

## Chapter 1 : The South and the Politics of Slavery

*Southern slaveholders often used biblical passages to justify slavery. Those who defended slavery rose to the challenge set forth by the Abolitionists. The defenders of slavery included economics, history, religion, legality, social good, and even humanitarianism, to further their arguments.*

Paradoxically, the creation of the South upon the practice of African slavery ensured the destruction of the region. A part of America since early colonial days, African slavery by the nineteenth century was increasingly controversial and largely concentrated in the agricultural-driven southern states. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, cotton emerged as the leading cash crop of the South. Slave labor enabled the greatest profits. Large plantations generated great wealth for white slave lords. The northern industrial economy in turn partially depended upon slave-produced cotton. At the same time, northern anti-slavery sentiment mounted on two fronts: Meanwhile, by the 1830s enough prominent white Baptists in the South had ascended the social ladder into the ranks of slaveholders to merit a public, aggressive, systematic apology of black slavery on biblical grounds. Baptist elites joined white Southern Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians and others in championing the growing, Southern caste system of white supremacy and black slavery. From the advocacy of white supremacy and black slavery emerged a new Baptist denomination. In 1845, former South Carolina governor James Hammond spoke on behalf of his fellow slave lords when he declared that free societies were the problem. Slave societies, by way of contrast, maintained a caste system that kept inferior humans in check. While white Southern Baptist elites had agreed that human equality was wrongheaded and black slavery morally pure most probably did not condone the enslavement of working class whites, they had not always believed thus. To be certain, the birthing of the pro-slavery Southern Baptist Convention in 1845 did not happen in a vacuum, nor was it necessarily inevitable. Prior to the 1830s, many Baptists North and South were anti-slavery, reflective of larger views in the South at that time, a legacy of a pre-cotton economy. But by the mid-1830s Baptist sentiment in the South "at least as expressed in denominational leadership" largely perceived the enslavement of blacks as ordained of God. The transformation of the thought of the prominent Baptist minister John Leland who ministered first in Virginia and then in the Northeast in regards to slavery illustrates the change that took place among white Baptists of the South. His letter, a response to the attempted slave insurrection led by free black Denmark Vesey months earlier, is considered a watershed event in the beginning of a movement toward consolidation of white Baptists in the South to the pro-slavery position. Baptists in America, united in the formation of the General Missionary Convention, were on the road to formal division over the issue of slavery. By the early 1830s American Northern Baptists hostility to slavery reached critical levels. Missionary strategy and funding, although highlighted at length, were not the primary causation of the split. Largely comprised of slaveholders, the gathering at the First Baptist Church of Augusta, Georgia, in May 1845 publicly endorsed the peculiar institution. Slavery was biblical, abolition sinful. Baptists of the North were wrong to oppose slavery. Abolitionists bore responsibility for the Baptist division. Baptists of the South had been patient with the agitators, but enough was enough. Wealth generated by God-ordained black slavery would advance the cause of missions worldwide. In so doing they embraced a racially-based form of Christian nationalism heretofore foreign to the very Christian denomination that had been the most vocal advocate, since the seventeenth century, of the separation of church and state. Alabama Presbyterian minister Rev. Ross wrote a book defending slavery in 1845. Entitled *Slavery Ordained of God*, Ross declared: "Senator from Georgia prior to the war, Vice-President of the Confederate States of America With the ascendant Republican Party in united in resisting the expansion and hence future of slavery, the preservation and expansion of slavery lay with the Democratic Party. In triumph South Carolinian slave lord John S. Slavery few disputed, but disunion troubled many. Other southern states soon followed, collectively forming the Confederate States of America. Senator from Georgia, while speaking in Savannah summarized the singular ideology of the newly-formed Confederate States. Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite idea; its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery "subordination to the superior race" is his natural and normal condition.

This, our new government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth. Baptist leaders, even many initially apprehensive regarding secession, echoed this message from pulpit and political platform alike. Baptist congressmen from southern states resigned their seats, and prominent Baptist slaveholders helped lead their states to secede from the Union and craft new constitutions. Throughout the war, Southern Baptist leaders consistently identified slavery as the cause of the war. Two Baptist sermons – one delivered three months before the war began, and the other delivered midway through the war – serve to illustrate the dedication and devotion of white Baptists in the South to white supremacy and black slavery. On January 27, , before a standing room only audience Ebenezer W. Slavery forms a vital element of the Divine Revelation to man. Its institution, regulation, and perpetuity, constitute a part of many of the books of the Bible. The public mind needs enlightening from the sacred teachings of inspiration on this subject. We of the South have been passive, hoping the storm would subside. Our passiveness has been our sin. We have not come to the vindication of God and of truth, as duty demanded. Both Christianity and Slavery are from heaven; both are blessings to humanity; both are to be perpetuated to the end of time. Because Slavery is right; and because the condition of the slaves affords them all those privileges which would prove substantial blessings to them; and, too, because their Maker has decreed their bondage, and has given them, as a race, capacities and aspirations suited alone to this condition of life. Two weary years of war have wrung this question from the agonized heart of our bleeding country. That we could have peace! The prayer of the land is for peace. You may hear it in the sanctuary, at the fireside, around the family altar, in the silent chamber, on the tented field. When will it come? If God governs the world, then his hand is in this war in which we are engaged. It matters not that the wickedness of man brought it upon us, that it was caused by the mad attempts of fanaticism to deprive us of our rights, overthrow our institutions [African slavery], and impose upon us a yoke which, as freemen, we had resolved never to bear. They [Northerners] assume that slavery is a sin and therefore ought to be abolished. We contend that it is a Scriptural institution. The very nature of the contest takes the point in dispute out of the category of politics, and delegates it to the sphere of Christianity. We are really contending for the precepts of religion, against the devices of the wisdom of this world, and it is, therefore, not only the policy, but the duty of religious bodies to define their position in this great contest. The [SBC] convention has done well in giving unambiguous utterance to its sentiments on this subject. Abolitionist Wendell Phillips speaking at an abolitionist meeting Never did it seemingly occur to Warren and Tichenor and most other white southern Baptists that God would want freedom extended to slaves. Freedom was the right of whites; slavery the lot of blacks. While vividly disagreeing with their southern counterparts over the nature of abolitionism, Baptists of the North echoed their opponents insistence upon slavery as the cause of the conflict, the one war-related issue of which Baptists of both regions remained in full agreement. During the war most Baptist state conventions of the North issued condemnations of the treasonous southern slavocracy. A brief statement by Illinois Baptists in June represented the convictions of most Baptists throughout the North: We recognize human slavery now, as we have heretofore done, to be the cause of the war and its kindred evils, and we reiterate our convictions that there can be no peace and prosperity in the nation until it is destroyed. The South fought honorably and bravely on behalf of the superior white race, only to lose to the overwhelming military might of the North. This denial remains widespread today among many white southerners of the twenty-first century. Yet the record is clear. Crucible of Faith and Freedom by Bruce T. Nurturing Faith, is a month-to-month summary of the online digital Baptists and the American Civil War: In Their Own Words project. Click here to buy your copy. Suspended precariously in the middle of this epic struggle is freedom itself. Yet only one God can prevail: For Baptists, the dividing line runs right through the Bible. Mercer University Press, is an examination of the varying views of Baptists of Georgia regarding slavery and the Confederacy. During the war, Baptists in local church and associations responded to the Confederacy in a myriad of ways. Patterns of responses emerged and evolved as the war progressed, while differences between Southern and Primitive Baptists stood out.

*Slavery in the United States was the legal institution of human chattel enslavement, primarily of Africans and African Americans, that existed in the United States of America in the 18th and 19th centuries.*

Total , In , Massachusetts became the first colony to authorize slavery through enacted law. Colonists came to equate this term with Native Americans and Africans. He had claimed to an officer that his master, Anthony Johnson , himself a free black , had held him past his indenture term. A neighbor, Robert Parker told Johnson that if he did not release Casor, Parker would testify in court to this fact. Under local laws, Johnson was at risk for losing some of his headright lands for violating the terms of indenture. Under duress, Johnson freed Casor. Feeling cheated, Johnson sued Parker to repossess Casor. A Northampton County, Virginia court ruled for Johnson, declaring that Parker illegally was detaining Casor from his rightful master who legally held him "for the duration of his life". England had no system of naturalizing immigrants to its island or its colonies. Since persons of African origins were not English subjects by birth, they were among those peoples considered foreigners and generally outside English common law. The colonies struggled with how to classify people born to foreigners and subjects. In Virginia, Elizabeth Key Grinstead , a mixed-race woman, successfully gained her freedom and that of her son in a challenge to her status by making her case as the baptized Christian daughter of the free Englishman Thomas Key. Her attorney was an English subject, which may have helped her case. He was also the father of her mixed-race son, and the couple married after Key was freed. A child of an enslaved mother would be born into slavery, regardless if the father were a freeborn Englishman or Christian. This was a reversal of common law practice in England, which ruled that children of English subjects took the status of the father. The change institutionalized the skewed power relationships between slaveowners and slave women, freed the white men from the legal responsibility to acknowledge or financially support their mixed-race children, and somewhat confined the open scandal of mixed-race children and miscegenation to within the slave quarters. The Virginia Slave codes of further defined as slaves those people imported from nations that were not Christian. Native Americans who were sold to colonists by other Native Americans from rival tribes , or captured by Europeans during village raids, were also defined as slaves. Ledger of sale of slaves, Charleston, South Carolina , c. Slavery was then legal in the other twelve English colonies. Neighboring South Carolina had an economy based on the use of enslaved labor. The Georgia Trustees wanted to eliminate the risk of slave rebellions and make Georgia better able to defend against attacks from the Spanish to the south, who offered freedom to escaped slaves. James Edward Oglethorpe was the driving force behind the colony, and the only trustee to reside in Georgia. He opposed slavery on moral grounds as well as for pragmatic reasons, and vigorously defended the ban on slavery against fierce opposition from Carolina slave merchants and land speculators. As economic conditions in England began to improve in the first half of the 18th century, workers had no reason to leave, especially to face the risks in the colonies. During most of the British colonial period, slavery existed in all the colonies. People enslaved in the North typically worked as house servants, artisans, laborers and craftsmen, with the greater number in cities. Many men worked on the docks and in shipping. In , more than 42 percent of New York City households held slaves, the second-highest proportion of any city in the colonies after Charleston, South Carolina. The South developed an agricultural economy dependent on commodity crops. Its planters rapidly acquired a significantly higher number and proportion of slaves in the population overall, as its commodity crops were labor-intensive. Before then long-staple cotton was cultivated primarily on the Sea Islands of Georgia and South Carolina. The invention of the cotton gin in enabled the cultivation of short-staple cotton in a wide variety of mainland areas, leading in the 19th century to the development of large areas of the Deep South as cotton country. Tobacco was very labor-intensive, as was rice cultivation. They also worked in the artisanal trades on large plantations and in many southern port cities. Backwoods subsistence farmers, the later wave of settlers in the 18th century who settled along the Appalachian Mountains and backcountry, seldom held enslaved people. Some of the British colonies attempted to abolish the international slave trade , fearing that the importation of new Africans would be disruptive. Virginia bills to that effect were vetoed by the British

Privy Council. Rhode Island forbade the import of enslaved people in 1774. All of the colonies except Georgia had banned or limited the African slave trade by 1775; Georgia did so in 1776. The great majority of enslaved Africans were transported to sugar colonies in the Caribbean and to Brazil. As life expectancy was short, their numbers had to be continually replenished. Life expectancy was much higher in the U.S. The number of enslaved people in the US grew rapidly, reaching 4 million by the 1860 Census. From 1776 until 1860, the rate of natural growth of North American enslaved people was much greater than for the population of any nation in Europe, and it was nearly twice as rapid as that of England. This resulted in a different pattern of slavery in Louisiana, purchased in 1803, compared to the rest of the United States. Although it authorized and codified cruel corporal punishment against slaves under certain conditions, it forbade slave owners to torture them or to separate married couples or to separate young children from their mothers. It also required the owners to instruct slaves in the Catholic faith. The mixed-race offspring creoles of color from such unions were among those in the intermediate social caste of free people of color. The English colonies insisted on a binary system, in which mulatto and black slaves were treated equally under the law, and discriminated against equally if free. But many free people of African descent were mixed race. They officially discouraged interracial relationships although white men continued to have unions with black women, both enslaved and free. The Americanization of Louisiana gradually resulted in a binary system of race, causing free people of color to lose status as they were grouped with the slaves. They lost certain rights as they became classified by American whites as officially "black".

*For many Americans, slavery was a southern institution. The divide between scholarly work on northern slavery and public knowledge can be in part attributed to a lack of public education.*

Slavery in America began in the early 17th Century and continued to be practiced for the next years by the colonies and states. Slaves, mostly from Africa, worked in the production of tobacco crops and later, cotton. With the invention of the cotton gin in along with the growing demand for the product in Europe, the use of slaves in the South became a foundation of their economy. In the late 18th century, the abolitionist movement began in the north and the country began to divide over the issue between North and South. In , the Missouri Compromise banned slavery in all new western territories, which Southern states saw as a threat to the institution of slavery itself. The decision antagonized many Northerners and breathed new life into the floundering Abolition Movement. The election of Abraham Lincoln , a member of the anti-slavery Republican Party, to the presidency in convinced many Southerners that slavery would never be permitted to expand into new territories acquired by the US and might ultimately be abolished. Eleven Southern states attempted to secede from the Union, precipitating the Civil War. During the war, Abraham Lincoln issued his famous Emancipation Proclamation , freeing slaves in all areas of the country that were at that time in rebellion. This measure helped prevent European intervention on the side of the South and freed Union army and navy officers from returning escaped slaves to their owners, but not until after the Union had won the war and the subsequent passage of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution were the American slaves officially freed. In , Members of the Commons had voted against abolition. Very few MPs dared to defend the trade on moral grounds, even in the early debates. Instead, they called attention to the many economic and political reasons to continue it. Those who profited from the trade made up a large vested interest, and everyone knew that an end to the slave trade also jeopardized the entire plantation system. In a stuffy party at Oxford, Dr. Those on both sides of the Atlantic faced expulsion from the Society if they still owned slaves in In the British Quakers established the antislavery committee that played a huge role in abolition. The committee began by distributing pamphlets on the trade to both Parliament and the public. May 12, , was clearly out of season for abolition. Wilberforce had concluded with a solemn moral charge: We can no longer plead ignorance. So far, the public had easily ignored what it could not see, and there had been no slaves in England since English people saw slave ships loading and unloading only goods, never people. Few knew anything of the horrors of the middle passage from Africa. Over time, it became more and more difficult for anyone to plead ignorance of this matter. Thomas Clarkson and others toured the country and helped to establish local antislavery committees. These committees in turn held frequent public meetings, campaigned for a boycott of West Indian sugar in favor of East and circulated petitions. When, in , Wilberforce again gave notice of a motion, petitions poured in. Although few MPs favored immediate abolition, this public outcry was hard to ignore. While in theory a victory of conscience, the bill as it then stood came to nothing. The abolitionist cause endured disappointments and delays each year following until ; and each year, British ships continued to carry tens of thousands of Africans into slavery in the Western Hemisphere. Wartime England lost her fervor for the cause. Although Wilberforce stubbornly brought his motion in Parliament each year until , only two very small measures on behalf of the oppressed Africans succeeded in the first decade of the war. Go Wâ€™ with narrow skull, Go home and preach away at Hullâ€™! Mischief to trade sits on your lip. Insects will gnaw the noblest ship. Go Wâ€™, begone, for shame, Thou dwarf with big resounding name. The state of affairs in France also brought abolitionist ideals under suspicion. What more or less than the rights of man? And what is liberty and equality; and what are the rights of man, but the foolish fundamental principles of this new philosophy? Slowly, public opinion began to reawaken and assert itself against the trade. Conditions in Parliament also became more favorable. Economic hardship and competition with promising new colonies weakened the position of the old West Indians. In abolitionists in Parliament managed to secure the West Indian vote on a bill that destroyed the three-quarters of the trade that was not with the West Indies. On the night of the decisive vote for total abolition of the trade in , the House of Commons stood and cheered for the

persistent Wilberforce, who for his part hung his head and wept. The bill became law on March 25, and was effective as of January 1. For the next century, England fought diplomatic battles on many fronts to reduce the foreign slave trade. British smugglers were stopped in their tracks by the decision that made slaving punishable by deportation to Botany Bay. Smuggling under various flags threatened to continue the Atlantic trade after other nations had abolished it, and the British African Squadron patrolled the West African coast until after the American Civil War. In slavery was abolished throughout the British Empire. The news reached Wilberforce two days before his death. It is bittersweet, years later, to commemorate the end of one of the most atrocious crimes in history. Yet the dismantling of an immensely profitable and iniquitous system, over a relatively short period of time and in spite of many obstacles, is certainly something to commemorate. For more great articles, subscribe to British Heritage magazine today! No, you dare not make war on cotton! No power on earth dares make war upon it. The lands being farmed evolvedâ€”from coastal plains linked by rivers and bays, to interior regions connected by rail and canals. The states with the most promising crops evolvedâ€”from the old Atlantic seaboard states of the Carolinas and Virginia, west and south to Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and eastern Texas. And the labor evolvedâ€”from a situation where enslaved blacks and whites essentially were both pioneers struggling to eke out an existence in a new world, to a system of chattel slavery in which the slaves were as much an asset as the land. Bad relations with the American Indians had plagued the colonists, who were struggling simply to keep themselves fedâ€”much less earn the riches they had hoped to earn in this new land. The building blocks included colonists and planters eager for riches, seeds of crops from other places, a wealthy European market and a complicated gumbo of human relations that would breed both invention and cruelty. Rolfe found good ways to grow and cure the Spanish tobacco, possibly with advice from his new bride, Pocahontas. Seven years after Rolfe first planted his tobacco, Jamestown had exported 10 tons of it to Europe. This luxury crop eventually gave colonists needed income to buy African slaves. At times, the colony had to force its residents to plant food. Within three decades, Jamestown was shipping tons of tobacco back across the Atlantic, making tobacco the largest export in the American colonies. But the crop wore out the soil, so there was a scramble across the Chesapeake Bay waterways for fresh, suitable lands. Not only were European markets essential; precedents in the Caribbean colonies influenced its development. French and Spanish colonists established sugar plantations on several islands, and English colonists got in on the action in Barbados. By the s, the small island was divided into large plantations. To do the demanding work, colonists imported African slaves in such numbers that there were three for every one planter, as wealthy planters eclipsed the poorer ones, some of whom would leave for a new colony called Carolina. As the Virginia colonists were establishing wealth with tobacco, another English ship came ashore farther South in to create a new colony that eventually would surpass Virginia in cultivation of cash crops. The ship Carolina arrived via Barbados, and unlike the first settlers in Virginia, the colonists arrived with African slaves, though they were more like indentured servants. But by , the Carolina colonists found a different crop that made many of them fortunes a few decades later: South Carolina planters valued slaves from rice-growing regions; Henry Laurens, a merchant slave trader and one of the wealthiest men in all of the American colonies, distinguished between slaves based on skills they learned in their native lands. There was always a scramble for the next big crop. Eliza Lucas Pinckney of Charles Towne loved to experiment with cropsâ€”including indigo, a blue dye now commonly used for jeans but created a rare and valuable color in the 18th century; so valuable England was willing to subsidize its production. The indigo marketâ€”and subsidyâ€”effectively ended with the Revolutionary War, but rice would survive and find lucrative markets in Europe. After all, people can do without smoke or blue-colored garments, but everyone needs to eat. In Louisiana, French and Spanish settlers had moderate success with sugar, but indigo also was the major crop there in the late 18th century, before the region was part of the United States. The balance started to shift after a French nobleman, Etienne de Bore, returned to his native Louisiana. At his plantation about six miles north of New Orleans, de Bore became frustrated by insects gobbling up his indigo, so he began tinkering with sugar cane and in , pioneered production of granulated sugar. He was helped by the expertise of other sugar makers who moved to Louisiana after the bloody slave uprising in Saint-Domingue, now Haiti. At the peak in the early 19th century, Louisiana planters got yields from 16 to 20 tons of cane per

acre and harvested , tons of sugar per year, helping support half a million people. Had a South Carolinian kept his promise in to pay a Yale-educated tutor guineas a year, the Southern economy as most know it today might have looked a whole lot different. But the deal fell through, and Eli Whitney headed south to Savannah instead, accepting an offer from the widow of Revolutionary War General Nathaniel Greene to stay at her plantation and continue his studies. A handful of planters produced cotton in Georgia, but extracting the valuable lint from the worthless seed was a time-consuming chore that could easily wipe away any meaningful profit. At their urging, Whitney concocted a series of wires to hold the seed while a drum with hook-shaped wires pulled the fiber out and a rotating brush cleaned the lint off the hooks. Cotton was by no means a new crop: Planters had grown Sea Island cotton, a long-staple variety, in the sandy soils along the South Carolina and Georgia coast since the early s. But like tobacco, it depleted the soil and often was challenging to market. Demand for cotton, including the short-staple variety, exploded as England and France built new textile mills that craved the raw material. By , Southern cotton production ballooned eight-fold from the decade before. Unlike Sea Island cotton, short-staple cotton could grow in upland areas, giving planters in vast swaths of the South a chance at riches previously confined to the coast. The War of disrupted trade with England, but entrepreneurial Northerners stepped into the breach. While a few cotton and wool spinning mills had been built in Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Connecticut by , scores more sprang up in the following decade. The number of mills within a mile radius of Providence, R. The revolution was on. The lucrative short-staple cotton trade helped create two Souths: An upper South of Virginia, Maryland, Kentucky, Tennessee and North Carolina that began moving away from the plantation model, selling their slaves to owners in the lower Southâ€™ states like Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi, where cotton planters desperately needed the labor.

### Chapter 4 : The Southern Argument for Slavery [racedaydvl.com]

*The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South* is a non-fiction book about slavery published in , by academic Kenneth M. Stampp of the University of California, Berkeley and other universities.

Resource Bank Contents By slavery was primarily located in the South, where it existed in many different forms. African Americans were enslaved on small farms, large plantations, in cities and towns, inside homes, out in the fields, and in industry and transportation. Though slavery had such a wide variety of faces, the underlying concepts were always the same. Slaves were considered property, and they were property because they were black. Their status as property was enforced by violence -- actual or threatened. People, black and white, lived together within these parameters, and their lives together took many forms. Enslaved African Americans could never forget their status as property, no matter how well their owners treated them. But it would be too simplistic to say that all masters and slaves hated each other. Human beings who live and work together are bound to form relationships of some kind, and some masters and slaves genuinely cared for each other. But the caring was tempered and limited by the power imbalance under which it grew. Within the narrow confines of slavery, human relationships ran the gamut from compassionate to contemptuous. But the masters and slaves never approached equality. The standard image of Southern slavery is that of a large plantation with hundreds of slaves. In fact, such situations were rare. Whites who did not own slaves were primarily yeoman farmers. Practically speaking, the institution of slavery did not help these people. And yet most non-slaveholding white Southerners identified with and defended the institution of slavery. Though many resented the wealth and power of the large slaveholders, they aspired to own slaves themselves and to join the privileged ranks. In addition, slavery gave the farmers a group of people to feel superior to. They may have been poor, but they were not slaves, and they were not black. They gained a sense of power simply by being white. In the lower South the majority of slaves lived and worked on cotton plantations. Most of these plantations had fifty or fewer slaves, although the largest plantations have several hundred. Cotton was by far the leading cash crop, but slaves also raised rice, corn, sugarcane, and tobacco. Many plantations raised several different kinds of crops. Besides planting and harvesting, there were numerous other types of labor required on plantations and farms. Enslaved people had to clear new land, dig ditches, cut and haul wood, slaughter livestock, and make repairs to buildings and tools. In many instances, they worked as mechanics, blacksmiths, drivers, carpenters, and in other skilled trades. Black women carried the additional burden of caring for their families by cooking and taking care of the children, as well as spinning, weaving, and sewing. These people were designated as "house servants," and though their work appeared to be easier than that of the "field slaves," in some ways it was not. They were constantly under the scrutiny of their masters and mistresses, and could be called on for service at any time. They had far less privacy than those who worked the fields. Because they lived and worked in such close proximity, house servants and their owners tended to form more complex relationships. Black and white children were especially in a position to form bonds with each other. In most situations, young children of both races played together on farms and plantations. Black children might also become attached to white caretakers, such as the mistress, and white children to their black nannies. Because they were so young, they would have no understanding of the system they were born into. But as they grew older they would learn to adjust to it in whatever ways they could. The diets of enslaved people were inadequate or barely adequate to meet the demands of their heavy workload. They lived in crude quarters that left them vulnerable to bad weather and disease. Their clothing and bedding were minimal as well. Slaves who worked as domestics sometimes fared better, getting the castoff clothing of their masters or having easier access to food stores. The heat and humidity of the South created health problems for everyone living there. However, the health of plantation slaves was far worse than that of whites. Unsanitary conditions, inadequate nutrition and unrelenting hard labor made slaves highly susceptible to disease. Illnesses were generally not treated adequately, and slaves were often forced to work even when sick. The rice plantations were the most deadly. Black people had to stand in water for hours at a time in the sweltering sun. One of the worst conditions that enslaved people had to live under was the constant threat of sale. Even if their master

was "benevolent," slaves knew that a financial loss or another personal crisis could lead them to the auction block. Also, slaves were sometimes sold as a form of punishment. And although popular sentiment as well as the economic self-interest on the part of the owners encouraged keeping mothers and children and sometimes fathers together, these norms were not always followed. Immediate families were often separated. If they were kept together, they were almost always sold away from their extended families. Grandparents, sisters, brothers, and cousins could all find themselves forcibly scattered, never to see each other again. Even if they or their loved ones were never sold, slaves had to live with the constant threat that they could be. African American women had to endure the threat and the practice of sexual exploitation. There were no safeguards to protect them from being sexually stalked, harassed, or raped, or to be used as long-term concubines by masters and overseers. The abuse was widespread, as the men with authority took advantage of their situation. Even if a woman seemed agreeable to the situation, in reality she had no choice. Slave men, for their part, were often powerless to protect the women they loved. The drivers, overseers, and masters were responsible for plantation discipline. Slaves were punished for not working fast enough, for being late getting to the fields, for defying authority, for running away, and for a number of other reasons. The punishments took many forms, including whippings, torture, mutilation, imprisonment, and being sold away from the plantation. Slaves were even sometimes murdered. Some masters were more "benevolent" than others, and punished less often or severely. But with rare exceptions, the authoritarian relationship remained firm even in those circumstances. In addition to the authority practiced on individual plantations, slaves throughout the South had to live under a set of laws called the Slave Codes. The codes varied slightly from state to state, but the basic idea was the same: Slaves could not testify in court against a white, make contracts, leave the plantation without permission, strike a white even in self-defense, buy and sell goods, own firearms, gather without a white present, possess any anti-slavery literature, or visit the homes of whites or free blacks. The killing of a slave was almost never regarded as murder, and the rape of slave women was treated as a form of trespassing. Whenever there was a slave insurrection, or even the rumor of one, the laws became even tighter. At all times, patrols were set up to enforce the codes. These patrols were similar to militias and were made up of white men who were obligated to serve for a set period. The patrols apprehended slaves outside of plantations, and they raided homes and any type of gathering, searching for anything that might lead to insurrection. During times of insurrection -- either real or rumored -- enraged whites formed vigilance committees that terrorized, tortured, and killed blacks. While most slaves were concentrated on the plantations, there were many slaves living in urban areas or working in rural industry. In Charleston, South Carolina, slaves and free blacks outnumbered whites. Many slaves living in cities worked as domestics, but others worked as blacksmiths, carpenters, shoemakers, bakers, or other tradespeople. Often, slaves were hired out by their masters, for a day or up to several years. Sometimes slaves were allowed to hire themselves out. Urban slaves had more freedom of movement than plantation slaves and generally had greater opportunities for learning. They also had increased contact with free black people, who often expanded their ways of thinking about slavery. Slaves resisted their treatment in innumerable ways. They slowed down their work pace, disabled machinery, feigned sickness, destroyed crops. They argued and fought with their masters and overseers. Many stole livestock, other food, or valuables. Some learned to read and write, a practice forbidden by law. Some burned forests and buildings. Others killed their masters outright -- some by using weapons, others by putting poison in their food. Some slaves committed suicide or mutilated themselves to ruin their property value. Subtly or overtly, enslaved African Americans found ways to sabotage the system in which they lived. Thousands of slaves ran away. Some left the plantation for days or weeks at a time and lived in hiding. Others formed maroon communities in mountains, forests or swamps. Many escaped to the North. There were also numerous instances of slave revolts throughout the history of the institution. For one white interpretation of slave resistance, see *Diseases and Peculiarities of the Negro Race* Even when slaves acted in a subservient manner, they were often practicing a type of resistance. By fooling the master or overseer with their behavior, they resisted additional ill treatment.

### Chapter 5 : The Origins and Growth of Slavery in America | Division and Reunion – Slavery and the Civil War

*Between 1789 and 1861, all of the northern states abolished slavery, but the so-called "peculiar institution" of slavery remained absolutely vital to the South.*

The Southern Argument for Slavery Southern slaveholders often used biblical passages to justify slavery. Those who defended slavery rose to the challenge set forth by the Abolitionists. The defenders of slavery included economics, history, religion, legality, social good, and even humanitarianism, to further their arguments. Defenders of slavery argued that the sudden end to the slave economy would have had a profound and killing economic impact in the South where reliance on slave labor was the foundation of their economy. The cotton economy would collapse. The tobacco crop would dry in the fields. Rice would cease being profitable. Defenders of slavery argued that if all the slaves were freed, there would be widespread unemployment and chaos. This would lead to uprisings, bloodshed, and anarchy. Some slaveholders believed that African Americans were biologically inferior to their masters. During the 1830s, this argument was taken quite seriously, even in scientific circles. Defenders of slavery argued that slavery had existed throughout history and was the natural state of mankind. The Greeks had slaves, the Romans had slaves, and the English had slavery until very recently. Defenders of slavery noted that in the Bible, Abraham had slaves. Defenders of slavery argued that the institution was divine, and that it brought Christianity to the heathen from across the ocean. Slavery was, according to this argument, a good thing for the enslaved. Calhoun said, "Never before has the black race of Central Africa, from the dawn of history to the present day, attained a condition so civilized and so improved, not only physically, but morally and intellectually. They said that their owners would protect and assist them when they were sick and aged, unlike those who, once fired from their work, were left to fend helplessly for themselves. James Thornwell, a minister, wrote in 1851, "The parties in this conflict are not merely Abolitionists and slaveholders, they are Atheists, Socialists, Communists, Red Republicans, Jacobins on the one side and the friends of order and regulated freedom on the other. Such unrest was used by many as a reason to continue slavery. When a society forms around any institution, as the South did around slavery, it will formulate a set of arguments to support it. The Southerners held ever firmer to their arguments as the political tensions in the country drew us ever closer to the Civil War. The Peculiar Institution Quiz What invention led to the increased concentration of slavery in the South?

### Chapter 6 : Slavery in the American South - Constitutional Rights Foundation

*Suddenly, the institution of slavery was reborn, reestablishing itself as the backbone of Southern financial interests once again. With the South emerging as one of the chief cotton regions of the world, slavery was more entrenched than ever.*

The framers consciously avoided the word, recognizing that it would sully the document. Nevertheless, slavery received important protections in the Constitution. Thomas Jefferson would have lost the election of if not for the Three-fifths Compromise. The Constitution also prohibited Congress from outlawing the Atlantic slave trade for twenty years. A fugitive slave clause required the return of runaway slaves to their owners. The Constitution gave the federal government the power to put down domestic rebellions, including slave insurrections. The framers of the Constitution believed that concessions on slavery were the price for the support of southern delegates for a strong central government. They were convinced that if the Constitution restricted the slave trade, South Carolina and Georgia would refuse to join the Union. But by sidestepping the slavery issue, the framers left the seeds for future conflict. After the convention approved the great compromise, Madison wrote: The institution of slavery and its consequences form the line of discrimination. Many of the framers harbored moral qualms about slavery. Some, including Benjamin Franklin a former slaveholder and Alexander Hamilton who was born in a slave colony in the British West Indies became members of anti-slavery societies. On August 21, , a bitter debate broke out over a South Carolina proposal to prohibit the federal government from regulating the Atlantic slave trade. Luther Martin of Maryland, a slaveholder, said that the slave trade should be subject to federal regulation since the entire nation would be responsible for suppressing slave revolts. Unless regulation of the slave trade was left to the states, the southern-most states "shall not be parties to the union. The poor despise labor when performed by slaves. They bring the judgment of heaven on a country. They could afford to oppose the slave trade, he claimed, because "slaves multiply so fast in Virginia and Maryland that it is cheaper to raise than import them, whilst in the sickly rice swamps [of South Carolina and Georgia] foreign supplies are necessary. The controversy over the Atlantic slave trade was ultimately settled by compromise. The same day this agreement was reached, the convention also adopted the fugitive slave clause, requiring the return of runaway slaves to their owners. Was the Constitution a proslavery document, as abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison claimed when he burned the document in and called it "a covenant with death and an agreement with Hell"? This question still provokes controversy. If the Constitution temporarily strengthened slavery, it also created a central government powerful enough to eventually abolish the institution.

**Chapter 7 : Slavery In America | HistoryNet**

*Introduction. Slavery is a prominent part of United States history. Slavery has existed for thousands of years in many cultures, but in the United States, the institution seemed to have been perfected.*

Introduction Slavery is a prominent part of United States history. Slavery has existed for thousands of years in many cultures, but in the United States, the institution seemed to have been perfected. It also came at a time of enlightenment, when many began to see slavery not as the necessity that many felt it was, but as an evil exploitation of men. From the time that Christopher Columbus arrived in the New World, slaves were as much a part of the settlement and economy as the settlers and the crops. But this was the normal state of affairs for much of the Western world. The African slave trade, which started in the 15th century, was begun by the Portuguese, but slavery among African tribes was common, as it was among the Native Americans that Columbus encountered in Hispaniola. The biggest difference between native slavery and the slavery brought by Europeans to Africa and the Caribbean was the scope and scale. Going further back, ancient Rome is said to have been more dependent upon its slave labor than any society before or since. Some estimates place the slave population in Rome in the 1st century to be about a third. Slaves came mostly from conquered peoples. To a lesser degree, the children of slaves were also slaves. Kidnapping and piracy, as well as cross-culture purchase are also seen as likely sources. Finally, self-sale, slavery for debt, and slavery as punishment for crimes were also in place. Lastly, as was often mentioned by American supporters of slavery, slavery is mentioned in the Bible. Therein, while it is not encouraged, it is acknowledged, and it is regulated. Slavery, then, has a long, if ugly, history. In 21st century America, it is easy for us to look at our past and be disappointed, even disgusted, by slavery. In fact, it is right to do so. However, it must be understood in the historical context.

#### The Origin of Slavery

When examining the American slave trade, a "why" must first be determined. Why were the slaves brought from Africa, and not from, say, the Caribbean or South America? There are two schools of thought on this topic. The first is purely racial - that the color of skin of the African made him a target for the European traders. The other is that race had little to do with the beginning of the trade, but that pure economics dictated the source. Race, when it eventually did become a factor, came afterwards.

#### Kitts, and in Virginia.

The primary concern of the English in the use of these lands was as a source of income. Tobacco was discovered and became wildly popular, and its cultivation became a priority. Tobacco agriculture requires lots and lots of land, and, in turn, lots of labor to work the land. The first workers were recruited servants from England itself. Lured by the promise of land at the end of their term of service, many indentured servants came. In the islands of the Caribbean, however, land was not limitless, as it seemed to be in Virginia to the north. Settlers branched out from one island colony to another, with some inhabitants and workers moving from other islands and some coming from Britain. Similar colonization was happening with the French, whose laws did not permit indentured servitude to fill labor needs. The Dutch slave traders stepped in with a ready source - enslaved Africans. The English were quick to adopt this model for labor, and by the s, the source of labor had switched from voluntary to involuntary. On Barbados, where tobacco failed as a crop, but where sugar cane and cotton grew well. Based on the Portuguese model in Brazil, Africans were brought in to work the crops such that by , the slave-to-free ratio was about . The Africans were slaves in fact and, eventually, in law. They did not have an end to their term of service as indentured servants did. There was no loss in profit when a number of years ran out. In addition, the wage levels for indentured servants had a strong upturn in the s. The economics of slavery were obvious to the plantation owners. This plays into slavery into America because by the mids, proprietors of the North American lands, from Virginia on south, were looking to profit from their lands just as had been done in the Caribbean. They wanted to attract settlers from England, but more so, they wanted to attract settlers from the Caribbean, who had already worked successful crops and were used to the climate. Certainly, they promoted the religious freedoms of the colonies, and the extension of English rights and liberties, but they also guaranteed property rights. And by this time, African slaves were property. As planters moved from Barbados to the Carolinas, they brought their slaves with them. In Virginia, in the meantime, the cultivation of tobacco became of paramount importance. Over objections of the King to

smoking, and over warnings concerning single-crop agriculture, the lure of profit fixated the settlers. Once they were able to take all the land they wished from the native Indian tribes, they were left with vast amounts of land to work. Indians proved too scattered and resistant to enslave in large numbers. Indentured servants were brought over from England, and they formed the backbone of Virginia labor until the s. The thinking is that indentured servitude continued to be the more profitable way of acquiring labor - an African slave was simply more expensive. Some of the same forces that influenced the shift to African labor in the Caribbean came to Virginia. Though it came later, by the slavery system was so firmly established that it was a fully developed area of the law. In 17th century Massachusetts, slavery was much less an important part of the economic structure, but it was, nonetheless, an important part of the social structure. The Puritans saw slavery as authorized by the Bible, and a natural part of society. These factors made the life of a slave only slightly less onerous than those in Southern states. But the form of agriculture used in Massachusetts is probably more responsible for the relative lack of slaves in the North. Small farms, not large plantations, were the norm, and it was common to find the farmer working the fields alongside slaves. The tide would eventually turn, however, and by the time of the Constitutional Convention, Massachusetts had outlawed slavery. In the census of , there were slaves counted in nearly every state, with only Massachusetts and the "districts" of Vermont and Maine, being the only exceptions. In the entire country 3. In South Carolina, 43 percent of the population was slave. In Maryland 32 percent, and in North Carolina 26 percent. Virginia, with the largest slave population of almost ,, had 39 percent of its population made up of slaves. The states were represented in Congress by state, with each state picking its own representatives, so population, which became critical in the future House of Representatives, was not relevant. Also, because fugitive slaves, and the abolition movement, were almost unheard of as late as the s, there is no mention of this issue in the Articles. The closest thing to be found is the Fugitive Clause in Article 4, but even that is more geared toward convicts. Prior to the Convention in , many "Founding Fathers" expressed opinions that condemned slavery. John Jay, great supporter of the Constitution after its creation and an author of *The Federalist* wrote in , "It is much to be wished that slavery may be abolished. The honour of the States, as well as justice and humanity, in my opinion, loudly call upon them to emancipate these unhappy people. To contend for our own liberty, and to deny that blessing to others, involves an inconsistency not to be excused. In , he wrote, "I believe a time will come when an opportunity will be offered to abolish this lamentable evil. Everything we do is to improve it, if it happens in our day; if not, let us transmit to our descendants, together with our slaves, a pity for their unhappy lot and an abhorrence of slavery. The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submissions on the other. Our children see this, and learn to imitate it; for man is an imitative animal. This quality is the germ of all education in him. His family sold his slaves after his death, in an effort to relieve the debt he left his estate in. In a letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, George Washington wrote, "[Y]our late purchase of an estate in the colony of Cayenne, with a view to emancipating the slaves on it, is a generous and noble proof of your humanity. Would to God a like spirit would diffuse itself generally into the minds of the people of this country; but I despair of seeing it. He directed that his slaves be freed upon her death. His will provided for the continued care of all slaves, paid for from his estate. The great American scientist and publisher Benjamin Franklin held several slaves during his lifetime. He willed one of them be freed upon his death, but Franklin outlived him. In , he said, "Slavery is such an atrocious debasement of human nature, that its very extirpation, if not performed with solicitous care, may sometimes open a source of serious evils. They illustrate the feelings of some, but those feelings cannot be seen in the product of their works at creating a government. Despite the freedoms demanded in the Declaration and the freedoms reserved in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights , slavery was not only tolerated in the Constitution, but it was codified. The Constitution has often been called a living tribute to the art of compromise. In the slavery question, this can be seen most clearly. The Convention had representatives from every corner of the United States, including, of course, the South, where slavery was most pronounced. Slavery, in fact, was the backbone of the primary industry of the South, and it was accepted as a given that agriculture in the South without slave labor was not possible. Though slaves were not cheap by any measure, they were cheaper than hiring someone to do the same work.

The cultivation of rice, cotton, and tobacco required slaves to work the fields from dawn to dusk. If the nation did not guarantee the continuation of slavery to the South, it was questioned whether they would form their own nation.

### Chapter 8 : Slavery in America's South : Implications and Effects

*Slavery in the American South. O Lord, O my Lord! O my great Lord keep me from sinking down. " From a slave song. No issue has more scarred our country nor had more long-term effects than slavery.*

The Peculiar Institution Slaves being put up for auction were kept in pens like this one in Alexandria, Virginia " just a few miles from Washington, D. Its history in America begins with the earliest European settlements and ends with the Civil War. Yet its echo continues to reverberate loudly. Slavery existed both in the north and in the South, at times in equal measure. The industrialization of the north and the expansion of demand for cotton in the south shifted the balance so that it became a regional issue, as the southern economy grew increasingly reliant on cheap labor. As is always true in history, cultures grow and thrive in all conditions. Two interdependent cultures emerged in the American south before the Civil War " the world the slaveholders created for themselves and the world of their slaves. Even though slaves were not permitted to express themselves freely, they were able to fight back even though enchained. Slaves worked long hours in the hot sun picking cotton for their owners. Overseers watched the slaves progress and disciplined those that were deemed to be working too slow. Although African-Americans had been brought to British America since the time of Jamestown colony, American slavery adopted many of its defining characteristics in the 19th century. The cotton gin had not been invented until the last decade of the s. As the south prospered, southerners became more and more nervous about their future. Plantation life became the goal of all the south, as poor yeoman farmers aspired to one day become planters themselves. Rebellions and abolitionists led southerners to establish an even tighter grip on the enslaved. Southern gentlemen like Colonel John Mosby, CSA, were glorified for their adherence to a code of honor most closely paralleled by medieval chivalry. Even amidst the bondage in the south, there was a significant population of free African-Americans who were creating and inventing and being productive. The Peculiar Institution refused to die. Great Britain had outlawed the slave trade long before its former American colonies. New nations in the Western Hemisphere, such as Mexico, often banned slavery upon achieving independence. But in America, political, religious, economic and social arguments in favor of the continuation of slavery emerged. Slavery became a completely sectional issue, as few states above the Mason-Dixon Line still permitted human bondage. These arguments also revealed the growing separation in the needs and priorities of the northern industrial interests versus the southern planting society, all of which culminated in the Civil War.

**Chapter 9 : Slavery, the Economy, and Society**

*The Peculiar Institution refused to die. Great Britain had outlawed the slave trade long before its former American colonies. New nations in the Western Hemisphere, such as Mexico, often banned slavery upon achieving independence.*

Paternalism and the Southern Hierarchy: The Old South, as it would later be referred to, was politically, culturally, economically, and spiritually built around the institution of slavery. Slavery was the foundation the strict southern hierarchy was based upon. Slaveholders, large and small, were at the pinnacle of the Southern society and the possibility of future slave purchase kept non-slaveholding families tied to this paternalistic hierarchy. Slave ownership elevated the status of both genders, giving white women more power within the slaveholding system. Southern women associated paternalism with feminine power in their homes and in their communities. Affluent white southern women, or southern mistresses, supported the institution of slavery because of the ideological agency slave ownership provided in the strict social hierarchy of the South. Along with non-slave owners, who shared their want for enhanced status, many southern women were staunch advocates of slavery. They used paternalism to justify it while still adhering to their prescribed gender roles and actively sought to personify the moral arguments in support of the institution that gave them power in the larger society and the domestic sphere. The South, highly dependent on the institution of slavery, was drastically different from the North; however, both portions of the nation conformed to the ideology of domesticity. Americans subscribed to the idea that there were two separate spheres, the public sphere, belonging to men, and the private sphere, belonging to women. The public sphere involved the outside, the corrupt, the immoral, and only men were strong enough to face it without manipulation or defeat. Women, seen as biologically weak, were fit for the private sphere where they provided their husbands with a moral sanctuary away from the emotionally draining public sphere. In this social framework, women only had a voice in domestic matters including the home and childcare, as well as moral or religious situations. These rigid roles limited the authority a woman had in her community; she had no voice in the public realm. Even in the home, because her husband supported her legally and financially, the American woman in the antebellum period held almost no power. Southern plantation mistresses portrayed the ultimate housewives because they were free of the manual labor associated with their domestic duties and were provided with leisure time to focus on their children and husbands. However, this picture perfect image was not the reality of the Southern plantation mistress. The appearance of perfection was an important part of the hierarchy of the South. Non-slave-owning women clung to the belief that owning slaves would relieve them of domestic chores and transform them into the figure of the Southern plantation mistress. Although wholly exaggerated, the women who did own slaves projected themselves to the rest of the South through the image of the mythical Southern mistress in order to uphold their role in society. By epitomizing the ideal southern mistress, a woman had the unique power to elevate the status of herself and her husband. The social hierarchy in the South placed white women above the slave population based on race. This extra distinction gave Southern women a sense of societal superiority that was not as prevalent in the social structure of the North. In addition, the more a woman fit into the ideology of domesticity the higher her social standing became in both the North and the South. According to Southern ideology, because slave ownership provided women with the opportunity to fulfill the domestic role to the fullest of their abilities the institution was moral. Southern slaveholders used this reasoning to advocate slavery. Slavery was a gateway for women to enhance their already elevated position in society by better allowing them to conform to the ideology of domesticity as well as marking them as higher in the white power structure of the South. Not only did a slave purchase alleviate them from domestic chores, it also provided them with enhanced agency in the home over their slaves, men included. Southern women, therefore, while still in the confines of the domestic ideology, experienced the private sphere in a drastically different way than Northern women due to the added defining element slavery held on their identities. However, owning slaves was a way for Southern women to both excel in their domestic role and exert high levels of dominance over the slaves. This unique combination led women to use their racial superiority as a way to gain power, in both society and their homes, and compensate for their inferior status as

females. In the North women lived under the structure of a rigid patriarchy, where they were below men on all levels besides their domestic realm; in the South, however, women not only lived within a patriarchy but they were an intricate part of Southern paternalism. Paternalism allocated men as not only the heads of their families but also of their slaves. They became father figures to the community as a whole, treating the slave population as a benevolent father would. These father figures did not see themselves as ruthless masters, but caring overseers who had the interests of their slaves at heart. Southern men used the argument of domestic relief when purchasing slaves. These men used their wives as another symbol of their status; the more their women fit the stereotype of the Southern mistress the greater their reputations became. The purchase of a slave to relieve their wives of labor elevated their status and the image of a family could be highly affected by just the appearance of a burden-less housewife. Women, by becoming key elements in this pro-slavery argument, held a powerful role in justifying paternalism. This position gave them superficial power in Southern society. Only one-third of the population held slaves at the onset of the Civil War, however, those few elite slave owners set the standard for the entire south. Plantation mistresses set the ideal for all Southern women. They were powerful and that power allowed them to be perfect feminine idols relieved of heavy burdens with leisure time to spare. In reality, many plantation women held the arduous task of managing their slaves as well as participating in domestic chores just to keep the self-sustaining plantation afloat. It was more important to appear to be relieved of domestic work though the Southern mistress often had difficult daily duties. Where the father in the paternalistic society was the father of his family and of all the slaves that lived on his plantation, the woman was therefore the defaulted mother. According to the ideology of domesticity this mother figure held agency over all that was included in the private sphere. With this logic, women claimed to have complete power over all domestic affairs including all slaves owned by their husbands. Paternalism served two purposes in this way: This critical role in the management of slaves gave women tremendous power in their domestic sphere. They did not deviate from the ideology of domesticity in this way, but used the power to advocate equality of the spheres. This equality formed a major argument in support of the separate spheres ideology. The spheres were equally important, however, women were just better fit for the domestic sphere. Women of the South saw their heightened agency within their domestic sphere as evidence of that argument. This power, however, was superficial and solely based on race. For example, a woman could gain a sense of power on the plantation by overseeing male slaves, but a woman often did not purchase a slave of her own. The purchase of a slave was therefore for the superficial benefit of the Southern woman; women assumed the ideal of the Southern mistress whether the slave relieved her of domestic chores or not. Women, along with their husbands, gained greater racial superiority because owning a slave elevated their status as members of the white society. Women, therefore, sought to embody the image of the Southern mistress in order to preserve that. The complex hierarchy made Southern women feel like they had power within the system and shaped their reactions within it. Although slavery, as it is justifiably argued, made women less powerful in their homes and provided them with less gender equality than the North, Southern women fought to uphold the institution they were socialized to believe allowed them domestic freedom and societal power. Southern plantation mistress, 19th cen. Library of Southern Literature The complex structure of society in the South led the majority of women to favor slavery, both for its effects on them as whites but also women. Southern plantation mistresses used an array of moral arguments to support the institution that gave them power and often used the paternal framework to argue their cause. Using paternalism women were able to argue for slavery within the gendered framework of their society. In effect, paternalism presented an un-threatening maternal argument to advocate for something that gave them a very masculine sense of agency in their homes and society. Southern women, in defense of slavery, would claim to be the mother figures for their slaves; they gave them food, shelter, and love, allowing them to have a better life than if they were off on their own. Women felt they were the protectors of their slaves. One Southern plantation mistress demonstrated this when she reflected on the threat of emancipation: Like many other women, this mistress used religious tones to support her beliefs. The Southern plantation, in this argument, was the place where slaves were enlightened to Christianity and saved from the barbaric customs they held otherwise. Much like the illusion of the Southern mistress, women clung to the illusion that slavery was morally justifiable in order to preserve the structure of

Southern society. Maternal overtones and Christian arguments gave women in the private sphere an inconspicuous way to support a very political hierarchy which gave them power. Many would claim that the factory system of the North treated their workers worse than slaves, and that Southern morality would not allow women to oppose the institution of slavery. This leisure component allowed women to focus on raising their children in an exemplary fashion. Slavery supposedly alleviated these mothers of all tasks that kept them away from their children and this became just another moral defense of slavery to the Southern woman. Without slavery these mothers would not have the ability to divert full attention to their children, and they would work as the imagined Northern children did. It is also telling that she noted on the working girls of the North; slavery provided women with a life where they did not have to work outside the home. These women were now imposing their private sphere ideology onto a public sphere issue. In another memoir, Nancy Bostick revealed a letter she had written to a friend in where she reminisced on her time as a Southern woman. Bostick gave her opinion having experienced the South before and after emancipation: First, because the context of this letter is , well after the Civil War, Mrs. Bostick may have claimed she was opposed to slavery due to the change in societal norms. In the antebellum period, however, it is fair to assume Bostick favored slavery as a critical defining element of Southern society. Bostick pointed out that slavery benefited the black population by providing caring plantation families who held their interests at heart. He provided an example of how Southern slave owners cared for their slaves on an equal level with that of their own family. Not every plantation was this way, but this image of the paternalistic slave master was a way for Southerners to defend their old way of life and it also demonstrated the ideals of the period. Southern women, before and after emancipation, clung to the image of the benevolent plantation in an attempt to prove the morality of slavery and uphold it as an institution. She, although childless, was an example of an ideal mistress as she hosted parties for her husband and projected the burden less image. I am always studying these creatures. They are to me inscrutable in their ways, and past finding out. Chesnut claimed she could not understand the slaves for complaining yet staying in their current state. She insinuated however, that they did so because they understood the treatment was better. They clung to the power they held in Southern society and were socially obligated to defend the institution and preserve the Southern way of life within their allotted position in the private sphere. Slave ownership allowed families to assume a higher position in white society, much of which hinged upon the image of the Southern woman. Women who wanted to retain the agency given to them with slavery, used their role as societal markers to their advantage. In addition to racial superiority, slavery provided women with the opportunity, although primarily fictitious, to alleviate them from the labor associated with the domestic realm. In turn, these women felt they were able to fit the mold of the ideal.