

The politics of slaveholders were shaped by their experience with the enslaved. Planters universally reacted to the landmark case of *Somerset v. Stewart* (1772) with fear and loathing, but South Carolinians gave it far less attention. In 1773, when South Carolinian planters were contemplating separation from Great Britain, Jamaican planters petitioned the king to double the number of soldiers garrisoned on the island (183). Slaveholders retrenched in both societies after the American and Haitian revolutions, but under different conditions. Jamaican planters were utterly dependent on government support, faced a limited geography for expansion, and found their influence in the metropole waning. South Carolina planters, on the other hand, gained significant political power within the United States, won protections for slavery in the Constitution, and expanded slavery through and beyond the Mississippi River Valley. The lessons are striking. Jamaican planters were unable to prevent the abolition of slavery in the 1830s. American slaveholders grew stronger, and only relinquished their power after a brutal war.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of Rugemer's book is how it consciously reorients the geography of American slavery southward, toward the Caribbean. Although more than two generations of careful scholarship have been making this argument, the gravitational pull of the traditional American national narrative still predominates. Rugemer's compelling account offers a corrective, but this by no means is Rugemer's greatest achievement. That would lie in his careful examination of law, power, violence, geography, economics, and the connections between them. Rugemer gives us a glimpse of the limits of law as a formative force, and of how it helps us understand the rise and fall of slavery in the Atlantic world.

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Stephanie E. Jones-Rogers, *They Were Her Property: White Women as Slave Owners in the American South*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019. Pp. 320. \$30.00 hardcover (ISBN 9780300218664).

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They Were Her Property is an engaging and provocative study of how white women participated in and profited from enslavement in the antebellum United States. Stephanie E. Jones-Rogers follows in detail how slavery shaped the

lives of slaveholding women, from their childhood through to adulthood and marriage. More than in previous scholarship, Jones-Rogers's particular focus on married women who held legal title to enslaved people allows for a more complex vision of what slave owning could provide for white women and how they entered and understood slavery's economy and social worlds as independent economic actors. The book claims to uncover "hitherto hidden relationships among gender, slavery, and capitalism" (xiii) and largely succeeds in doing so.

As Jones-Rogers argues, through familial and societal example, white girls learned slave owning early on in their lives. Their childhood engagement with slavery taught them how to become white Southern women. Their property in people facilitated their marriages, often through the sale of enslaved people and in their potential partner's interest in making a financially beneficial match. For married women who retained independent control of enslaved people, slaveholding also allowed a form of independence within their marriages, and society more broadly, that other white women could not afford. Many women enslavers also held wealth that drew the interests of less economically stable men who looked to make lives for themselves in the Southwest and thus helped to facilitate the expansion of slavery across the South.

The sheer cruelty of enslavement in the hands of white women is familiar from the work of historians such as Thavolia Glymph in *Out of the House of Bondage* (2008) and from the writings of the formerly enslaved, such as Harriet Jacobs, who told of the violence they suffered at the hands of white female enslavers. However, Jones-Rogers adds another level to our understanding of the gendered economic calculations within racial capitalism. One of the book's strengths is Jones-Rogers's concentration on the ways in which white women show up as enslavers in worlds with which they have not often been commonly associated in the historiography of slavery and American capitalism: slavery's law and market.

Jones-Rogers follows the activities of white women as active participants in shaping the economy of slavery, demonstrating how they remained speculators right up through the Civil War. She traces white women through both the domestic and public spaces of the slave market, showing that slavery permeated every aspect of Southern life for both men and women. The market demanded that enslaved people be bought and sold in the private spaces of Southern homes and in public markets. White women were present in these different market spaces and shaped value. They also worked to create gendered markets.

Jones-Rogers's argument about the role of white women's influence in the marketplace is particularly impressive when she discusses the trade of enslaved wet nurses. She argues that desire for the labor of wet nurses created a particularly gendered market that was dependent on both black and white women and was "crucial to the commodification of enslaved women's

reproductive bodies” (102). The market for wet nurses fundamentally shaped the lives and families of black women. The economic action of these female enslavers to create a market for wet nurses follows the connections between slavery and American capitalism that have been tracked by other historians, but the book demands that we continue to ask in more detail how these economies were gendered.

As Jones-Rogers deftly shows, women enslavers were able to use their ownership of people to maintain economic independence. Indeed, the book makes a convincing case that in many instances “slavery was their freedom” (xvii). This freedom was dependent on the non-freedom of the enslaved. Despite patriarchal systems such as coverture, white women slaveholders used the law to protect their independent legal title to the enslaved through marriage contracts and sometimes by suing their husbands for misuse of the human property that these women brought into their marriages.

Jones-Rogers uses traditional source materials such as the *Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writer’s Project* collection, Southern print culture, and legal documents to tell an untraditional history. The book offers a lesson on how what we look for, or choose to see, shapes our use of sources and understanding of history. This fast-paced and accessible narrative will shape how historians, students, and broader audiences alike understand the role that white women played in the economy of the slaveholding South. It offers a sharp historical analysis of broader conversations around white supremacy, gender, and slavery that is very much needed.

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Anders Walker, *The Burning House: Jim Crow and the Making of Modern America*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018. Pp. 304. \$30.00 hardcover (ISBN 9780300223989).
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In *The Burning House: Jim Crow and the Making of Modern America*, Anders Walker, a law professor at Saint Louis University, makes a unique and controversial argument regarding the effects of Jim Crow on modern America. Although Walker does not downplay the violence and inequality that resulted from segregation and disenfranchisement, he also claims that Jim Crow