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Moses and the Monster and Miss Anne

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refusing to confront this history, our study of the South remains riddled with unconvincing paradoxes.

Recent studies of African American political consciousness in the South look within African American cultures to explore distinctive political traditions and understandings of rights. Enormously influential works by Elsa Barkley Brown, Dylan C. Penningroth, Stephanie M. H. Camp, Michele Mitchell, and Steven Hahn, to name just a few, have changed our understanding of southern and American political traditions. *Out of the House of Bondage* repositions this literature by examining African American women’s articulation of rights through the most intimate forms of labor negotiation with white women in white homes. Therefore, even as Glymph questions paternalism and patriarchy (for their abilities to mask the full weight of oppression), she urges us to persist in exploring the full dimensions of labor as a place where consciousness, both black and white, is formed and mediated, often violently. The result may be uncomfortable, as it was for Mary Jones in 1865 when she wrote, “The word home has died upon my lips.” Yet with that death, as Katie Rowe remembered, “I begins to live” (p. 1).

Moving beyond the master narrative, Glymph offers a way out of tired conundrums. Her study repositions the analysis of power, establishing new research agendas for the study of the South and subaltern studies around the globe.

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NANCY BERCAW


*Moses and the Monster and Miss Anne* by sociologist Carole C. Marks compares the lives of three notable women in nineteenth-century Maryland: Patty Cannon, a kidnapper of free blacks; slaveholding Unionist Anna Ella Carroll; and fugitive bondwoman and abolitionist Harriet Tubman. In seven chapters Marks moves beyond the observation that the relationship of each woman to the slave system served as the thread linking their lives together. Using the concept of the “sociological imagination,” Marks recreates the intersecting worlds of her subjects based on their upbringing on Maryland’s Eastern Shore, their competing definitions of state authority, and how each defied conventional definitions of nineteenth-century womanhood (p. 2). These connections are intriguing and well developed. However, it is the secondary focus of image production that ultimately drives the book. All three women consciously participated in constructing public narratives of themselves as dangerous, deviant, good, and strong-minded at various points in their lives.

Though the three never met, Marks draws from published primary and secondary sources to create a world where these women’s lives convincingly overlapped. Understandably, the dearth of primary sources on Cannon and Tubman contributes to a slightly uneven portrayal when compared with that of Carroll, a member of one of the most notable families in Maryland and a self-purported confidante of Abraham Lincoln. Marks addresses gaps in the historical record on Cannon and Tubman by using the voices of abolitionists, proslavery
agitators, and former bondpeople such as Frederick Douglass. Additional examination of local sources such as Dorchester County court records and family papers and published writings such as the *Memoirs of Margaret Jane Blake of Baltimore, Md.* (Philadelphia, 1897) would have offered a more nuanced understanding of the gendered and racialized spaces each woman occupied. The concluding chapter, “Beginnings at the End,” is provocative in its analysis of spirituality. Cannon, at best, was rumored to be a conjurer; Carroll was raised Protestant; and Tubman was a practicing member of the African Methodist Episcopal faith and heralded as possessing the gift of sight. All embodied a defining aspect of the Eastern Shore: the tradition of religious diversity and dissent. Though Marks alludes to this connection in the introduction, the sound development that each woman’s spiritual center guided her political agenda and shaped her own historical imagining of the self is somewhat misplaced by coming at the conclusion of the work.

Criticisms notwithstanding, the contributions of this monograph to the studies of enslavement, gender politics, and the importance of place are substantial. It provides an overview of slavery in Maryland from the middle of the eighteenth century to the Civil War; it intersects with studies on gender, race, and social deviance; and it underlines the geographical importance of Maryland as a border state. More important, *Moses and the Monster and Miss Anne* restores to the historical record three women whose lives merit additional investigation.

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In 1861, when *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl: Written by Herself* was published in Boston as the story of “Linda Brent,” progressive readers knew that the author was the self-emancipated North Carolinian Harriet Jacobs. However, only Jacobs’s editor, the noted writer and abolitionist Lydia Maria Child, was named on the title page. As old-time abolitionist sentiment waned and Reconstruction was eclipsed, Jacobs and her narrative were forgotten. *Incidents* reemerged in the 1970s during the surge of mainstream scholarly patronage of black history. Yet academic opinion considered Linda’s story a piece of fiction—abolitionist propaganda at best—written by Child. Then, in 1987, Jean Fagan Yellin published an edition of the narrative with Harvard University Press that proved Jacobs’s authorship. Thanks to Yellin and the expanded edition of the narrative she published in 2000, *Incidents* has become a mainstay of courses in American literature and history. Yellin is also the author of the well-received biography *Harriet Jacobs: A Life* (New York, 2004).

For the two-volume *The Harriet Jacobs Family Papers*, Yellin, her coeditors, and a team of researchers have painstakingly compiled a massive assortment of documents. These include items by and about members of the Jacobs family, northern friends, and southern associates, as well as genealogical data. The documents are arranged in twelve chronological parts, each with an insightful introductory