stewart sailed from Boston to London, accompanied by James Somerset, who was born in West Africa and had been enslaved by

[10] Earle, *Jacksonian Antislavery*, 14.

[11] For more on Douglass's time in the U.K., see Alan J. Rice and Martin Crawford, eds., *Liberating Sojourn: Frederick Douglass and Transatlantic Reform* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1999); Fionnghuala Sweeney, *Frederick Douglass and the Atlantic World* (Liverpool, Eng.: Liverpool University Press, 2007); Tom Chaffin, *Giant's Causeway: Frederick Douglass's Irish Odyssey and the Making of an American Visionary* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014).

[12] This definition of abolition comes from Manisha Sinha, *The Slave's Cause: A History of Abolition* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2016), 1–5.

[13] As has been extensively documented, many Free-Soilers, especially former Democrats, were racist antislavery moderates. See, especially, Alexander Saxton, *The Rise and Fall of the White Republic: Class Politics and Mass Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (London: Verso, 1990), 195–201, 227–68, and David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 2007), 43–92. Douglass, himself, was certainly clear-eyed about the reactionary elements of the movement, writing in the *North Star* in the wake of the 1848 presidential election, "These men after all are not Abolitionists, and are not to be relied on as the leaders of the Anti-Slavery movement of this land." "The Presidential Campaign," *North Star*, 10 November 1848.

Stewart for approximately eight years.[14] Two years into their stay in England, Somerset escaped from Stewart's control and fled into London. Stewart, who had hired kidnappers before to track down fugitives in the U.S., immediately ordered the pursuit of Somerset, who was recaptured after fifty-six days. As demanded by Stewart, Somerset was incarcerated aboard the *Ann and Mary*, which was anchored in the Thames in anticipation of sailing for Jamaica, where Stewart planned to sell Somerset as punishment for escaping. Immediately after Somerset's incarceration, however, and before the ship departed, three British citizens—Thomas Walkin, Elizabeth Cade, and John Marlow—submitted an appeal to Chief Justice William Murray, Lord Mansfield, for a writ of *habeus corpus*, which Lord Mansfield granted. In a court case that would instantly reshape the transatlantic debate about slavery, Somerset's lawyers argued that because bondage violated natural law, an enslaved person who moved beyond jurisdictions where slavery was positively established could no longer be held legally in bondage. Somerset's lawyers presumed that people could be enslaved only in territories where bondage was protected by positive law and claimed that because freedom was humans' natural condition, that as soon as an enslaved person reached free soil, they could no longer be enslaved. Lord Mansfield upheld this position and ruled that Stewart had no claim on James Somerset. His ruling stated explicitly that slavery went against English common law and that Virginian law could not supersede U.K. jurisprudence. "The state of slavery," he explained, "is of such a nature, that it is incapable of being introduced on any reasons, moral or political. . . . It's so odious, that nothing can be suffered to support it, but positive law."[15]

Mansfield's decision in the *Somerset* case thus formally established in British law what was known as the free-soil principle, which stipulated that certain territories or regions are themselves constitutive of liberty and thus hostile to bondage. The free-soil principle presumes that as soon as an enslaved person sets foot on such territory—or even breathes its air—then they are instantly transformed into a free subject.[16] Popular throughout Europe, the free-soil principle had a particularly long history in England. William Harrison, for example, writing in 1593, explains that "such is the *privilege* of our countrie by the *especiall* grace of God, and bountie of our princes, that if any come hither from other realms, so soone as they set foot on land they become so free of condition as their masters, whereby all note of servile bondage is utterlie removed from them."[17] Similarly, Sir William Blackstone, writing in his *Commentaries* around the time of the *Somerset* decision, hailed the "spirit of liberty . . . so deeply implanted in our constitution, and rooted even in our very soil, that a slave or negro, the moment he lands in England, falls under the protection of the laws, and so far becomes a freeman."[18] In grounding his decision so explicitly in the tradition of the free-soil principle, Lord Mansfield echoed the appeals of Somerset's lawyers, one of whom, prominent antislavery activist Granville Sharp, had argued in *A Representation of the Injustice and Dangerous Tendency of Tolerating Slavery* (1769),

[14] This and the following information on Somerset come from Steven M. Wise, *Though the Heavens May Fall: The Landmark Trial that Led to the End of Human Slavery* (Cambridge, Mass.: Da Capo Press, 2005), 1–11.

[15] Quoted in William R. Cotter, "The Somerset Case and the Abolition of Slavery in England," *History* 79, no. 255 (1994): 35.

[16] See Sue Peabody and Keila Grinberg, "Free Soil: The Generation and Circulation of an Atlantic Legal Principle," *Slavery and Abolition* 32, no. 3 (2011): 331–39, and Stephen Alsford, "Urban Safe Havens for the Unfree in Medieval England: A Reconsideration," *Slavery and Abolition* 32, no. 3 (2011): 363–75.

[17] Quoted in Seymour Drescher, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 22. As bondage disappeared from the British Isles in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (while the practice expanded in its colonies), the British often sought to celebrate their entire territory as free soil.

[18] William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, 3rd ed., vol. 1 (Chicago: Callaghan and Company, 1884), 126.

a treatise that Jeannine Marie DeLombard has hailed as "a sort of brief for the *Somerset* case," that "a Slave therefore, on his coming to England, must be absolutely *free*, and not subject to any 'claims whatsoever of *perpetual service*,' on account of his former Slavery."[19] And another of Somerset's lawyers, Francis Hargrave, moreover, argued in the trial itself that England had "too pure an air for a slave to breathe in."[20]

As multiple scholars have noted, the *Somerset* decision inspired and empowered antislavery activists across the Atlantic for decades. Many interpreted the *Somerset* decision expansively, arguing that the ruling had effectively abolished slavery in England and across the British empire, presenting the free-soil principle as now coterminous with British territory.[21] T. B. Macaulay, for instance, in arguing for abolition in the West Indies, claimed that "there is freedom in the respiration of its air, and in the very contact of its soil!"[22] Although Lord Mansfield's decision did not in reality strike down slavery across the British empire, his ruling did help to intensify antislavery sentiment in both England and the North American colonies.

Antislavery factions in the U.S. would invoke Lord Mansfield's decision in debates over slavery's status, and enslaved people who had come into contact with territory where slavery was not protected by positive law petitioned—in the spirit of James Somerset—courts in both the North and South for their liberty.[23] *Commonwealth v. Aves* (1836), for example, freed the enslaved girl Med after her slavers brought her from New Orleans to Massachusetts, a decision which Paul Finkelman has described as "virtually a total application of *Somerset* to Massachusetts."[24] Whereas Southerners and slavery's apologists claimed that *Somerset* did not apply to the Northern U.S., many Free-Soilers argued not only that Northern courts should treat *Somerset* as precedent but also that the free-soil principle shaped the topographies of both the Northeast and the West. To give a couple examples out of many, Senator Charles Sumner praised the North for being "free as its bracing air,"[25] and Jermaine Loguen, who fled bondage in Kentucky and joined the political abolitionist movement in upstate New York, bemoaned the passage of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law as an "[endangerment to] the liberty of an American citizen who, for twenty years before it was enacted, has stood upon free soil, inhaling and exhaling the air of freedom."[26]

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[19] Jeannine Marie DeLombard, *Slavery on Trial: Law, Abolitionism, and Print Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 4; Granville Sharp, *A Representation of the Injustice and Dangerous Tendency of Tolerating Slavery; or of Admitting the Least Claim of Private Property in the Persons of Men, in England. In Four Parts* (London: Benjamin White, 1769), 158.

[20] Francis Hargrave, *An Argument in the Case of James Sommersett, a Negro, Lately Determined by the Court of King's Bench* (London: F. Hargrave, 1772), 45, quoted in Edlie L. Wong, *Neither Fugitive nor Free: Atlantic Slavery, Freedom Suits, and the Legal Culture of Travel* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 28.

[21] Peabody and Grinberg, "Free Soil," 336; Wise, *Though the Heavens*, 193; Drescher, *Abolition*, 102–7; Wong, *Neither Fugitive nor Free*, 19–21.

[22] *Report of the Committee of the Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery Throughout the British Dominions* (London: Richard Tayler, 1824), 78, quoted in Wong, *Neither Fugitive nor Free*, 21.

[23] Wong, *Neither Fugitive nor Free*, 27–28. See also Paul Finkelman, "*Commonwealth v. Aves* (1836)," in *Abolition and Antislavery: A Historical Encyclopedia of the American Mosaic*, eds. Peter Hinks and John R. McKivigan (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Greenwood, 2004), 85–87, and Finkelman, *An Imperfect Union: Slavery, Federalism, and Comity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1981), 101–25.

[24] Finkelman, *An Imperfect Union*, 113.

[25] Charles Sumner, "Antislavery Duties of the Whig Party, Speech at the Whig Convention of Massachusetts, in Faneuil Hall, Boston, September 23, 1846," in *The Works of Charles Sumner* 1 (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1875), 304.

[26] J. W. Loguen, "Letter to Governor Hunt," *Liberator*, 14 May 1852.

Douglass and the Status of Free Soil in the U.S. North

Frederick Douglass was certainly familiar with the *Somerset* decision and the free-soil principle prior to his trip, but it was not until he reached the U.K., as far as I have been able to determine, that he made public reference to either. This is not surprising, when one considers that Douglass, as he recounts in his *Narrative*, certainly did not feel as though his status was instantly transformed upon reaching the North, nor that Northern territory was thoroughly distinct from plantation topographies: he portrays New York City as perceptively hostile to Black people and New Bedford as providing only a "degree of safety."[27] Were the North, in Douglass's mind, free soil that transformed his legal status, moreover, Douglass would not have had to travel to the U.K. following the publication of his *Narrative* and the increased precarity that followed. Thus, it is in the U.K. that we see Douglass's first explicit reference to the *Somerset* decision, and, as this section details, it is from Britain that Douglass speaks back to readers in the Northern U.S. to insist that their territory lacks essential characteristics of truly free soil.

Douglass's first public allusions to the *Somerset* decision and the free-soil principle come in Limerick, just over two months after reaching the U.K. and as part of a speech in which Douglass explains that that he crossed the Atlantic because, as a fugitive, he is not safe anywhere in the U.S. It seems quite likely, therefore, that the story of James Somerset took on newly personal resonance for Douglass as he himself stepped on British soil and breathed its air. More pragmatically, when Douglass cites the *Somerset* decision and presents Britain as free soil, he engages in what Alan J. Rice describes as "strategic Anglophilia," a celebration of Britain that simultaneously critiques the U.S.[28] Douglass's presentations of Britain as free soil, this is to say, make explicit that the Northern U.S. is decidedly not free soil. As the reconstruction of his speech in the *Limerick Reporter* presents it, Douglass argued on 10 November 1845 that whereas "there was nothing like American slavery on the soil on which he now stood, . . . there was no one spot in all America upon which he could stand free."[29] Douglass continues by noting that an acquaintance of his had to flee to British-controlled Canada, "where alone on the American continent he could be safe."[30] Douglass and his friend, therefore, both recognized that free soil did not exist in the U.S. and thus, in the spirit of James Somerset, they sought freedom or protection in British territory.

From the free-soil principle, Douglass's Limerick speech then turns to the *Somerset* decision more directly, leaving behind his own anecdotal accounts and instead citing legal precedent. In doing so, he switches from the personal and the testimonial to a more legalistic approach, a rhetorical style that Jeannine Marie DeLombard has identified in Douglass's speech onboard the *Cambria* as he approached the U.K. and that would characterize his time abroad.[31] This legal mode is particularly evident in Douglass's Limerick speech when he includes a quotation from Irish nationalist John Philpot Curran, who was, notably, part of James Somerset's defense team. As Douglass explains,

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[27] John W. Blassingame, John R. McKivigan, and Peter P. Hinks, eds., *The Frederick Douglass Papers*, Series 2: *Autobiographical Writings*, 3 vols. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1999), 1:77.

[28] Alan J. Rice, *Radical Narratives of the Black Atlantic* (New York: Continuum, 2003), 172–87. For more on how England symbolized broadly within abolitionist discourse, see Elisa Tamarkin, *Anglophilia: Deference, Devotion, and Antebellum America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 178–246.

[29] John W. Blassingame and John R. McKivigan, eds., *The Frederick Douglass Papers*, Series 1: *Speeches, Debates, and Interviews*, 5 vols. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1979), 1:78, 79.

[30] Blassingame and McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 1, 1:81, 1:85.

[31] DeLombard, *Slavery on Trial*, 103.

> So true was it that the slave must leave his native soil to be free. In the language of Curran, their own orator—"I speak in the spirit of the British law which makes liberty commensurate with, and inseparable from British soil; which proclaims even to the stranger and sojourner, the moment he sets his foot on British earth, that the ground upon which he treads is holy, and consecrated by the genius of *universal emancipation*."[32]

Douglass here quotes from a 1794 speech of Curran, which itself invokes the free-soil principle in demanding emancipation for Irish Catholics.[33] The sentence that Douglass quotes, however, makes no reference to that specific context but instead speaks to the immediate emancipatory power of British soil, earth, and ground.

The effect of these references to the free-soil principle and to Curran, specifically, is not only to celebrate British antislavery or Anglo jurisprudence, but also to use the *Somerset* decision to bring into relief the extent to which the U.S. is decidedly not free soil. Douglass's references to *Somerset*, hard upon his arrival in the U.K., serve both to justify his own departure from the U.S. and to puncture the U.S. North's self-presentation as distinctly different from the slave states to the south. To emphasize this point, Douglass states, immediately after quoting Curran, that "if an American ever came among them speaking of the liberty of his country, let them make his cheek crimson by telling him that there is not a single spot in all his land where the sable man can stand free."[34] Despite decisions such as *Commonwealth v. Aves*, Douglass decidedly rejects the idea that *Somerset* applies to Massachusetts or that the free-soil principle reflects conditions in the U.S. North more generally. So long as the U.S. protects slavery anywhere within its boundaries, Douglass implies, truly free soil cannot exist.

In a letter to Garrison, written in Belfast on 1 January 1846, just prior to leaving Ireland for Scotland, Douglass again invokes the free-soil principle at the foundation of the *Somerset* case. In this instance, writing to readers of the *Liberator* about his time in Ireland, Douglass is even more explicit in stating that free soil does not exist in the U.S. Although he admits that he experienced instances of anti-Black racism in Ireland, he nonetheless contrasts the land and the people entirely favorably with the U.S. He notes that in Ireland he lived free from fear of being captured and rendered back to bondage, echoing the point he argued in Limerick that leaving the U.S. effected a complete transformation. "Behold the change!" writes Douglass. "Eleven days and a half gone, and I have crossed three thousand miles of the perilous deep. Instead of a democratic government, I am under a monarchical government. Instead of the bright blue sky of America, I am covered with the soft grey fog of the Emerald Isle. I breathe, and lo! the chattel becomes a man."[35] Douglass here invokes the presumption at the core of the free-soil principle, that a certain sort of "air makes free."[36] As he explains to readers of the *Liberator*, it is the first breaths of British air that transform him in a manner akin to his famous fight with Covey. But whereas in the context of the U.S. the fight with Covey is presented as an exceptional act, freedom is the normative condition of British topographies, embedded in the ground and contained within the air.

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[32] Blassingame and McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 1, 1:85.

[33] *The Speeches of the Right Honorable John Philpot Curran. Complete and Correct Edition. Edited, with Memoir and Historical Notes, by Thomas Davis, ESQ., M.R.I.A., Barrister-At-Law* (Dublin: James Duffy, 1845), 161–211.

[34] Blassingame and McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 1, 1:86.

[35] Frederick Douglass to William Lloyd Garrison, Dublin, 1 January 1846, in John R. McKivigan, ed., *The Frederick Douglass Papers*, Series 3: *Correspondence* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2009), 1:74. Douglass would reprint this letter in both *My Bondage and My Freedom* and *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*.

[36] Alsford, "Urban Safe Havens," 363.

The letter for American readers contains another comparative element that further emphasizes Douglass's point that free soil does not exist in the U.S. Ireland, explains Douglass, is characterized by "the entire absence of every thing that looked like prejudice against me, based on the color of my skin."[37] Douglass also describes the Irish as "animate[d] with a spirit of freedom," showing Black people "deep sympathy," "warm and generous co-operation," and "kind hospitality," while expressing "strong abhorrence of the slaveholders."[38] The free soil of Ireland, in Douglass's presentation, differs in noticeable ways from standard portraits of England. Beyond the free-soil principle, with its presumption that liberty is inherent to certain spaces, Ireland is marked by a populace whose sensibilities and actions create or further affirm free-soil conditions. Douglass, to this point, emphasizes expressions of sympathy and hospitality across the color line, coupled with desires to co-operate and thereby work together to advance freedom, as well as a perceptible hatred of enslavers. This is not simply liberty in a negative sense, or, put differently, free soil that merely lacks formal protection for slavery. It is particularly interesting that Douglass locates this decidedly positive example of free soil in Ireland, and not England. The Irish were, at the time of Douglass's visit, reeling from the Great Hunger, and many of the activists with whom Douglass came into contact in Ireland helped him to recognize that the famine was not simply a natural disaster but was more broadly an effect of what he would later identify as the "injustice and oppression" wrought by England on its colonial subject.[39] The Irish, it seems, subject to occupation and oppression themselves, recognize the imperative of creating the conditions of freedom. Douglass, moreover, in celebrating the Irish to his readers in the U.S., seems to reject the Anglo-Saxonism that shaped New England and that presented a commitment to liberty as the foremost feature of English people. As Nell Irvin Painter has demonstrated in *The History of White People*, the Anglo-Saxonism popular in the antebellum North, while it aligned with antislavery, also reflected anti-Blackness and the presumption that the English are the "natural rulers of other races."[40] Douglass's celebration of the Irish, in particular, refuses the exceptionalism of England and English people as naturally suited to liberty. In Ireland, this is to say, Douglass instead articulates a vision of truly free soil that is not only free of slavery but also free from the violence of Whiteness.

Douglass's letter to Garrison also includes an extended apostrophe to the landscapes of the United States that begins in a manner that calls to mind Free-Soilers' encomiums to the beautiful topographies of the Northern U.S. "In thinking of America," writes Douglass, "I sometimes find myself admiring her bright blue sky—her grand old woods—her fertile fields—her beautiful rivers—her mighty lakes, and star-crowned mountains."[41] Douglass's litany of beautiful and sublime landscapes is so thoroughly idealized that it comes close to a parody of Romantic aesthetics, what Paul Outka has called the "normative white male experiences of the natural world."[42] The normative discourse that Outka identifies is central to Free-Soilism, and it is not a stretch to imagine Douglass, in writing for the *Liberator*'s old-organization audience, as parodying Free-Soilism's environmental aesthetics. Douglass's apostrophe echoes, in particular, "A

[37] McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 3, 1:74.
[38] McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 3, 1:74.
[39] John R. McKivigan, *The Frederick Douglass Papers,* Series 2: *Autobiographical Writings,* 3 vols. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1999–2011), 3:401.
[40] Nell Irvin Painter, *The History of White People* (New York: Norton, 2010), 175.
[41] Frederick Douglass to William Lloyd Garrison, Dublin, 1 January 1846, in McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 3, 1:73.
[42] Paul Outka, *Race and Nature from Transcendentalism to the Harlem Renaissance* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 5.

Summons" by Free-Soiler John Greenleaf Whittier, whose poetry Douglass featured in the first issue of the *North Star*. "A Summons" protests the Gag Rule in a manner that suggests that the very topography of New England will resist the Slave Power:

> Oh, no; methinks from all her wild, green mountains;
> From valleys where her slumbering fathers lie;
> From her blue rivers and her welling fountains,
> And clear, cold sky;
>
> From her rough coast, and isles, which hungry Ocean
> Gnaws with his surges; from the fisher's skiff,
> With white sail swaying to the billows' motion
> Round rock and cliff;
>
> From the free fireside of her unbought farmer;
> From her free laborer at his loom and wheel;
> From the brown smith-shop, where, beneath the hammer,
> Rings the red steel.[43]

Although the composition of this poem predates Whittier's own break from Garrisonianism and his turn toward political abolition by roughly half a decade,[44] it nonetheless contains what would become an essential trope for Free-Soilers: the image of a fertile and beautiful North, whose plenty and ecological vitality are reflections of nature's acknowledgment of the superiority of free labor. As does Whittier, Douglass delivers what is effectively a topographical roll-call, surveying a landscape that resembles the free soil of New England that Whittier celebrates.

Unlike Whittier, however, who sustains his encomium across multiple stanzas, Douglass quickly punctures the idealized image of Northern topography that he constructed:

> But my rapture is soon checked, my joy is soon turned to mourning. When I remember that all is cursed with the infernal spirit of slaveholding, robbery, and wrong,— when I remember that with the waters of her noblest rivers, the tears of my brethren are borne to the ocean, disregarded and forgotten, and that her most fertile fields drink daily of the warm blood of my outraged sisters, I am filled with unutterable loathing, and led to reproach myself that any thing could fall from my lips in praise of such a land. America will not allow her children to love her. She seems bent on compelling those who would be her warmest friends, to be her worst enemies.[45]

[43] John Greenleaf Whittier, "A Summons," in *The Poetical Works of John Greenleaf Whittier, Volume III: Antislavery Poems and Songs of Labor and Reform* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1892), 42.
[44] See John B. Pickard, "John Greenleaf Whittier and the Abolitionist Schism of 1840," *The New England Quarterly* 37, no. 2 (1964): 250–54.
[45] Frederick Douglass to William Lloyd Garrison, Dublin, 1 January 1846, in McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 3, 1:73.

As Ian Finseth has demonstrated in his analysis of this passage, the tone shifts quickly from pastoral idyll to terror so as to "[link] natural plenty to racial domination and violence."[46] But whereas Finseth presents Douglass here subverting a distinctly Southern pastoralism by suggesting that the wealth and beauty of Southern landscapes are thoroughly corrupted by violence and exploitation,[47] I want to suggest that Douglass also addresses Northern landscapes, and in so doing simultaneously critiques the pastoralism of Free-Soilers.[48] The entire topography of the U.S., Douglass suggests with his emphasis on *all*, is "cursed," as the related human and ecological violence of plantation slavery exceeds the boundaries of the slave states. Such a position distinguishes Douglass from White Free-Soilers who seek to compartmentalize and thereby delimit the blight of the Slave Power to spaces south of the Mason-Dixon line in the interest of preserving the North as the site of free soil. Douglass makes clear that he, by contrast, is incapable of doing so, for the North's lack of protection for fugitives and its pervasive anti-Blackness—which White Free-Soilers either miss or ignore in their celebrations of Northern environments—make it impossible for Douglass to apprehend its landscapes as beautiful. Douglass's revulsion, this is to say, reflects a condemnation not only of Free-Soilers' landscape aesthetics but also of Free-Soilism's politics more generally. The containment strategy of Free-Soilism and the presentation of Northern-style yeoman agrarianism as a solution to the problem of slavery are both rooted in the Northern exceptionalism that Douglass's letter eviscerates. The presumption that Northern-style agrarianism will constrain and ultimately lead to the downfall of the slave system if supported by federally-mandated constrictions of the Slave Power's growth rests upon the belief that Northern society contains none of the practices and conditions that structure plantation agronomy. More specifically, it ignores the extent to which anti-Blackness pervades Northern society and prevents Northern topographies from achieving the status of truly free soil. The containment strategy as it exists, Douglass suggests in his letter to Garrison, is an insufficient and ultimately fatally compromised response to the Slave Power, primarily because the persistence of anti-Blackness in the North demonstrates the extent to which the Slave Power has already expanded into free soil. How, therefore, can the extension of Northern-style yeoman agronomy into the West and Southwest forestall the Slave Power's growth if it has already failed to do so in New England?

As I argue in the remainder of this essay, Douglass takes up this question in the weeks and months following his letter to Garrison, but instead of simply rejecting containment and Free-Soilism out of hand, he works to articulate a novel form of Free-Soilism, one that is capable of meeting the expansiveness of the Slave Power and, crucially, decisively destroying it and its influences. The distinct manner of containment that Douglass envisions, I seek to demonstrate, rejects Free-Soilism's liberal reformism for something decidedly more radical that will not be satisfied with removing the Slave Power but rather commits to the creation of new modes of sociality that are free of all traces of bondage and anti-Blackness.

[46] Ian Frederick Finseth, *Shades of Green: Visions of Nature in the Literature of American Slavery, 1770–1860* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 280. Finseth considers this letter's inclusion in *My Bondage and My Freedom*, and thus addresses the subversion of pastoralism in the 1855 autobiography (271–91).

[47] Douglass makes a similar move in his 1845 *Narrative*. See Michael Bennett, "Anti-Pastoralism, Frederick Douglass, and the Nature of Slavery," in *Beyond Nature Writing: Expanding the Boundaries of Ecocriticism*, eds. Karla Armbruster and Kathleen R. Wallace (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001), 195–210.

[48] John M. Grammer has identified rhetorical similarities between the republicanism of Southern agrarians and Free-Soilers. *Pastoral and Politics in the Old South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), 9.

The Cordon of Freedom

Just prior to Douglass's voyage to the U.K. and the period in which he most intensively references the free-soil principle, the U.S. annexed the Republic of Texas and prepared to invade Mexico, a series of geopolitical moves that Douglass and other abolitionists recognized as a bald attempt to extend the Slave Power's territory and increase its political hegemony. While abroad, Douglass closely followed the news from the U.S., and commentary on Texas and Mexico appears frequently in his speeches, especially at the outset of his trip. As James Oakes has suggested, Douglass's interest in antislavery politics was sparked by the invasion of Mexico and the political resistance that met it.[49] That political resistance manifested itself in Free-Soilers' calls for the slave states to be surrounded by a "cordon of freedom" that would, in the words of Thaddeus Stevens, "[prevent] the extension of slavery into free soil."[50] Free-Soilers, accordingly, rallied behind a proposed rider—first introduced in August 1846 by Democratic congressman David Wilmot and subsequently known as the Wilmot Proviso—that stipulated that "neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall ever exist in any part" of the territory acquired from Mexico.[51] As an antislavery tactic, the Proviso was decidedly gradualist, and Wilmot's own anti-Blackness led many to consider it a "white man's proviso," reserving western territories for White, yeoman farmers.[52] Douglass would offer a partial endorsement of the Wilmot Proviso in June 1848, arguing that while he did not place much hope in its bringing down the Slave Power, he nonetheless saw it as an encouraging prospect: "While we regard it as a step in the right direction and hail it as a most hopeful sign of the times, it is but a *sign*—a mere *sign*—of a radical principle, which must one day force itself into practice. To that principle we must cling."[53]

Over two years before he published his qualified support of the Wilmot Proviso, Douglass proposed a similar tactic of containment, thereby providing another example of his engagement with Free-Soilism during his trip to the U.K. Speaking in Belfast in January 1846, Douglass identifies extension as the lifeblood of the Slave Power and argues that the Slave Power's goal is not simply expansion into Texas but rather growth as a means of sustaining itself. Stalling its growth, therefore, would ramify far beyond the borders of the Republic of Texas, precipitating a contraction that would ultimately destroy the Slave Power. "If kept within narrow limits," Douglass explains, "we should soon be rid of it."[54] Douglass here invokes the cordon of freedom in a manner that reflects the same conclusion that U.S. Free-Soilers themselves reached: that the Slave Power would come to its demise if surrounded by territory that is hostile to bondage. Although Douglass does not specify, in his Belfast speech, precisely how the Slave Power will be "kept within" its current territory, he does suggest that it involves the U.S. federal government to a certain extent, for his speech constitutes a broad attack on the annexation of Texas and the Slave Power's territorial appetites for northern Mexico. Douglass goes on to praise the forty thousand

[49] Oakes, *The Radical and the Republican*, 15–16.
[50] Quoted in Oakes, *The Scorpion's Sting: Antislavery and the Coming of the Civil War* (New York: Norton, 2014), 23.
[51] *Congressional Globe*, 29th Cong., 1st Sess., 1217.
[52] Earle, *Jacksonian Antislavery*, 123–43. See also, Frederick J. Blue, "Neither Slavery nor Involuntary Servitude: David Wilmot and the Containment of Slavery," in *No Taint of Compromise: Crusaders in Antislavery Politics* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005), 184–212.
[53] "John Van Buren," *North Star*, 16 June 1848.
[54] Blassingame and McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 1, 1:122.

signatories in Massachusetts who petitioned Congress not to annex Texas unless it immediately abolished slavery.[55]

Douglass's Belfast speech thus represents a fascinating example of his move from Garrisonian anti-politicism toward the Free-Soil position that the federal government could be mobilized to combat the Slave Power, an example that predates his "Change of Opinion" by five years. The Belfast speech departs from Garrisonianism, as well, in its presentation of the Slave Power as ecologically destructive, a foundational tenet of Free-Soilism. Right after claiming that the Slave Power must be "kept within its narrow limits," Douglass explains that "the cry of slavery is ever 'Give, give, give!' . . . It goes on, leaving a blighted soil behind—leaving the fields which it found fertile and luxuriant, covered with stunted pines. From Virginia it has gone to North Carolina, and from that to South Carolina, leaving ruin in its train, and now it seizes on the fertile regions of Texas."[56] Douglass's emphasis on blight and soil exhaustion and his suggestion that the growth of slavery from Virginia to points south and west together precisely index Free-Soilers' presentation of the Slave Power as an ecologically unsustainable system, whose downfall could be precipitated by a cordon of free soil.

At the same time as he demonstrates his investment in Free-Soilism, Douglass retains commitments that have more in common with Garrisonianism, as evidenced by a letter to Garrison from the spring of 1846. Writing from Glasgow in April, Douglass exclaims, "Let slavery be hemmed in on every side by the moral and religious sentiments of mankind, and its death is certain."[57] At first glance, we see an additional example of Douglass's investment in the cordon of freedom. But the specific references to moralism and a thorough distinction between slavery and what lies at its borders seem to demonstrate Douglass's presumption that neither geopolitical distinctions between North and South, nor free-labor conditions in and of themselves, are sufficient means by which to create a firewall capable of stalling the Slave Power's expansion. In this example, Douglass's cordon of freedom is inflected by Garrisonianism's investment in the public shaming of slavers and their supporters. The means by which to establish the particular cordon of freedom that Douglass envisions are disunionism and come-outerism, those central tactics of Garrisonianism, and most certainly not the Federal Government's institution of a Wilmot-Proviso style ban on slavery's growth. Thus, Garrisonianism is an essential element of, rather than the alternative to, Douglass's newly found investment in Free-Soil-style containment. Despite his newfound interest in the free-soil principle and the cordon of freedom, therefore, Douglass would continue to insist, for some time to come, that he remained firmly within the Garrisonian camp.[58]

Around the same time as the letter from Glasgow, and again in correspondence with Garrison, this time from London, Douglass returns to the cordon of freedom. As he does in the Glasgow letter, Douglass presents a series of prophetic statements that are both invocative and binding: "Let [American slavers] be hemmed in on every side. Let them be placed beyond the pale of respectability, and standing out separated, alone in their infamy, let the storm gather over them, and its hottest bolts descend."[59] The first two statements directly call for the sort of antislavery cordon that Douglass invoked in the Glasgow letter. The third ratchets up the already highly pitched tone by calling for divine intervention. Rather than the legal instrumentalism of Free-

[55] Blassingame and McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 1, 1:124.
[56] Blassingame and McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 1, 1:122.
[57] McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 3, 1:110.
[58] As Douglass explains in a letter to Maria Chapman on 29 March 1846, "I have withstood the allurements of New organization liberty party—and no organization at home—why should I not withstand the [anti-Garrisonian] London Committee?" McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 3, 1:99.
[59] McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 3, 1:130–31.

Soilers or the moral suasion of Garrisonians, Douglass here presents a cordon in the jeremiadic mode. Douglass's cordon thus fits within the tradition of Black radicals such as David Walker and Henry Highland Garnet, who portrayed apocalyptic punishment, seemingly from both divine and abolitionist actors, as awaiting enslavers. The cordon of freedom need not be simply an incrementalist and technocratic approach to destroying the Slave Power; it can also be immediatist, even insurrectionary.

Douglass once again invokes the cordon of freedom in June, speaking in Birmingham, and providing another example of his efforts to radicalize the cordon of freedom beyond the limits of Free-Soilism. Instead of investing hope in the nominally free soil of the U.S., the Birmingham speech shows Douglass turning to the U.S.'s neighbors, both of which had abolished slavery in recent decades. Canada and Mexico, in this formulation, become the necessary associates to create a cordon of freedom. A cordon of truly free soil, this is to say, is comprised not of Northern states and western territories but rather of Canada and Mexico, which would not only destroy the Slave Power but which would also transform the remainder of the U.S. The transnational elements of the cordon are most apparent when Douglass, speaking in Birmingham in June 1846, calls for the Slave Power to be surrounded by "Canada blazing all over with anti-slavery fires, and Mexico, once more strong in her love of freedom, on the south."[60] By gesturing to Canada and Mexico, Douglass argues that abolition is a necessary precondition for truly free soil. Abolition, therefore, as I will address in this essay's final section, is not something that is set in motion by free soil or the cordon of freedom, but is rather, for Douglass, free soil's essential, constitutive element.

Free-Soil Abolition

Free-Soilism, as noted above, is distinctly antislavery rather than abolitionist because of its commitment to free labor rather than to civil rights for Black Americans as well as its approach to reforming a slave society through the gradual, but expedited, invisible hand of liberal capitalism. By contrast, Douglass seeks to transform Free-Soilism into something akin to what W. E. B. Du Bois and Angela Davis (among others) envision when they define *abolition* as that which reflects a broad and intersectional commitment to freedom in truly comprehensive and democratic terms. For Du Bois and Davis, an abolitionist project worthy of the name is dedicated to creating and establishing new modes of sociality rather than ridding society of a symptom that in its absence will leave structural inequalities largely the same. Du Bois writes in *Black Reconstruction* that if abolition is to be both comprehensive and democratic, it must "[demand] . . . freedom, civil rights, economic opportunity and education and the right to vote as a matter of sheer human justice and right."[61] For Davis, what makes a certain form of activism distinctly abolitionist is the presumption that "our present social order—in which are embedded a complex array of social problems—will have to be radically transformed." Abolition, then, continues Davis in the spirit of Du Bois, "is not only, or not even primarily, about abolition as a negative process of tearing down, but it is also about building up, about creating new institutions."[62]

Douglass's investment in a distinctly abolitionist Free-Soilism is most apparent in a speech delivered in London, roughly a month before the Birmingham speech cited above. The London speech, which mostly addresses the Free Church of Scotland's support for the Slave Power,

[60] Blassingame and McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 1, 1:310.
[61] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860–1880* (New York: The Free Press, 1992), 325.
[62] Angela Y. Davis, *Abolition Democracy: Beyond Empire, Prisons, and Torture* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2005), 69.

contains another reference to the *Somerset* case, but rather than simply presenting free soil as terrain which transforms the fugitive, Douglass instead envisions free soil as that which confronts the enslaver: "Let the atmosphere of Britain be such that a slave holder may not be able to breathe it. Let him feel his lungs oppressed the moment he steps on British soil."[63] Whereas the free-soil principle presumes an atmosphere reflective of natural law, whereby the fugitive breathes free air for the first time, Douglass, in his London speech, calls for the creation of a political and social climate that is distinctly hostile, even painful, to enslavers. The creation of truly free soil requires a pervasive "atmosphere" that is decidedly hostile to the comfort, even to the basic life, of the enslaver, for who can survive, Douglass seems to suggest, when they cannot breathe? In the London speech, moreover, Douglass again invokes the cordon of freedom itself, and in a performative manner that compels his audience to join the abolitionist insurgency:

> I want the slave holder surrounded, as by a wall of anti-slavery fire, so that he may see the condemnation of himself and his system glaring down in letters of light. I want him to feel that he has no sympathy in England, Scotland, or Ireland; that he has none in Canada, none in Mexico, none among the poor wild Indians; that the voice of the civilized, aye, and savage world, is against him. I would have condemnation blaze down upon him in every direction, till, stunned and overwhelmed with shame and confusion, he is compelled to let go the grasp he holds upon the persons of his victims, and restores them to their long-lost rights. Here, then, is work for us all to do.[64]

As in the example from Birmingham, Douglass fuses moral suasionism with containment. At the same time, the main emphasis here is on radicalism, calling not for federal legislation and economic restrictions, but rather for a "wall of anti-slavery fire," whereby direct action from abolitionists aflame with righteousness and jeremiadic passion will immediately overpower the "fire-eaters" of the South, fighting fire with fire, as it were.[65]

In addition, Douglass pairs abolition with anti-racism and a commitment not only to emancipation but also to justice. The cordon of freedom that Douglass envisions in London dramatically exceeds the negative prohibition of bondage at the core of the Wilmot Proviso that represents the limits of U.S. Free-Soilers' antislavery commitments. Instead, Douglass calls for an attack on the Slave Power that will, in addition to tearing down the system of bondage, also set in motion the creation of civic conditions where Black people can thrive. The "long-lost rights" that he mentions here are those foundational human rights that the Slave Power and its allies deny Black people across the nation. Black people in the North, whether fugitives or not, are themselves clearly "victims" of the Slave Power due to its reach into Northern communities and its hold over the federal government. Douglass's cordon, therefore, seeks the simultaneous overthrow of both unfree labor, disenfranchisement, and systemic anti-Blackness.

What Douglass's London speech demonstrates, especially when considered alongside the other examples addressed in this essay, is the extent to which Douglass recognizes that the foundations of U.S. Free-Soilism—the free-soil principle, the *Somerset* decision, and the cordon of freedom—are antislavery and reformist rather than radical and abolitionist. Douglass's position

[63] Blassingame and McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 1, 1:296.
[64] Blassingame and McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 1, 1:295.
[65] Eric H. Walther traces the term "fire-eater," referring to extreme defenders of slavery and the South, back to 1851. *The Fire-Eaters* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 1992). As such, it is not entirely clear to me whether Douglass invokes this specific connotation.

thus anticipates that of Du Bois, who writes in the opening chapter of *Black Reconstruction* that Free-Soilism and Garrisonianism represented two distinct but related labor movements, the first dedicated to destroying the Slave Power so as to improve the condition and earning power of White laborers, whereas the second group sought the emancipation of Black workers so that they could sell their own labor. "Labor-Free Soil, and Abolition," according to Du Bois,

> exhibited fundamental divergence instead of becoming one great party of free labor and free land. The Free Soilers stressed the difficulties of even the free laborer getting hold of the land and getting work in the great congestion which immigration had brought; and the abolitionists stressed the moral wrong of slavery. These two movements might easily have coöperated and differed only in matters of emphasis; but the trouble was that black and white laborers were competing for the same jobs just of course as all laborers always are. The immediate competition became open and visible because of racial lines and racial philosophy and particularly in Northern states where free Negroes and fugitive slaves had established themselves as workers, while the ultimate and overshadowing competition of free and slave labor was obscured and pushed into the background.[66]

Across his many references to Free-Soilism during his U.K. tour, Douglass, too, underscores the anti-Blackness in Northern states, suggesting in particular that White supremacy and a lack of moral urgency weaken Free-Soilism's ability to confront and ultimately defeat the Slave Power.

Over the next decade, Douglass would publicly grapple with the limitations of Free-Soilism, especially after his own break from Garrisonianism.[67] From the late 1840s through the 1850s, Douglass's statements on Free-Soilism ranged from support to condemnation. To give just a few examples, when Douglass attended the inaugural Free-Soil Party convention in Buffalo, N.Y., held in August 1848, and where, Martin Delany reports, he was recognized from the stage "as one of the great instruments by which this event was brought about,"[68] Douglass's throat problems prevented him from delivering a speech, though he did manage to say "God speed your noble undertaking."[69] In May of 1849, by contrast, writing in the *North Star* under the headline "What Good Has the Free Soil Movement Done?" Douglass answers his own question by stating "It promised much and has performed little. . . . It promised to be a progressive movement. It has not even been a standstill one, but has actually proved a retrograding movement."[70] In the summer of 1852, however, Douglass's paper would endorse the Free-Soil presidential ticket and he would self-identify in a speech to Garrisonians as both a "Liberty party man" and as a Free-Soiler.[71]

As David Blight has argued, Free-Soilism "offered [Douglass] little satisfaction, and he took every opportunity to expose its deficiencies. But simultaneously he found it impossible to resist the appeal of a broad coalition that could discredit slavery, even if it fell short of calling for

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[66] Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, 20, 21–22.

[67] Studies that consider Douglass's interest in Free-Soilism in the 1850s include Lance Newman, "Free Soil and the Abolitionist Forests of Frederick Douglass's 'The Heroic Slave,' " *American Literature* vol. 81, no. 1 (2009): 127–52; Cristin Ellis, "Amoral Abolitionism: Frederick Douglass and the Environmental Case against Slavery," *American Literature* 86, no. 2 (2014): 275–303; John R. McKivigan and Rebecca A. Pattillo, "*Autographs for Freedom* and Reaching a New Abolitionist Audience," *The Journal of African American History* 102, no. 1 (Winter 2017): 35–51.

[68] Martin Delany, "The Buffalo Convention, Report of Proceedings," *North Star*, 11 August 1848.

[69] Oliver Dyer, *Phonographic Report of the Proceedings of the National Free Soil Convention at Buffalo N.Y. August 9th and 10th, 1848* (Buffalo: Derby and Co., 1848), 21.

[70] "What Good Has the Free Soil Movement Done?" *North Star*, 25 May 1849.

[71] Blassingame and McKivigan, *Douglass Papers*, ser. 1, 2:389, 2:395.

complete abolition and equal rights for blacks. Douglass was learning to be a realist and an opportunist, while also trying to preserve the moral integrity of his abolitionism."[72] Attention to the specific ways in which Douglass invokes and reformulates both the free-soil principle and the cordon of freedom across his time in the U.K. reveals that Douglass was attuned to the movement's limitations from the start of his engagement with its ideas and tactics. But rather than treating his investment in Free-Soilism as an example of pragmatism or realism, with their connotations of concession, or as something that he worked toward over the course of the 1850s, I instead see Douglass's investment as a sustained attempt to radicalize the movement and its tactics, attempts that would extend throughout the lifespan of the Free-Soil movement, and one that began—in the very spirit of the free-soil principle—as soon as he set foot on the shores of the U.K. and breathed its air.

[72] Blight, *Frederick Douglass's Civil War*, 47.

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Anne P. Adams, "An Orphan Girl of New England": The Search for Annie Parker

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Since the publication of *Autographs for Freedom* in 1853, readers and scholars alike have speculated over the identity of Annie Parker, the heretofore unknown author of the short story "Passages in the Life of a Slave Woman," and whether the story was, in any way, autobiographical. Best known today for Frederick Douglass's contribution, his novella "The Heroic Slave," *Autographs for Freedom* was a collection of antislavery poems, short stories, and essays contributed by a number of well-known nineteenth-century activists, writers, and politicians, including Charles Sumner, Horace Greeley, Gerrit Smith, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Caroline W. H. Dall, Catherine M. Sedgwick, William H. Seward, and John G. Whittier. Edited by Julia Griffiths under the auspices of the Rochester Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society and published by the Boston firm of John P. Jewett, *Autographs for Freedom* was essentially a gift book designed to raise funds to help support *Frederick Douglass' Paper*.

Unlike most of her fellow contributors, however, fewer than ten pieces—published in *Frederick Douglass' Newspaper*, a temperance newspaper based in Geneva, New York, and the *Cayuga Chief* of Auburn, New York—can be attributed with any degree of certainty to Annie Parker prior to the publication of *Autographs for Freedom*. Moreover, aside from a few references indicating some familiarity with Rochester and Brooklyn, New York, and an apparent proximity to the Finger Lakes district and the central region of Upstate New York, this slim number of publications offered few clues to the identity of Annie Parker. The lack of biographical information has led to much speculation over such matters as her age, race, social status, and so forth.

In conjunction with the publication of the Frederick Douglass Papers' scholarly edition of *The Heroic Slave* in 2014, my coeditor, John R. McKivigan, published a blog post in which he considered the possibility that Annie Parker might in fact have been a pseudonym for Harriet Jacobs, author of one of the best known slave narratives, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1859). Like "Passages in the Life of a Slave Woman," Jacobs's autobiography also dealt with the abuse and exploitation of enslaved African American women. Additionally, there were clear overlaps between Annie Parker's life and Harriet Jacobs's life, including both a connection to Douglass (at one point Harriet Jacobs worked in the same building that housed Douglass's newspaper office) as well as to Jacobs's one-time employer, Nathaniel Parker Willis, as Parker referenced Willis in a piece she wrote about a trip to the resort at Silver Lake, Pennsylvania.[1]

However, the answer to the question of Annie Parker's identity, including both her race and whether her story might have been autobiographical, has now been discovered in an obscure item of correspondence in the papers of Gerrit Smith. In a letter dated 16 August 1851, Joseph Comstock Hathaway asked Smith if he would be willing to send a small amount of money to their mutual friend Frederick Douglass so that he could provide some additional compensation for Annie Parker, who had recently contributed a few articles to Douglass's newspaper. Hathaway then explained that Anne P. Adams, who he praised as a "great reformer" and described as a

[1]Adams referred to the Charlotte Canda mausoleum, which was completed in 1847 and is located in Brooklyn's Greenwood Cemetery, in her article, "Rural Cemeteries." Annie Parker, "Rural Cemeteries," *Frederick Douglass' Newspaper*, 13 August 1852. She mentioned Willis and her visit to Silver Lake, Pennsylvania, in the *Cayuga Chief*. Annie Parker, "From Annie Parker," *Cayuga Chief*, 20 July 1852.

"young orphan girl of New England," was in fact the author of the "Annie Parker" articles.[2] Armed with this new information, the search for the real "Annie Parker" could begin in earnest.

What I discovered was that Anne P. Adams was, according to the 1850 U.S. Census, a single, White female born circa 1821 in New Hampshire, living in the household of Joseph Comstock Hathaway (the very man who would later identify her as Annie Parker) in Farmington, New York, a community twenty-five miles southeast of Rochester.[3] Further investigation of census records indicated that she continued to reside with the Hathaway family through at least 1860.[4] Although no occupation was given in the 1850 Census, beginning with the 1855 state census, Anne P. Adams's occupation was listed as teacher.[5] By 1870 she was living in her own home in Dansville, New York, where once again her occupation was listed as teacher, and she was described as possessing real estate valued at $6,000 and a personal estate valued at $3,000. At the time, she shared her home with a wealthy physician, a fellow teacher and her child, a cook, a domestic servant, and the servant's child.[6] In the 1875 state census, however, she was still working as a teacher and living in Dansville, but the composition of her household had changed drastically, and now consisted of another single female boarder from Canada, and a small family of German immigrants composed of a husband, wife, and two young children.[7]

Further research exposed additional information on Annie Parker's life, such as the fact that in 1849 Anne P. Adams was one of a group of five Quaker women who organized a racially integrated school, known locally as the "Bird's Nest School," in Macedon, New York, specifically to teach the famous Edmondson sisters (Mary Catherine and Emily) alongside local White children.[8] Notes in a couple of 1858 issues of the *Letter-Box*—the Glen Haven, New York, newspaper—indicated that Adams taught at the Brooklyn Female Seminary (known as the Packer Institute after 1854) sometime between its founding in 1845 and 1849.[9] She also published a few short stories and poems, under her own name, in the *Student and Family Miscellany* in 1854.[10]

After settling in Dansville, Annie P. Adams also served as the first librarian of the Livingston County Circulating Library from 1874 to 1875. In 1881, she became the first president of the local chapter of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and in 1888 she was the vice president of the Dansville Village Improvement Society. Although her date and place of death has still not been determined, the last record of her public activities dates from 1893, when she was appointed one of the first trustees of Dansville's library after it became part of the state library system.[11] After this, the trail runs cold and no further information about Anne P. Adams, or Annie Parker, has been discovered. Even so, at least part of the mystery of the woman who was Annie Parker can now be cleared up, and perhaps over time more details about the life, career, and writings of Anne P. Adams will also come to light.

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[2] Historical Records Survey Program, *Calendar of the Gerrit Smith Papers in the Syracuse University Library*, 2 vols. (Albany, N.Y.: The Works Progress Administration, 1941), 2:108.
[3] 1850 United States Census, Farmington, Ontario County, New York, 555.
[4] 1860 United States Census, Farmington, Ontario County, New York, 45–46.
[5] 1855 New York State Census, Farmington, Ontario County, 39.
[6] 1870 United States Census, Dansville, Livingston County, New York, 328.
[7] 1875 New York State Census, Dansville, Livingston County, 19B.
[8] Judith Williams et al., eds., "Uncovering the Underground Railroad, Abolitionism, and African American Life in Wayne County, New York, 1820–1880," *The Wayne County Historian* (2007–2009), 25.
[9] *The Letter-Box* (Glen Haven, N.Y.), 15 September 1858.
[10] Anne P. Adams, "The Lily and the Rose. From the German of Herder," *The Student and Family Miscellany…A Monthly Reader for Schools*, vol. 9 (June 1854), 61; "Elihu Burritt," vol. 10 (November 1854), 83–86.
[11] A. O. Bunnell, ed., *Dansville, 1789–1902: Historical, Biographies, Descriptive* (Dansville, N.Y.: Instructor Publishing Company, 1903), 63, 82, 99.

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"The Birth Place of *Your* Liberty": Purchasing Frederick Douglass's Freedom in 1846

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Following in the footsteps of African Americans who had made radical and politicized journeys across the Atlantic, Frederick Douglass set sail for the British Isles in August 1845. Over the course of nearly two years, he electrified audiences with his blistering exposure of American slavery, the corruption and pollution of Southern Christianity, and the blatant hypocrisies of American freedom and independence. He forged antislavery networks with British and Irish abolitionists who would support him financially and emotionally for the rest of his life, including most famously Julia Griffiths Crofts, Russell L. and Mary Carpenter, and Ellen and Anna Richardson, who were based in Newcastle. After a stay in the Richardson household in 1846, Ellen became determined to secure Douglass's legal freedom; extended analysis of her letters, though, indicates that throughout the entire process she did not discuss the matter with him. Through Walter Lowrie, a lawyer in New York, she and her sister-in-law Anna made contact with Douglass's enslaver, Hugh Auld, and organized a bill of sale for £150, or $750. Eventually, on 12 December 1846, the free papers were signed.[1] While Douglass regarded this as a generous and unselfish act throughout his life, supporters of William Lloyd Garrison and the American Anti-Slavery Society objected to the purchase, for it seemed to be `property.[2] In the pages of the *Boston Liberator,* Garrison himself reiterated his disagreement with compensation, but did recognize the ransom was enacted to secure Douglass's liberty.[3] Militant Garrisonian abolitionists like Henry Clarke Wright, however, viewed the so-called transaction with abhorrence: he wrote that Douglass had now been "shorn" of his strength within the antislavery movement, and it was an unnecessary decision to "ask the sacrilegious villain to set a price" upon his head.[4]

Bristling against the racial paternalism of White abolitionists who had no comprehension of his trauma or fear of being recaptured, Douglass replied to his critics in a public letter and celebrated the actions of his English friends who had paid £150 not to confirm legitimacy upon a "remorseless plunderer" but "to release me from his power, not to establish my *natural right* to freedom, but to release me from all legal liabilities to slavery."[5] As Douglass summarized in *My Bondage and My Freedom,* while his "uncompromising friends" failed to see the wisdom in such a ransom, he was fully aware that it was necessary for his return home.[6] The dialogue revealed on a colossal scale the tensions between Douglass, White abolitionists, and the racism of those who felt he would "lose" the power of his oratory or position within the antislavery movement if the purchase was completed.

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[1] Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass,* ed. Celeste-Marie Bernier (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2018), 48–49.
[2] Catherine Paton to Maria Weston Chapman, 17 November 1846, Antislavery Collection, Boston Public Library.
[3] William Lloyd Garrison to Elizabeth Pease Nichol, 1 April 1847, Antislavery Collection, Boston Public Library. See also *Boston Liberator,* 19 March 1847, 2–3, 15 January 1847, 26 March 1847.
[4] Henry Clarke Wright and Frederick Douglass, *Letter to Frederick Douglass with his Reply* (1846), 1–3, Samuel J. May Anti-Slavery Collection, Cornell University.
[5] Wright and Douglass, *Letter to Frederick Douglass with his Reply*, 1–2. Douglass also published a letter in the press *Durham Chronicle,* 22 January 1847. See Douglass, *Narrative,* 20–21.
[6] Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom* (New York: Miller, Orton & Mulligan, 1855), 375–76.

Cross-examining Richardson's letters reveals her motives for the ransom, her trials in contacting the Auld family. Memories of the event often resurfaced when Richardson visited the small fishing villages of Whitley Bay and Cullercoats, a few miles from the city of Newcastle and the very "birth place of *your* liberty" as she described them; Richardson had a second home in Cullercoats, and Douglass had stayed there with her in 1846 and again in 1859, where, according to a local newspaper correspondent, he had given a two hour speech "in a fireside, conversational manner" to some of the local children.[7] Both places had extraordinary reverence for her, and of course for Douglass.

Writing to Helen Pitts Douglass, Richardson recollected that "a short distance from here I see the spot when the thought first [came to] me that *Frederick must be free!!*" She was often reminded of the events when "Frederick my sister and myself sat opposite Cullercoat sands with the sea rolling on the beach . . . that was one of the best days works I ever did when I look at the result of Frederick's freedom."[8] As she reminded him, however, she was filled with "*doubt* & *perplexity*" at the time because of his alignment with the Garrisonian party, as she feared "*you would not allow yourself* to be purchased and I was *determined you should.*" She neglected at first to tell her sister-in-law Anna, concerned she would disagree, but eventually asked for her help in contacting an American lawyer. Upon reflection, Richardson "felt some compunction" over the notion she had not asked Douglass' permission and perhaps in explaining the full story to him, she wished to partially make amends for her conduct, as age had caused her to reflect on its morality. She remembered with fondness, though, "how *astonished* you were in my drawing room when I told you how the ransom had been effected you leaned back in the arm chair and exclaimed 'well I *never knew this!!* I never knew this before'!!"[9] Although it is unclear whether such an intimate and revealing moment took place in 1847 or 1887 (likely the latter), Richardson strongly believed that it was "the best speculation we ever made and I am sure we have both cause to be very thankful not to say *gratified* that it worked out so well."[10]

In his speeches and writings, Douglass always framed the purchase as an act stemming solely from the Richardson's generosity, and did not mention his part within it. In August 1846, he had written to Anna Richardson from London and was clearly aware of her attempts to secure his legal freedom. He longed to see his family and hoped to return to the U.S. that autumn but wanted to ensure his travel did not "interfere in any way with your correspondence with my owner – as whether you succeed or fail good may come of the effort."[11] As we have seen from Douglass's own hand, Ellen is perhaps misremembering the particulars. This does not take away from her memories, or the fact that Douglass may not have known all the details surrounding the ransom and those involved within it. Perhaps Ellen does not remember informing him because Anna did so instead; she mentions her sister-in-law's key role, and Anna may have felt uneasy at trying to arrange this without Douglass's permission, advice or acknowledgement. The passage of time and some guilt had weighed on Ellen's shoulders, despite the fact that Anna had taken matters into her own hands and had clearly discussed it with him.

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[7] Ellen Richardson to Frederick Douglass, 1887, FDP Digital Collection, Library of Congress; *The Newcastle Guardian*, 3 March 1860, 5.
[8] Ellen Richardson to Helen Pitts Douglass, 28 September 1894, FDP Digital Collection, Library of Congress.
[9] Ellen Richardson to Frederick Douglass, May? 1892, FDP Digital Collection, Library of Congress.
[10] Ellen Richardson to Frederick Douglass, 1 August 1889, FDP Digital Collection, Library of Congress.
[11] Douglass, *Narrative*, 50–51.

Throughout his life, though, Douglass never forgot the Newcastle benefactors who helped him return home safely, but perhaps Richardson herself summarized this relationship best when she once wrote with great love and affection, "*our* interest [in you] never *dies*."[12]

[12] Ellen Richardson to Frederick Douglass, 30 September 1886, FDP Digital Collection, Library of Congress.

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Placing the Oratory of Frederick Douglass in Time and Space

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The Frederick Douglass Papers (FDP) is mapping the location of Douglass's public speaking engagements. Supported by grants from IUPUI's Center for Research and Learning and the Institute of American Thought, student researchers have been scouring the Douglass Papers' archive for information about where and when he delivered public addresses. To date, researchers have examined thirty-one years from Douglass's public career. They have presented their results at student research gatherings hosted by IUPUI and Butler University. Carefully recorded in a spreadsheet's cells and subsequently plotted on a map, the results of this vast compilation, "An Atlas of the Oratory of Frederick Douglass," eventually will be shared at the project's website. Projected for release in 2023, this online exhibit will complement existing Douglass scholarship by presenting an interactive map that allows users to explore the spatial dimension of Douglass's far-reaching intervention in American life.

The immediate inspiration for the project derives from our former colleague Caitlin Pollock's digital map of Ida B. Wells's anti-lynching activism. Pollock's map clearly illustrates lynching's spatial distribution and the focus of Wells's subsequent activism. Working by analogy from Wells's career suggested the value of applying a similar technique to Douglass's oratory. Decades of scholarship have revealed themes and patterns in Douglass's speeches; what might be learned from mapping the places where he addressed the public?

The project began in earnest at IUPUI in 2016 when researchers—undergraduate and graduate research assistants drawn from a diverse collection of majors and disciplines—began examining archival sources housed at the Douglass Papers, seeking out references to the site and situation of his public addresses. Each research assistant was assigned one of Douglass's fifty-six years of public oratory and tasked with carefully recording data related to the time and place of his speeches. Within their assigned year, researchers combed through the Douglass Papers' vast collection of nineteenth-century newspaper clippings about Douglass and its holdings of his correspondence, editorials, and other writings, gleaning relevant data along the way. A "data dictionary" imposed a strict format for entering dates and places, ensuring that all researchers recorded information in a uniform manner and a format adaptable to the production of tables and maps.

The facts recorded about each of Douglass's presentations fall into three categories: itinerary, venue, and event. Details associated with his itinerary include his point of origin and destination(s), mode of travel, and any overnight accommodations. Care is taken to note any evidence of racial discrimination in mode of travel or accommodations. Relevant aspects of the venue include the city, street address, name of building or public place, and capacity. Event details include the demographic makeup of the audience, lecture topic, sponsoring organization, fellow speakers, remuneration, and any notes that can be used to characterize the event. Later, researchers compiled the latitude and longitude coordinates of the presentation's venue and added it to the database. These coordinates are useful in cases where street addresses have changed, buildings have been demolished, or streets rerouted. Their inclusion allows us to accurately locate Douglass's presentations on the map.

Beginning in 1839 in New Bedford, Massachusetts, and ending with his final public address in Washington, D.C., in February of 1895, Douglass delivered thousands of scheduled and spontaneous presentations. At the beginning of his career, Douglass spoke to small northeastern audiences in places closely associated with the nascent abolitionist movement. In support of his newspaper and cause, backed by a movement and its sponsors, Douglass's circuit grew to include large and small cities north of the Ohio River. Throughout this antebellum period, he needed to remain cognizant of places where the Fugitive Slave Acts were actively enforced and be on the watch for political opponents and hostile mobs. During the Civil War, he spoke throughout the North, mixing his political activism (e.g. advocating for broader war goals) with his work recruiting for the army. After the war, he ranged even more widely on behalf of the nascent civil rights movement and Republican Party causes, and in financial support of his family as a popular figure on the professional lecture circuit. Over the course of his six-decade speaking career, the size of Douglass's audiences increased, and he spoke as far west as Denver; as far south as New Orleans, Louisiana; and more than one hundred times outside of the country, most famously in Ireland and Great Britain.

Eventually, the atlas will act as a reference work for heretofore unwieldy, seemingly prosaic empirical questions. Where, for instance, did Douglass speak most often? For that matter, what is the total number of his speaking engagements? What was the largest audience to witness his oratory? On how many occasions did he speak in the former slave states? When we sort these engagements by year and location, what, if any, patterns are apparent? How might we explain them? In its capacity as a reference source, our intention is that the atlas will serve a broad audience of student and professional scholars.

In addition to contributing to the knowledge base of Douglass scholarship, plotting his speaking engagements on the changing map of nineteenth-century America may prompt new research questions related to Douglass's oratory. For instance, did his subjects and rhetorical techniques vary from place to place? What, if any, impact can be attributed to the racial and gender composition of his audience? How did the composition of his audience vary geographically? More generally, can we discern any regional patterns in his oratory, e.g. Did his message vary in New York City compared to Chicago? Or, to shift the comparative frame, how does the map of his speaking engagements fit with the activities of his various rivals and opponents, e.g. Garrisonian abolitionists, fugitive slave hunters, or the American Colonization Society?

Finally, the atlas database may help scholars further understand the significance of Douglass in this historical context. Take for instance the socio-political significance of Douglass's famed mobility. Beginning with northward self-emancipation and continuing on through his late career comings and goings from his Anacostia home, Douglass's mobility was simultaneously representative and exceptional from the experiences of contemporary African Americans. What do the conditions of Douglass's mobility indicate about the more general condition of Black freedom between the fall of the Slave Power and the rise of Jim Crow? Are there similarities among maps of his speaking engagements and the Underground Railroad? African American religious congregations or Republican voters and clubs? Thus, we intend that the atlas help us investigate White supremacy's enduring obsession with regulating Black mobility.

Throughout his career, Douglass sought out audiences ready to support the causes he championed: abolition, emancipation, and an expansive franchise. Broadly, the dates and places of Douglass's speaking career describe a geography of progressive nineteenth-century America. As a database compiling the facts of where and when he spoke, the message he delivered, and who attended those events, "An Atlas of the Oratory of Frederick Douglass" intends to provide scholars

with a convenient reference work, one that simultaneous answers empirical questions and inspires ongoing critical inquiry into Douglass's enduring impact.

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"The Future of the Negro"

Edited by Rebecca A. Pattillo
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Before the end of the Civil War, reports of widespread suffering, disease, and death among freed Blacks, especially in urban environments, circulated widely in the press. Critics of emancipation regarded these reports as proof that freedom was literally harmful to the health and well-being of African Americans. After the war, similar claims about rising death rates due to disease and skyrocketing rates of infant mortality among Southern Blacks continued to spread. Southern apologists used these rumors to argue that, lacking the medical care, shelter, food, and clothing that had once been provided by their former owners, emancipated African Americans were doomed to fall victim to illness and disease that would threaten the very survival of the race. In 1884, the *North American Review* solicited a series of articles by various authors entitled "The Future of the Negro Race" that sought to address such claims, along with other subjects affecting race relations, ranging from emigration to Africa, political participation, and miscegenation to the effects of emancipation on the formerly enslaved and free Black populations.

Founded in Boston in 1815, the *North American Review* remains the longest-running literary magazine in the United States. When Allen Thorndike Rice took over the editorial helm in 1876, the *Review*'s content changed significantly. Shying away from traditional journalist contributors, Rice, along with his editorial assistant James Redpath, sought "men of action" to discuss the latest social, political, and scientific issues. In 1884, Rice sought a wide range of authors and opinions, centered around the topic of the "Future of the Negro." The tone of the essays ranged from optimistic to overtly racist. Of the nine contributors, two others in addition to Douglass were African American: Richard T. Greener and J. A. Emerson. The first essayists to appear in the series, John T. Morgan and Zebulon Baird Vance, were former Confederate officers who later became U.S. senators. Unsurprisingly, these essayists offered a negative assessment of the future of African Americans in the country: they were against miscegenation, favorable toward emigration to Africa, and overtly paternalistic toward Blacks. Essays by Douglass, Joel Chandler Harris, Richard T. Greener, Oliver Johnson, and Samuel C. Armstrong took a more hopeful approach.

Douglass's contribution to the series stated that African Americans would unequivocally not migrate to Africa and compared the plight of African Americans to those of other minority groups oppressed throughout history. Douglass argued for unification, rather than isolation from Whites, prompting a call for "human brotherhood." He modeled this call for unity in his personal life. In January 1884, he married Helen Pitts, a White woman from New York who served as his clerk while he was recorder of deeds for the District of Columbia. Throughout 1884 Douglass received harsh criticism from Whites and Blacks alike, many of whom felt he had betrayed his race that he worked so diligently to support. Even Douglass's children from his first marriage to Anna Murray and his second wife's former abolitionist father disapproved of the new union.

Following its publication, one reviewer of the collection sarcastically wrote, "The latter gentleman [Douglass] has lately done his share towards amalgamation, and does not see why others should not follow so excellent an example." Predictably, Southern reviewers sided with the two former Confederate writers, Morgan and Vance. Writing in a North Carolina newspaper, one reviewer stated, "First, the only writers who can treat the negro question intelligently are Southern

whites . . . Northern writers fail always to understand the race problem in the South when they discuss it." Another Southern paper went so far as to suggest the editor of the *Review* rename the publication "The North American Kaleidoscope" due to its "departure from the heavy seriousness of a Review literature." Northern newspapers, however, wrote approvingly of the collection of essays. One review in particular focused primarily on the African American authors: "It is a significant fact that the . . . ablest, calmest, and most sensible contributions are from the pens of colored men." *Boston Zion's Herald*, 25 June 1884; *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, 23 June 1884; *Wilmington* (N.C.) *Weekly Star*, 11 July 1884; *New York Mail and Express*, c. 1884 as reprinted in *Selma* (Ala.) *Times-Argus*, 4 July 1884.

IT would require the ken of a statesmen and the vision of a prophet combined to tell with certainty what will be the ultimate future of the colored people of the United States, and to neither of these qualifications can I lay claim. We have known the colored man long as a slave, but we have not known him long as a freeman and as an American citizen. What he was as a slave we know; what he will be in his new relation to his fellow-men, time and events will make clear. One thing, however, may safely be laid down as probable, and that is, that the negro, in one form and complexion or another, may be counted upon as a permanent element of the population of the United States. He is now seven millions, has doubled his number in thirty years, and is increasing more rapidly than the more favored population of the South. The idea of his becoming extinct finds no support in this fact. But will he emigrate? No! Individuals may, but the masses will not. Dust will fly, but the earth will remain. The expense of removal to a foreign land, the difficulty of finding a country where the conditions of existence are more favorable than here, attachment to native land, gradual improvement in moral surroundings, increasing hope of a better future, improvement in character and value by education, impossibility of finding any part of the globe free from the presence of white men,—all conspire to keep the negro here, and compel him to adjust himself to American civilization.

In the face of history I do not deny that a darker future than I have indicated may await the black man. Contact of weak races with strong has not always been beneficent. The weak have been oppressed, persecuted, driven out, and destroyed. The Hebrews in Egypt, the Moors in Spain, the Caribs in the West Indies, the Picts in Scotland, the Indians and Chinese in our own country, show what may happen to the negro. But happily he has a moral and political hold upon this country, deep and firm, one which in some measure destroys the analogy between him and other weak peoples and classes. His religion and civilization are in harmony with those of the people among whom he lives. He worships with them in a common temple and at a common altar, and to drag him away is to destroy the temple and tear down the altar. Drive out the negro and you drive out Christ, the Bible, and American liberty with him. The thought of setting apart a State or Territory and confining the negro within its borders is a delusion. If the North and South could not live separately in peace, and without bloody and barbarous border wars, the white and black cannot. If the negro could be bottled up, who could or would bottle up the irrepressible white man? What barrier has been strong enough to confine him? Plainly enough, migration is no policy for the negro. He would invite the fate of the Indian, and be pushed away before the white man's bayonet.

Nor do I think that the negro will become more distinct as a class. Ignorant, degraded, and repulsive as he was during his two hundred years of slavery, he was sufficiently attractive to make possible an intermediate race of a million, more or less. If this has taken place in the face of those odious barriers, what is likely to occur when the colored man puts away his ignorance and

degradation and becomes educated and prosperous? The tendency of the age is unification, not isolation; not to clans and classes, but to human brotherhood. It was once degradation intensified for a Norman to associate with a Saxon; but time and events have swept down the barriers between them, and Norman and Saxon have become Englishmen. The Jew was once despised and hated in Europe, and is so still in some parts of that continent; but he has risen, and is rising to higher consideration, and no man is now degraded by association with him anywhere. In like manner the negro will rise in the social scale. For a time the social and political privileges of the colored people may decrease. This, however, will be apparent rather than real. An abnormal condition, born of war, carried him to an altitude unsuited to his attainments. He could not sustain himself there. He will now rise naturally and gradually, and hold on to what he gets, and will not drop from dizziness. He will gain both by concession and by self-assertion. Shrinking cowardice wins nothing from either meanness or magnanimity. Manly self-assertion and eternal vigilance are essential to negro liberty, not less than to that of the white man.

Source: Frederick Douglass, "The Future of the Negro," *North American Review* 139:79–99 (July 1884). Other text in *Philadelphia Christian Recorder,* 19 June 1884.