

CONSTRUCTION OF ETHNICITY IN THE CIVIL WAR
DIARIES OF SOUTHERN WOMEN

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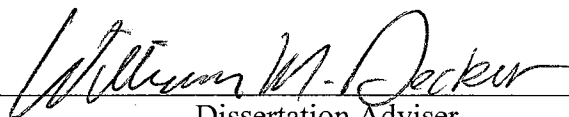
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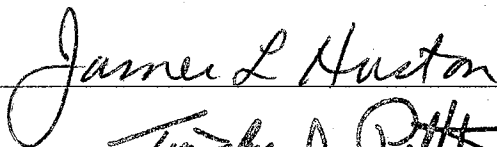
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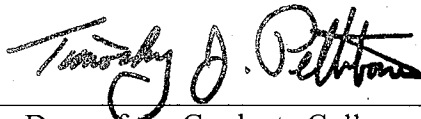


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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

"I Would Die Without Some Means of Expressing My Feelings"

I initially approached this study through my interest in abolitionist literature, particularly the slave narratives of Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs. Their texts presented me with an old enigma: How could any right-thinking person believe slavery justifiable? Because the institution of slavery is so obviously evil from a late twentieth-century perspective, the challenge seemed to rest in recreating the slaveholder's hermeneutic circle. How did the slaveholder position himself or herself in relationship to the slave? Out of what historical, religious, and social milieu did the slaveholder construct meaning? What factors would effectively create a fissure in a thought-system which endorsed slavery?

The Civil War diaries of Confederate women allow me to address many of my concerns. They represent a coherent genre, written by a group affiliated by race, time period, region, politics, social class, religion, and gender. The majority of the diarists write with the express purpose of recording the events and impact of the war on their personal fortunes, and so they pen the stories of their days with an eye toward history and a clear sense of future readers, characteristics which have endeared their texts to historians seeking to reconstruct the Civil War world.¹ Unlike the aloof, fragile blossoms of antebellum lore, these writers express anger and belligerence at the war's progress as sons and brothers are maimed and killed, and property is destroyed or confiscated. Many of the women write from occupied territory; the recurrent confrontation with Union soldiers, slaves, and former slaves gives these women a unique perspective, one which allows them to repeatedly test the validity of their beliefs in a way

unavailable to the bulk of Northerners and Southern men. The physical violence and emotional desolation of the War force these women to question their received attitudes toward ethnicity, gender, and class, causing them to reevaluate what it means to be a Southern White Lady.

Because periods of war inevitably cause social and political upheaval, I believe this set of autobiographical writings provides a unique opportunity to study the relative coherence as well as the gradual transformation of the world view of individual women. Frank Shuffelton, in his introduction to A Mixed Race: Ethnicity in Early America, makes an observation concerning ethnicity in early American texts which seems equally applicable to these Confederate diaries: "the 'qualifying energy' of ethnicity implicates it always in struggles for control over narratives, over values, over the self, and thus ethnicity is not to be ascribed only to someone who is culturally other than a hegemonic group but is operative within the narratives, the values, and the selves of the dominant group as well" (8). Thus, a study of these women's autobiographical writings not only uncovers the writers' perceptions of the African slave or Union soldier, but demonstrates their continually shifting construction of their own identities. While each woman's diary bears her unique psychic imprint, when read as a set, these texts reveal recurrent patterns. The circumstances of civil war assault these women's sense of who they are and how they stand in relationship to others; they respond to the uncontrollable changes in their status, physical surroundings, daily routine, material wealth, and family relationships by turning to a world they can control—their diaries.

I want to explore the rhetorical strategies these writers employ in constructing their identities, focusing primarily on their evolving attitudes toward their own and

other's ethnicity. This direction allows me to address my original questions concerning attitudes toward slavery, while creating space for inquiry into other aspects of ethnicity. For instance, how does gender interact with the construction of an ethnic identity? More specifically, how does it enhance, intensify, or otherwise transform an identity based on region and class? What manner of literacy does diary keeping represent, and how does this form of literacy influence the diarist's perceptions of ethnic identity? What rhetorical patterns emerge as significantly connected to the formation of ethnic identity? What shared assumptions do these various writers employ to create meaning out of experience? How does the publication of these texts, along with certain editorial glosses, promote particular ethnic agendas?

These women diarists face a frontal attack to their cherished belief in Southern white superiority. As the Confederacy grinds toward its eventual defeat, slaves run away and are liberated; Union soldiers march into parlors uninvited; generals order loved ones to distant battlefields. Despite—or perhaps because of—the lack of control over the massive changes bombarding their lives, these diarists create portraits of empowerment which gradually emerge in texts where the story's ending is truly unknown,² so that the actual process of keeping the diary affects the writer's ethnic identity. Within the pages of their journals, the disloyal slave is always the anomaly and the Yankee soldier is always bested in an argument. Close attention to the texts reveals that these women uniformly focus on themes designed to regain the power wrested away from them by the failing fortunes of war.

Because this study focuses on the literary rather than historical aspects of Confederate Civil War diaries,³ a survey of critical work treating women's life writings

will help contextualize my subsequent observations. Women's autobiographical writings were overlooked and undervalued in the few critical appraisals of English-language autobiographies prior to 1980. This situation has been remarked upon so often now that their disenfranchisement has become a truism. One of the earliest scholars to comment on the glaring absence of women's autobiographical writings from the critical arena was Estelle Jelinek in "Women's Autobiography and the Male Tradition" (1980).⁴ After noting that " 'insignificant' . . . expresses the predominant attitude of most critics toward women's lives" (4), Jelinek concludes that the majority of "objective" critical theories regarding autobiography are not applicable to women's autobiographical writings (5), an insight which leads her to discuss the differences between men's and women's autobiographical writing. Jelinek identifies the first important gendered difference as the attitude toward history: male autobiographers perceive their texts as "a mirror of [their] era," while female autobiographers "rarely mirror the establishment history of their times" (7). Instead of emphasizing the public aspect of their lives, they "concentrate instead on their personal lives—domestic details, family difficulties, close friends, and especially people who influenced them" (8). A second gendered difference rests in the autobiographical form: male autobiographers "consciously shape the events of their life into a coherent whole" by "concentrating on one period of their life, one theme, or one characteristic of their personality," while female autobiographers write narratives which are "not chronological and progressive but disconnected, fragmentary, or organized into self-sustained units rather than connecting chapters" (17).⁵ Finally, Jelinek notes that, contrary to popular critical belief that "the autobiographical mode is an introspective and intimate one and that autobiographers write about their inner or emotional life," neither

male nor female autobiographers are likely to explore painful or intimate memories in their texts (10). Although autobiographers frequently discuss their parents, both genders tend to avoid writing about "siblings, children, mates, and romantic attachments" (11), an authorial silence that Jelinek attributes to the desire for privacy. In those cases where the text does treat friendship, love, and hate, Jelinek finds that the author is most frequently a woman.

What does this apparent dichotomy between male and female autobiographies suggest to Jelinek? At the very least, these differences necessitate a fresh appraisal of the critical criteria applied to autobiographies, a call which has produced significant results over the last two decades. Criteria and theories which emerge from an understanding of men's autobiographical traditions seem inadequate to explain and evaluate women's autobiographical writings. Perhaps, she reasons, women's autobiographies "may constitute, if not a subgenre, then an autobiographical tradition different from the male tradition" (17), a suggestion which she explores in her later study, The Tradition of Women's Autobiography: From Antiquity to the Present.

The same year that Jelinek's study appeared, Mary Mason published an important discussion of women's autobiography in James Olney's groundbreaking study Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical (1980). In "The Other Voice: Autobiographies of Women Writers," Mason argues that through close attention to the autobiographies of Dame Julian, Margery Kemp, Margaret Cavendish, and Anne Bradstreet "we can discover not only important beginnings in the history of women's autobiography in English as a distinct mode of interior disclosure but also something like a set of paradigms for life writing by women right down to our time" (21). Mason

observes two major patterns in men's autobiographies, both of which center on the self in isolation: Augustine's Confessions presents the self as a stage where the dramatic battle between the forces of good and evil battle for dominance over the individual's soul, and Rousseau's Confessions portrays an evolving consciousness where external characters and events serve only as a backdrop. Mason argues that women's autobiographies follow neither of these models. Instead, "the self-discovery of female identity seems to acknowledge the real presence and recognition of another consciousness, and the disclosure of female self is linked to the identification of some 'other' " (22).

Acknowledging another consciousness, whether that other consciousness is transcendent, another autonomous being, or a community, allows the woman autobiographer to evolve and delineate a sense of self through "alterity." This process of defining Self in relationship with another fully-rounded Self represents a constant theme in women's autobiographies.⁶ Like Jelinek, Mason urges critics to recognize the presence of a separate tradition of women's autobiographical writing which has literary value in its own right, and which opens up a window on the manner in which women have encoded their consciousness into language.

Susan Stanford Friedman builds on Mason's argument in "Women's Autobiographical Selves: Theory and Practice." She also questions the pervasive emphasis placed on the individualism of the autobiographical self. Friedman observes that Georges Gusdorf believes "a conscious awareness of the singularity of each individual life" forms a prerequisite to true autobiography (qtd. in Friedman 29), a requirement which results in the marginalization of texts by women and minorities which

present the self in relationship with others. Friedman rewrites Gusdorf's definition of the place where autobiography can exist:

Autobiography is possible when the individual does not feel *herself* to exist outside of others, and still less against others, but very much *with* others in an interdependent existence that asserts its rhythms everywhere in the community . . . [where] lives are so thoroughly entangled that each of them has its center everywhere and its circumference nowhere. The important unit is thus never the isolated being. (38)⁷

Instead of the true self being the one which remains unaffected by others and unchanged by circumstances, Friedman emphasizes that a woman's identity is formed through "identification, interdependence, and community" (38). Instead of forcing a distinction between the self and the other in order to clarify the self's uniqueness, (a process which can result in the other's objectification and dehumanization), Friedman argues that women autobiographers recognize the full autonomy of the Other and explore the concept of the self by placing that self in relationship with a "fully rendered Other" (44).

Shari Benstock, another scholar urging a reevaluation of women's autobiographies, argues that theorists such as James Olney and Georges Gusdorf present the goal of autobiography as the portrayal of a Unified Self, a model which demands that the writer enfold any narrative aberrations into a seamless whole which rests on the totality of the individual's past.⁸ In The Private Self: Theory and Practice of Women's Autobiographical Writings, Benstock theorizes that the "coming-to-knowledge of the self constitutes both the desire that initiates the autobiographical act and the goal toward which autobiography directs itself" (11). Thus, the writer feels constantly propelled

toward unity, identity, and sameness, an understanding of the self that Benstock identifies as a male construct (20). Benstock argues that Freud's discovery of the unconscious profoundly affects the way we understand speech and writing, unsettling the "I" and calling into question the relationship between the "self" and "consciousness" in a way that resonates with women writers who feel the truth behind the "psychic reality" that Freud describes (21). While Olney emphasizes memory's primary role in shaping the self portrayed in autobiography, Benstock observes that an application of Freud's theories forces one to reevaluate memory's reliability: "What is directly gazed upon in the memory remains absent; what is 'revealed' comes by side glances and hints, in the effects of sound, light, smell, touch" (27). Instead of the autobiographer disclosing a stable, concrete self who pre-existed the writing of the autobiography, Benstock believes that for women, "writing the self" is a "process of simultaneous sealing and splitting that can only trace fissures of discontinuity" (29). Benstock conceives of selfhood as an artificial construct, created through the medium of language.

Domna Stanton, in The Female Autograph, concurs. Stanton rejects critical methods and conclusions which seek to identify an essentialized female autograph, or that imply a belief in "referentiality and truth-value" of women's autobiographies (15).⁹ By pointing to numerous texts which refuse categorization, Stanton challenges the reliability of critical dichotomies such as those proposed by Jelinek, which identify men's autobiographical narratives as "linear, chronological, coherent," while labeling women's autobiographies as "discontinuous, digressive, fragmented" (11). Although Stanton sees these oppositions as reductive, she does believe that the very act of writing forces women to participate in a "symbolic order that equates the idea(l) of the author with a

phallic pen transmitted from father to son [and] places the female writer in contradiction to the dominant definition of woman and casts her as the usurper of male prerogatives" (13). Like Benstock, Stanton concludes that the "self" revealed through autobiographical writings rests in the linguistic struggle to capture a presence in the symbolic (and phallogentric) medium of words.

Sidonie Smith further problematizes the gendered nature of autobiography in Subjectivity, Identity, and the Body: Women's Autobiographical Practices in the Twentieth Century. Smith argues that the idea of "true womanhood" is a cultural embodiment arising from the mind / body split of the Enlightenment which portrays the Self as a "fixed, extralinguistic" entity characterized by "well-defined, stable, impermeable boundaries around a singular, unified, and atomic core" (5). The Self thus defined engages the world through reason, and seeks for impartial, universal, objective truth. In order to emphasize similarity between these "ontologically identical, rational beings," whatever is different becomes marginalized (8). Since the Self is synonymous with mind and maleness, the Other—woman—becomes body, engaging the world through the discredited methods of intuition, emotion, and desire.¹⁰ The traditional modes of autobiography seem closed to the unruly, irrational woman whose very humanity is suspect (15). The female autobiographer must work against the genre's established conventions, inevitably confronting a choice: refuse the autobiographical "I" and remain silent, or trespass on that male space and write her own story. If she chooses silence, then through the repression of her body she may join the sisterhood of "true women." If she chooses to write, she automatically violates the cultural imperatives

toward silence and becomes either a "fallen woman" (the embodiment of sexual excess), or a "mannish woman" (in an attempt to reason like a man).

Concerning the dilemma facing woman, Smith queries, "How could she boldly enter the autobiographical 'I' when, to escape the drag of her body and the potential for evil associated with it, she had to renounce self-assertion through a posture of self-sacrifice to others, to children, family, husband, to God?" (25). Carolyn Heilbrun, in Writing a Woman's Life, agrees that the female autobiographer often presents a passive, docile persona in her published writing because anger and the desire for control over her own life are declared "unwomanly" by cultures which deny women a public voice (13-15). The autobiographical project forces woman to distance herself from her body in order to participate in the "male" enterprise of writing, while simultaneously assuring the reader that her body is sexually pure.

Literary scholars have made great strides during the last two decades in correcting the long-standing imbalance which privileged autobiographies penned by men.

Autobiographical narratives by women, such as A True History of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson or Harriet Jacobs's Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, increasingly find their way into even the most conservative of American literature anthologies, attesting to their widespread acceptance as important pieces of our literary heritage. Diaries have yet to achieve this status. Robert Fothergill's 1974 observation that many scholars exclude the diary from literary discussions, dismissing the genre as interesting only to antiquarians and historians (40), still applies in some academic circles.

¹¹ In Private Chronicles: A Study of English Diaries, Fothergill seeks to establish criteria for determining a diary's literary value. He claims that little to no critical attention has

been given to private journals, and the few literary critics who have considered diaries fall into two traps: "merely smiling over them" (6), or "proceed[ing] deductively from the assumption that [the diary's] defining characteristic is an unpremeditated sincerity" (40). This latter faulty approach results in elevating naiveté and formlessness to the status of an ethical standard against which any conscious "literary" moves (such as the desire to write well or to impose structure) seem inauthentic and "poor" (40). Fothergill observes that this opposition of sincerity and premeditated prose is over-simplified and ill-equipped to judge the relative merits of various diaries. Instead of seeing formlessness as a requirement for the true diary,¹² Fothergill argues that "one of the most important effects of keeping a diary is the awareness thereby generated of patterns and processes at work in the life of the writer. Channeled back into the diary, this awareness becomes the source of structural 'themes' that may give to the work a highly sophisticated design" (41). Writing the diary becomes an interactive process between the writer and the text, with the writer shaping the life portrayed in the text, and the text, in turn, shaping the writer's life. Eventually, the text begins to operate within consistent literary conventions about which the author may or may not be aware (63). Contrary to the popular belief that the genre's periodicity precludes the diary writer's sense of a formally completed whole, Fothergill asserts that "as a diary grows to a certain length and substance it impresses upon the mind of its writer a conception of the completed book that it might ultimately be the commitment of the major diarists is to the *book* that their living nourishes" (44).

¹³ Fothergill suggests, then, that "good" diaries present themselves as "the essential imprint of a man's being-in-the-world" (43), a "Book of the Self" constituted by a multitude of discrete impressions of the writer's inner and outer world.

Significantly, Fothergill argues that the best diarists see their diary as "the essential imprint of a *man's* being-in-the-world" [emphasis mine] (43). While Fothergill certainly follows the standard written conventions of the early seventies in utilizing the male pronoun, his subsequent discussion of the development and perceptions of the self focuses primarily on male diarists. In fact, at one point he remarks that female diarists do not seem to feel the "need to project an ego-image" in the same way that men do: "the drive to become Somebody . . . and the conception of one's personal history as 'My Development,' have been masculine traits" (87). Although Fothergill does not flesh out the implications of this gender difference, he does conclude, after sampling women's diaries, that "one simply does not find in past centuries women diarists who strut and perform and descant on their own singularity" (87). His backhanded compliment heralds a concern for subsequent critics who do chose to focus on women's diaries: does gender play a role in shaping and portraying the Self?

The same year that Fothergill's study was published saw the arrival of Mary Jane Moffat and Charlotte Painter's innovative anthology Revelations: Diaries of Women. Many later critics refer back to Moffat's brief foreword, in which she notes the now familiar cultural imbalance between love and work, where "love" is seen as the woman's exclusive realm—an imbalance leading to "self-pity, masochism, manipulation, celebration of the torments of the heart, invalidism, madness" (7)—and where "work" is seen as the man's exclusive realm—an imbalance leading to "slavery, war, corporate profits, destruction of the earth" (7). Moffatt claims that her study of these (primarily) nineteenth- and twentieth-century diaries uncovers a pattern: "What united these disparate lives for us was what we heard as an unconscious call by the women for a

redefinition of these concepts into a less divisive, more organic pattern for existence, one where their capacities for both love and work blend, allowing them to be fully human and balanced, true to the power of their individual natures" (4-5). She contends that dissatisfaction with the prevailing paradigm prompted these women to keep diaries, whether in an effort to redefine the boundaries of love and work, to escape the loneliness resulting from "confusion about the conflicting demands of love and work in relationship to the authentic self" (5), or to express love and work as inner power.

Although Moffatt clearly hopes her collection of diary excerpts will spark "an expanded definition of love to describe the successful exercise in life of each individual's best capacities" (10), the remarks in her foreword that have most intrigued later critics concern the diary's form, and the suggestion that it embodies something inherently female. Discussing the traditionally restrictive nature of women's work, Moffatt observes that the diary's "form has been an important outlet for women partly because it is an analogue to their lives: emotional, fragmentary, interrupted, modest, not to be taken seriously, private, restricted, daily, trivial, formless, concerned with self, as endless as their tasks" (5). Penelope Franklin responds to Moffatt's description in her anthology Private Pages: Diaries of American Women, 1830s-1970s. After quoting Moffatt's remarks concerning the modest, fragmentary nature of women's diaries, Franklin suggests that "there is a more positive view. Why not substitute: realistic, self-contained, patient, assertive, serious, individual, liberating, constant, accessible, flexible, proud, limited only by one's imagination? . . . these qualities mirror the strengths women admire in others and strive for in their own lives" (xxiv). Although Franklin believes that she interprets the connection between women's lived experiences and their journal keeping more

positively than does Moffatt, both critics concern themselves with the individual displayed in the diary's pages. Both critics explore the impulses prompting women to keep diaries, and both insist that the practice of keeping a diary is "a way of gaining perspective and control" (Franklin xxv), a powerful tool in defining self for women who feel censured by male-centered culture.

Elizabeth Hampsten also believes that the diary form reflects the reality of women's lives. In Read This Only to Yourself: The Private Writings of Midwestern Women, 1880-1910, Hampsten observes that women consciously seek to maintain stability in their own lives and in the lives of their families; thus, they work "hard to see that as little as possible 'happens'" (2). The most common artistry of these working-class women is "occasional and impermanent: food cooked, clothes sewn, letters written," and diary entries characterized by a "repetitive daily-ness" which underscores the similarity of the flow of days (2). Hampsten warns readers against valuing the exotic and exceptional over the endless repetitions. Instead, she encourages sensitivity to the values expressed through the diarist's repetition of certain ideas and actions as well as her omission of others. Because these women value stability, they "write in order to assert a pattern and to blur distinctions between recurring and unique events" (88). Maintaining the smooth surface of routine marks a well-regulated and successful life.¹⁴

While Hampsten spends a good deal of time exploring the ways that these Midwestern women encoded their particular concerns in language, she seems primarily concerned with establishing a "true" picture of these particular women's lives, a picture she then plans to generalize to all nineteenth-century American women: "The effort to find whatever it is that these voices out of the past can truly tell us is, I think, urgently

worth making if we are to retrieve a genuine history of people who so far have largely been unaccounted for. The effort can also, I think, illuminate again the sources of writing itself" (15). It is at this point that Hampsten's study most obviously intersects with critical work done on more traditionally accepted forms of autobiography, or even the more recent work done in women's autobiographical writings. While she skillfully utilizes current linguistic theory to address the way language functions in these texts, her desire to uncover the "true" woman behind the text reflects a belief that the diary acts as a prism through which the skillful reader can see the historically factual life. This desire to access Reality often motivates students of literature as well as historians; however, Benstock and Stanton remind us that the autobiographical "I" is always constructed, though with varying degrees of skill and even awareness.

Margo Culley embraces the perspective that "all diarists are involved in a process . . . of selecting ideas to create a persona," and recognizes this characteristic of diaries as only one of several which push these texts beyond the category of historical documents and into the realm of literary constructs (12). In her introduction to *A Day at a Time: The Diary Literature of American Women from 1764 to the Present*, Culley observes that until the mid-nineteenth century American men kept journals in far greater numbers than did American women. As she explores why diary writing has evolved into a form predominantly practiced by women writers, Culley rejects earlier suggestions that women write diaries because other forms of writing are closed to them, and the belief that the fragmentary nature of the diary reflects the fragmentation of women's lives. While she acknowledges that diaries are indeed periodic in structure, she argues that the daily entry as well as the calendar year frequently furnish an active framework which the diarist

manipulates to provide structural rhythm and to advance the "plot" (19), a critical perspective which sees the diarist as artistically shaping her text. Rather than labeling the diary form as essentially female, Culley argues that as self exploration emerged as the diary's proper subject, men gradually abandoned the form because they found themselves unused to "probing and expressing this inner life in any but religious terms" (4). While many diaries written in eighteenth- to mid-nineteenth century America served the semi-public function of family and community histories, Culley observes that beginning with the second half of the nineteenth century, diary keeping became associated with gentility and was ranked alongside skillful needlework or prowess at the keyboard as one of a "lady's" accomplishments (4), a social trend that neutralized the potential power of this increasingly accessible form by relegating it to the drawing room.

Like Moffatt and Hampsten, Culley also explores the reasons compelling women to maintain a daily record of their lives. In keeping with her belief that the diary's proper subject is the self, she argues that keeping a diary "always begins with a sense of self-worth, a conviction that one's individual experience is somehow *remarkable*. Even the most self-deprecating of women's diaries are grounded in some sense of the importance of making a record of the life" (8). Though she agrees with Hampsten that diarists often assert a pattern through their entries, she believes that this demonstrates their desire for narrative control and continuity of the self, rather than a flattening out of experience. Thus, the diary's pages "might be thought of as a kind of mirror before which the diarist stands assuming this posture or that" (12).¹⁵

While Culley draws explicit links between diary keeping and psychoanalysis (12-13), Harriet Blodgett in Centuries of Female Days: Englishwomen's Private Diaries

insists that "using a diary to explore personal inner space for the sake of growth into female awareness . . . is contemporary practice, not the typical historical reality" (4). Instead of using the diary as a therapeutic tool or as a site for redefining the relationship between love, work, and power as Moffatt suggests, Blodgett observes that most diarists of the past participated in conventional gender assumptions and aspirations, and used the diary to record family history or the daily accounts of visits and expenditures (41). The diaries themselves were "much less introspective and frank than [they] are currently envisioned to be" (39).

Blodgett identifies the primary question guiding her study as "How might the diarists' gender have played a role in their diary keeping?" (2) Unlike some earlier theorists, Blodgett refutes the notion that there is something inherently female in the form; instead, she believes it is a "characteristic" form which women have practiced extensively because it has been both possible and gratifying (5). She studies diaries not simply as collections of factual data which can be skillfully mined for their truth value, but as pieces of "literature subjectively interpreting life" (5) which utilize the literary strategies of persona, imagery, and suspense to lend a form to the seemingly endless progression of daily events (6-8). This property of "dailiness" distinguishes the diary from other autobiographical forms through its proximity to events and its lack of an intentional, overarching shape to the narrative (21). It is the diary's periodic nature that Blodgett sees as particularly appealing to women, not because it acts as an analogue to the fragmentation of their lives, but because it offers a chance to relive experience, to "control attitudes [and] command facts" (66), and to apply a "corrective" to their lives (94). She rejects what she sees as the anachronistic move of placing a late-twentieth

century sense of "feminist consciousness-raising" onto these earlier diarists (39), noting that, contrary to current theoretical views of past women's lives, the diaries indicate that these women felt a widespread sense of satisfaction with their lives. Instead of writing from a deficit position of feeling mistreated by a male patriarchy, these women were motivated to write from a more proactive and creative interest in self:

The truth is . . . that diarists, even in public diaries, are taking an interest in self—in their own affairs and problems, and their own perceptions and times; in their own images. A self, a center of subjectivity, is an operative illusion for the women, and their sense of life seems important enough to them to record because it issues from and validates that self. (71)

Blodgett concurs with theorists such as Paul Rosenblatt who have noted the apparent "egocentrism" (14) of most diarists;¹⁶ however, she notes that many female diarists struggle with this motivation because it "smacks of simple vanity and self-assertion, which go contrary to female training" (71). Once again, the diary's form seems perfectly suited to resolve these conflicts. The diarist may satisfy her desire to paint a picture of self, while producing a document apparently motivated by utility and need: "a memoir for posterity, a record for my children, a self-improving discipline to make me more acceptable to others" (72). In answer to her question about the connection of gender and genre, Blodgett concludes that "keeping a diary is not a peculiarly female habit. But it has been especially useful to female being" (97).

Rebecca Hogan, in "Engendered Autobiographies: The Diary as a Feminine Form," also explores the connection between gender and the diary form. Growing out of Naomi Schor's studies,¹⁷ Hogan argues that "the privileging of the detail in the diary

form gives it a structure and perspective which have been culturally and historically seen as feminine" (99). According to her, contemporary critics maintain that "immersion in a profusion of details *is* a perspective, not a loss of perspective as it is for neo-classical critics" (99) who viewed abundant detail as a flaw. This emphasis on detail blurs traditional boundary lines between "world and text, author and text, reader and text" (100) by placing seemingly disparate details side-by-side in a grammatically equivalent form without the use of subordinating conjunctions which suggest that one idea or event ranks higher in importance than another. Hogan asserts that this "principle of parataxis" pervades the diary form, not only on a sentence level, but on the larger structural level (101). Entries detailing the planting of an ornamental garden are placed beside entries detailing the death of a spouse, with no privileging of one over the other. Hogan reframes this "apparent lack of selectivity" as the more positive attribute of "inclusiveness" (102), which enables the diarist to record all events, perceptions, and thoughts "equally, horizontally, haphazardly," in an elastic form which allows the writer to construct significance later (103). Although she alludes to Hampsten's study of Midwestern working women's diaries to support her observations, Hampsten's assertion that repetition signals priority and emphasis should further qualify Hogan's understanding of parataxis. Hogan concludes her article by stating that "the diary's valorization of the detail, its perspective of immersion, its mixing of genres, its principle of inclusiveness, and its expression of intimacy and mutuality all seem to qualify it as a form very congenial to women life/writers" (105). Although Hogan stops short of asserting an essentially female quality to the diary, she does move further than Blodgett in linking the diary's paratactic form to a feminine aesthetic.¹⁸

Critics of the past two decades have explored many of the dynamics peculiar to women's autobiographical writings, and have begun the work of positioning diary writing within that larger context.¹⁹ Although a healthy theoretical framework for approaching diary writing is emerging, much room remains for applying this framework to particular texts. I believe that considering how female Confederate diarists use language to both maintain and transform their sense of ethnicity will contribute to the critical discussion.

Chapter two, " 'Free, white, and twenty-one': Representations of Self and Slave in the Diaries of Confederate Women," explores the manner in which these diarists encode their changing relationships with and attitudes toward African American slaves. I will argue that beyond directly deriding slaves, the grammatical elision of the slave presence from their texts and the colonization of the language of slavery serves to further cement an ethnic distinction endangered by the social, political, and economic upheaval of war.

Chapter three, " 'I Can Write and Think Myself into a Fever About My Brother': The Convergence of Nationalism and Gender," studies the various methods these diarists use to create and exacerbate the ethnic distinction between North and South. Because of the unusually intense interaction between Union men and Southern women during the war years, these diarists conceive of the ethnic conflict along gender lines. Rather than portraying themselves as wilting magnolias, these diarists create powerful portraits of Confederate womanhood by grammatically linking themselves with the battlefield and recording brilliant and biting verbal exchanges with Union officers and soldiers.

Chapter four, "Intertextual Influences on Perceptions of Ethnicity," surveys a wide variety of sermons, periodicals, and works of literary fiction which influence these diarists' understanding of who they are and how they differ from other groups of people. Because

these women believe that familiarity with particular texts and the ability to use language in particular ways mark a true Southern lady, Confederate diaries cannot be read in isolation; instead, they must be seen as texts with permeable boundaries whose authors were heavily influenced by other texts. The connection between literacy and ethnicity builds on earlier discussions of the role of writing in identity formation. Finally, chapter five, "'As a Discourager of Self-conceit There is Nothing Like an Old Diary': Editorial Intervention in Confederate Women's Diaries," addresses the issue of editorial intervention. While editors undeniably shape texts, I argue that they continue a process begun by the diarists themselves. On all levels the diarist edits her own image, shaping the way others, and her future self, read her experience. We see this in the initial choice of which experiences to record and which to suppress, the decision to use particular forms, vocabulary, and textual allusions, and the intentional revision of diary entries to make the writing conform to "standard" English. Secondary editors continue this process, layering their own ethnic biases on top of the text.

On November 19, 1864, Dolly Lunt Burge confronted Sherman's army on his fabled march to the sea. She records that the soldiers rushed in to her plantation like "Demons" (159), stealing more than a thousand pounds of meat from her smoke house in a "twinkling," spiriting away her slaves, plundering her home, "tearing down my fences & desolating my home" (161). Although she prays "Such a day if I live to the age of Methusalah may God spare me from ever seeing again" (162), she manages at the conclusion of this traumatic day to pen more than 1500 words. Burge responds to these cataclysmic changes not by dissolving into tears, or cocking her rifle, but by turning to the power inherent in her diary.

Notes

¹ Several historians have contributed excellent studies to the field of Southern women's history during the past two decades. Among these works are Catherine Clinton's The Plantation Mistress: Woman's World in the Old South (1982) and Tara Revisited: Women, War, and the Plantation Legend (1995); Nina Baym's American Women Writers and the Work of History, 1790-1860 (1995); Drew Gilpin Faust's Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War (1996); Elizabeth Fox-Genovese's Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women of the Old South (1988); and Jean Friedman's The Enclosed Garden: Women and Community in the Evangelical South, 1830-1900 (1985). While each of these writers draws on one or more of the diaries under consideration, the diarists' works are combined with a variety of other documents and historical artifacts to craft a mosaic of nineteenth-century Southern life and consciousness, a worthy goal which this study does not share.

² Innumerable Civil War memoirs have been published, many of which parade under the name of "diary" but which, in fact, reconstruct experience from a later vantage point, inserting the dates to obtain the look of periodic writing. Probably the most famous of these fictionalized diaries is Mary Chesnut's A Diary from Dixie, which C. Vann Woodward places beside her original diary in his excellent study Mary Chesnut's Civil War. Other scholarly works collapse the distinction between diaries, memoirs, and other forms of personal writing, such as Jane E. Schultz's insightful article "Mute Fury: Southern Women's Diaries of Sherman's March to the Sea, 1864-1865" which draws on both published and manuscript diary accounts, memoirs, and letters. While texts such as Phoebe Yates Pember's A Southern Woman's Story, and Belle Boyd's Belle Boyd: In

Camp and Prison provide riveting narratives, they are not, in the purist sense, diaries and thus will not be treated in this study.

³ While many diaries, letters, and short narratives penned by Confederate women are held in manuscript collections throughout the South, I have chosen to focus on twenty-one published diaries which represent a coherent body of autobiographical writing largely neglected by literary critics. While these texts are certainly familiar to historians, as noted above, only a handful of articles treating particular diaries or subsets of diaries have appeared in literary journals, with no work yet offering a comprehensive overview of the set.

⁴ Jelinek repeats this overview in her introduction to The Tradition of Women's Autobiography, pgs. 1-8.

⁵ Jelinek directly refers to Moffat's foreword to Revelations: Diaries of Women here, but does not acknowledge her debt.

⁶ In Metaphors of Self, James Olney contends that the successful autobiographer "draws out of the flux of events a coherent pattern, or . . . creates a sufficient metaphor for experience" which provides unity and uniqueness to the life writing (45). Mason argues that Olney's paradigm applies particularly to life writing penned by men, and that women's life writing underscores community rather than a unique, isolated consciousness.

⁷ George Gusdorf's original statement in "Conditions and Limits of Autobiography" is that autobiography cannot develop in cultures where "the individual does not oppose himself to all others; [where] he does not feel himself to exist outside of others, and still less against others, but very much *with* others in an interdependent

existence that asserts its rhythms everywhere in the community . . . [where] lives are so thoroughly entangled that each of them has its center everywhere and its circumference nowhere. The important unit is thus never the isolated being" (29-30).

⁸ Benstock draws most directly from James Olney's essay entitled "Some Versions of Memory/Some Versions of *Bios*: The Ontology of Autobiography," and Georges Gusdorf's essay entitled "Conditions and Limits of Autobiography," both found in the volume edited by Olney, Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical (1980).

⁹ The question of the "truth-value" of autobiographical writing—particularly as it pertains to the value of diaries—is a query I find particularly intriguing and one which I attempt to address in the first two chapters.

¹⁰ Judith Butler writes that "masculine disembodiment is only possible on the condition that women occupy their bodies as their essential and enslaving identities by defining women as "Other," men are able through the shortcut of definition to dispose of their bodies, to make themselves other than their bodies" (qtd. in Smith 11).

¹¹ Not only does the lack of critical attention attest to the suspect nature of these diaries as "literature," but recently I sat with the English faculty of a mid-size university who quizzed me on my use of "historical documents" as the basis of a dissertation in American Literature.

¹² In An Annotated Bibliography of British Diaries Written Between 1442 and 1942, William Matthews argues that "true" diaries are distinguished by their formlessness (x).

¹³ Many of the diarists considered in this study refer to their diaries as "books" worthy of sacrifice and protection. For example, Sarah Morgan refers to her diary as

"this precious autobiography I am at present compiling" (51), a "book" important enough to rank among the few possessions she spirits away from occupied Baton Rouge (436). Though her friends warn her that if confiscated her diary will be "read aloud to me to torment me," Sarah judges that the benefits outweigh the risk: "Why I would die with out some means of expressing my feelings in the stirring hour so rapidly approaching. I shall keep it by me" (436).

¹⁴ Although the majority of the diarists under consideration in this study nod to nineteenth-century diary writing conventions, often noting the weather or recording visits made and received, they uniformly insist that they live in unique and momentous times, and offer their realization of their key spot in history as the justification for keeping a diary. They frequently remark on the cataclysmic changes rocking the South, a characteristic of these diaries which sets them apart from the diaries in Hampsten's study.

¹⁵ This depiction of the posturing diarist directly contradicts Fothergill's contention noted earlier that female diarists never "strut and perform" (87).

¹⁶ See Paul Rosenblatt's insightful study, Bitter, Bitter Tears: Nineteenth-Century Diarists and Twentieth-Century Grief Theories. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1983.

¹⁷ Naomi Schor observes that neoclassic critics believed that "a profusion of details leads to a loss of perspective" (21), an observation that leads Schor to suggest that detail has been historically construed as feminine. For a fuller discussion, see her study, Reading in Detail: Aesthetics and the Feminine. New York: Methuen, 1987.

¹⁸ Judy Nolte Lensink joins the debate over the connection between the diary's characteristic form and gender, arguing that the "diary's generic liminality makes it the representative female autobiographical text." In her unpublished paper entitled

"Expanding the Boundaries of Criticism: The Diary as Autobiography" (1985), Lensink observes that while the "diary's virtual exclusion from critical praxis has been viewed as a function of its idiomatic fluctuations in form and content, in fact it reflects critics' lack of tools to systematize the reading of diaries" (qtd. in Schultz 61).

¹⁹ Inscribing the Daily: Critical Essays on Women's Diaries (1996) edited by Suzanne Bunkers and Cynthia Huff offers a unique collection of theoretical essays based on individual diaries. Although Bunkers and Huff's introduction covers little new ground, I will refer to several of the volume's essays during the course of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

"Free, white, and twenty-one":

Representations of Self and Slave in the Diaries of Confederate Women

On September 25, 1863, Lucy Buck of Front Royal, Virginia celebrated her birthday. Her hometown, a collection of roughly two dozen white families and an indeterminate number of slaves, occupied a strategic military position on the Shenandoah River, in the pass between the Blue Ridge and Allegheny mountain ranges. By the third year of the war, Front Royal had seen repeated occupation by both Union and Confederate soldiers, many of whom quartered in the Bucks' fields and spare bedrooms. More than once, Buck had found the family home Bel Air caught in the crossfire between troops and targeted for Yankee looting. Family members had fallen on distant battlefields, and second and third generation family slaves had grasped at Lincoln's promises of freedom, leaving Buck and her siblings to master the complicated tasks of caring for themselves. On that evening in late September 1863, she wrote in her diary,

My birthday—twenty-one years old today—free, white and twenty-one!
Heigh-ho! Twenty-one and free! Free indeed, why 'tis reversing the
order of things when every year since I was a little child the shackles of
care and anxiety have more and more closely clasped about me confining
and restraining even the natural impulses of my heart. Free forsooth! I
could laugh the idea to scorn were it not such a sad—such a mournful
burlesque. (228)

Buck acts as spokesperson for multitudes of Confederate women who saw themselves, as the Civil War ground toward its devastating close, living in a burlesque where the

"natural" order had been suspended. Instead of donning silk, they wore homespun. Instead of feasting on sherbet, they ate corn pone. Instead of entertaining gentleman callers, they quartered soldiers. Perhaps most significantly, instead of issuing orders, they cared for themselves. The rapid and cataclysmic changes of those four years left many southern slaveholding women feeling trapped in a tableaux where their ethnic identity was little more than scarves and glitter.

What did it mean to be white and free when one no longer owned slaves? A number of historians have sought answers to this question in recent years, relying on Lucy Buck's and other Confederate women's diaries, letters, and memoirs in conjunction with slave narratives to paint an accurate ethnic landscape of the antebellum and Confederate South.¹ Although these studies have deepened our historical understanding of racial relations, their overwhelming purpose has been to establish some sort of extratextual reality, to use these texts to force open a window on material nineteenth-century America. For the student of literature, the numerous published diaries penned by Confederate women offer other attractions. Because diaries are "texts, that is, literary constructs" whose authors are "involved in a process, even if largely unconscious, of selecting details to create a persona" (Culley 10, 12), they are especially well suited for examining the constantly fluctuating manner in which an individual conceives of herself in relationship to others, and the manner in which she encodes that perception in writing. Though the diaries under consideration were conceived as primarily public documents² intended as records of the tumultuous events engulfing the newly-formed Confederate States, each nevertheless reveals an author who "creates and presents a central character, herself, as seen through a central consciousness, also herself" (Bloom 31). While modern

readers could rightly charge these diarists with racial insensitivity, or—in rare cases—cruelty, readers must also acknowledge the courage and tenacity with which these women reinvent themselves. Four years of civil war challenged each diarist's perception of herself, particularly her long-held understanding of what it meant to be white, free, Southern, and female. The insatiable appetite of the Confederate army robbed many of these women of brothers, fathers, and sons who had formed the focus of their pre-war attention, leaving them alone to confront their changing relationship with those slaves who served as the largely unseen backdrop to their genteel daily routine.

TEXTUAL ENCODING OF ETHNIC ATTITUDES

How do these diarists encode attitudes toward slaves in their texts? Although extended references to particular slaves are rare, at times circumstances compel the diarist to reflect directly on the ethnic divide. A disproportionate number of these direct references reflect the writers' attempts to contextualize and diminish their slaves' displays of emotional strength or passion. When white diarists are unavoidably confronted with a slave's anger or hostility, they typically react defensively or with bewilderment. For instance, in Ada Bacot's diary entitled A Confederate Nurse, the writer relates an encounter with William, a slave boy employed by the medical association to serve at the hotel where the hospital staff lives. Bacot, whose duties include overseeing the housekeeping staff at the hotel, finds that William has inadequately cleaned up after dinner. When she confronts William with the fact that "the dishes had barely been washed, & that was all, the Silver was on the dinner table, the cloth not removed or the knives cleaned," William reacts "impertinent[ly]" (144-45). Bacot writes that, "I slapped

him in the mouth before I knew what I did. He ran off yelling as if I had hit him with a cudgel, he never rested until he made his noze bleed then ran to his mother saying I had done it" (145). Her diary entry not only reveals her refusal to acknowledge her harsh treatment of William to others, but that she deflects responsibility for the incident even in the relative privacy of her journal. Bacot feels that William has overreacted to her slight "slap," a blow which she gave without thinking, and which she feels convinced did not precipitate the bloody nose. The unpremeditated nature of the blow erases any blame in Bacot's mind; indeed, the next day's entry finds her reflecting that "I realy begin to feel that I am one of the most unfortunade of human beaings. I am always doing something or offending some one without intending it" (145-46). She presents William's reaction as completely unreasonable, and fails to appreciate the connection between her anger and the events which follow.

Bacot finds Old Willie's outrage even more disconcerting than William's noisy protest. The reaction of William's mother frankly bewilders Bacot; she writes that when William ran to his mother with his bleeding nose, "Old Willie was like a lioness in a moment. I never in my life saw any thing with such a temper she was perfectly frantic she went on at such a rate that I told her if she did not take care I would have her whiped too that I was determined William should be whiped tonight she said no one should tutch either her or William" (145). Old Willie's refusal to calm down and be "reasonable" seems perverse to Bacot, and her use of words such as "lioness," "frantic," "passion," "raving," "row," "abusing," "thretning" to describe Old Willie's behavior indicates her failure to recognize this slave's passion as maternal feelings. When Old Willie breaks into the room to stop Drs. Rembert and MacIntosh from whipping her child, Bacot

reports that she "burst in telling them to stop whipping her child that they should not whip him," an act of assertiveness that earns Old Willie her own whipping (145). Though Bacot ends the day's entry by observing that she is "worried almost sick about it all," her subsequent discussion of giving up her own personal maid, Savary, to replace Old Willie in the kitchen reveals the source of her concern. The confrontation has been disconcerting, indeed, but more than that it has inconvenienced Bacot. Her text implies that she expects slaves to perform their work cheerfully in order to maintain the fiction of the loving and submissive relationship between master and slave, and that when they do not, this mistress is unwilling—or unable—to recognize her own contribution to the problem. Instead of acknowledging the justness of Old Willie's explosive anger, Bacot neutralizes the moral mandate by reframing Willie's adult rage as a childish tantrum. A slave's anger challenges the owner to see the slave as multi-dimensional, a human being rather than a thing. Diarists such as Bacot who refuse to confront this challenge produce texts which prove internally consistent in their denial of ethnic complexities.

Eliza Frances Andrews in The War-time Journal of a Georgia Girl records another type of dehumanizing intersection between slaveholder and slave. Andrews does not experience a slave's anger but rather an equally unsettling encounter with religious passion which speaks to her in disconcerting and ultimately unacceptable ways. Early in 1865, Andrews visits her sister and brother-in-law's plantation in southwest Georgia, one of the few places in the Confederacy that remained relatively unscathed at that late date in the war. On Sunday, February 2, she writes that she

Went over to the quarter after dinner, to the "Praise House," to hear the negroes sing At their "praise meetings" they go through with all sorts

of motions in connection with their songs, but they won't give way to their wildest gesticulations or engage in their sacred dances before white people, for fear of being laughed at. They didn't get out of their seats while I was there, but whenever the "sperrit" of the song moved them very much, would pat their feet and flap their arms and go through with a number of motions that reminded me of the game of "Old Dame Wiggins" that we used to play when we were children. They call these native airs "Little speritual songs," in contradistinction to the hymns that the preachers read to them in church, out of a book, and seem to enjoy them a great deal more I mean to make a collection of these songs some day and keep them as a curiosity. The words are mostly endless repetitions, with a wild jumble of misfit Scriptural allusions, but the tunes are inspiring. They are mostly a sort of weird chant that makes me feel all out of myself when I hear it way in the night, too far off to catch the words.

(89-91)

While Frederick Douglass also remarks on the power and the haunting beauty of the slave's song, the thrust of his description is to emphasize the slave's humanity within the dehumanizing institution of slavery, and the powerful sense of community that their music nourishes.³ Andrews' description underscores the difference between white and black. Their music is exotic, invoking disturbing emotions she finds difficult to articulate. She admits that she feels unaccountably moved by these strange songs, and the power of their message is attested to by the fact that she records the lyrics to four of their "little sperritual songs."⁴ Andrews is aware that her presence restrains the

worshippers, and the fact that their "sacred dances" are forbidden to her eyes combines with the overheard midnight chant to produce a potent eroticism. However, she seeks to neutralize the music's emotional and erotic appeal by comparing the slaves' movements to the familiar childhood game of "Old Dame Wiggins," by reframing their "sacred dances" as patting feet and flapping arms, and by questioning whether the "sperrituals" are indeed legitimate music. Although she claims that one of the songs has a "quick, lively melody" (90) and wishes that she were "musician enough to write down the melodies" because "they are worth preserving," she also remarks several times that the "songs" are in fact "a sort of weird chant" (91). Likewise, she claims that "the words are mostly endless repetitions, with a wild jumble of misfit Scriptural allusions" (91), after having carefully transcribed several songs into her journal. The journal entry is rife with these apparently unwitting contradictions, suggesting Andrews' unresolved racial biases as well as her troubled fascination with the songs.

Three weeks later, she returns to the Praise House with a friend. While Andrews presents herself as an amateur anthropologist in this entry, her efforts to analyze scientifically the slaves' worship are once again undercut by her implicitly acknowledged physical response to the experience. She describes the slaves in animalistic terms, writing that "Alfred, one of the chief singers, is a gigantic *creature*, more like an *ape* than a man. I have seen pictures of African *savages* in books of travel that were just like him. His hands and feet are so huge that it looks as if their weight would crush the heads of the little piccaninnies when he pats them" [*italics mine*] (101). Though Andrews intends to distance herself from Alfred, her insistence on his size and strength attests to her attraction to this man. Alfred's gentleness with the slave children emphasizes his power

and undeniably communicates that he controls himself rather than being controlled by any white master and mistress. She too could be crushed under the weight of his hands; the fact that she safely "commands" him both attracts and repels her.

The act of writing about the slaves' worship allows Andrews to intellectualize an apparently powerful experience, and to distance herself from an identification she neither understands nor desires. She increases the distance between herself and the worshipping slaves through the use of dialect in words such as "sperrit," a familiar rhetorical move throughout the diaries under consideration. Although these texts rarely present slaves and freedmen as speaking, writers consistently employ dialect in those few presentations they do include which underscores the difference between the literacy levels of slaveholder and slave. Fox-Genovese touches on the highly political motives behind including dialect when she observes that as white interviewers record the words of former slaves, they "ascrib[e] to them not so much black dialect as bad English. Somehow, when whites are quoted in the sources they usually come out speaking impeccably I am prepared to believe that many black women spoke in dialect and that many, being uneducated, also spoke bad English. But when an interviewer records 'no' for 'know,' you know that he or she is up to no good" (33). What motivates a writer to translate oral language into incorrect written language? The conventional wisdom asserts that the writer, acting as a type of linguistic anthropologist, seeks to faithfully record uttered sounds. However, Robert Secor notes, in his study of early American jest books, that "one way of laughing at ethnic groups who are outside a bonded society is to make fun of their way of talking. Dialect is thus used in ethnic humor to define borders, to mock groups for their most recognizable differences from the dominant culture, and to laugh at

their inability to assimilate into it" (165). Though Eliza does not overtly mock these worshippers, she does characterize them as children playing at "praise meetings"(89) in the quarter as opposed to her legitimate worship conducted within a church building's walls using hymns "read" by the preachers. The ability to read and write, then, gives Andrews the perception of power, so that transcribing the spoken word "spirit" as the written word "sperrit" allows her to subtly remove herself one step further from this experience and this group of people who exert such a powerful attraction over her. Similarly, she diminishes Alfred by comparing him to familiar pictures in "books of travel." The cumulative effect of her diary entries resembles the impression left by Ada Bacot's account of her encounter with Old Willie. Both women are bewildered by their own reactions and motivations, and seem unable to penetrate the ethnic curtain that separates them from their slaves.

Occasionally, a diarist reports personally participating in the family slaves' spiritual education in the role of teacher. Southern ministers admonished their white congregations to Christianize their slaves, a plea that grew more urgent as the war progressed. Although slaveholders present their evangelistic efforts as benevolent, comments from African American writers such as Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs, and David Walker demonstrate many slaves' negative reactions to their "Christian" masters and mistresses, a conflict which vividly foregrounds slaveholders' misperceptions of how slaves receive their religious overtures. On June 26, 1862, Sarah Morgan provides a "sketch of [her] daily life" in which she closes a long day of flower gardening, tutoring, writing, sewing, and piano playing by teaching a Bible class for the female house slaves. Morgan records that at ten o'clock each evening,

Lucy, Rose and Nancy & Dophy assemble in my room, and hear me read the bible, or stories from the bible for a while. Then one by one say their prayers—they cannot be persuaded to say them together; Dophy says "she cant say with Rose, 'cause she aint got no brothers and sisters to pray for," and Lucy has no father or mother, and so they go. All difficulties and grievances during they [sic] day are laid before me, and I sit like Moses judging the children of Israel, until I can appease the discord. (137)

Though Morgan implies that she routinely closes her long day by leading the house slaves in worship, the diary tells another story: none of the entries covering the next four hundred and seventy-four pages mention a similar Bible study. In fact, she frequently records entertaining various officers or family friends into the small hours of the morning. The discrepancy between this entry where the Bible study is described as part of her "daily life" and the glaring absence of similar devotions in the rest of the diary points to Sarah's construction of self. She imagines herself as a spiritual paragon, the evangelist of her private household congregation. By figuring herself as Moses, Morgan elevates herself above her slaves whom she considers childish and temperamental. She fancies herself as a wise, benevolent, God-ordained leader, who proves irresistible to "these humble creatures" who shower her with grateful compliments and "honest devotion" (138). Once again, the ability to read confers power on the diarist. Not only does she judge like Moses, but her ability to read allows her to act as God's mouthpiece, to deliver the law to her small assembly just as Moses delivered God's written words on Sinai.

Morgan inadvertently reveals her limited understanding of the family slaves when she describes that

memorable night when I had to work Rose's stubborn heart to a proper pitch of repentance for having stabbed a carving fork in Lucy's arm in a fit of temper. I don't know that I was ever as much astonished as I was at seeing the dogged, sullen girl throw herself on the floor in a burst of tears, and say if God would forgive her she would never do it again. . . . And Dophy overcome by her feelings, sobs "Lucy I scratched you last week! Please forgive me this once!" and amazed and bewildered I look at the touching tableau before me of kissing and reconcilliation, for Lucy can bear malice towards no one. (137-138)

Even though she overtly seeks to minimize her slaves' dispute by grouping Lucy, Rose, Nancy, and Dophy with her adoring young nieces and nephews, her use of such words as "astonished," "amazed," "bewildered," and "wild" indicates that Morgan is out of her depth. She expresses confusion when confronted with the news of Rose "having stabbed a carving fork in Lucy's arm in a fit of temper," or witnessing Rose "throw[ing] herself on the floor in a burst of tears" which leads to the equally bewildering "tableau before me of kissing and reconcilliation" (137). As in Ada Bacot's and Eliza Andrews' diaries, Morgan begins with a premise concerning her slaves, then stubbornly reasons deductively, despite her own discomfort and the abundance of contrary evidence. She muses that "I look from one to the other, wondering what it was that upset them so completely, for certainly no words of mine caused it," an astonishing observation given that she has just devoted an entire paragraph to a description of her sagacity. Instead of considering the possibility

that she stands outside the hermeneutic community formed by Lucy, Rose, Nancy and Dophy, she images her slaves as children, "humble creatures" who respond to her affection rather than comprehending her wise words. The discontinuity of her diary entry reflects her ethnic prejudices: she reasons that if slaves are children, then their behavior—no matter how inexplicable—must be childish. Morgan ends the day's diary entry by dismissing Lucy, Rose, Nancy, and Dophy as interesting, but inconsequential: "Here I am discussing the affection all servants have for me, a-pro-pos of nothing! It is time to conclude before running off in another strain as little to the purpose" (138).

Many slave mistresses did treat their slaves like children; however, they modified the old proverb "children should be seen and not heard" to "slaves should be neither seen nor heard." While several theorists argue that the major thrust of women's autobiography is establishing community, these female Confederate diarists generally ignore a class of people with whom they live in intimate proximity—slaves who wash their undergarments, prepare their meals, dress them, comb their hair, empty their chamber pots, nurse their children, draw their baths. With few exceptions, these diaries ignore the presence of the slaves. They seldom use the word "slave," opting instead for the more neutral word "servant." This verbal smokescreen obscures the power dynamic of the master/slave relationship, and allows these women to imagine themselves participating in the employer/employee relationships experienced in middle- and upper-class British families. Frequently, they refer to the slaves' work as if it were accomplished by unseen hands or as if they had done the work themselves, leading the reader to see the slaves as an extension of themselves, not—as Susan Friedman argues—"a fully rendered Other" (44). In her study of women's life writing, Friedman emphasizes that "identification,

interdependence, and community" are "key elements in the development of a woman's identity" (38), and agrees with Mary Mason's observation that women explore a concept of Self by placing that Self in relationship to a fully autonomous Other (Mason 41). Though these slaveholding women certainly live interdependently with their slaves, particularly during the early war years, they do not present themselves in their diaries as embracing an interracial community, nor do they recognize the autonomy of the many "Others" that populate their households. In her excellent study of the relationships between slaveholding women and slave women of the antebellum south, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese briefly observes that the slave mistress frequently "saw herself as doing what was in fact done for her, albeit under her direction. Her attitude paralleled that of the typical planter, who would note that he had 'ploughed my field' " (128). As evidence of her assertion, Fox-Genovese explores Sarah Gayle's antebellum journal, suggesting that while surface reading would indicate that Gayle "was caring for the children herself. . . close attention reveals that care to have been amply seconded by servants" (7). Careful study of numerous Civil War diaries penned by Southern women supports Fox-Genovese's suggestion. When the slaves are mentioned, it is frequently because they've done something to disrupt the daily rhythm of the white diarist—they've gotten sick, and so are not at their post, or they've run away, and so are not at their post, or they've died, and so are not at their post. For instance, in August 1861, Kate Stone returns from a three-week visit to Vicksburg, and writes, "Came all alone in the carriage from DeSoto and it took all day" (46). Only later in the entry, when the mules refuse to budge another step, does the reader become aware that Stone was not, in fact, alone on that journey, but instead was driven by Webster, one of the family slaves. Webster receives the rare honor

of being mentioned by name because Stone is furious with him for starving the mules and so delaying her homecoming till long past nightfall. Functionally, Webster does not exist for Stone until his misstep frightens and inconveniences her. The most frequent way that these white diarists encode their ethnic attitudes toward their slaves is through a thundering silence.

On February 21, 1862, Kate Stone writes, "I am tired. I have been so busy. Have read several hours—French and English—sewed, practiced, written a letter, entertained Mr. Stockton for a time, played nine games of cards, eaten three meals and a luncheon, learned and recited four French lessons, and written all this. Surely it is bedtime" (92). Though Stone occasionally mentions the family's slaves affectionately, particularly Frank, her "lazy" personal maid who was given to her at birth, nowhere in her narrative does she indicate an awareness that her "tiring" days like the one described above rest on the backs of the family's more than one hundred and fifty slaves.

Eliza Andrews' diary reveals similar disjunctions. Although Lincoln had officially manumitted all American slaves in January of 1863, areas under Confederate control ignored the Emancipation Proclamation as a foreign government's non-binding law. Thus, February 2, 1865, finds Eliza Andrews enjoying the fruits of slave labor. She writes that "We spent the evening at Maj. Edwin Bacon's, rehearsing for tableaux and theatricals, and I never enjoyed an evening more. We had no end of fun, and a splendid supper, with ice cream and sherbet and cake made of real white sugar" (83). While she does acknowledge the special nature of the supper with such words as "splendid" and "real," Andrews completely hides the mechanization behind those desserts. She enjoys the evening of drama and sweets because it reminds her of the genteel life before the war,

and because all seams are hidden. No mention is made of the slaves who prepared those treats, who drove Andrews and Metta to Major Bacon's house, who transported the food for the supper and the costumes for the tableaux, who constructed the stage, who cleaned up after the impromptu party. While almost every page implicitly provides evidence of their work, seldom do the writers of these Confederate diaries acknowledge their debt to their slaves.

Periodically Andrews portrays Sister giving orders to "servants"; only rarely does she mention a slave by name. More frequently, the slave presence is completely elided from the text, so that readers see and hear the slave owner, but not the slave who carries out the orders. For instance, Andrews records that "a buggy drove up" (98), or that all her "preparations were made [for the party], even the bows of ribbon pinned on my undersleeves" (71), grammatical constructions that remove the actor from the sentence, granting agency to the speaker, rather than to the slave who actually performed the work. Frequently, the slaves' labor is attributed to their master or mistress, such as when Andrews notes that Mrs. Sims "is such a nice housekeeper . . . and has such awfully good things" to eat (76), or when she remarks that she "found sister busy with preparations for Julia's birthday party," a gala that involved "all the children in the neighborhood . . . and most of the grown people, too" (79). A casual reading of Andrews's text tempts one to glide over these references, granting full credit for the exemplary housekeeping or the lavish party to the mistress of the house. However, later in the second entry after military guests unexpectedly arrive at Sister's plantation, Andrews reveals the nature of Sister's labor: "When they saw what a party we had on hand, they seemed a little embarrassed, but sister laughed away their fears, and . . . went out to give orders about supper and

make arrangements for their accommodation" (80). Once again, the actors who carry out Sister's orders are elided from the text and Andrews shows Sister's work to consist of giving orders and supervising their completion.

Historians have long debated the accuracy of portrayals of Southern womanhood which painted plantation mistresses and their pampered daughters in hues of pearly white. For example, Anne F. Scott argues that "no matter how large or wealthy the establishment, the mistress was expected to understand not only the skill of spinning, weaving, and sewing but also gardening, care of poultry, care of the sick, and all aspects of food preparation from the sowing of seed to the appearance of the final product on the table." Far from lying in bed until noon, a habit Margaret Mitchell's Scarlett O'Hara frequently indulges, "it was customary for the mistress to rise at five or six, and to be in the kitchen when the cook arrived, to 'overlook' all the arrangements for the day" (31).

Catherine Clinton builds upon Scott's foundation in The Plantation Mistress: Woman's World in the Old South. Clinton contrasts the mythology with the historical data pertaining to the plantation mistress, noting that while "first and foremost, manual labor and physical work were disdained" in the antebellum South (17), plantation mistresses were expected to manage their households efficiently, an expectation which involved not only care of her immediate family, but oversight of the household slaves and—in her husband's absence—the affairs of the field. Clinton argues that, popular perceptions of the Old South to the contrary, "generally, the larger the plantation, the more extensive the household cares and responsibilities that devolved upon the mistress. Even though in a few cases a large slave force offset the disadvantages of management, the only women in the South who wholly escaped manual labor were invalids; for the

rest unpaid domestic service to their families and their husbands' slaves was the rule" (19). The plantation mistress' typical duties included supervising the storerooms, managing the household budget, dealing with local merchants, making the household's candles, soap, rugs, linens, salting pork, mixing and dispensing medicine, tending the kitchen garden, manufacturing clothing, and caring for the family slaves (21-23). For instance, December was the month typically reserved for hog killing. Though the mistress participated little in the slaughter, scalding, and disembowelment of hogs, Clinton cites sources which indicate that once the carcass was prepared, the mistress took charge: "She emptied and scraped clean the small intestines processed the fat into lard . . . chopped and seasoned the back meat, funneling it into skins for smoking," and placed the ham shoulders and bacon flanks "into a barrel of brine to be corned" (23). With up to two thousand pounds of pork processed at a time, December was a month dreaded by many Southern housekeepers (24).

With the enormous amount of physical labor expected of the model plantation mistress, maintaining the illusion of a Southern magnolia blossom was often challenging. Clinton refers to one visitor's experience on a southern plantation:

While visiting the home of an ante-bellum southern planter, one visitor was charmed by the grace and hospitality of the mistress. She was warm, gentle, and refined in her manner. He found her a genial hostess and a model of what he expected "the southern lady" to be. Having gained the permission of his host to stroll around the plantation alone during this visit, the stranger one day spied his host's wife hard at work. The matron was considerably disarranged; hoop removed from her skirt, she was bent

over a salting barrel, up to her elbows in brine. As he was about to approach her, the gentleman realized that he faced a delicate situation. To fail to greet her might seem rude, but to acknowledge her would put the woman in an awkward position. He had essentially caught his hostess behind the scenes, accidentally violating the rules by wandering backstage. Thus, he ambled by without a direct glance. (16)

This incident points to a contradiction between the picture presented in the diaries and the historical data as Clinton and others have interpreted it.⁵ Although many of the diarists complain of mornings spent studying French, and afternoons grueling over the embroidery hoop, none of the diarists mentions engaging in the kind of physical labor that Clinton describes. Occasionally, a young diarist will allude to her mother making the year's supply of clothing for the family's slaves, but by and large the mother's work is presented as the genteel obligations of a lady of the manor—playing hostess to the many guests, arranging for her children's education, ordering meals.

How does the reader account for the vast difference between the picture presented in so many of these diaries and the historical facts presented by Clinton? Although there are many possible explanations, three seem most likely: (1) they were actively shielded from the realities of their future roles; (2) they had, in fact, no manual labor awaiting them; or (3) they select details to craft a particular self portrait. First, Clinton observes that daughters of the planter class were protected from the harsher aspects of their anticipated adult roles, and seldom received instruction in housekeeping; instead, "education at home and in academies . . . emphasized intellectual and artistic accomplishments" (19). Southern daughters were pampered, often eating breakfast in bed

and attending to nothing more arduous during the day than embroidering pillowcases or writing letters to an extensive circle of correspondents. Even during the war years, the young diarists most frequently report work in keeping with their genteel status. Though they commonly report knitting gloves or sewing silk shirts for their brothers or male acquaintances serving in the Confederate forces, very few report participating in the necessary daily tasks of procuring and preparing food for the family, laundering, or cleaning the family's home. Lucy Buck's reaction to the disappearance of the family's house slaves sheds light on this apparent contradiction. On June 9, 1863, Buck woke around five o'clock and noticed that

There was no fire made, no water brought, no movement whatever below stairs. Just then I heard Father enter Ma's room and exclaim—"All gone horses and all." Throwing on my shawl I stepped in and inquired what was the matter when Ma told me that the servants had all left in the night . . . We every one of us made a dash for our clothes, hauled them on, kindled a fire, brought water and Laura and I went to milk the cows while Ma, Nellie and Grandma cleaned the house, got the breakfast and dressed the children. (190-91)

Though Buck willingly assumes her share of the morning's work, her careful cataloguing of tasks indicates to the reader how unusual this particular morning is. She proudly records how the women of her family handled this crisis, and that they were able—in this emergency—to prepare their own breakfast and clothe their own children. Although Buck, her mother, and sisters make valiant efforts to supply the labor suddenly demanded because of the missing slaves, the next day's entry records that "Eliza came up from Rose

Hill this morning and milked and made the fires for us and cleaned up the kitchen, put on meat for dinner and *everything we couldn't do for ourselves*" [italics mine] (191); Buck clarifies this inclusive phrase during the following week's entries by noting that Eliza washes the family clothes, irons, milks the cows, scours the kitchen utensils, and cleans the churn. The sheer space she devotes to detailing tasks during the next few days attests to the unusual nature of the labor. Buck sees herself playing a role, much as a small child will act as "mama's helper" in the kitchen. Several times she remarks that her "biscuits were pronounced faultless" (191), and when several young gentlemen drop in for dinner, Buck records that she and Nellie enjoyed the social interaction, "particularly as our exertions [with cooking] received so much unmerited praise" (194). By day five, the charm and novelty of the situation has begun to dissipate. Buck begins the day's entry by recording what their borrowed servants have accomplished, then continues, "In the afternoon there were pies to make for tomorrow, salt rising to bake, and supper to get besides milking, and washing the children. Oh such a weary time as we had of it—the children were sleepy and fretful, the stove wouldn't get hot, the bread would not bake and the cows would run I felt almost crazed Could not eat a bit of supper—indeed I've not eaten two full meals since our labors began" (195). Not long after this entry, Buck's father employs full-time servants to handle these tasks, and while life never returns to "normal," her diary resumes its typical silence on the manual labor needed to support her family's lifestyle. Several of the other diaries indicate that, like Lucy Buck, the young writers are truly ignorant of the enormous amount of grueling physical labor needed to produce one bite of honey-cured ham.

Fox-Genovese agrees with Clinton's basic analysis, observing that "the primary household responsibilities of slaveholding daughters included the care of their own rooms and clothing, the gathering and arrangement of flowers, and perhaps a contribution to the putting up of preserves" (113-114). However, her analysis of slaveholding women's work differs significantly from Clinton's, most notably in her rejection of the "slave of slaves" motif (48). Rather than interpreting the material evidence as supporting a view of female slaveholders as co-laborers with their slaves, Fox-Genovese asserts that the roles of slaveholding women "within those households approximated the roles assigned by the ideology and culture of southern society [which] emphasized the ideal of the southern lady as gracious, fragile, and deferential to the men upon whose protection she depended" (109). The mistress of the household acted as the "ruling lady" subservient only to her husband, and symbolized her authority by carrying the keys to the various storerooms and domestic outbuildings (110). Her most strenuous tasks consisted not in stuffing ground meat into hog intestines, but in coaxing recalcitrant slaves. Jean Friedman argues similarly that while white Southern women did participate in manual labor, "a good deal of their work was supervisory and their heaviest labor cyclical." Processing pork occurred in the autumn months, and planting the garden occupied a relatively short time in the spring, both of which tasks—Friedman insists—were performed primarily by slaves with white mistresses in a supervisory role. Likewise, "candle-making, carpet-weaving, or mattress-making were not routine tasks, and few mistresses ventured upon such undertaking in the middle and late Victorian period" (27).

When considering the training of these privileged daughters, Fox-Genovese cautions against confusing "lack of preparation for the basic responsibilities of being

mistresses" with a "lack of specific training in many of the skills that would be required of them" (110). Daughters of slaveholding women participated in their mother's daily routines, mastering the mechanics of reading, writing, sewing, neighborly visiting, and supervising the garden, specific skills expected of a young Southern matron; however, they infrequently received practical experience in commanding slaves. Since the vast bulk of the household's work was actually carried out by the slaves, a bride's inexperience in authoritatively delivering orders often resulted in halfhearted effort or outright refusal on the part of the slaves. Fox-Genovese observes that when slaveholding women wrote about their abilities as a housekeeper, they "primarily meant their ability to order, persuade, or cajole servants to do assigned tasks properly and at the proper time—or better, and considerably more difficult, to train servants to keep the household running smoothly without minute supervision" (115). Though daughters of slaveholders "enjoyed the freedom to command slaves . . . their commands were guaranteed by their mother's authority and, beyond hers, their father's" (112), a situation which, Fox-Genovese argues, ill-prepared them for their most important matronly role of managing the household. Application of Fox-Genovese's paradigm leads the reader to interpret the younger diarist's silence about manual labor as ignorance of the mechanics of work which she commanded her slaves to perform.

Both of these explanations for the noted absence of remarks regarding physical labor in diaries kept by young, single Confederate women assume that the silence reflects the diarists' "true," empirical existence: either the young diarist is silent because she is shielded from the harsh realities of her future adult role, or she is silent because there is, in fact, no grueling labor about which to speak. Both explanations look at the diary as a

tool useful in fleshing out the historical reality of mid-nineteenth century Southern American women. Indeed, many American eighteenth- and nineteenth-century women diarists perceived themselves as "family and community historians . . . [and] used journals to maintain kin and community networks" (Culley 4), a motivation for writing which would seem to endorse using these texts as material evidence.

A third possible explanation is that the writer purposely constructs an image of herself which leaves no room for hog slaughtering or homespun. Such an explanation would emphasize the diary as a literary construct where the writer has selectively included details which will further her project and deleted details which contribute little to the global portrait she seeks to present. Harriet Blodgett observes that a diary is not merely a collection of factual data, but an "aesthetic representation through language" of a self with "an autonomous and significant identity" (5). As a literary construction, the diary "offers an individual perception of existence translated into words, concrete images, and sequences that show a personality in process of being in a particular world" (7). Many female writers shy away from the egocentric agenda implicit in diary keeping, instead construing their motivation for writing in terms of "utility and need—a memoir for posterity, a record for my children, a self-improving discipline to make me more acceptable to others" (Blodgett 72). Despite these protests to the contrary, Blodgett asserts that

the truth is. . . that diarists, even in public diaries, are taking an interest in self—in their own affairs and problems, and their own perceptions and times; in their own images. A self, a center of subjectivity, is an operative

illusion for the women, and their sense of life seems important enough to them to record because it issues from and validates that self. (71)

Even the diarist who writes as a social and political historian, then, projects an image of herself on to external events. If these wartime diaries are constructions of the self, as Blodgett suggests, then the writers' frequent mention of troop movements or wartime deprivations must be viewed within the context of the individual consciousness. In order to decode the writer's ethnic attitudes, the reader must question how the diarist wishes to present herself and her people. How does the writer construct the relationship with the diary's proposed or imagined audience? How should contradictions or elisions within the text be read? What themes or rhetorical strategies recur in the text? What role does authorial absence play in constructing the persona of the diarist? How do preconceived expectations of the author and her text affect the reader's understanding? ⁶ In short, readers benefit from applying to these "historical documents" critical tools long used in reading other recognized literary constructions. ⁷

While several diaries hint at the underpinnings of plantation life, such as the enormous amount of unladylike effort behind one summer gala, these oblique references seem consciously thrust to the background of the diary's fabric. For example, Kate Stone records on October 3, 1862 that her "fingers have been busy with unaccustomed work today, the work of olden times, learning to weave" (146), laborious work necessitated by prices as high as \$500 a yard for poor grade silk. Though she indicates that it will take her and her brother Jimmy several days to complete the harness, and that she is to be involved in weaving homespun for the family's large number of slaves, only three other references are made to the time-consuming task of weaving. On October 29, Stone

remarks that Mrs. Alexander has helped her to make another harness, because the one she and Jimmy made was "entirely too fine" (153), a mild self-criticism highlighting her genteel sensibilities and familiarity with delicate work. Two days later, Stone records that "Mamma has been busy for the last two days superintending the weaving which is at last underway. And what a slow process it is to be sure" (153). Finally, on November 10, she writes that "Mamma went to Vicksburg today and I am left at home as commander-in-chief with Little Sister and the two boys, Johnny and Jimmy, as aides. We are getting on bravely today, pickle making, weaving, etc., etc. I think I should like keeping house if I were forty years old and had no one to interfere, but now it is horrid work, vanity and vexation of spirits" (155). The last two entries obscure the identity of the weavers: the reader is uncertain whether Stone appropriates credit for the slaves' work, or whether she does in fact participate in the weaving herself as the October 3 entry indicates. Though she reports severe shortages which require family members to assume a larger role in manufacturing food and household goods, the only work she records participating in during the next two months is nursing her sick brother, making a new silk dress for herself, and embroidering a tobacco bag and a "fancy" shirt for her young neighbor, Mr. Valentine, all activities worthy of a belle in the most peaceful of times. The harsh realities of slave culture have no place in texts where writers maintain that familiarity with physical labor marks class distinctions. In fact, though fleeting references to unfamiliar work pepper these diaries, the overwhelming intent is to portray a façade of normality. Kate Stone, as well as the other diarists, constructs a world free from the grueling, monotonous, messy details of hard physical labor by modifying references to her own and her slaves' work. This strategy further blurs the agency of

family slaves, many times effectively removing their presence from the text and making them nonentities.

Not only do these writers face their slaves' passion with bewilderment and grammatically elide their slaves' presence from their texts, these diarists also encode ethnic attitudes by describing their wartime situation in terms of slavery. Confederate diarists are certainly not the first Americans to utilize this trope: Revolutionary writers such as Patrick Henry figure the colonists' relationship to the British Crown as slavery, for instance. However, Jean Fagan Yellin argues that within the context of the nineteenth-century debate over the morality of institutionalized slavery, the appropriation of the slave's rhetorical position becomes increasingly problematic. Yellin points out that abolitionists such as Lydia Maria Child and Angelina Grimke articulated the belief that in a "patriarchal America where slavery was institutionalized, all women were in a sense slaves" (78). By recognizing this similarity between America's women and America's slaves, abolitionists gained the emotional and political support of a large segment of the population, while early feminists gained a powerful and galvanizing emblem. Though the connection between the two movements certainly resulted in progress toward the twin goals of emancipation, the union of the abolitionist's discourse and the feminists' discourse created unforeseen problems. Yellin notes that

by conflating the oppression of women who were enslaved and the oppression of women who were free, by collapsing the literal enslavement of (conventionally) black women into the figurative enslavement that they felt they suffered, white free antislavery feminists obscured the crucial differences between the experience of women who were held as chattel

and their own experience. Confusion resulted. On one hand, the free women misinterpreted the situation of slave women, and on the other, they misinterpreted their own: they were not, after all, literally in irons. Their appropriation of the emblems of antislavery discourse masked the very real differences between the oppression of black slave women and free white women in America—and the very real differences in the character of the struggle against these oppressions. (78-79)

A similar, perhaps even more destructive, pattern emerges in many of the war diaries of Confederate women. For instance, Eliza Andrews writes that the weary Confederate soldiers in central Georgia "do not whine over their altered fortunes and ruined prospects, but our poor ruined country, the slavery and degradation to which it is reduced—they grow pathetic over that" (215). Upon hearing of Lee's surrender and Jefferson Davis' flight, the refugee Kate Stone writes, "*Conquered, Submission, Subjugation* are words that burn into my heart The war is rushing rapidly to a disastrous close. Another month and our Confederacy will be a Nation no longer, but we will be slaves, yes slaves, of the Yankee Government" (339-340). Just as many nineteenth-century feminists appropriate anti-slavery language to describe their own situation, many Confederate women write about their experiences both preceding and during the War in terms of slavery, a use of a trope which serves to neutralize the African American slaves' very real grievances by co-opting their discourse.

Lucy Buck utilizes the language of slavery in her wartime diary, Sad Earth, Sweet Heaven. She spends the evening of December 31, 1861 reflecting over the past year, a common practice in diaries of this period. As she recalls the events which have

transpired since the last New Year's Eve, Buck muses on the rise of a tyrannous government which she believes has reduced the citizens of Virginia to the position of slaves:

I saw this people that waxed strong grow proud and boastful too. I saw it trample upon the laws, desecrate the symbols and outrage every principle upon which this government was founded. Then I saw the oppressed rise up and assert its rights. I saw it plead with the oppressor for equal privileges as brothers of one household. I saw concessions made and efforts for compromise, but the strong would have none of it. Might was right, and the only compromise to be accepted was entire submission and resignation of self-respect by the weak. Then I saw the oppressed strive to quietly go its way alone where it might worship under its own "vine and fig tree" with "none to vex or make it afraid." But a factorum [sic] was not to be given up thus tamely and the oppressor raised a great furor and with threats and chastisements and scourges tried to force the little one into subjection. (15)

Buck uses words like "compelled" (67) to refer to the Yankees' urging of her and her sisters to appear at the supper table or sit at the keyboard, records that soldiers of the invading army threaten them "Now behave yourselves—we're your masters and if you but so much as breathe rebellion against our authority we will consign you to a corner of 'Davy Jones' lockers' " (59), and remarks that "but a little while ago . . . I boasted of my willingness to abide a little tyranny for a while . . . but I find the prospect of slavery more revolting than ever before—probably because I know [the Yankees] will strive to render

it more abject" (90). When the Union army comes to occupy Front Royal yet again, bringing with them promises of Lincoln's kindness to a conquered South, Buck fumes, "Insinuating wretches!—to come here and tell Father how kind and good they are going to be to us after our subjugation—how they will soothe the pains of submission—trying to win him over to the opinion that the Lincoln government when once established will be very mild and equitable. Gracious heavens! If I thought it were my fate to submit to them I believe it would craze me!" (103). When the Confederate army crosses over into Maryland in September of 1862, Buck imagines the scene as the gray uniforms liberate the Marylanders from the "gloom of tyrannical oppression," a state she sympathizes with since she also has "tasted the bitterness of slavery" (141). This conflation of her experience with that of her family's "servants" continues to the very end of the diary. On April 13, 1865, her father brings her the news that Lee has surrendered. She responds by pouring out her feelings in her diary: "To remember half the horrible ideas that filled my heart and brain would be impossible—the one thought—subjugation—all staked, all lost. Our dearest hopes dashed—our fondest dreams dispelled—we and our brave ones who had struggled, bled and suffered—slaves and to such a tyrant" (297). Buck's appropriation of the language of slavery powerfully renders the depth of her feelings; simultaneously, applying those symbols to her own situation weakens their ability to depict the suffering of the millions in literal slavery.

CHANGING ATTITUDES

How do these diarists' understanding and perceptions of the ethnic divide develop over the course of the war? As long as slaves remain at their post, the overwhelming

response is a concerted attempt to ignore the complicated relationship, often treating the slave's labor as an extension of their own, co-opting not only the physical work, but the very language and ideology of enslavement to refer to their own situation as warred-upon Confederate States. Only when the slaves march off to join the Yankee army or steal away to the Yankee camps do the writers report "seeing" them as separate individuals. The later diary entries record the diarists' struggle to retain control within a rapidly-changing world. Although their attitudes toward slaves and former slaves are certainly varied and complex, three major reactions emerge.

First, a small handful of women express relief that an institution toward which they had long felt such personal abhorrence is now at an end. On August 27, 1862, Elizabeth Lindsay Lomax of Maryland records a visit from her former slave Ailsa, a woman whose family had belonged to the Lindsays for generations and whose grandfather had served as bodyguard to Elizabeth's father during the Revolutionary War. After remarking that Ailsa "looks well and has seen a good deal of the world since she became free," Lomax writes that "Ailsa was given to me by my mother early in life as my personal maid. I raised her with great care, teaching her not only her duties, but her lessons and the religion and prayers of the Episcopal Church. She repaid me fully with her devotion and care of my children. It grieved me to part with Ailsa, but she was persuaded that it was the right thing for her to do" (210). Although Lomax's description of her past relationship reveals the familiar pattern of condescension and paternalistic attitudes so prevalent among slaveholders, her passage is remarkable for its acknowledgement of Ailsa's personal agency. The passage contains no hint of sarcasm as Lomax notes that Ailsa "has selected Boston as her future home," and although she

remembers grieving over Ailsa's decision to leave, Lomax had, amazingly, allowed Ailsa to choose whether to stay or go, treatment which validated Ailsa's judgment while respecting her rights over her own body. Less than one month later, Lomax records that "the President's proclamation for freeing the negroes was made public yesterday. It had my approval" (215).

Second, many women express feelings of betrayal, especially when slaves to whom they have felt particularly close choose to leave them or fail to express sufficient loyalty. Eleanor Cohen, a twenty-six-year old still living in her father's Columbia, South Carolina home, writes on June 23, 1865 that the family "servants born and reared in our hands, hitherto devoted to us freed by Lincoln! left us today, it is a severe trial to Mother, and quite a loss to me among them, went Lavinia a girl given to me by my grandmother very handy & who had promised always to remain with & when I was married to go with me" (315). Though she reports that Lavinia "behaved better than most of them" by "offer[ing] to come to me in town & do anything . . . & show[ing] regret at parting" (315), Cohen's entry demonstrates her bewilderment in the face of her "servant's" actions. She expects her childhood companion to voluntarily remain with her, bound by cords of affection for her former mistress and eager to continue her servitude. Even a casual reader of this diary must be struck by the overwhelming frequency of run-on sentences, a grammatical construction which quickens the flow of the prose, while ignoring conventional subordinating or coordinating conjunctions and punctuation marks that clarify each sentence's meaning. A succession of run-on sentences tends to flatten out the prose, making it difficult to determine which ideas the writer deems most important. In the diary entry dated June 23, only two sentences are punctuated conventionally, both

declarative statements whose meaning is unmistakable. Commenting on the slaves' departure, Cohen writes that, "I who believe in the institution of slavery regret deeply its being abolished. I am accustomed to have them wait on me, and I dislike white servants very much" (316). Though the personalities of the Cohens' house slaves remain opaque to her, she clearly articulates her own perception of the ethnic divide. Not only must she have servants, but they must be black. Interestingly, while this diarist displays keen insight into other interpersonal relationships, most notably with her absent fiancé, she seems oblivious to the powerful forces motivating Lavinia's desire for freedom.

The slaveholders' disappointment and hurt indicates that they lacked a basic understanding of the dynamics of the relationship, a misperception that resists the educating experience of defeat and Reconstruction.⁸ For instance, Lucy Buck, in the incident mentioned above, continues to maintain the parent-child metaphor when the family slaves slip off during the night. She reports that her "sensations when first becoming cognizant to their flight were a mixture of wonder at their dexterity in baffling so successfully all suspicion of their movements and indignation at their ingratitude in taking the horses when they knew they were our main dependence of support" (191). After clearing the "trumpery" from their rooms, Buck and her family discover that "the servants took apparently nothing with them but their finest clothing," which further indicates their childishness and inability to cope in the world outside the family home. She ends that day's entry by musing, "Wonder where Father is—wonder if the servants don't some of them feel a little homesick. Poor creatures! They little know the fate in store for them" (191). Her closing words indicate the great sacrifice that she feels her father makes in figuratively braving the storm, and underscores her perception of Bel

Aire as "home" to Mahalla, Horace, Marshall, Allfair, Rob Roy, John Henry, Martha, and the others.

Buck repeats these same sentiments in the next day's entry, describing the family's slaves in more emotionally intense language:

Father saw the servants—all save Horace and Marshall—they were all together in a crowded, close shanty with not a single convenience of life. Miserable creatures—there's no doubt but they wish themselves back in their comfortable home many times ere this. They tried to brave the matter off very bravely when they met Father—told them they had had no idea of leaving until about noon that day before. (192)

Buck's language patterns reveal the level of her distress. Her prose in this section includes many more dashes than she normally utilizes, a device that tends to accelerate the rhythm of the prose, allowing her to represent grammatically her excitement and distress. She repeats the word "brave," an editing slip seldom allowed in her careful crafting of prose, and instead of the "*poor* creatures" of the day before, she describes the slaves as "*miserable* creatures" [italics mine], a change which foregrounds the squalor of their physical condition while emphasizing the disastrous results of their independent action. Though Father returns from his rescue mission without retrieving any of his human property, Buck records that he is successful in bringing back two of the three horses that the slaves "liberated." The third horse was left with "old Milroy," the horse trader, on his insistence that the horse represented the slaves' " 'lawful (?)' hire since the first of January" (192). Her use of quotation marks and a question mark signal a rare use of intentional irony in Lucy's text. Although their departure occasions her first extended

comments on the family's slaves, her diary entries reveal ambivalence regarding her relationship to Mahalla, Horace, and Marshall. That Mr. Buck stands metaphorically in the Father position is made abundantly clear—he, from his daughter's perspective, has provided the family's "servants" with a comfortable home, has clothed and fed them, and when they foolishly run off, he magnanimously leaves the comfort of home to retrieve them. However, she does not—in any sense of the word—see herself as a sister to these slaves. Just how does Lucy conceive of her relationship to them? The text remains ambiguous on this point. While her anger and hurt at the slaves' flight indicates a deep level of emotional involvement with them, her earlier silence and her refusal to articulate a metaphorical relationship in which she personally participates may indicate either an immature understanding of the relationship, or an unwillingness to flesh out the complicated and painful patterns. Instead, she focuses on the officially sanctioned metaphor. They are figuratively children, and as such are expected to repay Father's care with loyalty and respect. But, perhaps more vividly for Buck, they are pitiful "creatures" toward which she has no real responsibilities and from which she can expect no reasonable behavior beyond the blind loyalty associated with the family's other livestock. Readers of Lucy Buck's diary must balance her professions of sympathy toward the family's slaves against her complete bewilderment and anger in reaction to their displays of agency which she interprets as betrayal.

Third, many of these women express revulsion at the new roles their former slaves occupy. For some diarists, the feelings of personal betrayal inevitably lead to anger directed at all African-Americans. For others, seeing African-Americans in clothes, relationships, and roles formerly reserved for white, European Americans

appears ludicrous, unnatural. When Sarah Morgan, for instance, receives word that Baton Rouge has been pillaged, she reflects on her possible reaction to news that their house has shared a similar fate:

Wicked as it may seem, I would rather have all I own burned, than in the possession of the negroes. Fancy my magenta organdie on a dark beauty! Bah! I think the sight would enrage me! Miss Jones' trials are enough to drive her crazy. She had the pleasure of having four officers in her house, men who sported epaulets and red sashes, accompanied by a negro women, at whose disposal all articles were placed. The worthy companion of these "gentlemen" walked around selecting things with the most natural airs and graces. "This," she would say, "we must have. And some of these books, you know, and all the preserves, and these chairs and tables, and all the clothes, of course; and yes! The rest of these things." So she would go on, the "gentlemen" assuring her she had only to choose what she wanted, and that they would have them removed immediately.

(215)

Morgan confronts the almost intolerable situation of a destroyed family home and confiscated family mementos with the only weapon at hand: her pen. She attacks Union soldiers and former slaves with sarcasm, and foregrounds the irony she sees in calling the Northern invaders "gentlemen," and—by implication—their African-American companions "ladies." This caustic tone marks the conclusion of many Confederate diaries, as writers struggle to articulate the rapidly changing relationships between themselves and their former slaves.

ATTITUDES TOWARD SLAVERY IN MARY CHESNUT'S CIVIL WAR DIARY

The surviving portions of Mary Boykin Chesnut's diary, which date from February to December of 1861 and January to June of 1865, illustrate the evolution of one woman's ethnic attitudes over the course of the Civil War. C. Vann Woodward, who edited Chesnut's diary as well as the critically acclaimed 1981 version of Chesnut's narrative which Woodward titled Mary Chesnut's Civil War, claims Chesnut penned statements which stand as "the strongest indictment of slavery ever written by a Southerner" (xv). Many early passages would seem to lend support to Woodward's analysis. He particularly points to the often quoted March 18, 1861 passage where Chesnut writes, "I wonder if it be a sin to think slavery a curse to any land. Sumner said not one word of this hated institution which is not true. Men & women are punished when their masters & mistresses are brutes & not when they do wrong" (42). While Woodward argues convincingly that Chesnut's "abhorrence of slavery and her welcome of its abolition were quite genuine and most extraordinary in her time and place" (xvi), the continuation of the March 18 passage clearly establishes the particular aspect of slavery that Chesnut finds so abhorrent:

We live surrounded by prostitutes. An abandoned woman is sent out of any decent house elsewhere. Who thinks any worse of a Negro or Mulatto woman for being a thing we can't name. God forgive us, but ours is a monstrous system & wrong & iniquity. Perhaps the rest of the world is as bad. This only I see: like the patriarchs of old our men live all in one house with their wives & their concubines, & the Mulattoes one sees in every family exactly resemble the white children — & every lady tells you

who is the father of all the Mulatto children in every body's household, but those in her own, she seems to think drop from the clouds or pretends so to think — (42)

This passage, and others such as Chesnut's description of a slave sale, certainly contain an indictment against the institution of slavery itself and the Southern men who all too eagerly take advantage of licensed sexual access to slaves; however, close reading reveals ambivalence toward the very women that slavery victimizes.⁹ In the March 18 entry, Chesnut excuses Southern men as "no worse than men every where," arguing that "the lower their mistresses, the more degraded they must be" (42). Chesnut unflinchingly enjoys the benefits of slave labor, as her diary repeatedly demonstrates; however, she cringes at the sexual perversity inherent in institutional slavery. The contradictions in her prose and her use of ambiguous pronouns indicate her ultimate unwillingness to lay blame for slavery's curse at the feet of rich white Southerners. By the conclusion of her entry, Chesnut has done an about-face. She effectually absolves her lecherous countrymen and her self-delusional countrywomen from guilt, concluding that while her white countrywomen are "as pure as angels" they are "surrounded by another race who are—the social evil!" (43).

Sidonie Smith identifies the racial paradigm utilized by many white Southerners in her study of women's autobiography, Subjectivity, Identity and the Body. Referring to Harriet Jacobs' narrative, Smith argues that the African slave woman was "doubly the site of western culture's totalizing representations, doubly embodied as African and woman, doubly colonized in the territory of rape and enforced concubinage" (37). Sexual excess, primitive and unrestrained impulses, treachery, and absence of maternal feeling are

ascribed to the female African slave, allowing the white, slaveholding woman to envisage herself and her peers as "angels." Chesnut's glowing evaluation of her white countrywomen, therefore, is achieved by "balancing opposing definitions of womanhood and motherhood [for white and black women], each dependent on the other for its existence" (Carby 25).

The famous slave sale passage contains similar contradictions. On March 4, 1861, Chesnut writes

I saw to day a sale of Negroes—Mulatto women in *silk dresses*—one girl was on the stand. Nice looking—like my Nancy—she looked as coy & pleased at the bidder. South Carolina slave holder as I am my very soul sickened—it is too dreadful. I tried to reason—this is not worse than the willing sale most women make of themselves in marriage—nor can the consequences be worse. The Bible authorizes marriage & slavery—poor women! poor slaves! (21).

Again, Chesnut astutely identifies the sexual economy operating within institutionalized slavery, and articulates the similarity between slavery and marriage which Simon de Beauvoir explores so eloquently in The Second Sex almost ninety years later. Despite her genuine sympathy for the girl on the auction block, however, Chesnut remains appalled that these slave women seemingly flaunt their sexuality. Chesnut describes the girl on the slave block as "coy and pleased," perceived attitudes which lead Chesnut to believe that these slave women participate as eagerly in their prostitution as "the willing sale most women make of themselves in marriage." It is this apparent complicity which appalls Chesnut, so that she simultaneously identifies with and censures these slaves.

The fact that she identifies these women as "mulattos" is significant, for their perceived ethnic background explicitly announces past miscegenation, and implicitly calls to mind the famous quadroons of New Orleans who also plied their trade in silk dresses.

Careful attention to Chesnut's diary uncovers ambivalent ethnic attitudes. Though passages such as the two quoted certainly support Woodward's claims, other historians such as Fox-Genovese caution against lauding Chesnut as a nascent abolitionist. Fox-Genovese observes that the popular trend of classifying southern women as fervent opponents of southern institutions "encourages[s] the view that privileged southern women were alienated from their own society and were feminists in much the same sense as were the northern advocates of women's rights" (47). Slave women, she argues, did not view their mistresses as "oppressed sisters" (48), and slaveholding women such as Chesnut enjoyed the advantages of slave labor far too much to lobby for abolition.

What were Chesnut's "real" opinions on the subject of slavery? As with many other Confederate diaries written by women, Chesnut's text most frequently elides the presence of her slaves, so that rare allusions to a slave's action or speech tear the carefully constructed narrative tissue of an all-white Confederacy. These few passages that deal directly with Chesnut's ethnic ideas reveal conflicted attitudes. She expresses outrage at the cruelty of many slaveholders and at the licensed sexual abuse inherent in a system where one group exercises total control over another. However, as noted, she also condemns slave women for their voracious sexual appetites, implying that they get no worse than they deserve, while nodding toward such "loyal" slaves as the Columbia man who "rushed in the midst of the fight & carried his Master a tin pan filled with rice and ham, screaming, 'Make haste & eat. You must be *tired* & hungry, Massa' " (105). Both

of the latter attitudes lend support to institutional slavery, relying on the well-worn arguments that African slaves are morally inferior (and, thus, need the tutelage of the morally superior European Americans), and that slaves, in fact, love their masters and gladly participate in a parent-child relationship. All these beliefs exist side-by-side. The periodic nature of the diary makes it especially well-suited to such complexity; because Chesnut imposes no overarching metaphor at the front end of her diary, as frequently found in formal autobiographies, the reader can see her shifting, conflicting beliefs from one entry to the next, and sometimes within single entries.¹⁰

As the diary progresses, however, Chesnut's ethnic attitudes seem to coalesce. An incident in late September of 1861 serves a pivotal role in shaping Chesnut's thoughts, temporarily removing much of the earlier ambiguity regarding the ethnic divide. Chesnut learns that the aged mother-in-law of a family friend "had been murdered by her negroes She was smothered—arms & legs bruised & face scratched. William, a man of hers, & several others suspected of her own negroes, people she has pampered & spoiled & done every thing for" (162). Less than a week later on September 27, Chesnut returns to this incident. Though she asserts that she has "never injured any one black especially & therefore feared nothing from them," the murder of old cousin Betsy has unnerved her, causing Chesnut to "sleep & wake with the horrid vision before my eyes of those vile black hands—smothering her" (164). Two weeks later, the accused slaves confess to the murder. Chesnut reports with vivid detail that they entered Betsy Witherspoon's room during the night, and "Wm. stood at her head with the counterpane & Rhody at her feet & Romeo & Silvy at each arm. She struggled very hard & a long time. After they thought her dead she revived— & they commenced their hellish work

again" (175). Although Chesnut does not state that Mrs. Witherspoon was raped, the sexual overtones of her description of the attack are obvious, implicitly confirming widespread racial stereotypes regarding African-American sexuality. Chesnut was not the only Southerner terrified by this bloody incident. On September 21, 1861, Ada Bacot records that her father told her the "terable" details of Mrs. Witherspoon's death, causing her to exclaim "I cant get it out of my mind. We none of us know when we are safe. I have some about me that I fear twould take very little to make them put me out of the way" (51). Thousands of women across the South apparently shared Chesnut's and Bacot's concerns about their vulnerability in the face of an increasingly angry and assertive slave population.¹¹ Though Chesnut still insists that her family's slaves are "so well behaved and affectionate" (200), she increasingly uses terms such as "incubus" (203) and "beastly" (207) to describe her feelings toward the ethnic Other. She includes rumors of massive slave uprisings across the South, and offers additional "*true stor[ies]*" of slaves murdering their masters (182). Her repeated reflection on Betsy's grisly murder eventually achieves a critical mass, drowning out her sympathetic impulses with more uniformly negative racial stereotypes. In other words, not only her empirical, "real life" experiences shape her ethnic attitudes, but the very act of writing influences her perceptions. The text takes on a life of its own, blurring the boundaries between empirical and textual experience.¹²

Steven Kagle and Lorenza Gramegna explore this interaction between "real" and written experience, cautioning readers of diaries that "the line between an accurate rendering of events and a creative manipulation of reality is not always apparent even to the diarists themselves. To the extent that a diary becomes a vehicle for the examination

and direction of its author's life, it influences perceptions of and actions in the real world" (42). These comments certainly apply to Chesnut's text. Though the early entries reveal multiple contradictions in ethnic attitudes, later entries adopt a more homogeneous tone. Reiteration of a single idea or set of ideas serves to eliminate ambiguity, so that entries penned late in 1861 speak much more consistently about slave treachery and betrayal. Like Bacot, Chesnut frequently feels powerless when confronted with the awful implications of ethnic tension: her writing helps her regain control.

Because of the huge gap in Chesnut's text between December of 1861 and February of 1865, the reader can more easily discern the fruition of patterns which have their genesis in the conflicting, sometimes sarcastic entries of 1861. Though her 1865 comment that an acquaintance seems "to be an *abolitionist* in the sense I am one" (229) indicates a change in her self-characterization, the last entries in Chesnut's diary suggest that many of her perceptions of ethnicity and of her relationship with her own slaves have restabilized on a familiar field. She still asserts the corrupting societal influence of African American women, as in the next to the last entry where she comments that "more will be done by these garrisons over the country & their intimacy with negro women to demoralize the country" than a "thousand" Yankee proclamations "urging the Negroes to respect the marriage tie" will "ever do good" (261). She still waits anxiously for the slave uprising, noting that "JC [her husband] finds his Negro men all have Enfield rifles. The next move will be on pretense of hunting public arms to disarm all white men" (243). What has changed from the 1861 entries is the manner in which she writes about the ethnic divide. Her ethnic attitudes retain much of their ambivalence, but she employs a more consistent, seemingly studied pose, which distances her from the earlier painful

emotional involvement with her slaves. After recording her husband's discovery that his slaves are armed, for example, Chesnut ironically observes that when Southern whites find themselves totally defenseless, "Then we will have the long desired Negro insurrection" (243). During these last few months of her diary, Chesnut comments on slaves and former slaves in a consistently ironic tone which enables her to cope with the increasingly frightening and chaotic domestic turmoil.

Her rhetorical stance seems most pronounced when referring to the slaves' legendary loyalty toward their masters, a myth which fell with Betsy Witherspoon's murder. Though she continues to assert her personal slaves' loyalty, those self-assurances are frequently tongue-in-cheek or purposely exaggerated, as in the word portrait of the slave woman Molly "weeping & wailing & begging me to go home [to Camden]—that my black people would see me safe" (228), or in her observation that her former slaves' "violent emotional offers to live & die" with the Chesnuts are "like lovers' vows made to be broken" (254). Even Old Myrtilia, whom Chesnut describes as "so old that a servant was given her by her master to cook & wash for her," leaves with the Yankees instead of staying loyally with her master. Two days after she leaves, Chesnut records that Myrtilia has imperiously "sent word she wants to be *sent for*" because she's tired of traveling (237). Chesnut recognizes that the slave's request that the Chesnuts arrange for an escort home underscores her self-assertion, rather than indicating gratitude or loyalty. Does Chesnut offer this incident as a parable illustrating the results of pampering slaves? Her intent is unclear: her brief comments seem directed equally toward the queenly Myrtilia and the over-accommodating slaveholder. No one—not even herself—escapes the

pervasive ironic jab. A few weeks later, Chesnut describes a "wonderful scene" in church:

An old African—who heard he was free & did not at his helpless age relish the idea wept & prayed, kissed hands, rolled over on the floor until the boards of the piazza were drenched with his tears. He seemed to worship his master & evidently regarded the white race as some superior order of beings, he prostrated himself so humbly. He was given a blanket—clothes—meat—sugar—and sent on his way rejoicing. *We* are not free of him yet—not by a long way. (256)

The irony of Chesnut's "scene" rests in the ex-slave's misguided worship, the simplistic solution to his exaggerated distress, and the reversal of the master—slave relationship. Significantly, the slave's master, and the one producing the blanket, clothes, food are grammatically absent from the text, alluded to only by the plural first-person pronoun "we" which distributes responsibility for the old African's fate among the slaveholding class, the legitimate worshippers who form the audience to this spectacle. Despite Chesnut's cursory identification with the rest of the audience, the pathetic scene apparently produces no empathy reminiscent of the early visit to the slave block; instead, she remains emotionally aloof, a writer describing a curious incident.

Chesnut's bitterest invective falls on the Northern conquerors whom she feels have deceived and betrayed the South's gullible slaves. The pernicious nature of Yankee promises of freedom finds embodiment in the aged slave rolling on the church floor, or more horrifically in the exhumed bodies of "eighteen negro women with bayonet stabs in the breast," lumped in a mass grave by Union soldiers because "the Yankees were done

with them!" (242). Over the course of her text, the slaves' ingratitude has become reified, superseded, and contextualized by the far more demonic crimes of the Union soldiers.

Chesnut's diary entry for February 16, 1865 illustrates the linguistic space she frequently occupies during these last months when inscribing the ethnic divide. In this set piece, Chesnut has just arrived in Lincolnton, North Carolina as a refugee, having fled from the burning rubble of Columbia, South Carolina. When she enters the hotel with her slaves Laurence and Ellen, the proprietress questions,

"Did you bring these negroes to keep them from going to the Yankees?"
 Ellen—"Name er God. What de matter wid de 'oman. What for [*one illegible word*] we two. Don't you know Misses never travel without Molly er me?" Mrs. J said, "If they are saucy, they can't stay here." So I bade Ellen hold her tongue—which she did with a flaunt. I wanted a pencil to write a note to JC. Could not find mine. Laurence handed me his. Mrs. J said with venom, "Let that man go home on the cars. We won't have no niggers with gold pencils here." So Laurence said he had better go—as he could do me no good—and Mr. C would certainly want him. Ellen came up after dinner & found me in my constant condition of tears—which she soon changes to wild laughter. "Old Miss Jonson say in the kitchen, 'Go away gal—don't stand there. My niggers won't work for looking at you.' Now Misses—ain't I a *show*. I never knew it before—but I am *somfin* for folks to look at." (230)

Chesnut describes the action of the encounter in short declarative sentences reminiscent of stage directions and relies heavily on recorded dialogue to capture the flavor of Mrs. Johnson's outrage. Though Mrs. Johnson's comments are addressed to Chesnut, she chooses not to record her own responses, allowing Ellen and Laurence to speak for her, effectively removing herself from the incident. From this powerful position of observer, Chesnut not only comments on the behavior of her two favorites, but turns her sharp pen on the racial biases of her hostess. Characteristically, Chesnut records her slaves' speech in dialect; in this passage, she uses the same technique for Mrs. Johnson, whose four speeches devolve from grammatically correct to ungrammatical constructions, a subtle movement which underscores Chesnut's power as a writer to shape the "characters" in her book. Interestingly, Mrs. Johnson's last sally concerns Ellen's appearance, a return to that familiar theme of slave sexuality which threads its way through Chesnut's diary. By filtering Mrs. Johnson's comment through Ellen's mouth, Chesnut can record the concern while twice removing herself from the text. She plays both sides of the field, actively portraying herself as a champion of the South's misunderstood slaveholders and brutalized slaves, while undercutting both presentations with carefully chosen words. By the conclusion of her diary, Chesnut grasps the power inherent in the subject position. Though she has lost money, land, human property, political status, she reigns within the pages of her own text, able to elevate her own status or diminish an enemy at will. Her ability to write well validates her sense of her own ethnicity, her status as a white Southern lady who exercises power over her subordinates. Significantly, in the above passage, Chesnut borrows Laurence's gold pencil, the appearance of which infuriates Mrs. Johnson and results in Laurence's dismissal from the hotel. The field is cleared: her

slave is punished for intruding on the closed circle of literacy, and Chesnut remains the only writer.¹³

CONCLUSION

Mary Boykin Chesnut's Civil War diary opens a window into the mind of an accomplished writer whose text reveals her constantly evolving attitudes toward race. Although the rhetorical patterns toward the beginning of her diary indicate confusion, by the diary's conclusion, Chesnut consistently occupies the position of ironic observer. Wartime realities of murdered slaveholders and ex-slaves flocking toward Union lines force Chesnut to reevaluate long-standing notions of her own invulnerability. As the war's events quickly dissolve her well-ordered life into chaotic turmoil, Chesnut regains a measure of control through the act of writing. Though she no longer holds sway over each detail of the family slaves' lives, her highly literate written record allows her to retain the position of power. The diary itself, then, functions as a weapon in the continuing ethnic struggle.

The other diaries under consideration operate in a similar fashion. While the diarists rely on many different writing strategies, each unique autobiographical account reflects and shapes the writer's ethnic attitudes, enabling her to organize and classify the momentous changes occurring at increasingly breakneck speed, while courageously shaping a new identity. Though they can no longer wield the whip with impunity, these women wield the pen, an instrument of farther-reaching effects. These diarists write the "reality" left to posterity, records treated by many historians as the most reliable evidence of extratextual historical fact. And, arguably, most of these women do indeed attempt to

represent accurately their short-lived Confederacy and the men and women who peopled it. But within these representations they make choices, with varying degrees of self-consciousness, concerning the best manner in which to capture the flavor of those years. Against protestations of empathy with a favorite slave's hard lot, discerning readers must balance that same writer's elision of the slave's daily ministrations. Against claims of mutual understanding across ethnic barriers, readers must account for the diarists' bewilderment and anger at their slaves' joyous reaction to emancipation, confusion expressed through biting sarcasm and sometimes bitter irony. Against fervent attestations to the God-ordained nature of institutional slavery, readers must acknowledge the diarists' use of abolitionist vocabulary and images to describe their own intolerable situation as a defeated nation. An informed picture of race-relations in the Confederate South embraces the complexity of these written texts.

What do these texts reveal about race relations in the Confederate South? Perhaps a more answerable question would be, "How did these women represent themselves in relationship to their slaves?" for these diaries are first and foremost representations of a self. To our great benefit, these brave diarists undertook the task of chronicling their days in a time when their own sense of ethnicity was inevitably called into question, allowing us the opportunity to study their developing sense of what it means to be white, Southern, and female. The roots of their ethnicity, though seemingly cemented in the natural order, are laid bare, forcing these women to reconsider their identity. A very few rise to the occasion; most attempt to retain a stranglehold on well-established notions of racial superiority, beliefs contradicted by the crushing experiences of personal ineptitude and dependency on the enslaved African-Americans.

Notes

¹ Several excellent historical studies focusing on Southern women have been published in recent years, among them Elizabeth Fox-Genovese's Within the Plantation Household (1988), which focuses on the relationship between "black and white women of the southern plantation household" and their experiences as gendered peoples; George C. Rable's Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism (1989); Ted Ownby's Black and White: Cultural Interaction in the Antebellum South (1993), a collection of essays focusing on ethnic relations; Catherine Clinton's Tara Revisited: Women, War, and the Plantation Legend (1995), which studies the war's impact on black and white women against the backdrop of the legendary Old South; and Drew Gilpin Faust's Mothers of Invention (1996), which reevaluates evolving gender assumptions during the war years.

² In her essay entitled, " 'I Write for Myself and Strangers': Private Diaries as Public Documents," Lynn Z. Bloom argues that despite common notions of the diary as a unitary genre, there are indeed distinct differences between private diaries which are "predetermined by topic—the weather, accounts received, visitors, daily occurrences" and are largely self-referential, and "public private diaries" which encompass a "range of subjects [which] is potentially infinite, generated by the writer's response to her world, varied and variegated, including not only people and events but her reading and intellectual and philosophical speculations" (28). Unlike the genuinely private diary, public diaries "form coherent, free-standing texts that are more or less self-explanatory if the entries are read in toto" (30). The majority of the Confederate diaries under consideration certainly fall into this second category, many of them indicating a specific

intended audience, or referring to instances where passages from the diary are read aloud to another individual or to a group.

³ After describing the slave songs heard on allowance day, Douglass comments that, "I have sometimes thought that the mere hearing of those songs would do more to impress some minds with the horrible character of slavery, than the reading of whole volumes of philosophy on the subject could do." Far from signifying the slaves' contentment with their situation, Douglass argues that "the songs of the slave represent the sorrows of his heart; and he is relieved by them, only as an aching heart is relieved by its tears" (Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass 19).

⁴ Eliza Andrews transcribes the following "sperrituals" sung by her family's slaves:

A. "Mary an' Marthy, feed my lambs,
 Feed my lambs, feed my lambs;
 Mary an' Marthy, feed my lambs,
 Settin' on de golden altar.
 I weep, I moan; what mek I moan so slow?
 I won'er ef a Zion traveler have gone along befo'.
 Mary an' Marthy, feed my lambs," etc. (90)

B. "I meet my soul at de bar of God,
 I heerd a mighty lumber.
 Hit was my sin feel down to hell
 Jes' like a clap er thunder.
 Mary she come runnin' by,

Tell how she weep an' wonder.
 Mary washin' up Jesus' feet,
 De angel walkin' up de golden street,
 Run home, believer; oh, run home, believer!
 Run home believer, run home." (90)

C. "King Jesus he tell you
 Fur to fetch 'im a hoss an' a mule;
 He tek up Mary behine 'im
 King Jesus he went marchin' befo'.

CHORUS.—

Christ was born on Chris'mus day;
 Mary was in pain.
 Christ was born on Chris'mus day,
 King Jesus was his name." (90-91)

D. "I knowed it was an angel,
 I knowed it by de groanin'." (91)

⁵ In "White and Black Women in Louisiana," Wilma King suggests that one mistress' overwhelming desire for neighbors and friends to consider her a "southern lady" led Tryphena Fox to work alongside her household slaves whom she often considered lazy or stubborn (90-91). Thus, Fox participates in physical labor in order to maintain an image of leisure. Testimony from women such as Fox suggests that other southern slaveholders agreed with the perception of their contemporary Susan Dabney Smedes who argued that "the mistress of a plantation was the most complete slave on it."

⁶ In his essay "What is an Author?" Michel Foucault explores the interaction between the authorial presence in a text and the reader's expectations, arguing that the concept of the "author" is an "ideological product" separate and apart from the historical figure of the writer. Foucault's remarks contribute to the discussion of whether or not these diaries can be used to establish historical fact by foregrounding some of the problems attached to collapsing the categories of author and writer.

⁷ In her chapter entitled "The Imaginative Worlds of Slaveholding Women: Louisa Susanna McCord and Her Countrywomen," Fox-Genovese argues that despite occasional forays into statistical analysis, the history of slaveholding women remains hostage to the literary sources left by them or by the men who lived with them or observed them, to the accounts of occasional travelers or journalists, and to the testimony of their slaves. Even the most devoted and learned scholars must, ultimately, fall back on subjective and impressionistic evaluations of the personal papers and published writings of contemporaries. We cannot afford to denigrate the value of these impressions, on which much of the best historical scholarship rests, but we need to justify our considered judgments by paying close attention to the meanings that slaveholding women ascribe to the words they used. (243)

Fox-Genovese's subsequent comments, though focusing on gender relations between slaveholders and their slaves, point to some of the difficulties in teasing out historical fact from literary constructions.

⁸ Incidents like the one below, recounted by Mill and Jule to a leader in the antislavery movement named Laura Haviland, point to the vastly different perceptions of their relationship held by the mistresses and their slaves:

One day she say, "Mill, I reckon that's a gunboat commin'. Now, if the Yankee do stop you all run and hide, won't you?" I didn't answer till I see the big rope flung on the bank. An' mistress got wild-like. "Yes, they are stoppin'. Mill an' Jule run, tell all the niggers in the quarters to run to the woods an' hide; quick, for they kills niggers. Mill, why don't you go?" I said, "I ain't feared the Yankees," "Jule, you run and tell all the niggers to run to the woods, quick. Yes, here they are coming, right up to the house. Now, Mill, you won't go with them, will you?" I felt safe, and said, "I'll go if I have a chance." "Jule, you won't go, will you?" "I shall go if Mill goes." She began to wring her hands and cry. "Now, 'member I brought you up. You won't take your children away from me, will you, Mill?" "Mistress I shall take what children I've got lef." "If they fine that trunk o' money or silver plate you'll say it's your'n, won't you?" "Mistress, I can't lie over that; you bo't that silver plate when you sole my three children." "Now, Jule you'll say it's your'n, won't you?" "I can't lie over that either." An' she was cryin' an' wringin' her han's. "Yes, here they come, an' they'll rob me of every thing. Now 'member I brought you up." Here come in four sojers with swords hangin' to their sides, an' never looked at mistress, but said to me, "Auntie, you want to go with us?" "Yes, sir," I said, an' they looked to Julie an' say, "You want to go?" "Yes, sir,"

"Well, you can all go; an' hurry, for we shall stay but a little while." An' Jule jus' flew to the quarters an' they all tied up beds an' every thing, an' tote em' down to the gunboats. An' we all got on the boat in a hurry; an' when we's fairly out in the middle of the river, we all give three times three cheers for the gunboat boys, and three times three cheers for big Yankee sojers, an' three times three cheers for gov'ment; an' I tell you every one of us, big and little, cheered loud and long and strong, an' made the old river just ring ag'in. (qtd. in Sterling 238-239)

⁹ In "Black Bodies, White Bodies: Toward an Iconography of Female Sexuality in Late Nineteenth-Century Art, Medicine, and Literature," Sander Gilman observes that "in the nineteenth century the black female was widely perceived as possessing not only a 'primitive' sexual appetite but also the external signs of this temperament—'primitive' genitalia" (232). Seeking to establish physical differences between Americans of African and European descent as a means of justifying racial biases and institutional slavery was a well established tradition in pseudo-scientific circles, as evidenced by similar moves in Query XIV of Thomas Jefferson's Notes on the State of Virginia where he lists physical characteristics of African American slaves which lead him to conclude that they are a separate race.

¹⁰ In his groundbreaking study entitled Metaphors of Self, James Olney argues that the self expresses itself through metaphors and that "in the fullest variety of autobiography . . . one discovers a creative, patterned construction that operates from and in the present over a past made coherent in the recall of memory" (37).

¹¹ Drew Gilpin Faust notes that by mid-war, Confederate women began publicly voicing their fears of slave insurrection, "writing hundreds of letters to state and Confederate officials imploring that men be detailed from military service to control the slaves," an assertion which she substantiates by citing numerous excerpts from letters penned by Confederate women (58-59).

¹² Margo Culley suggests that "some evidence exists that the persona in the pages of the diary shapes the life lived as well as the reverse" (14), a tantalizing suggestion that Culley does not flesh out in this section.

¹³ Sidonie Smith argues that in 18th and 19th century America, the ability to write served as evidence of one's capacity to reason. Since access to reading and writing were frequently denied to slaves, their

very humanity . . . remained problematic. For without a written language, Africans appeared deficient in memory, mature reason, vision, and, critically, history. Since the century inherited from the Enlightenment its privileging of reason as the fundamental cornerstone supporting the architecture of universal selfhood, and since the century privileged knowledge of the arts and sciences as the highest achievement of reason and writing as the evidentiary scene of reason, absence of written language signified absence of full humanity. (35)

CHAPTER THREE

"I Can Write and Think Myself into a Fever About My Brother:"

The Convergence of Nationalism and Gender

While the ethnic distinction between African and European drew the attention of the earliest American colonists, resulting in an avalanche of justifications for enslaving a people, the conviction that ethnically distinct peoples inhabited the northern and southern regions of the newly-settled continent grew gradually, evolving from an admiring recognition of a Virginian's aristocratic manners or a Bostonian's plain-spoken tenacity to the unshakable belief expressed in many Confederate women's diaries that insurmountable moral, cultural, economic and political differences excluded the possibility of the two peoples existing peacefully in one nation. Numerous scholarly studies have sought to track and explain this emerging antipathy between North and South so evident in the literature of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Classics such as William Taylor's Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and American National Character trace the cultural divide to differing countries of immigration, differing religious traditions, differing economic and political backgrounds, and basically argue that North and South inevitably collided because they were settled by ethnically diverse people, a type of argument which reifies ethnicity into a fixed category.¹ In his introduction to The Invention of Ethnicity, Werner Sollors observes that in studies emerging from this familiar theoretical framework, "ethnic groups are typically imagined as if they were natural, real, eternal, stable, and static units. They seem to be always

already in existence" (xiii-xiv). This very "ability of ethnicity to present (or invent) itself as a 'natural' and timeless category" is, Sollors argues, the "problem to be tackled" (xiv).

Rather than a set of eternal, authentic distinctions, ethnic groups consist of "pliable and unstable" components which continually recombine and evolve to reflect the changing political, social, spiritual, and economic aspects of the historical process (Sollors, Invention xiv). Viewing ethnicity as a "dynamic" idea which is "reinvented and reinterpreted in each generation by each individual" (Fischer 195) allows readers of life writing, such as the Civil War diaries considered in this study, to question how and why individuals form themselves into new ethnic groups. How, for example, do individuals move from perceiving themselves as Americans to the conviction that they are Southerners, a distinct and separate ethnic group? In the introduction to A Mixed Race: Ethnicity in Early America, Frank Shuffleton argues that one's own ethnicity forms and becomes defined through confrontation with the ethnic "other," so that "ethnicity is not a constant but an index of a cultural group's continually changing self-understanding in the face of shifting relations to the larger world" (8). Rather than awakening to the existence of one's ethnicity, then, an individual creates ethnicity as he or she collides with peoples of distinctly different cultures.² Ethnicity, Sollors asserts, "is not a thing but a process" (Invention xv).

Sollors further argues that the approach of scholars such as Fredrik Barth, who in Ethnic Groups and Boundaries (1969) urges his readers to understand that it is "the ethnic *boundary* that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses" (15), elevates "contrastive strategies" such as naming and name-calling to the "most important thing about ethnicity" (Beyond Ethnicity 28). Although anthropologist Michael Fischer posits

that contemporary "ethnic autobiographies" introduce the concept of ethnicity as an "ethical device attempting to activate in the reader a desire for *communitas* with others, while preserving rather than effacing differences" (232-33),³ these particular female diarists consistently articulate negative distinctions between themselves and Union soldiers and supporters, frequently calling Union soldiers "Yankees," "Yanks," or (more rarely) "nigger lovers."⁴ This naming constitutes a pervasive feature of their texts which supports theories of ethnic formation which emphasize the purposeful contrasting of the writer's group with another group which the writer conceives as "other."

However, these explanations must also address the added dimension of gender present in these diarists' conception of their own group identity. Drew Gilpin Faust claims that "very little of the enormous scholarly and popular literature on the [Civil] war has been devoted to the ways in which it disrupted assumptions about gender or to how those disruptions produced their own long-lived legacy" (5), a surprising oversight considering the rich cache of extant life writing by Confederate women.⁵ Faust observes that

Civil War armies numbered close to a million, and deaths exceeded 600,000. Almost all of this conflict and destruction took place on southern soil. The totality of warfare for the South, the extraordinarily high level of mobilization of both men and resources, and the enormous significance of the southern homefront as well as its frequent transformation into battlefield made the Civil War experience so direct and thus so significant for Confederate women. (5)

The War stormed into their kitchens and trampled their rose beds in ways that most Northern women did not experience. The interactions between Union soldiers and Confederate women prompted many of these female diarists to figure the War as a conflict involving not only huge companies of soldiers in tattered blue and gray uniforms, or even statesmen wrangling in Washington and Richmond, but also as a conflict fought in the parlors and on the front lawns of Confederate homes between Northern men and Southern women. While Faust's insightful work draws broadly from letters, diaries, and memoirs generated by Southern women as well as plays, novels, songs, paintings, and speeches delivered by leading statesmen in order to establish an accurate portrayal of "the changing nature of . . . gender relations in the wartime South" (xiii), focused analysis of the diaries opens a unique window on forces shaping the individual diarist's sense of her own ethnicity: who she is and how she differs from others. This gradually unfolding process of identity construction and revision is seen more clearly in periodic life writing⁶ where the outcome is unknown and inconsistencies in text and presentation stand in a more unguarded position than they do in either a formal autobiography where the writer consciously seeks to present a unified whole in retrospect,⁷ or in a polished piece of fiction where artistic goals often render the author's intentions and perceptions more opaque. Though the diary does exert influence over the diarist's interpretation of events,⁸ the controlling metaphor only gradually emerges, often without the diarist's full awareness, enabling the reader to observe more clearly the process of developing ideas.

How do literary texts contribute to the formation of ethnic identity? Particularly in periods of great cultural and political upheaval such as the American Civil War, how do written texts both reflect and exert pressure on a people's changing picture of itself?

What role does the activity of writing play in building ethnic boundaries? What rhetorical strategies do writers utilize to encode and reify ethnic identity? The diaries of these twenty-one Confederate women demonstrate that as the war progressed, they, with increasing frequency, perceived themselves—along with other Southerners—as an ethnic entity separate from those Americans inhabiting the Northern states. Many saw these cultural differences rooted in a natural, inalterable order: an unbridgeable gap similar to the racial differences forever dividing "true" Southerners from their slaves. And because of the intrusions of this war into the diarists' domestic lives, these ethnic boundaries are inscribed as a convergence of nationalism and gender. Many aspects of the relationship between Union and Confederate peoples have been explored in depth; however, room remains to study the impact of writing on the formation of ethnic identity. Though each diary reflects the idiosyncrasies of its writer, Kate Stone does not stand alone when she articulates her sense of power present in her daily reflections on the War's progress, her brother's military activities, and her own role in the Confederacy's future: "I can write and think myself into a fever about my brother" (248). These women diarists not only considered themselves as active, invaluable participants in the Confederacy, but they viewed the books they were creating as weapons in that deadly struggle. Several rhetorical and thematic patterns unify these accounts by women separated by geography as well as individual circumstances. By identifying and then tracing these patterns, the reader comes to a fuller understanding of the interaction between writing and one's perception of ethnic identity.

INTERACTION BETWEEN WRITING AND ETHNIC FORMATION

While naming and name calling of various groups certainly characterize the texts under consideration, these diarists manipulate language in several subtler ways which serve to conflate national and gender identity to create a unique perception of the Union / Confederate divide. One major method of encoding ethnic identity in these diaries comes from various writers identifying themselves with the war effort and the Confederacy through the use of the first person plural. Instead of referring to what Confederate generals and soldiers have done in the third person, these women consistently write of the battle "we" fought at Manassas, or the deprivations "we" suffer in prison on Long Island. For example, Lucy Buck writes that the Union forces "cannot meet us in open honorable warfare, cannot subjugate us by force, and so depend upon their Yankee craft and cunning" (40); Eliza Andrews comments toward the end of the war that "we are all old soldiers, and used to raids and vicissitudes" (151); Floride Clemson despairs over the depleted military stores, commenting that "I can not but feel that there is little hope for our cause, everything shows that our resources are nearly if not quite exhausted" (76); Mary Chesnut summarizes the first battle at Manassas by tallying, "Our loss small, theirs great. We took six hundred prisoners" (98). Though the majority of actions and events thus described can be clearly attributed to soldiers on distant battlefields, this collapse of first and third person, of female writer and male soldier, creates an immediacy to the events described in the diaries while grammatically linking the identities of writers with the Confederate cause, an effect heightened when the diarist writes about her father, brother, or son. For instance, Pauline DeCaradeuc Heyward, a nineteen-year old South Carolina girl whose two soldier brothers died in 1862 and whose father visited Charleston

during the Union siege, describes the battle of August, 1863 as if she were herself participating:

Last night the Yankees made two desperate attacks on our batteries at Morris Island, but were completely defeated each time. We have two guns, new ones, called Blakely guns, which reach 8 miles and the balls weigh 800 lbs. & shell 600 & something over, they were to reach town yesterday, trust they will help us well. (23)

Only other entries which indicate that Heyward pens these words from the safety of the family's plantation, Montmorenci, distinguish her account from others written by soldiers on the spot.

A particularly striking example of this grammatical identification can be found in the diary of Elizabeth Lindsay Lomax, entitled Leaves from an Old Washington Diary, 1854-1863. Lomax's Confederate war diary is unusual on many counts: a large portion of her diary is written within Union territory; she is fifty when she begins her diary, and age 57 when war breaks out; she is widowed with six children; and she knows key military and political players in both governments. While these characteristics distinguish her from the vast majority of diarists under consideration who, at the time of the Civil War, were in their teens or early twenties, unmarried or childless, and living in Confederate territory, probably the fact that sets her apart more than any other is that, while she prides herself on her Virginian heritage, she enters the Civil War years an avowed Unionist. A glance at Elizabeth Lomax's heritage explains this apparent contradiction. Her father, William Lindsay, maintained a personal friendship with George Washington and Lafayette, and served as a gentleman soldier in the

Revolutionary army, acting first as cornet of the Virginia Horse Dragoons and later as captain in Lee's Legion. Her husband, Mann Page Lomax, served as a lieutenant in the third artillery of the United States Army during the War of 1812,⁹ and her son, Lindsay Lunsford Lomax, attends West Point when the diary opens, later accepting an appointment in the United States army. These official connections, strengthened by the family's sojourn at Watertown Arsenal when the children were small, create emotional bonds with the Northern states which present little internal conflict for Elizabeth Lomax during the 1850's. On December 24, 1854, for instance, she reflects on a photograph of the family home at Watertown Arsenal which she had received the previous day. While Lomax identifies herself proudly as a Virginian, she writes that the photograph "made a wave of homesickness sweep over me. Life is very strange—One goes on from day to day, occupied, contented, interested in one's present life, then some small incident will raise the curtain on the past and it is all there, so vividly that one wonders which is the most real—the present or the past" (31). The answer to her question, of course, is that both past and present are "real," and both exert influence on future action. Though cognizant of the tension between slaveholding and "free" states, Elizabeth Lomax expresses little sectional loyalty; instead, the pre-war entries in her diary draw equally from experiences in northern and southern states, refer with equal fondness to northern and southern friends, and acknowledge family ties which transcend state borders. She thinks of herself as an American rather than as a Southerner.

Thus, the reader feels little surprise when Lomax responds to hints of Southern unrest by writing on October 24, 1860 that "the idea of secession or disunion is terrific and *appalling*. *God defend us from such a calamity*" (132). Repeatedly during those last

months of 1860, she records her loyalties to the government that her father, husband, and son supported: "The Presidential election takes place next month—God grant it may be *favorable to the Union and peace*" (132); "Great excitement—Mr. Lincoln elected President of the United States. The papers speak of the dissolution of the Union as an accomplished fact—God spare us from such a disaster" (133); "The South seems determined on disunion. God forbid!" (134); "I am, after much thought and deliberation, *definitely for the Union with some amendments to the Constitution*. Every day some political event of tremendous importance occurs—anxious times for those who can see the trend of events" (135); and finally, "South Carolina has seceded—God defend us from civil war" (135). Three times in the above quotations, Lomax uses the pronoun "us" in reference to the union of states that form the national government, an alliance she rightly sees threatened by the secession of southern states.

What event or set of events transpires to transform Lomax from a fervent Unionist into an equally passionate Confederate? Though her "dear son commanded the escort for President Lincoln[']s" inaugural parade (144), when Virginia secedes six weeks later, Lindsay feels compelled to send in his resignation, a decision his mother describes as "heartrending" (149). Her entries for the weeks following Lindsay's departure for Alexandria chronicle a jumble of emotions as dear friends and neighbors join the Federal army to fight against her son. On May 7, 1861, Lomax writes that on her return from visiting the Soldiers' Home that afternoon, she stopped at the Stones' place "where the Seventh Regiment is encamped. They have a charming military band and are a wonderful looking body of men. We stayed to see them drill, but oh, to think they are drilling to kill—and to kill my own people" (153). The subtle shift in pronouns—from

"we" to "they"—reveals an enormous shift in Lomax's ethnic paradigm. For the first time, she articulates a distinction between "my" people, which translates Virginians, Southerners, and particularly Lindsay, and "those" people—the "enemies of my own people" (153)—which translates Northerners, Unionists, or anyone in blue carrying a rifle. Just as her language prior to Lindsay's resignation identifies her loyalties, so too do her entries subsequent to Lindsay's decision. Although she continues to abhor the carnage of war which robs mothers of their precious sons, she now blames Northern politicians for the "dissensions. . . hatred and cruelty and injustice" which have resulted in "Our land invaded, our property destroyed, our best men to be destroyed by this frightful conflict" (162). Her repeated use of "our" underscores her identification with her fellow Virginians. In a manner similar to other diarists, Lomax collapses her individual experience into the larger Confederate experience, writing that "If we are conquered it will be because we are outnumbered. They tell me that in the North they are hiring Hessians to fight against us while the South sends her own men and her best men—God save them" (156). This rumor that the Union army hires Hessians would evoke memories of British aggression during the Revolutionary War and intensify her sense of the enemy's otherness.

Elizabeth Lomax unwaveringly sides with the Confederates for the remaining eighteen months of her diary. She notes her participation in a national "day of fasting and prayer" appointed by "President Davis" (158); she comments that her pension will not be reinstated unless she swears "the oath of allegiance to the Federal Government," something that she "will never do—Perish the thought" (170); and she records her approval of various Confederate generals such as Robert E. Lee whom she finds to be "a

marvelous soldier" (172). Repeatedly, she calls on God to champion the South's righteous cause, just as months earlier she had beseeched him to preserve the Union. For instance, on November 5, 1861, she writes that "From all accounts our enemies are beginning their hostilities with renewed force, with grim determination to conquer the South. God protect us from their violence!" (177), and on January 16, 1862, she reports that "General McClellan is advancing—we can do nothing but commend our cause to a righteous God" (184).

For all her professed sectional loyalties, however, Lomax makes a distinction between Northern men—those politicians, generals, and merchants who stand to benefit from military conflict—and individual Northern "children," especially those downy-cheeked boys who serve as cannon fodder for their officers' military ambitions. Discrimination between a wholly adult male population of Union soldiers and politicians and the young male or female individual who is effectively neutered marks a second manner of encoding ethnic identity in Lomax's text. This distinction allows her to remain loyal to both her role as a Virginian and her role as a mother. For example, on October 19, 1861, she records that Miss Wirt, a cousin of Lindsay's friend George Bayard, pays her a visit. Although Miss Wirt is a Northerner, Lomax observes that "the difference in our sympathies makes no difference in our friendship. I was more than glad to assist her in procuring a flag of truce and a military escort to Washington. From there she can travel to her own people" (176). Perhaps an even more salient characteristic than Miss Wirt's gender is her connection with Lindsay's friend, a relationship which allows her access to the family circle and to that group that Lomax identifies as "children." More dramatically, two days earlier, Lomax narrates her encounter with a wounded Union

soldier whose "blond head looked so young and helpless" (175). Ten times during the entry, she refers to the soldier's youth and status as someone's son. Although she remarks on her relief that the "slender figure on the stretcher wore a blue uniform" thereby ruling out Lindsay, she nurses the boy as if he were her own son, a similarity the soldier acknowledges when he drowsily promises that "I'll be good because you have kind grey eyes like my mother's" (175). When the boy dies early the next morning, Lomax weeps and concludes her entry with the caustic observation, "And *this* is War" (176). Two months later, as she desperately seeks to travel to the family's Washington home, she encounters a group of Union soldiers who beg her to play the piano. After recording her exchange with a polite "young soldier" from Boston, Lomax reflects, "Even though enemies of my country, I was glad to amuse them, they looked so young and were going into battle the next day and might never go home again. I could not help thinking, 'They know not what they do.' War is so terrible—so unreasonable and barbaric" (180). Again, the themes of youth and home surface in this exchange with Union soldiers who at "close range" (180) reveal themselves to be only children—innocents—and thus absolved of guilt, like her boy, Lindsay.

Elizabeth Lomax is not alone in distinguishing between the aggregate Union and the individual Yankee. While these diaries certainly abound with stories of Union soldiers commandeering a family's last pound of butter or firing a field of crops,¹⁰ a significant number of the women relate incidents of an individual Union officer's chivalry in seeking to protect a family's heirlooms or a wounded soldier's humanity shining forth despite his blue uniform.

Ethnic distinctions, so sharply defined for these diarists when the Others can be viewed far away and clumped in a mass, blur when the writer confronts a pair of eyes, a work-worn hand. Some of the diarists, such as Lomax, articulate their cognizance of a common bond which periodically transcends sectional distinctions. Just as Lomax explains these apparent ethnic anomalies by emphasizing the Northerner's youth or family connection, Kate Cumming, a member of Mobile's upper crust who served as a nurse in various front-line hospitals, articulates a distinction between the "children" sent to the battlefields and the men who must be held responsible for conscripting them. Upon her arrival in Corinth, Mississippi, site of a major battle, Cumming dwells on the hospital's horrific conditions—hundreds of men lying on the ground soaked in their own blood and urine, amputated limbs thrown into the yard, shortages of food and water. She is called upon to nurse both Confederate and Union soldiers; although she encounters Federal officers her first day in Corinth who laugh and appear "indifferent to the woe which they had been instrumental in bringing upon us" (15), she immediately distinguishes between them and the boys who obey their orders. The next day, Cumming observes that "seeing an enemy wounded and helpless is a different thing from seeing him in health and in power. The first time that I saw one in this condition every feeling of enmity vanished at once" (18). Significantly, she describes this soldier as "quite a youth, with a childish face," a boy whose youth and wounds presumably rendered him powerless. After asking him where he called home, Cumming records that she "asked him about his mother, and why he had ever left her. Tears filled his eyes, and his lips quivered so that he was unable to speak Poor child! There will be a terrible day of reckoning for those who sent you on your errand, and who are the cause of desolating so

many hearts and homes" (18). This wounded boy lies stripped of his weapons and the ability to engage in verbal combat, rendering him an object of compassion and moving him into an ethnic no-man's zone.

Cumming's varied reactions to the Union officer and this wounded Union soldier reveal the emotional rather than ideological basis of her ethnic paradigm, a characteristic that social historian Eric Hobsbawm finds common in times of emerging nationalism. In his introduction to Inventing Traditions, Hobsbawm argues that the "crucial element" linking created ethnic groups such as new nations seems to be "the invention of emotionally and symbolically charged signs of club membership rather than the statutes and objects of the club" (11), and that, in fact, "values, rights and obligations" of the group tend to be "quite unspecific and vague" (10). Kate Cumming's conflicting attitudes toward her Union patients confirm Hobsbawm's observations: her patriotic fervor intensifies when confronted with the symbols of power—Union flags, Union uniforms, signs of rank—even when ideological and political distinctions are blurred. Thus, Cumming regards the implicit claims of kinship embedded in several wounded prisoners' insistence that "they dislike Lincoln and the abolitionists as much as we do" as invalidated by their assertion that "they are fighting for the Union," a holy war symbolized by a Union flag printed on the back of a Bible (33). Though her Christian faith permeates the texture of many diary entries, Cumming writes that this particular Bible is "the most hateful thing which I could look at; as every stripe in [the flag] recalled to my mind the gashes that I had witnessed upon our men" (33). In this instance, not even the combined force of the soldiers' wounds, their expressions of political sympathy, and their common spiritual heritage is sufficient to outweigh the overt power represented

by the flag and the idea of the Union. Neither Elizabeth Lomax or Kate Cumming entertain the possibility that their attitudes toward the Union and Union soldiers are self-contradictory, nor do their positive experiences with powerless "children" result in modification of their ethnic paradigm. Though both diarists abhor the brutality of war, neither of their texts reveals deep reflection on ethnic categories which demonize the North and deify the South; rather, these boy soldiers are viewed as embryonic Yankees or as ethnic anomalies, much like the "good" slave who acts differently from his enslaved brothers.

Sarah Morgan also emphasizes the suffering which reduces dying Yanks to mortal men whose pain-filled faces remind her of her soldier brothers: Gibbes, George, and Jimmy. As in the previous cases, Morgan expresses her conviction concerning Yankee cruelty and aggression while successfully maintaining personal values of compassion and womanly gentleness, a maneuver which implicitly identifies the power inequality in gendered terms. She allows herself to identify with Union soldiers who are refigured as powerless—young, sick, alone. In a particularly poignant example, Morgan decries the fate of the hundreds of Union soldiers in Baton Rouge's occupying army who are dying from wounds, disease, and neglect:

These poor soldiers are dying awfully. Thirteen went yesterday. On Sunday the boats discharged hundreds of sick at our landing . . . these poor wretches lay uncovered on the ground, in every stage of sickness. Cousin Will saw one lying dead without a creature by to notice when he died. Another was dying, and muttering to himself as he lay too far gone to brush the flies out of his eyes and mouth . . . O I wish these poor men

were safe in their own land! It is heart breaking to see them die here like dogs, with no one to say Godspeed. (181-182)

The same Morgan who "carries a large carving knife . . . always ready for use" (51) against the Confederacy's enemies expresses consternation when confronted with the sights, sounds, and smells of death. She reports feeling heartbroken by the soldiers' abandonment, and tacitly blames their plight on those who ordered these men to march out of "their own land" and thus forfeit the comfort of a woman's touch and prayerful "Godspeed." Her inclusion of descriptive terms such as "wretch," "creature," and "dogs" reinscribes ethnic boundaries and modifies her self-portraiture of compassion; however, the force of her censure seems directed toward those in power who have discarded these men rather than toward the individuals themselves. This subtle distinction allows Morgan simultaneously to recognize human suffering and maintain her ethnic paradigm which differentiates between godly Southerners who know how to care for their dying and Northerners who dump their wounded on the streets.

Sarah Morgan's willingness to extend compassion toward "these poor men" raises an interesting question: do these diarists identify with the weak and unguarded because they themselves feel powerless? Many of the young diarists do indeed record frustration connected with their gender, railing at fate that they weren't born male and so cannot contribute more directly to the war effort. Morgan, for instance, repeatedly vents her frustration over being female. When she learns of Butler's infamous proclamation concerning the women of New Orleans,¹¹ she complains, "O my brothers, George, Gibbes and Jimmy, never did we more need protection! Where are you? If Charlie must go, we are defenseless. . . . If I was only a man! I don't know a woman here who does

not groan over her misfortune in being clothed in petticoats; why cant we fight as well as the men?" (76-77). When rumors of a Confederate raid on occupied Baton Rouge prove groundless, Morgan storms, "Why was I not a man? What is the use of all these worthless women, in war times?" (166) Mary Chesnut joins Morgan in recording disgust at women's limited role in wartime: "I think *these* times make all women feel their humiliation in the affairs of the world. With *men* it is on to the field—'glory, honour, praise, &c, power.' Women can only stay at home—& every paper reminds us that women are to be *violated*—ravished & all manner of humiliation" (145). And the Louisianan Kate Stone bemoans her "inactive life when there is such stir and excitement in the busy world outside." The fact that she must stay quietly at home while battles rage "is enough to run one wild. Oh! To be in the heat and turmoil of it all, to live, to live, not stagnate here" (87).

While Stone's passionate outcry "What can poor weak women do?" (334) seems to cement a self-perception of powerlessness, the attentive reader must consider the assertions of power that precede and follow Stone's statement: when her fellow Confederates argue that further struggle is useless, she responds by shouting, "Never, never, though we perish in the track of their endeavor!"; and after she avers to woman's weakness, she states emphatically, "I cannot bear to hear them talk of defeat" (334). The frequent frustration these diarists express at not being male does not necessarily prove that they feel powerless, or that they are consumed with "self-loathing directed against both their individual selves and the female sex" as some scholars argue (Faust 20); conversely, their anger might express their conviction that they could fight the war as well or better than their male contemporaries. While Confederate campaigns conducted

on distant battlefields receive almost universal approbation by these diarists, they are more frequently censorious toward the conduct of those close at hand, either criticizing the apparent cowardice of men who remain at home, or expressing anger at the lack of protection afforded by weak or absent family members.¹² In her study of changing gender expectations in the war-torn South, Drew Gilpin Faust suggests that the Confederate military establishment, as well as "Confederate discourse generally, celebrated southern women's outspokenness against the Yankee foe" (204) as a means of deflecting hostile scrutiny from Confederate efforts. While this public relations strategy might have enjoyed partial success, close attention to the contradictions embedded in the diary entries of these Confederate women reveals expressions of anger and sarcasm that often belie their professed sense of powerlessness. Rather than portraying themselves as fragile flowers dependent on the nurturing hand of male gardeners, they present themselves as involved in, contributing to, and aware of the war in ways that refuse culturally-generated categories of gender and inscribe the War as a conflict between Union men and Confederate women.

Thus, in an entry where Sarah Morgan records sending a letter to her brother George across occupied territory, she reports urging George to fight in order to defend his family while simultaneously presenting herself as able to defend herself:

"Well! If the Yankees *do* get it, they will find only a crazy scrawl, for I was so intensely excited that though I wanted to calm his anxiety about us, I could write nothing but 'don't mind us; we are safe; fight, George fight' until the repetition was perfectly ludicrous. I hardly knew *what* I said, I was so anxious for him to remain where he is, and defend us. Ah Mr

Yankee! If you had nothing in the world but your brothers, and their lives hanging on a thread, you would write crazy letters too! And if you want to know what an excited girl is capable of, call around, and I will show you the use of a small seven shooter, and large carving knife which vibrate between my belt, and pocket, always ready for use" (50-51).

Interestingly, her direct address to "Mr Yankee" identifies her motive behind the frantic plea to "fight, George fight" as a desire to shield her brother, effectively reversing the roles of protector and protected.

Many other entries record Morgan's sense of agency. Rather than figuring her hoopskirts as a symbol of her own weakness, she attributes her frustration with her clothing to the fact that it restricts her from openly fighting, an activity for which she feels convinced she possesses the courage, unlike many of the men who remained in Baton Rouge. When she shouts "O if I was only a man!" she does not long for a changed heart, but cultural permission to enact the aggressive role reserved for men. She stands fully convinced that the Confederate army would profit from her enlistment: "I could don the breeches, and slay them with a will! If some few Southern women were in the ranks, they could set the men an example they would not blush to follow. Pshaw! There are *no* women here! We are *all* men!" (65) A week later she returns to the subject of her carving knife (which she has apparently stopped carrying around under her clothes), addressing it in a fashion hardly befitting the wilting Southern belle of popular lore: "Come to my bosom O my discarded carving knife . . . come, I say, and though sheathless now, I will find you a sheath in the body of the first man who attempts to Butlerize—or brutalize—the terms are synonymous) me!" (77) ¹³ Morgan's claims that

"the women of the South are as brave as the men who are fighting, and certainly braver than the 'Home Guard' (182) move beyond reversal of culturally prescribed gender roles to assertions concerning her identity, her self or core which she understands as nonconstructed.¹⁴ At the conclusion of yet another passage where she discusses the possibility of discarding her "pretty blue organdie" for "boots and breeches" (183), she apostrophizes the young women of Baton Rouge, urging them to "only ask Heaven why you were made with a man's heart, and a female form, and those creatures with beards were made so bewitchingly nervous?" (183)

Readers of Sarah Morgan's diary might question whether her assertions of courage are merely bravado, and whether Morgan's text includes description of actions prompted by her perception of self-agency. Indeed, Morgan eagerly supports claims of her superior courage by contrasting the behavior of the women and men of Baton Rouge. The women prove their mettle under threat of invasion by sleeping "serenely" while "half the men in town sat up all night in expectation of a stampede" (166), and by laughing merrily as they vacate their homes instead of "tumb[ing]" into the Asylum in panic like the men who lack "a moral backbone" (182).¹⁵ When General Butler orders that "All devices, signs, and flags of the confederacy shall be suppressed," Morgan replies by declaring "Good. I devote all my red, white, and blue silk to the manufacture of Confederate flags. As soon as one is confiscated, I make another, until my ribbon is exhausted . . . [and] the man who says take it off, will have to pull it off for himself; the man who dares attempt it—well! A pistol in my pocket will fill up the gap. I am capable, too" (64-65). The next day, when additional Union gunboats arrive at Baton Rouge, Morgan has an opportunity to act out her plan. She records that when she sees

the "American Flag. . . flying from every peak, and received in profound silence, from the hundreds gathered together," she immediately returns to her home, makes herself a five-inch Confederate flag, pins it across her breast, and walks down town, "creating great excitement among women & children" (67). Morgan joins the majority of these diarists who portray themselves as valuable Confederates, not only by laughing in danger's face, but by supplying military necessities, ministering to sick and wounded soldiers, and creating books which vindicated the Confederate cause.

Though largely excluded from battlefield heroics, these women contributed to the War effort in significant ways.¹⁶ Each of the diarists under consideration notes repeated instances of providing food, clothing, and sometimes shelter for Confederate troops in transit or for imprisoned Confederate soldiers, many times depleting the family's provisions in order to fuel the Confederate fighting machine. The dozens of episodes involving ragged, starving soldiers appearing "hat-in-hand" on a family's porch to beg for water or bread further suggest the war was a joint effort that could not be sustained without the highly significant sacrifices of women willing to endure a lowered material standard as well as shoulder familial responsibilities traditionally gendered male.¹⁷ In addition to these informal contributions, Faust observes that during the war years, more than a thousand women's voluntary associations appeared across the South. These organizations participated in a wide range of activities, from transforming raw material into uniforms, cartridges, and tents (24), to supplying the Confederate army with knitted socks and gloves and a seemingly endless number of bandages. These organizations joined the efforts of individual Southern women in raising money to purchase the

military's needed supplies by hosting bazaars and tableaux and concerts, such as Eliza Andrews records in her entry for February 2, 1865.

Besides supplying a countless number of Confederate soldiers with food and clothing, hundreds of Southern women served the Confederacy as professional nurses. Women across the North and South felt inspired by Florence Nightingale's Notes on Nursing: What It Is, and What It Is Not (1860) which details her experiences as a British nurse in the Crimea, and determined that they too could serve their countries in this invaluable way. The Union led the way in officially sanctioning female nursing with the June 10, 1861 appointment of Dorothea Dix as Superintendent of Female Nurses of the Army of the United States,¹⁸ and the Confederacy followed by granting women hospital workers official status in September 1862.

Notwithstanding the initial resistance to employing women formally as nurses and matrons in the Confederate Medical Department, Southern women volunteered in established hospitals and makeshift clinics from the war's very first skirmishes. Ada Bacot and Kate Cumming, along with hundreds of other Confederate women of all ages, responded to the desperate summons for help in caring for the thousands of sick and freshly wounded after each successive battle. Although Kate Cumming clearly admires the efforts of individual doctors, she repeatedly criticizes the management and organization of the various hospitals she visits and in which she serves, contrasting the filth and squalor characteristic of those hospitals attended by male nurses with those staffed by Sisters of Charity where "every thing is *parfait*" (22). On more than one occasion, Cumming remarks on the inept management skills of her male contemporaries, such as her observations regarding the General Hospital of Okolona, Mississippi from

which female nurses were excluded: "I hear many complaints about the bad treatment our men are receiving in the hospitals. I have been told that many a day they get only one meal, and that of badly-made soup, and as badly-made bread. . . . If our government can not do better by the men who are suffering so much, I think we had better give up at once" (49). Her criticism of Dr. Caldwell's hospital appears especially pointed when compared with her praise of a hospital under the "special charge" of women: "They cook and prepare all the delicacies, and provide every thing at their own expense. It did me good to see the quantities of milk and good butter" (45).

Although Cumming confines most of her overt criticism of the Confederate Medical Corp's male leadership to the pages of her diary, she does record several instances where her indignation spills over into speech, as when she returns early one morning to the train depot to see the same badly wounded soldiers and dead piled together on the platform "as if they were bundles of dirty rags" just as they had been the day before (44). She asks the wounded "if there were none to care for them," to which they reply that there is "no one, and that they had not even had a drink of water" (44). Though Cumming describes herself as surrounded by men used to dismissing women's opinions, placing her in a similar position as these broken soldiers who "no one seemed to notice" (44), she refuses to accept that opinion of her worth. Instead, on this morning, Kate Cumming strides the length of the platform, stepping around numberless discarded soldiers until she reaches a group of officers "who were having their breakfast cooked" (44), a grammatical construction which underscores not only the contrast between the officers' full bellies and the foot soldiers' thirst, but the attentive service rendered to the officers while the wounded lay neglected. Reflecting on the incident, she records that "I

asked them if they could tell me what this meant. They replied that they had left Corinth in such a hurry that it could not be avoided. I told them that I thought it could, and that the doctors were to blame. To this they made no reply. Perhaps they were doctors, and I do not care if they were" (44). Significantly, Cumming portrays herself as besting an entire group of the Confederacy's most powerful, literally rendering them speechless by the force of her righteous anger and the truth behind her just accusation. Her ability to command language by outspeaking these officers and by subsequently writing down her story demonstrates Cumming's sense of her own agency. She refuses to be sidelined, and—as history bears out—eventually wins the right to manage the hospitals as she sees fit.¹⁹

Each of these diarists places high importance on the ability to articulate herself, and expresses awareness of the power inherent within spoken and written discourse. Perhaps even more than secretly carrying pistols and publicly waving flags, these diarists participate in the Confederacy's struggle through the very books which record their daily thoughts. Sarah Morgan's editor comments that

keeping the diary is also, Sarah at one point confesses, an act of defiance, proof 'to my own satisfaction that I am no coward' The diary in fact becomes a part of the story, as real as any character, as she slips it into her 'running bag' or takes it with her on the flight to Greenwell or leaves the book she has just completed with her sister in Clinton while she begins another. (East xxviii).

On the day she flees Baton Rouge, Morgan hides her diary, calling it a "book full of Treason" because it "'countenances' the C. S." (184). What are the terms of her military

pass? It reads that "Parties holding it are considered to give their Parole not to give information, countenance, aid or support to the So called Confed. S.'," a contract which Morgan refuses to consider binding since she "did not apply for it, agree to the stipulation, or think it by any means proper" (184). Morgan's willingness to commit her rebellion to paper mirrors a courageous attitude found in many of these diaries, particularly notable in diaries such as Lucy Buck's, Emma LeConte's, Kate Stone's, and Ellen Renshaw's which were partially written in occupied territory. In the face of physical deprivation, their ability to read and write marks an "unstealable" treasure; when forced to abandon their homes or mouth the Union oath, their diaries attest to their continued freedom. On an essential level, these women refuse to be silenced, preserving a powerful autonomy despite the superior muscle of the Union army. Even when Morgan's companions later warn her that, if her diary is confiscated, the Yankee soldiers will "read this aloud to me to torment me" she refuses to abandon her writing, exclaiming that "I would die without some means of expressing my feelings in the stirring hour so rapidly approaching" (436).

Further evidence that their "books" are seen as contributions to the war effort rests in the careful attention so many of the diarists give to documenting the precipitating causes of secession and the progress of the war. Margo Culley's observation that during the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century, American "women diarists in particular wrote as family and community historians" (4) seems particularly applicable to texts such as Eliza Andrews' diary which she describes as a "history of each day" (211), or Emma Holmes' diary which begins with a lengthy summary of the "great political changes" which have transpired during the past months (1). After lauding South

Carolina's bravery for over 1500 words, Holmes concludes her opening entry by lamenting that "so many startling occurrences are compressed into so small a space of time that it is difficult to give an account of all, particularly as I have not all the newspapers to refer to. I have tried to recall the most important events of the last two months, fraught with the happiness, the prosperity, nay, the very existence, of our future" (6-7). Holmes expands her dramatic initial agenda to include comments on Charleston's social scene; however, movements of troops and reports of battles form a staple subject in the hundreds of subsequent diary entries. Frequently, readers find body counts and speculation regarding the number of wounded or captured, so that the diary serves the function of a war record—an "accurate" description of the Confederacy's struggle for freedom seen from the perspective of one of her faithful daughters. Mary Chesnut, likewise, opens her journal by declaring her loyalty to the Confederacy and her determination to rectify her neglect of the historic changes rocking South Carolina:

I do not allow myself vain regrets or sad foreboding. This southern Confederacy must be supported now by calm determination—& cool brains. We have risked all, & we must play our best for the stake is life or death. I shall always regret that I had not kept a journal during the two past delightful & eventful years. . . . I dare say I might have recorded with some distinctness the daily shocks— (3)

Chesnut underscores the public nature of her diary by rehearsing her rebel heritage, as she observes that the combination of her father's radical politics and the "taunts and sneers" of her despised Union-loving in-laws predestined her to active support of the Confederacy. Unlike some life writing which encodes experience to such a degree that

only intensive research makes it accessible to outside readers, Chesnut's diary offers abundant textual cues (an explanation of where and how she met her husband, identification of key "characters," historical context of South Carolina's decision to secede, etc.) targeted toward making her personal experiences and her perceptions of the Confederacy "readable" to future generations.²⁰ At several points, she refers back to an earlier entry to check the accuracy of someone's memory, such as when Jefferson Davis requests that James Chesnut supply him with the particulars of an interview some three months earlier, an important incident which Mary believes she "could give pretty well from [her]journal" (192). Thus, Chesnut's frequently recorded frustration at inaccurate news stems not only from concern for dear friends (though this certainly plays an important role), but also from thwarted goals of providing a true record.

Contrary to Estelle Jelinek's claim that Chesnut's record forms "a deviation from the usual apolitical accounts by women" (87), broad reading of women's Civil War diaries reveals texts consistently preoccupied with the progress of the war. Repeated references to troop movements, the careers of favorite generals, dead or wounded soldiers, shortfalls in military supplies along with recorded efforts at rectifying those needs, and governmental decisions stand as evidence contradicting Jelinek's argument that Confederate women "focused their attention on other matters than the war itself and rarely even mention its political implications. Instead," Jelinek continues, "most concentrated on the difficulties of maintaining a semblance of domestic life while under siege" (Tradition 86). While the problems of obtaining cornmeal and broadcloth certainly figure prominently in these diaries, the writers frequently contextualize these "domestic" concerns as a significant—though troublesome—aspect of the Confederacy's

political struggle. The distinction between "public" / "political" and "private" / "domestic" collapses within the pages of these diaries. As Nina Baym observes, close attention to late eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century texts demonstrates that "the line of demarcation between the 'public' and 'private' spheres was more blurred than twentieth-century historians and literary critics have previously thought" (11). Refusing to be sidelined, these diarists contribute to the war effort through their patriotic chronicles of the Confederacy's struggle.

Indeed, far from portraying themselves as powerless, these women diarists frequently claim credit for inciting, fueling, and sustaining the War. In Emma Holmes' opening diary entry, for instance, she carefully establishes her place in Charleston's story: "Doubly proud am I of my native state, that she should be the first to arise and shake off the hated chain which linked us with Black Republicans and Abolitionists. 'Secession,' said a gentleman, was born in the hearts of Carolina women" (1). Holmes joins a long line of South Carolinian women such as the eighteenth-century Eliza Lucas Pinckney and Eliza Wilkinson who describe themselves as rebels.²¹ Though Northern texts clearly intend "rebel" as a derogatory label, these women embrace this portrait of themselves, along with the passion, conviction, and violence which the term implies. These diarists join voices from the popular press and the pulpit in retooling that term, removing any negative connotations, transforming a term of derision into a badge of honor, and imaging themselves as the true inheritors of the American Revolution.²² In an illustration of this shifting paradigm, Kate Cumming fashions what she considers an irrefutable argument when she observes that despite the fact that North and South share an Anglo-Saxon racial heritage (thus eliding any Native Americans or Africans from the

category of "Americans"), they can never again form a "union" because the two peoples are too vastly different. She continues by querying how the Union would react if the case were reversed, "were we the aggressors, and demanded of them what they now demand of us. I think we all know their answer. It would be that given by the immortal Washington to the haughty monarch of England, when he attempted to make slaves of men who had determined to be free If we were sinners" by seceding from the Union, "what were our forefathers when they claimed the right to secede from the British crown?" (34) Emma Holmes echoes Cumming's sentiments by including a list of the "descendants of Virginia's revolutionary heroes [who] are now holding high positions in the C. S. A." (46), and Eliza Andrews observes that George Washington was the "first 'rebel' president" in a time when the term meant something quite different to Northerners. Andrews concludes her political musings by writing, "I wonder [that] the Yankees don't remember they were rebels once, themselves" (92). By mid-1865, the term "rebel" has reified into the quintessential Confederate, applicable only to those faithful to the Cause, who proudly refuse to bow to the Union yoke.

While Drew Gilpin Faust contends that "Women's evaluations of the southern government's policies on conscription, relief, home defense, economic production, and slavery influenced and . . . in the end undermined women's support for continued war" (xiii), historian Lee Ann Whites takes the opposite position, arguing that after "sacrific[ing] their brothers and sons to the effort and ultimately . . . their homes as well," the Augusta, Georgia women in her study "expressed themselves as being unconditionally wedded to the cause" (105). Coinciding with White's observation that "the greater and more irretrievable their domestic loss, the more committed they seemed

to become to the righteousness of the cause for which it was suffered" (106), several of the diaries under consideration indicate that these women in fact respond to events designed to strip the South of agency and to increase perceptions of powerlessness by advocating continued rebellion. Instead of describing themselves as demoralized by Union attacks such as Butler's infamous proclamation or Sherman's wide swath of destruction which were designed to subjugate Southerners by breaking their spirit,²³ these diarists respond with increased rage directed at Union and Confederate men alike. They rage against Northern soldiers for violating their homes, for raping their land, for summarily wresting control of their slaves and their own futures out of their hands through the twin policies of emancipation and occupation. And far from advocating a return to the Union, these diarists rage against Southern generals and soldiers for abandoning the fight.

As the casualty lists lengthen, including names of more and more friends, cousins, and brothers, the anger often reaches the pitch of hysteria. Sarah Morgan responds to news of Lee's surrender, the prospect of returning to the Union, and to her fellow countrymen who cry out "Peace! Blessed Peace!" by proclaiming, " 'Never! Let a great earthquake swallow us up first! Let us leave our land and emigrate to any desert spot of the earth, rather than return to the Union, even as it Was!' " (606) Morgan presents herself as a prophetess who pronounces judgment on a South which exchanges honor for rest, and implicitly criticizes those generals and soldiers who have tired of the struggle. Two months later, she remains adamantly opposed to the South's surrender, writing that "I only pray never to be otherwise than what I am at this instant—a Rebel in heart and soul, and that all my life I may remember the cruel wrongs we have suffered. It

is incomprehensible, this change" (611). Mary Chesnut likewise blames the Confederacy's demise on those men who refuse to continue fighting:

There is a universal hue & cry. This one caused our failure—the other one—here—there—every where. I say every man who failed to do his utter most aided—every man who could & did not fight caused it. I do not see that any did their duty but the dead heroes—the wounded & maimed—& those sturdy souls who first went into it—& were found at their post under arms when the *generals* gave them up to the Yankees. (247)

In Chesnut's paradigm, only the dead, the maimed, and those whose guns still pointed at the Yankees escape culpability for the South's tragic defeat. Those who betrayed the Confederacy by surrendering her soldiers are despised, an attitude which effectively eliminates all options but one for the honorable Southerner: continued war. Kate Stone reacts to the news of Lee's surrender by declaring that she "cannot bear to hear them talk of defeat. It seems a reproach to our gallant dead . . . [whose graves] should teach us to emulate the heroes who lie beneath and make us clasp closer to our hearts the determination to be free or die." While she admits that "Lee's defeat is a crushing blow hard to recover from," she refuses to acknowledge the South's ruin, hoping that "maybe after a few days we can rally for another stand" (336). As late as May 20, 1865, Stone records that she joins the townspeople of Tyler, Texas in "a fever of apprehension." Each day brings conflicting rumors, yet Stone reports that while she is uncertain "whether armed resistance is over or whether we are to fight on to the bitter end," she joins her neighbors in affirming "Better years of battle than a peace like this" (342). Eliza Andrews of Georgia, who travels across Sherman's scorched earth and sees her city

occupied by Union troops, announces that "I am more of a rebel to-day than ever I was when things looked brightest for the Confederacy" (172). Emma Holmes remembers the reactions of her fellow South Carolinians to the news of Lee's surrender and South Carolina's imminent return to the Confederacy: "Peace on such terms, is war for the rising generation. We could not, we would not believe it. Our Southern blood rose in stronger rebellion than ever and we all determined that, if obliged to submit, never could they *subdue* us" (436-437). Finally, Pauline DeCaradeuc, another South Carolinian, passionately proclaims that "Mr. Davis has gone to the trans Mississippi, it is thought to try and rally, and continue the war, every man is a traitor & coward who doesn't go with him, & fight to the death to keep us from this disgraceful reunion" (75).

Two themes run throughout these diarists' reactions to the Confederacy's defeat. First, these women refuse to tolerate the possibility of returning to the Union. After repeatedly demonizing Yankee soldiers in their diaries and recording their very real grievances against their male enemies, many of the Confederate women diarists considered a reunion of North and South as impossible and unnatural. Second, they overtly voice their disgust with the behavior and decisions of the Confederacy's men—particularly those in positions of power. This discontent, which only periodically emerges during the early years of the war, seems almost universal at this critical juncture: the men have bungled the war; the men have acted cowardly; the men have given up. While each diarist reserves the right to laud her brothers or lover as heroic, the overwhelming feeling is dismayed amazement that years of sacrifice have not achieved the Confederacy's goals. Even Kate Cumming, who by the war's conclusion has seen more death and greater atrocities in her position as a military nurse than the vast majority

of Southern women, approaches the announcement of surrender ambivalently. Although she longs for the bloodshed to cease, she reacts with incredulity to the news that the Union has refused to recognize the Confederacy's sovereignty, thinking that "certainly . . . we were independent." Cumming continues to entertain hope that France and Great Britain will officially recognize the Confederacy and comments on the ongoing nature of the conflict by using the present tense in her prayer: "This is a severe ordeal; may God in his mercy give us comfort through it" (276).

Can the experiences and perceptions of these women be generalized to all Confederate women in order to make claims about women's response to injury or the threat of injury? Can the outpourings of these diaries establish the actions of even these diarists? Descriptions of how Confederate women reacted to privation, to exile, to rape must be pieced together not only from their own written accounts, but from external, empirical data—historians' tools. And before valid generalizations can be offered, the sample must meet rigid statistical requirements. Generating these types of generalizations is not the purpose of this study. Instead, readers may discern ways these particular diarists articulated their experience of being a Confederate lady. How did these particular diarists structure their relationships? How did they perceive themselves and their ethnic identity? How did they utilize their own literacy to create portraits of empowerment and to regain equilibrium after devastating personal loss? Answers to these types of questions necessarily come from their written records over which they maintain control even when everything else they own—including at times their bodies—are being pillaged by a male conquering force. Writing empowers and allows space for these women to respond to insult and injury by assuming a stance of renewed power in their diaries, a

written picture which solidifies into the myth of the iron magnolia. The reality for these writers is that the "true" battle is fought between Union men and Confederate women.

SOUTHERN ETHNICITY IN THE DIARY OF ELLEN RENSHAW HOUSE

Perhaps no Confederate diary better illustrates the convergence of nationalism and gender than that of the twenty-year old Ellen Renshaw House of Knoxville, Tennessee. The opening pages of her diary read like a catalogue of Yankee character flaws. She comments on the soldiers' empty boasting (16), their cheating of a poor, loyal, Confederate landlady (17), their miserliness (17), their unprincipled behavior (20), their "theft" of household goods (21), their impudence (21), their neglect of their own sick (34), their brutality (53), and their vanity (86). House most vehemently criticizes, however, the Northerner's perceived propensity for deceit. For instance, after watching the Union soldiers marching in to possess the city, she comments that they spread themselves out, attempting to demoralize the Confederates by making "a hundred men look like two or three." House indignantly records that "two of the Regiments that passed this morning only had a hundred and ninety-five men each, and if I had not counted them I should have thought there were at least four hundred in each" (16). The Yankees' attempt to deceive, and House's self-identified ability to cut through that deception, serves as a recurring theme throughout these early weeks. When the Union army reports losing men in the battle at Cleveland, she remarks that "if they acknowledge to two hundred I know we took more" (18); when Union officials announce that "Lee has been completely routed and Richmond evacuated," she acidly observes that she "cant tell how many times they have reported the same thing since they have been here" (40); when

those same soldiers report a raid by General Wheeler resulting in a loss of thirty-five Union wagons and fifty men, House retorts, "If they acknowledge to that many of course there must have been more" (82); and when she sees the besieged Union soldiers begging from house to house for food, she places that action beside the official insistence that the occupying army has "plenty to eat for a month or two" and concludes, "They do lie so" (49) .

Ironically, while House embraces opportunities to hoodwink Union soldiers by feigning attraction in order to gather information or special treatment for Confederate prisoners (30, 105), Yankee cunning elicits her thickest sarcasm. For example, on November 19, 1863, House engages in a verbal battle with two Union men, Dr. Borders and Captain Phillips. After noting that Captain Phillips is Chief of Artillery in Knoxville's occupying army and thus—presumably—a worthy opponent, she writes that Phillips

was not taken with his Battery at Rogersville. He said he felt perfectly safe. The Rebels would not attack the place. They were only passing by on their way to Virginia. I asked him why they came this way instead of going by rail. He said they did not think Burnside would fight. They could not take the place. He had twenty-three guns the other side of town. He doubted it there would be one Rebel to be seen any where's around here this morning. *Of course I believe it all.* They have not taken one of our men so far. They said this morning that last night they had charged the Rebels and taken a hill, but the Rebels had retaken it this morning. *They do wonders Charging.* [italics mine] (43)

She continues in this same vein the next day, as she reports the disarray of the Union army and the ineptitude of its commanders, chief among whom is General Burnside who stands in the cupola of the university, "giving orders and countermanding them as soon as given." Despite his obvious confusion, House observes that Burnside "says this morning he don't feel at all uneasy. Grant is in the rear of Longstreet, was fighting him all day yesterday. Of course it must be true, they never lie" (43). She portrays herself as adroitly cutting through the verbal smoke bombs of the occupying army's most powerful men, a strategy that moves the heat of the Civil War into the pages of her journal.

The cumulative weight of Ellen House's observations propels her toward sweeping judgments of the Union soldiers. She joins a long line of writers who, perceiving themselves as captives, seek to equalize power by demonizing their captors. Angered by the poor treatment of Confederate prisoners, House explodes, "These outrageous creatures—devils if I must use the word—to treat our officers in such a way. God will punish them for it in his own good time" (36). By identifying these negative character traits with her enemies, House justifies herself. The Union soldiers boast; she expresses her loyalty. The Union soldiers hoard; she economizes prudently. The Union soldiers lie, aligning themselves with the Father of Lies; she practices patriotic cunning. House generalizes impressions received from individual encounters with Northern men into ethnic categories, completing the process of reification by ascribing to these Union soldiers physical characteristics which broadcast the perceived personality traits in much the same way that African-American slaves were frequently portrayed as stooping or slack-jawed as a physical embodiment of their supposed imbecility.²⁴ Lucy Buck makes similar generalizations when she describes Union soldiers as "vermin," one of whom had

his "arms about the neck of a strapping 'colored gemmun,' and his lips in loving proximity to the lips of ebony" (54), an apparently abhorrent racial juxtaposition with homosexual overtones. She continues by portraying another soldier as "a most Satanic looking Yankee" (54), and later intensifies the distinction between her angelic Confederate brothers and the invaders of Front Royal by writing that "they looked like demons as they galloped through the streets. . . and with their harsh laughter they seemed like nothing human" (165). While House describes Confederate Captain Moody as "the finest looking man I have ever seen, very tall, [and] well formed" (79), she pictures Union soldiers as possessing "the most diabolical faces I ever saw" (39). General Shackleford is described as "a most disgusting looking man" (22), and even the Union soldiers who frequent House's church are "an abominable looking set" of which "none look like Gentlemen" (23).²⁵

All the proof she needs of their depraved, demonic state rests in the fact that the Union soldiers blur the distinction between the white Confederate girls and their black former slaves. General Shackleford, for instance, "touch(es) his hat to every negro he meets," and when the Yankees question the veracity of Mrs. Kains' statements about the poverty of her household, they "turned and asked Mary if she had any liquor. Took a negro girls word before a lady's" (42). Eliza Andrews files a similar complaint when she notes that a prominent Union officer in the occupying army went to the freedmen's balls and "danced with the black wenches!" (287), "indecent behavior" that so outraged the citizens of Washington, Georgia that they refused to admit Union soldiers to their homes and even "absented themselves from the Communion Table" rather than worship

alongside men whose predilections for "negro maids" irrefutably proved the existence of a "yawning gulf of blood between us and them!" (288)

Of course, proponents of institutionalized slavery frequently accessed Southern fear of miscegenation to galvanize support for the Confederacy's agenda,²⁶ but Ellen House—along with several other Confederate diarists—places a new spin on a familiar theme. When House muses that she does not "know which hold their heads the highest since the Yankees have been here, the negro girls or the tory girls" (22), she verbalizes an implicit conflation made in the pages of her diary. House figures interaction between Knoxville's girls and the Union soldiers as miscegenation, rhetorically building on all the familiar prejudices and fears associated with sexual interaction across ethnic boundaries. Social intercourse between her city's female Union sympathizers and Union soldiers assumes a decidedly sexual flavor in the pages of her journal as she remarks on what "grand times . . . [the tory girls] have been having, such famous riding partners, so much high life below stairs" (22). Sutherland notes that "tory" was common Knoxville parlance for a Union sympathizer (213); however, the slur predates the Civil War by decades, originally marking a Royalist in the Revolution, and eventually signifying anyone considered unpatriotic (Coulter 64, 140). While House applauds the aggressive behavior of her Confederate girlfriends, who emerge from the protection of their homes to nurse the wounded and verbally taunt the enemy, flirtation between Knoxville's girls and Union soldiers results in severe censure. Such is the case when Mary Hazen waits at her street corner to be introduced to Captain Pike, a union officer. House complains that "she told him she was a union girl and all sorts of things. He admires her very much and she has heard it. She will get herself in to trouble if she goes on at the rate she has been for the

last day or two" (26). Unlike Mary Hazen, House refuses to entertain the possibility of intermingling Confederate and Union blood as repulsive and unnatural. When Horace Maynard, a prominent Knoxville Unionist, argues that the "She Rebels" of Knoxville "would find out that they would be obliged to have Yankee Offers for beaux, or do without," House firmly responds that "I am sure I would rather go without" (25). She knows only one proper interaction between Union soldiers and Confederate ladies—war.

27

Her censure of Union sympathizers extends beyond her female peers, however, to encompass "country people," Confederate deserters, and her arch enemy, William Brownlow, editor of the Knoxville Whig. House's family certainly occupied a social position far below the fabled "three thousand";²⁸ however, as late as 1850, her father Samuel House identified himself as a planter, owning seven slaves and employing two white servants. By the opening of her diary, the family had moved from their Marietta "plantation" to a rented house in Knoxville, where the 1860 census listed Samuel as a bookkeeper (Sutherland xviii). Though public records offer no conclusive proof regarding the status of the family's two black servants Martha and Sidney, House's diary indicates that these two women were, in fact, owned by the House family. She seems keenly aware of her status as a literate, slave-owning, Knoxville citizen, and uses these characteristics as defining marks of true Confederate ladies. For instance, five days after the Union army marches into Knoxville, House writes that the

country people cut down our secession flag staff and danced over it. I suppose they think that they spite us dreadfully, but they are very much mistaken. I had much rather have it cut down than have their old rag

flying from it. Dr. Jackson's British flag seems to provoke them very much. They think it is a Confederate one. Some of them threatened to tear it down. Mrs. J. told them that she dared them to put their fingers on it. (7)

Her use of pronouns distinguishes between the country folk—"them"—and Knoxville's residents—"us," the first group making mass, ignorant, impotent gestures which are easily repulsed by one strong, Confederate lady. Their failure to recognize the Confederate flag not only confirms House's obviously low opinion of these outlanders, but effectively removes them from her consideration. While her early distinction between herself and the "country people" illuminates her class biases, perhaps more significant is the subsequent textual absence of this group. Within the world of House's diary, the reader finds virtually no mention of Knoxville's underclass or further mention of impoverished farmers and country laborers—they simply do not exist. The text's implicit class bias speaks to House's conception of her own ethnicity. Confederate women are bold, articulate, and intelligent.

While one class of Union supporters effectively disappears from the pages of House's Civil War diary, another group quickly takes its place. Fewer than a dozen brief entries cover the first nine months of 1863, a pattern that undergoes a major transformation on September 1, 1863. What precipitates the change from sporadic comments on the weather and social visits to a lengthy daily record of life in Confederate Knoxville? House writes, "I think it is outrageous. The Yankees are here. Just think, here—here in Knoxville. Walked in without the least resistance on our part. Buckner evacuated it last week, took everything But to let them have the place. I never never

could have believed it" (4). Her initial outrage at the absence of Confederate resistance grows over the next few weeks. Two weeks after Union soldiers first marched into Knoxville, House exclaims,

It makes me heart sick to see so many blue coats. Oh! Why did Buckner evacuate East Tenn, give it up without a single blow struck for its defense. He will never find a place that will be easier to hold. He ought to be turned out [of] the army. He was completely under the influence of the Union men while he was here. They all think him something extraordinary because he let them do and say what they pleased. (15)

Though House realizes that an entire Confederate regiment defended Knoxville, she lays responsibility for the occupation at Buckner's feet. She joins a host of women who rebel against social systems which place them at the mercy of incompetent, cowardly, or simply absent defenders. Her paradigm directly charges Buckner with exposing the flower of Southern womanhood to dangerous contact with Union men: in the entries for September 1 and 2 alone, House records three unorthodox encounters with Yankee soldiers, one of which results in her sister Nellie being made the object of Yankee ridicule. Though House shields active Confederate soldiers from the charge of incompetence, she repeatedly demonstrates her disgust at deserters who through fear or discouragement find their way back to Knoxville's relative safety. Unlike her praise for the prisoner Colonel Cummings who declared that "his life, liberty and property were in their hands, his Honour in his own, and he would keep it" (6), House unreservedly censures any "Conscripts who allow themselves to be taken" or any soldiers found hiding, running from the scenes of battle (7).

House feels especially resentful regarding the oath of allegiance required of all conquered Confederates.²⁹ Throughout her diary, she carefully tabulates how many Confederate soldiers and citizens of Knoxville remain loyal to the Confederate cause, and how many announce their desertion through swearing the Oath. On Sunday, September 20, 1863, she walks to the railroad station to honor the first batch of Confederate soldiers shipped to Northern prisons: "There were not more than fifty who had had the courage to go. The others—poor miserable creatures—had all taken the Oath, over three hundred of them" (17-18). House reacts more intensely when her father swears allegiance to Lincoln's government four months later. Since she has made refusal to take the oath the litmus test of the true Confederate, the fact that this latest betrayal emerges from within her family wounds her vanity, prompting her to exclaim that she has "been mad as a hornet all day. Father went and took the oath, and what is the worst took Mr. Humes [a Union sympathizer] with him as his friend to vouch for him I know it don't change his feelings one bit, but it is so humiliating. It mortified me to death" (89). House reports in the next paragraph that Will, her only brother not in the Confederate Army, also toys with the idea of taking the oath, encouraged by House's mother and sister. Though House fully realizes the economic advantages that potentially accompany trading sides in occupied Knoxville, she states emphatically that unlike her sister and mother, she cannot encourage her brother's pursuit of political favor. Instead of wishing him safe, she "wish[es] he was in our army where he ought to have been long ago" (89). House effectively aligns herself with Samuel and Johnnie, her two brothers serving in the Confederate army, portraying herself as engaging the enemy in a manner every bit as real and important. By identifying herself as the only civilian family member who disdains

the Union oath of loyalty, she foregrounds her special relationship to her brothers, as well as implicitly claiming the role of family leadership for herself, the only courageous and loyal Confederate family member remaining in Knoxville. Once again, House collapses gender boundaries, portraying herself and her band of girlfriends as active and politically savvy, rather than the retiring, apolitical Southern bells of antebellum lore. Who most closely resembles and most thoroughly understands Samuel and Johnnie? Not their father or elder brother, but their spitfire little sister, who organizes her own battalion of Knoxville girls to care for wounded Confederate soldiers and bamboozle the Union officers at every turn.

House reserves her greatest wrath for William G. Brownlow, a well-known Union sympathizer and a neighbor of the House family whom House credits for her deportation from Knoxville (127)³⁰ After riding the Methodist preaching circuit for years, Brownlow turned to journalism, and settled in Knoxville in 1850 where he published the inflammatory periodical Knoxville Whig and Independent Journal. When Tennessee seceded, Brownlow's pro-Union editorials became even more virulent, eventually resulting in his imprisonment and deportation to his beloved Union in March of 1862 (Patton v, ix; Coulter 187, 205). On September 3, 1863, two days after Burnside's army moved in to occupy Knoxville, House observes that Brownlow had returned from his Northern exile: "Our friend across the way came home today. Every union man in town I believe has been to see him. All looking perfectly delighted. They think they have every thing their own way now, & I suppose they will for a time" (5). Although House credits Brownlow with all sorts of stringent measures against Knoxville's Confederates, such as the order "forbidding any one from buying any thing except those who take the

oath as Loyal citizens, not even a dose of medicine or a spool of thread" (82), Brownlow's inflammatory anti-Confederate rhetoric draws her most vehement protest. On October 17, for instance, House records that "one of the common Yankee soldiers" heard Brownlow assert that "Lincoln was the best president they ever had. The Rebellion must and should be crushed. If there were not men enough in the North to crush it, the women must be armed, and if they were not enough the negroes and beast of the forest, and if it could be effected in no other way the whole population of these states must be exterminated, men, women, and children" (25). Though each of Brownlow's statements no doubt infuriates the Confederate House, her preface to his remarks identifies her frame of reference and betrays the gendered hermeneutic within which she operates. "Any man," House reports the soldier as saying, "who could make such a speech had not respect for his wife and daughters" (25). Refusal to support the Confederacy equals betrayal of Southern womanhood, especially of the women living within one's own home. The fact that even a "common Yankee soldier" understands the logical connection between these attitudes seems to support House's paradigm, while consigning Brownlow to the lowest circle of the Confederate hell.

House quotes directly from Brownlow's publication on two occasions before her deportation. In the first instance, on January 11, 1864, Brownlow comments on the execution of Captain Ephraim Shelby Dodd, a great favorite of House's whose hanging as a spy three days before elicited an excruciatingly concrete description: "The first time they hung him the rope broke, and he lay about fifteen minutes when they hung him again. What torture. I hear too that when he fell he broke his thigh bone. Was such brutality ever heard of before" (83). She awards Dodd the status of martyr in contrast to

Brownlow who attributes his stoicism to his moral depravity. House quotes Brownlow as writing that "he met his fate with perfect composure, and seemed indifferent to the dreadful end before him. Men going into this Rebellion become hardened by sin, and lost to all sense of honor or shame. Our idea is that they expect after death to wake up in one of the Cotton States' " (86). Less than a week later, House remarks that she saw Brownlow's paper describing "Mr. Currey's piazza . . . crowded with she-rebels, who as the prisoners passed waved their handkerchiefs, and made such bold, impudent flirting demonstrations as only she rebels know how to make," for which seditious display they "ought to be sent South immediately" (90). Both excerpts foreground the polarization House feels between herself and Brownlow—only one of them can be right, a position she claims for herself. She chooses to include those passages where Brownlow, through his apparent sarcasm and blatant exaggeration, appears to demonize Southern martyrs and Southern girls, Union rhetoric which lends support to House's thesis that Brownlow is "the vilest thing that ever lived" (86).

She conceives of her relationship with Brownlow as a battle analogous to those fought between huge armies of blue and gray. The fact that her war is a conflict of words and glances, fought on the field of Southern chivalry, does not lessen its significance for House. She portrays her refusal to curry favor with Union supporters as courage, actions invariably encoded in terms of gender relationships, where the categories of male and Yankee frequently collapse into one ethnic other—the enemy. House's conflictual relationship with Brownlow tellingly extends to include his son, John Brownlow, whose confrontation with House, recounted through her eyes, reveals the sexual dynamics undergirding this highly charged display of power:

Today when we were standing waiting to see our poor fellows go off, John Brownlow came along and stopped within ten steps of me. I don't think he took his eyes off my face for five minutes the whole time I was there. I looked at him just as I would at any stranger. If he thought I would speak to him, he was very much mistaken. I had not spoken to him for months before he went north, when we were in power here. I most certainly shall not now when he is. It would look entirely too much like cowardice. (18)

Correctly interpreting a prolonged stare as a display of power is certainly not unique to Ellen Renshaw House's diary;³¹ however, her conflation of this sexual interaction with a display of patriotic courage illuminates a facet of House's self-constructed ethnicity.

Unlike those false Confederate soldiers whose cowardice leads them to take the oath earlier in this entry, or those turncoat Tennesseans like Brownlow who support Lincoln's government, true Southerners courageously stand firm. And in House's Knoxville, those true Southerners are primarily young women.

One of the most prominent ways in which Ellen Renshaw House encodes her growing conviction of an ethnic identity is through her narration of encounters with Union soldiers occupying Knoxville. The vast majority of her diary entries summarize the day's events and her own actions in broad, sweeping strokes that kaleidoscope time and elide her own speech. For instance, in a typical entry on November 16, 1863, House writes that

Just as I sat down to breakfast this morning, Sissie Kain came over to say that the Sutlers were selling out for any thing they could get—and packing up what they could not sell, for me to hurry and meet her and go with her

to see if we could get any shoes. So I swallowed my breakfast and set out. Every body was out. I mean all the rebel Ladies looking as smiling as possible. We whipped them twice below here today, terribly down at Campbell's station. Longstreet is down there. They are fighting over the river and up at Bull's Gap this side of Greenville. Such running and racing never was seen. (38)

House notes her motivation for hurrying into town, groups herself with other Confederate women seeking to exchange smiles for goods, and performs a verbal leap to the battlefield. This paratactic construction reveals the connection she makes between events transpiring in downtown Knoxville and the bloody battlefields. This collapse of worlds is underscored by the paragraph's last sentence where the "running and racing" could equally apply to shopping women or pursuing troops. Though House portrays herself as participating in the rebellion, in this passage she figures herself as part of a group which acts in unison, a move which solidifies group identity while decreasing personal agency.

In contrast to these more typical entries, those portions of her diary where she records personal skirmishes with individual Yankees elongate to encompass House's words, thoughts, and musings on the nuances of language. Her description of these encounters stands apart from the text surrounding them as she relates her verbal sallies and her fervent desire to retaliate against any member of General Burnside's army who dares to cross her path. In these vignettes, House paints herself as aggressively matching wits with one Yankee after another, single-handedly engaging in battles every bit as real as those fought in the foothills along the Cumberland Gap. For instance, the day after her visit to the sutlers, House writes that a Yankee soldier came to their door begging for

food. Though her mother takes compassion on the obviously sick, starving boy, House sees his appearance at their house as an opportunity to reconnoiter. Unlike the majority of entries where she reports only actions, in this instance she carefully records both sides of the conversation, presenting herself as a skillful and aggressive spy:

I went out to see if I could get any thing out of him. He said it was only picket fighting, did not know who was in command of the Rebels. He said camp life was very hard. I said it must be on both sides. He said that they had had awful hard times already but he thought the war would be a long one and the hardest was yet to come. I said I thought so that the South and North were both very determined. He said yes it was. They expect a general attack at daylight in the morning. (40).

She presents her behavior, which onlookers might style coquetry, as a purposeful participation in the war effort, bracketing the verbal repartee with a statement of her goal to "get [some] thing out of him" and the result of her efforts: a report that Union forces expected an attack at daylight. Other entries such as October 28th, 1863 flesh out House's self-portrait of her spy-like activities.³² Once again, a Union soldier appears at her door, this time delivering a note requesting milk for a Confederate prisoner. After determining that her gifts would indeed go to a Southern boy, House writes that

I invited the Yank to come in, and talked to him while I fixed a basket of things to send. I was killing polite to him, asked if I wrote a note to Capt. McLean if he would get it. He said if I would have it ready by half past four he would call for it The Yankee came for it as he had promised, and I made myself as pleasing as possible, for I thought that he would be

willing to do any thing for our prisoners again if I treated him like a gentleman. I wanted to knock him down and take his boots and gloves all the time. (30)

Several other passages detail similar encounters. Entries such as November 16, 1863, underscore House's perception of herself as fearless, willing to make outrageous, "unladylike" statements in loyal service to the Confederate cause. On this particular day, a Major Haggerty of the occupying army pays a social call on House's father; when she finds out that he serves as Pay Master, she writes that "I told him I hoped our boys would catch him. He said they would get a pretty good haul if they did. I understand that he had \$2,800,000 with him" (39). Two days later, Major Haggerty returns to the Houses' residence. Following the exchange of pleasantries with House and her father, she records that "he informed me that the Rebels could not take the place. I asked him if they could starve it out. He looked at me very hard and says, Yes they could do that" (41). Several days later, a Yankee Lieutenant named Torr calls at the House residence searching for a blanket to purchase. After informing him that they had none to sell, House writes that

I peppered him well, told him the idea of their talking of reconstruction of the Union was simply ridiculous. Southern children hated the Yankee nation from the time they were born, and the hatred grew with their growth and strengthened with their strength. Gave him a dose of the slavery question then we touched upon the news today that Grant had whipped Bragg all to pieces. I asked him how he would account for the difference of their report and what one of our prisoners told me today that A. P. Steward was in front of Chattanooga. He said that the dispatch they

had received was that Bragg had been whipped, and had fifteen thousand men taken prisoners. I told him certainly I believe it all. Then he said divide all we heard by 20 and we would about get the truth. I told him that would suit me exactly. Bragg had whipped Grant and taken five thousand prisoners. (55)

The sexual energy behind such verbal battles cannot be denied, and although House resolutely refuses to admit attraction to her Yankee sparring partners, she occasionally hints that they seem to be attracted to her, such as her addendum to the above scene that before leaving, Lieutenant Torr tells her mother that "he had passed the most pleasant evening he had had since he had been in Knoxville" (55). Catherine Clinton, in Tara Revisited, argues that Confederate girls, starved of male company, often cast themselves in the role of female spy in order to justify their interaction with Union soldiers: "Those Southern girls who mixed too readily with Yankee soldiers . . . needed a patriotic excuse for their attentions to Northern soldiers, the only young men available for companionship in the occupied South While this contact was branded disloyal, women might imagine a patriotic content to their encounters with these men if they were ostensibly fishing for information" (97). Clinton's suggestions certainly bear consideration in light of House's repeated and detailed descriptions of encounters between herself and various Union men. However, while her text clearly indicates her sensitivity to the sexual undercurrents implicit in her parlor confrontations, she consistently reserves statements of overt attraction and approbation for loyal Confederates, particularly ones wearing gray field cloth. House carefully crafts the rendition of each of these encounters to present herself as purposefully, aggressively

engaging the enemy, invariably defeating those Yankee soldiers who unwittingly cross her path. The entry recording a rare encounter where the Union Lieutenant Shaw seems to best her illustrates this self-portrayal. On March 9, 1864, House's father reports that Knoxville's jail currently holds sixty prisoners. Instead of remaining silently on her porch as Sister does at the beginning of the diary, House accompanies her sibling and father to the jail where she spies a Confederate Lieutenant being led into the prison. She incorrectly assumes that this officer fought valiantly before being subdued by superior numbers, perhaps because this is how she pictures herself behaving. After asking Lieutenant Shaw if she could speak to him, Shaw replies

Certainly. The officers who came with him very pertly said Oh! Yes you can look at & talk to him as much as you like. I turned to him and asked in my very pleasantest manner, Where were you captured Lt. He looked slightly sneaking & replied "I was not captured at all." (I know my face was in a blaze. I would [have] liked to see some one slap his face) "You came in" I asked. He said "yes" the contemptable rascal. I turned round as fast and walked off in a hurry. (112)

The significance of this verbal exchange for House is heralded not only in the now familiar recording of conversation, but by the parenthetical stage direction and the use of quotation marks to announce direct quotation, punctuation used only one other time for her own speech in the entire diary—the day she impulsively urges her friends, "girls shake your handkerchiefs to them" (85), as over one hundred Confederate prisoners are marched toward the train depot. Though House remarks that "the Yankee Officers laughed" at her obvious embarrassment, she ends the March 9th entry by noting that "I

know Lt. Shaw told him that I was the D—t rebel he ever saw" (112). House's closing line implies that despite her embarrassment, she still "won" the encounter by proving herself courageous and loyal.

Instead of perceiving her gender as a handicap, House uses her feminine charms and expertise in spirited conversation as a weapon in her encounters with Union soldiers, verbal skirmishes where the lines between gender and nation inevitably blur. Her text writes Confederate identity as preeminently female. As with so many of the other diarists under consideration,³³ House's verbal acuity becomes synonymous with her standing as a Southern Lady as she demonstrates the strength of character which contributed to the development of the myth of the iron magnolia. The cult of "true womanhood" which identified true women as those who embodied "piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity" (Welter 21), undergoes a transformation in the pages of these diaries.³⁴ The ideal Confederate lady remains pious and pure; however, she is no longer lauded for a retiring disposition that flees from the sordid concerns of politics; rather, she is encouraged to contribute to the Cause, to be acutely aware of the movements of troops and the status of battles, to shoulder the heretofore masculine responsibility of managing plantations, and—in all things—to be a "rebel." Though Carolyn Heilbrun in her book-length study of women's life writing argues that "above all other prohibitions, what has been forbidden to women is anger, together with the open admission of the desire for power and control over one's life" (13), Ellen Renshaw House does not hesitate to portray herself as a "very violent rebel" (113). Her anger comes to mark the epitome of Confederate womanhood.³⁵

Clinton hints at this transformation, observing that "despite women's presumed 'softer natures' and Christian principles, Confederate propaganda remodeled the feminine ideal into the 'iron magnolia' " (59). While Clinton rightly credits the power of the Southern press in promoting this transformation, she undervalues the role of Confederate women's diaries in facilitating what amounted to self-transformation. Far from passively reacting to a male-dominated popular press, these women actively participated in creating a new standard. Written accounts of interactions between Confederate women and Yankee men such as in Ellen Renshaw House's diary, chronicling Yankee affronts to Southern womanhood and the brilliant manner in which those offended women handle themselves, restructure popular ideology which defined "true" women as retiring, submissive, and apolitical.

CONCLUSION

Commenting on the process by which a characteristic such as Southern women's assertiveness comes to be seen as a "natural," biological aspect of Southern womanhood, Sollors argues that "it is always the specificity of power relations at a given historical moment and in a particular place that triggers off a strategy of pseudo-historical explanations that camouflage the inventive act itself" (xvi). In other words, the effort to equalize or to sway the balance of power results in the articulation of cultural differences which masquerade as timeless, empirical truths. Sollors' argument seems particularly applicable to this set of Confederate diaries. As Ellen Renshaw House and the other diarists seek to chronicle their stories within the roiling, cataclysmic events of the Civil War, their texts simultaneously reify the conflicts which they, themselves, experience.

The insult from a starving Union soldier evidences the uncouth behavior of all Northern men. The display of the Confederate flag on the breast of a Charleston belle demonstrates the courage and loyalty of all Confederate women. And, the torching of a tobacco plantation solidifies the belief in an unalterable ethnic difference between Sherman's soulless savages and the South's martyred aristocracy. The diary entries counter the external reality of crushing poverty and slaughtered brothers and lovers with portraits of women whose fiery rebellion proves more than a match for a whole battalion of Yanks. Though the diarist's city may be occupied by Union soldiers, within the pages of the journal, *she* remains powerful.

Ellen Renshaw House, along with the other diarists mentioned in this chapter, utilizes her written account to equalize the playing field, creating a powerful image of herself in opposition to the defeat, displacement, and humiliation she feels thrust upon her by her current enemies. And in the process of creating herself, she creates an "other" which collapses boundaries of nationalism and gender.

Notes

¹ Taylor traces the nineteenth-century theory that the Northern states were settled by Puritan Roundheads and the Southern states by the royal party, the Cavaliers. These two distinct ways of life were thought to have been steadily diverging since colonial times, and at least partially responsible for the Civil War. In looking at the construction of Southern ethnicity, Taylor draws cultural and historical conclusions by examining literary texts.

² Several scholars concerned with the formation of nations and ethnic groups address Ernst Gellner's 1964 pronouncement that "Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist" (169). Benedict Anderson argues that Gellner's insistence on "invention" carries the negative connotation of " 'fabrication' and 'falsity' ", which implies that "true communities exist which can be advantageously juxtaposed to nations" (15). Although Anderson argues that this implication undercuts Gellner's thesis, Sollors takes a more positive approach, observing that Gellner's "understanding of nationalism . . . could be helpful toward an interpretation of ethnicity, too" (Invention of Ethnicity xi).

³ Michael Fischer, in his insightful article entitled "Ethnicity and the Arts of Memory" asserts that "it is the inter-references, the interweaving of cultural threads from different arenas, that give ethnicity its phoenix-like capacities for reinvigoration and reinspiration. To kill this play between cultures, between realities, is to kill a reservoir that sustains and renews humane attitudes" (230). Fischer's positive views on the inherent enrichment of ethnic interaction seem to have little relation to the perceptions of the diarists under consideration, and seem to contradict theorists who conceive of the

ethnic divide as a battleground where one group gains power only at the expense of another group. Perhaps the differences in paradigms can be attributed to the fact that these writers penned their life writing during a time of war when the "play between cultures" had already been "killed" in a most dramatic manner.

⁴ I believe one possible explanation for the relative infrequency of this intended slur is that these diarists elided the presence of African Americans from their texts, particularly their own slaves. The relationship between Union soldier and African American is most frequently commented upon when the diarists see Union soldiers interacting with freedmen in situations which appear "unnatural" to the writer.

⁵ Historian Lee Ann Whites concurs with Faust's evaluation, commenting that in the enormous body of scholarly work surrounding the Civil War, "one critical vantage point has been almost entirely absent from this discussion: gender." Whites considers this elision "remarkable" given the highly "gendered . . . conduct of the war" (2). Though the major goal of Whites' study of Augusta, Georgia is to highlight the constructed rather than essential nature of gender, many of her comments have pertinent applications for readers seeking to uncover the invented nature of ethnicity.

⁶ Marlene Kadar contrasts the formal terms "biography" (which first appeared in the OED in 1683) and "autobiography" (which first appeared in the OED in 1809) with another term in popular usage during this same time period: "life writing." While the first two terms refer to genres that adhere to certain formal conventions, and that privilege "truthfulness" and "linearity," the last term is more inclusive, including not only autobiography and biography, but letters, diaries, lyric poetry. Life writing, Kadar argues, "has a history of being androcentric, and may therefore (re)generate androcentric

interpretive strategies, thus underlining the marginalization of what may be called gynocentric ones" (4).

⁷ James Olney, in Metaphors of Self, argues that the "fullest" autobiography displays a "creative, patterned construction that operates from and in the present over a past made coherent in the recall of memory" (37). This pattern which the reader discerns is the metaphor by which the author's self "expresses itself" and before the creation of which that self "did not exist as it now does and as it now is" (34).

⁸ In his classic study of English diaries, Robert Fothergill has argued that an autobiographer's metaphors not only extend backward over lived experience as Olney suggests, but project a shaping influence on future perceptions and attitudes: "One of the most important effects of keeping a diary is the awareness thereby generated of patterns and processes at work in the life of the writer. Channeled back into the diary, this awareness becomes the source of structural 'themes' that may give to the work a highly sophisticated design" (41).

⁹ For further information, see the preface to Lomax's diary written by Lindsay Lomax Wood.

¹⁰ Some notable instances of Yankee aggression against Southern homes occur in Lucy Buck's diary, page 168, Eliza Andrews' diary, pp. 32-33, and Sarah Morgan's diary, p. 237.

¹¹ General Orders No. 28, May 15, 1862, states that "As the officers and soldiers of the United States have been subject to repeated insults from the women (calling themselves ladies) of New Orleans . . . it is ordered that hereafter when any female shall by word, gesture, or movement insult or show contempt for any officer or soldier of the

United States she shall be regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman of the town plying her avocation." Found in Butler, Benjamin F. Autobiography and Personal Reminiscences of Major-General Benjamin F. Butler: Butler's Book. Boston: Thayer, 1892. 418.

¹² Jane Schultz suggests in "Mute Fury: Southern Women's Diaries of Sherman's March to the Sea, 1864-1865," that Southern women caught in the path of marauding armies confided feelings of "humiliation. . . abandonment. . .and finally anger" to the pages of their diaries. The men who had pledged to protect them were absent—or dead—and these women were left to face the destruction of their homes and possible rape as best they could.

¹³ Given the overt sexual license of Butler's famous proclamation, and Morgan's discussion of kissing and "brutaliz[ing]" in this entry, the phallic nature of the knife could hardly escape her notice, illustrating the covert manner of dealing with sexual issues in these diaries.

¹⁴ While Sarah Morgan acknowledges the restrictions placed on her by her corsets and hoops, she argues adamantly that these external trappings do not change the fact that she has a "man's heart" (183). Her sense of an irreducible core contrasts with Sidonie Smith's assertion that this sense of selfhood was reserved for men during the nineteenth century. For a fuller discussion, see Smith's chapter entitled "The Universal Subject, Female Embodiment, and the Consolidation of Autobiography" in Subjectivity, Identity and the Body: Women's Autobiographical Practices in the Twentieth Century.

¹⁵ Drew Gilpin Faust alludes to several instances of Confederate women acting on the animosity and sense of power which fuels their verbal assaults against Union soldiers:

In Rome, Georgia, students at a ladies' seminary emptied their chamber pots on troops below their windows. Elizabeth McKamy of Tennessee . . . responded with violence to a Yankee who snatched a crust of bread from her nephew, . . . 'beating that Yankee over the shoulders with a stick of stove wood.' One Arkansas woman pushed a soldier down the stairs when he tried to wrestle her dead brother's suit out of her hands, and another Arkansan filled a shovel with ashes from the hearth and emptied it on the table when six Federal soldiers walked in and sat down to dinner. (202)

¹⁶ Faust notes that approximately 400 women disguised themselves as soldiers and served in either the Confederate or Union armies, crossing gender boundaries in particularly dramatic ways. Faust cites the story of Amy Clarke, "who volunteered as a private . . . in order not to be parted from her husband. After his death at Shiloh, she continued to fight, was twice wounded, and then was taken prisoner by the Yankees, who discovered her sex" (202-203). So far as I have been able to determine, none of these women kept full journals.

¹⁷ For a fuller discussion of Confederate women's wartime work, see the previous chapter.

¹⁸ In his brief introduction to Mary Gardner Holland's 1895 collection Our Army Nurses, Daniel John Hoisington observes that Union hospital records list approximately

5,600 women as "nurse" (ii). Holland's collection of first and third-person accounts of some one hundred Union nurses provides a rare chance for these public servants to speak.

¹⁹ As early as September 16th, 1862, Cumming was placed in charge of an entire ward, with several men and women nurses and servants under her command.

²⁰ In Kendra McDonald's 1996 dissertation, "The Creation of History and Myth in Mary Boykin Miller Chesnut's Civil War Narrative," she argues that Chesnut's 1880 "diary" is a "novelized chronicle in diary format" which functions as a consciously constructed history (15). McDonald's observations have application to Chesnut's actual diary, as well. Throughout her original entries, Chesnut supplies clues that she is consciously shaping her experience in order to project a particular perception of events.

²¹ Eliza Lucas Pinckney's support of the American Revolution is well documented through the wide correspondence she maintained with family members and friends. Both her sons served as officers in the Revolutionary Army and George Washington requested the honor of serving as a pall bearer at Pinckney's funeral. Eliza Wilkinson's letterbook, kept during the British invasion and occupation of Revolutionary Charlestown, records several instances of being called a "rebel," a term Wilkinson believes was meant to inflame and provoke her, but which instead binds her more tightly to the Revolutionary agenda. After rhapsodizing over the promise of "Liberty," she justifies her bold participation in political rhetoric by writing,

I won't have it thought, that because we are the weaker sex as to *bodily* strength. . . we are capable of nothing more than minding the dairy, visiting the poultry house, and all such domestic concerns; our thoughts can soar aloft, we can form conceptions of things of higher nature; and

have as just a sense of honor, glory, and great actions, as these 'Lords of the Creation.' (60-61)

Collections such as Wilkinson's, which was published in 1839, arguably helped prepare the imagination of Southern women, making them more receptive to the conflation of rebellion and womanliness.

²² In George Murdock's brief article "Ethnocentrism," he argues that ethnic groups refer to themselves with flattering names or simply as "the people," a designation which seeks to escape reduction into an ethnic category (613). Interestingly, these diarists document a widespread effort to reframe the slanderous term "rebel" into a flattering term which connects Confederates with the Revolution, thus identifying them as the "true" Americans, the "people" who will carry out the apocalyptic vision of the nation's founding fathers.

²³ For a description of the ideology propelling Sherman's burnt earth policy see "War is Hell!" : William T. Sherman's Personal Narrative of His March through Georgia. Ed. Mills Lane. Savannah: Beehive P, 1974.

²⁴ Several nineteenth-century "academic" studies sought to uncover the irreducible physical characteristics of various ethnic groups. Of particular interest are the Harvard-based studies of Louis Agassiz which photographed dozens of naked African American slaves in an attempt to prove that they were of "a separate species, separately created" from white Americans (Sterling 19).

²⁵ In Beyond Ethnicity, Sollors discusses the etymological roots of the term "ethnicity," indicating that the collapse of "otherness" with the demonic rests in the concept's etymological origin:

To say it in the simplest and clearest terms, an ethnic, etymologically speaking, is a *goy*. The Greek word *ethnikos*, from which the English "ethnic" and "ethnicity" are derived, meant "gentile," "heathen." Going back to the noun *ethnos*, the word was used to refer not just to people in general but also to "others." In English usage the meaning shifted from "non-Israelite" . . . to "non-Christian." Thus the word retained its quality of defining another people contrastively, and often negatively the English language has retained the pagan memory of "ethnic," often secularized in the sense of ethnic as other, as nonstandard, or, in America, as not fully American. This connotation gives the opposition of ethnic and American the additional religious dimension of the contrast between heathens and chosen people. (25)

²⁶ Phillip Lapsansky, in "Graphic Discord: Abolitionist and Antiabolitionist Images," argues that supporters of institutionalized slavery responded to the increased political activity of female abolitionists and their "unapologetic association" with their African-American co-workers by "linking . . . the antislavery movement to 'amalgamation,' or interracial association, and miscegenation" (225). The explosive antiabolitionist agenda collapsing antislavery and miscegenation was propelled by graphics illustrating the slaveholders' deepest fears. One cartoon in a series entitled "Practical Amalgamation" depicts a "vigorous black man being fondled by a lovely and willing white woman; and, to underscore the revulsion of this misalliance, an effete, unappealing white man courts a grotesquely caricatured black woman" (225-226). Lapsansky cites numerous graphics linking abolitionism with miscegenation, and

develops a sound argument demonstrating the role of such graphics in the political scene of the antebellum South.

²⁷ Lucy Breckinridge joins House in linking proposed Union / Confederate unions with miscegenation. When "Col. Putnam of Ohio" quizzes Breckinridge and her sisters regarding their marital status and offers to " 'send some Yankees here to marry you [in order to] . . . build up the Union again,' " she reports feeling outraged. She later records that "When some of the nasty things said they would marry Southern girls, I felt so tempted to tell them that I had heard it was their plan to marry our negroes and that they were the only Southern girls they would ever get" (194-195). Breckinridge's comment reduces Union officers such as Colonel Putnam to objects fit only for slaves whose humanity was also in question.

²⁸ In the introduction to her diary, Eliza Andrews refers to the widely-accepted belief that the South's privileged planter class numbered approximately 3000:

Out of a population of some 9,000,000 whites that peopled the southern States, according to the census of 1850, only about 300,000 were actual slaveholders. Less than 3,000 of these—men owning, say, over 100 negroes each, constituted the great planter class, who, with a small proportion of professional and business men affiliated with them in culture and sympathies, dominated Southern sentiment and for years dictated the policy of the nation. (2)

According to Daniel Sutherland, the editor of Ellen Renshaw House's diary, only 47 Tennessee planters owned 100 or more slaves in 1860.

²⁹ Sutherland notes that General Burnside made the "loyalty oath the linchpin of Union occupation in East Tennessee" (209). House joins other diarists such as Sarah Morgan, who worries that swearing the oath of allegiance will begin the "process of turning Yankee" (486).

³⁰ Sutherland speculates that House's suspicions concerning Brownlow's role in her deportation were correct, noting that Brownlow argued heatedly for ridding Knoxville of "rebel females" and "she rebels" in both the Knoxville Whig, January 16, 1864, page 2, and the Rebel Ventilator, February 6, 1864, page 2.

³¹ In her insightful article entitled "Resisting the Gaze of Embodiment," Sidonie Smith argues that "without the power of words and public discourse, without the power to theorize on and from her own," nineteenth century " 'woman' and women remain silenced, unrepresented, subject always to the theorizing and fictionalizing of man," trapped within the cultural restrictions of her body (82). When House refuses to be made an object of man's stare—and thus mindless body— she participates in one of the major challenges of women's autobiographical writing.

³² Entries such as this one have led some scholars to speculate that House served as a spy in some official capacity for the Confederate army, much as Belle Boyd did. Editor Daniel Sutherland argues, however, that "it is unlikely that she played this dangerous game. Certainly Ellen says nothing in her diary to suggest a tendency toward espionage" (xxi). While I would challenge Sutherland's denial of spy-like tendencies on House's part, I agree that her diary gives no conclusive proof that she operated as a officially recognized spy.

³³ Drew Gilpin Faust confirms that many Southern women "proudly reported the cleverness of their responses to Yankee provocations, sometimes recording lengthy dialogues demonstrating their verbal triumphs" (201). Arguing that "such confrontations offered the satisfaction of direct participation in attacks on the enemy troops," Faust briefly cites manuscripts where women styled their verbal sallies directed against Union soldiers as acts of heroism (202).

³⁴ For further information on the ideal of "true womanhood," see Sidonie Smith's Subjectivity, Identity, and the Body: Women's Autobiographical Practices in the Twentieth Century, Catherine Clinton's The Plantation Mistress, and Anne Scott's The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930.

³⁵ Elizabeth R. Baer, in her essay entitled "Ambivalence, Anger, and Silence: The Civil War Diary of Lucy Buck," notes similar expressions of anger present in Buck's text: "Overt expressions of anger and ambivalence pepper Lucy Buck's diary, emotions not permitted to young women in the antebellum South, or indeed, to any woman aspiring to the 'cult of true womanhood' in the nineteenth century" (213). Baer suggests that the radical intrusions of the Civil War into the private sphere of Confederate women "created an environment in which Southern women could not feign weakness, could not shrink from the public gaze, and could not assume the presence of protection that was supposedly her right" (218). While Baer astutely observes that conflicting demands of public activity and public silence force these women to confide feelings of "ambivalence and anger" to the pages of their private journals (218), her argument implies no public or private restructuring of the feminine ideal.

CHAPTER FOUR

"I Shall Have to Read to be Comforted":

Intertextual Influences on Perceptions of Ethnicity

Though many of the diarists considered in this study share characteristics of region, class, age, and religious affiliation, their only universal trait is a deep commitment to literacy, one strong enough to compel women embroiled in social and political upheaval to devote themselves to the active production of texts. Their daily records emerge from the privileged place given to reading and writing, and readers examining the formation of ethnicity in these diaries should consider exactly what literacy means for these Confederate women. Does it simply refer to one's ability to construct grammatically correct sentences, as Lucy Breckinridge remarks about her slighted suitor, Captain Harris?¹ Or does the literate person reject the "yellow back novel style" in favor of "Macaulay! Addison! Pope! Hume!" as did Sarah Morgan (366-67)?

Thomas Jefferson's 1781 Notes on the State of Virginia articulates the crucial question of literacy's "true" ethnic character. Unlike the Native Americans who "prove the existence of a germ in their minds which only wants cultivation" by their "crayon" drawings or who "astonish you with strokes of the most sublime oratory," Jefferson argues that even years of contact with the arts and sciences of the Western world's most advanced societies has left the African dull and witless: in short, illiterate (147). Though Jefferson concedes that "in memory they are equal to the whites," he contends that the African's reasoning ability falls far below his white master's for "one could scarcely be found capable of tracing and comprehending the investigations of Euclid" (146). He

further argues that the African lacks artistic ability because he "never see[s] even an elementary trait of painting or sculpture," and that even the civilizing effect of Christianity results in poetry by "Phyllis Whately" which is "below the dignity of criticism" (147). Jefferson's thesis is clear: the African's barbaric nature is demonstrated by his inability to master Western culture.²

What is "literacy"? Is it simply the ability to read and write? Does literacy assume a certain level of proficiency with language's mechanics or the ability to use language in particular ways? Does an "ideal," Platonic literacy exist? Many have followed Jefferson's lead, defining literacy as familiarity with certain core texts, ideas, and cultural artifacts as well as a demonstrated ability to write in restrained, coherent, "reasonable" prose (Notes on the State of Virginia 148).³ Instead of reifying literacy, Sylvia Scribner encourages educators and sociologists to recognize that "literacy has neither a static nor a universal essence," and so must always be defined within a social context (72). She explores three prevalent metaphors used to describe literacy: literacy as adaptation, literacy as power, and literacy as a state of grace. Her belief that definitions of literacy spring from social contexts and that multiple metaphors may operate simultaneously bears on our discussion of literacy within Confederate women's diaries. Scribner explains adaptive or "functional" literacy as "the level of proficiency necessary for effective performance in a range of settings and customary activities" (73). This approach to literacy, Scribner notes, is problematic because it calls for the dominant ethnic or socio-economic group to distinguish between necessary and peripheral skills (73).

While reading in abolitionist literature readily uncovers instances of the literacy-as-adaptation model, the metaphor of literacy as power is more applicable to the antebellum and Confederate South where the ability to read and write was overtly politicized. For instance, in David Walker's inflammatory Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World, he pleads with fellow African Americans to study history, literature, and English grammar as a weapon to fight oppression, for when "coloured people . . . acquire learning in this country, [it] makes tyrants quake and tremble on their sandy foundation" (31). Walker's younger contemporary Frederick Douglass expresses passion for reading and writing, identifying forced illiteracy as "the white man's power to enslave the black man" (29). Both of these writers recognize that white Southerners seek to monopolize literacy because the ability to read and write confers power.⁴ Scribner observes that "historically, literacy has been a potent tool in maintaining the hegemony of elites and dominant classes" (75), while Paulo Freire argues that the one capable of wielding language can transform the world (75). His description of the myth of "absolutizing of ignorance" seems applicable to the dynamic these African-Americans identify in their society:

This myth implies the existence of someone who decrees the ignorance of someone else. The one who is doing the decreeing defines himself and the class to which he belongs as those who know or were born to know; he thereby defines others as alien entities. The words of his own class come to be the "true" words, which he imposes or attempts to impose on others: the oppressed, whose words have been stolen from them. Those who steal

the words of others develop a deep doubt in the abilities of the others and consider them incompetent. (129)

At a time when slaves were forbidden to read and write and slaveholders came under public and legal censure for teaching their slaves to read, literacy became inextricably linked to ethnic identity. White society robbed slaves of speech, thus robbing them of their full humanity. Sidonie Smith observes that "without a written language, Africans appeared deficient in memory, mature reason, vision, and critically, history." Since writing was the "evidentiary scene of reason, absence of written language signified absence of full humanity Fixed in their essential racial difference, they were denied metaphysical selfhood and relegated instead to an inescapable embodiment as the system's beast of burden" (*Subjectivity* 35). Henry Gates agrees, observing that "without writing, no *repeatable* sign of the workings of reason, of mind, could exist. Without memory or mind, no history could exist. Without history, no humanity, as defined consistently from Vico to Hegel, could exist" (11). Maintaining slave illiteracy, then, becomes essential for the slaveholder who bases the right to rule on an unshakeable belief in their slaves' childish—or animalistic—minds.

While many slaveholders recognized the empowering qualities of literacy, they refused to examine the process through which the discrepancy in literacy levels initially occurred. Eventually, the ability to communicate in socially acceptable, articulate, "literate" ways became a mark of full humanity: literacy as grace. This is the last metaphor Scribner identifies, and the one most applicable to our diarists' understanding of their own literacy. Scribner writes that "in the literacy-as-a-state-of-grace concept, the power and functionality of literacy is not bounded by political or economic parameters

but in a sense transcends them; the literate individual's life derives its meaning and significance from intellectual, aesthetic, and spiritual participation in the accumulated creations and knowledge of humankind, made available through the written word" (77). The belief that participation in a "bookish tradition enlarges and develops a person's essential self" fuels today's liberal arts universities (Scribner 77), as well as Jefferson's insistence that the ability to appreciate Pope and understand Euclidian geometry marks the individual's capacity for reason. This belief permeates Confederate diaries, as well.

For the handful of largely elite Confederate women who had the requisite skills, time, physical resources of ink and paper, and desire to record their experiences during this tumultuous era, "literacy" meant much more than the ability to decode and replicate the alphabet. Literacy equaled culture. And the truly cultured woman, one able to grace her husband's dinner table as well as effectively manage his plantation household, was conversant with the religious texts of Bible and sermon, with popular periodicals, and with both classical and modern works of literature. Though some slaves might be able to scratch out their names or decipher a work order, they almost never had access to the texts which acted as cultural and ethnic currency in the antebellum and Confederate South. Readers desiring to explore the connection between literacy and ethnicity in these diaries must first acknowledge the textual milieu which these women valued and out of which their diaries emerged.⁵ The diaries of Mary Chesnut, Lucy Buck, Sarah Morgan, Dolly Lunt Burge, Elizabeth Lomax, Lucy Breckinridge, Ellen Renshaw House, Kate Cumming, Ada Bacot, Eliza Andrews, Kate Stone, and many others cannot be read in isolation; rather, they must be seen as texts with permeable boundaries whose authors were heavily influenced by other texts. This chapter will explore the connections

between the diaries of Confederate women and three major textual influences: the pulpit, the press, and popular literature. Acquaintance with the ethnic messages embedded in these texts enriches readers' understanding of the diarists' perception of their own and others' ethnicity, while enabling readers to further assess the role of reading and writing in the Confederacy. ⁶

RELIGIOUS INFLUENCES

Embedded in Harriet Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl is a chapter entitled "The Church and Slavery," where the narrator remarks that, "When I was told that Dr. Flint had joined the Episcopal church, I was much surprised. I supposed that religion had a purifying effect on the character of men: but the worst persecutions I endured from him were after he was a communicant" (115). Both David Walker's repeated use of the emotionally charged adjective "Christian" in his Appeal and Frederick Douglass's biting criticism of his "Christian" masters point to similar disjunctions: instead of ameliorating the slaveholder's character, religious conversion often accentuated tendencies toward brutality. These texts pose a familiar question: "Why does my master become more cruel after he's converted?"

Part of the answer rests in the particular spin many Southern churches placed on the Biblical message. In Uncle Tom's Cabin, Mr. Wilson confronts the fleeing George with his "unscriptural" behavior, reminding him that "the angel commanded Hagar to return to her mistress, and submit herself under the hand; and the apostle sent back Onesimus to his master" (183), and Captain Auld reminds his naked, bleeding female slave of the Luke 12 parable that concludes, "He that knoweth his master's will, and

doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes” (Douglass, Narrative 53). Likewise, when Jacobs' protagonist Linda comments on her desire to “live like a Christian,” Dr. Flint responds, “You can do what I require; and if you are faithful to me, you will be as virtuous as my wife” (115). In all three instances, obedience to one’s master is equated with Christian morality, even when that master “requires” his slave to satisfy his sexual appetites.

Across denominational lines, antebellum Southern churches repeated the message of total subjection from their pulpits as well as in published sermons and tracts. In fact, upwards of two hundred and seventy-five ordained ministers, the vast majority of whom served in Southern churches, published defenses of “the indefinite perpetuation of servitude” (Tise 363). In Clergy Dissent in the Old South, 1830-1865, David Chesebrough observes that although the majority of eighteenth-century southern evangelical clergymen were openly opposed to slavery, by the beginning of the nineteenth century southern ministers and ecclesiastical organizations adopted a stance of silence on the slavery issue, arguing that it was a civil issue, not a religious concern (6-7). Their silence was broken during the 1830's, however, when the rise in radical abolitionist publications combined with Nat Turner's slave uprising convinced many southern clerics that abolitionism was “inseparably intertwined with northern religion” (8). Northern abolitionists who summoned religion to aid them in condemning slavery as immoral and inhumane elicited response in kind from southern ministers, who perceived that “religious and ethical challenges could only be countered with religious and ethical responses” (14). In their efforts to defend institutionalized slavery from Northern challenges, southern clergymen “turned to their Bibles where they ‘discovered’ that

slavery was a God-ordained, biblically sanctioned way of life" (10). For instance, in the widely-read tract "A Scriptural View of Slavery," a pre-Civil War "best seller" (Beringer 91), the Reverend Thornton Stringfellow refutes the common assumption that "Jesus Christ has at least been silent, or that he has not personally spoken on the subject of slavery" by asserting that Jesus himself commands the slave to obey his master, particularly if his master is his Christian brother (97). Pastor George D. Armstrong continues Stringfellow's argument in The Christian Doctrine of Slavery (1857) by answering the question, "Do the ministers of Christ, in the Southern states, teach from the pulpit all that the Bible teaches on the subject of slavery?" with a resounding "Yes. . . as freely as they do the doctrine of God's word on any other subject" (123). And how does Dr. Armstrong sum up the Biblical teaching regarding slavery? Slave masters must exercise their God-given authority with kindness, and slaves must unceasingly obey their masters, "discharging all the duties growing out of their several relations as men and as Christians" (58). Though Dr. Armstrong admits that "there are incidental evils yet attaching to the institution," he believes that "Christianity, working in God's appointed way, will ere long remove" these moral hiccups (60), a process that will occur within the framework of institutionalized slavery. Chesebrough observes that "hundreds, more likely thousands, of sermons with similar themes were delivered throughout the South in response to an abolitionist-religious challenge" (10).

Sermons published in the Confederacy indicate that the tendency to wed religion, politics, and economics in vehement support of slavery continued. In 1861, the Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist denominations "represented 94 percent of the churches in the South: the Methodists with 45 percent, the Baptists with 37 percent, and

Presbyterians with 12 percent" (Chesebrough 2), and each of these powerful denominations officially proclaimed their unified support of secession which they believed was necessitated by the desire to uphold the God-ordained institution of slavery. Richard Beringer observes that "southern clergymen who expressed pro-Union sentiment, as a few did, were usually removed from the pulpit by the congregation or perhaps even expelled from church membership" (97), action which resulted in a powerful homogeneity from the Confederate pulpit.

One of the most powerful examples of the marriage of religion and politics was Stephen Elliott, who served as the Episcopal Bishop of the Diocese of Georgia and is mentioned in several of the diaries.⁷ During the first days of the war, he catalogues the various ways Southerners have been "systematically slandered and traduced" at the hands of Northern newspapermen, statesmen, poets, and novelists, arguing that these groups have "each, in turn, singled out our homes as the targets of [their] falsehood, and our mothers, and wives, and daughters, as the objects of [their] insult" ("God's Presence in the Confederate States" 4). Nothing could have inflamed Southerners listening to Elliott's sermon more than the suggestion that their women, the very flowers of the South, were accused of evil by depraved abolitionists. Elliott continues his list of grievances by reminding his audience that "in many of the religious bodies of the United States, their communicants from the slaveholding States were excluded from the participation of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and the Southern ministers from brotherly interchange of services" (4). Elliott skillfully moves from a defensive to an offensive position, manipulating his audience's emotions by claiming that the women and clergy of the South are under attack by godless abolitionists. He assumes the moral high road by reminding

his listeners (and readers) that Southerners merely maintain a system they "inherited from [their] fathers," one which was good enough for Philemon and good enough for Abraham, "the friend of God" (4), a move linking Southerners with those ancients who stood in God's favor. As Mitchell Snay observes, sermons and tracts in the antebellum South commonly conflate abolitionism with heresy. Snay claims that "the justification of slavery based on the Bible and natural law and the portrayal of abolitionism as infidelity were perhaps the most viable and influential contributions religion made to the cause of Southern separatism" (32).

By September of 1862, Elliott openly proclaims the conclusions to which deep study and prayer have led him: God has appointed the Southern states as custodians of the African race, charged by God with the task of evangelizing and training them to ultimately return to Africa as missionaries:

Whence, then, is [the African's] regeneration to come? I find this agency in the African slaves now dwelling upon the Continent and educating among ourselves. I see here the instruments whom God is preparing, in his own inscrutable way, to co-operate with the other instruments who are at work upon the other Continents to bring in the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and it is this conviction, and not any merit in ourselves, which makes me confident that we shall be safely preserved through the conflict. ("Our Cause in Harmony with the Purposes of God" 10)

As Southerners serve as caretakers, "nursing mother[s]" (11), advisors, and teachers to these struggling slaves, they not only prepare them for their future role as missionaries to

a benighted continent, but also reap the benefit of their presence as "security" that the Confederate cause will prevail. Elliott believes that God "has caused the African race to be planted here under our political protection and under our christian nurture, for his own ultimate designs, and he will keep it here under that culture until the fulness of his own times" (10). Only those who have looked at slavery "superficially" and have allowed themselves to be blinded to "scriptural decrees by such trivial things as are the necessary accompaniments of all bondage" (10) fail to see God's master plan for the Southern slave as Elliott has outlined it. If any of his listeners still doubt Elliott's interpretation of the Almighty's comprehensive plan, Elliott points toward the past, and the great number of fortuitous circumstances that have solidified and entrenched the slave system over the past century, claiming that "God protected it at every point, made all assaults upon it to turn to its more permanent establishment, caused the laws of nature to work in its behalf . . . and raised up advocates who placed it, through reasoning drawn directly from the Bible, upon an impregnable basis of truth and necessity" (13).

The Confederacy's defeats of the next two years do little to temper Elliott's position; in fact, he becomes more strident. In April of 1864, Elliott again addresses his congregation on a national fast day. By this point in the war, many in Elliott's audience have personally felt the bitterness of loss, and Atlanta is only months away from Sherman's torch. As he looks across his congregation's pain-filled faces and struggles to frame the South's suffering in a meaningful way, Elliott returns to a favorite theme: "We have been entrusted with the moral and religious education of an inferior race, made more sacred to us by the events of this war, because we have been made to see what will be their miserable fate should they pass out of our nurturing hands" ("Gideon's Water-

Lappers" 20). Elliott believes that the South has received a Divine commission to "preserve upon this continent all that is valuable in morals and legislation and religion" (20) for which purpose "God is disciplining and refining us in the fires of affliction" (21). This claim re-envisioned the cause of the War not as a struggle over state's rights, but as a proving ground to purify God's elect. Four months later, on September 15th, Elliott prophesizes that the outcome of the war will determine the fate of African Americans. While defeat would mean "shame and degradation" for white Southerners, Elliott believes that the "black race [would] perish with its freedom." Instead of flourishing under their new legal and economic status, Elliott proclaims that "they will die out before the encroaching white labor of Europe, which will be poured in upon them, as the Indians have died out before the progress of civilization, or they will be banished to other lands to perish there, forgotten and unlamented" ("Vain is the Help of Man" 9). The progression of Elliott's theology on slavery is clear—he has moved from a position that the South has the God-given prerogative to imitate the Biblical precedent of slavery, to a claim that the South is nurturing a race of future missionaries, to an argument that institutionalized slavery protects the African from extinction. The implications of a theology which places one ethnic group's very survival in the hands of another cannot be overemphasized. Although Elliott portrays white and black Southerners in a symbiotic relationship, all of the power resides with the slave owner, without whom the African race will cease to exist. No mention is made that the slave contributes anything to the welfare of his master or the enrichment of the community. Instead, the slave is simultaneously cherished as a precious, fragile commodity, and stripped of any rudiments of agency or humanity. Just as the South for centuries has bartered with the slave's labor and the slave's body, now

Elliott proposes that the South barter with the slave's soul, trading promises of evangelistic fervor for God's military acumen. Elliott's assurance that he has accurately interpreted God's designs lead him to assert that "to protect [the slaves], he must protect us, and therefore is it, as I have said again and again, that I have full confidence in the successful termination of this conflict" (9).

Many other Southern ministers echoed Elliott's sentiments during the war years. For instance, Georgia Reverend J. Jones proclaims that the soldiers in the audience are "engaged in a holy war," because the "southern view of slavery is derived from the unerring word of God" (10-11). Virginian I. R. Finley unfolds God's plan for "christianiz[ing] that dark and benighted people" of Africa: God has commissioned the Southern Confederacy to evangelize Africa by converting their own slaves. The perpetuation of slavery, under Finley's theology, becomes not an economic or political matter, or even an issue of moral prerogative, but a spiritual obligation, for only by forcing the slave to "stay put" can the master preserve the physical proximity necessary to remake the degenerate African into a Christian missionary. The war, then, is fought for "the privilege of obeying our 'God-given hest' " ("The Lord Reigneth" 18). Virginian D. S. Doggett reassures his audience that "the curse entailed upon the posterity of Canaan, that they should be 'servants of servants unto their brethren,' shall not be revoked, until the lease shall have expired, according to the will of the Judge, and not by the caprice of self-constituted umpires" ("The War and Its Close" 18). In fact, Doggett believes that those self-appointed umpires—Northern abolitionists—pose a real spiritual threat to themselves as well as to the South. They endanger their own salvation by directly

opposing "the authority of Divine Revelation." Doggett announces that their erroneous doctrine

proceeds upon the assumption, that the institution of domestic slavery, in the South, is contrary to the will of God; that it is an oppression and an injustice to a part of the human family, and that it is the duty of the Government of the United States to extinguish it by force of arms. This assumption is positively contradicted by the Holy Scriptures. On no human institution have they spoken more explicitly, both in the Old and New Testaments, and on none have they left more unequivocally the seal of their approbation. Their import cannot be mistaken, nor can it be overthrown by any legitimate exegesis known to scholars. Here, then, a fundamental question of religion is involved and avowed, in the prosecution of this war. It involves the teachings of God's word, on a specific point; and it involves, by necessary consequence, the integrity of Divine Revelation, as a whole. For, if the Bible be false in so remarkable an instance, it would raise the question whether it be not false in every other instance Say what we may, this very issue is pending in the present contest. It is a war of real, if not of outright infidelity; and it is sustained by the legion-headed hydra of Northern skepticism. (8)

Doggett asserts that these same infidel abolitionists plan the destruction of the South's churches: "Victory, against us, will close our churches, imprison our ministers, and scatter our members At one fell stroke, religious liberty would be extinguished, and a ruthless tyranny would dictate terms of communion with the polluted crusaders of their

altars" (13) He offers as evidence of his prophecies the state of the churches in New Orleans and Norfolk, where Union occupation resulted in monitored liturgy, and concludes this section of his sermon by assuring his audience that if the Confederacy falls, "abolitionism will install itself within its darkened cathedral, and issue its decrees on pain of excommunication" (13). Slavery, according to Doggett's sermon, is not only allowed but commended by God, and those who oppose the South's slave system, oppose God. Confederate religious thinking comes full circle. In Elliott's 1861 sermon, he bemoans the lack of fellowship extended to Southerners by Northern churches; in Doggett's 1864 sermon, he demonizes Northern Christians, branding them infidels for refusing to accept his interpretation of the Scriptures.

Although several antebellum proslavery clergymen also emphasized the duties of masters toward their slaves, the vast majority of these writings characterized the slave holder's duties as giving just treatment and providing religious instruction, with only a small number encouraging slave holders to honor and protect slave marriages and slave families (Tise 121). This pattern continues during the war years, with the few ministers who do speak out in the slave's defense focusing on abstract, ill-defined spiritual goals. For example, on June 13, 1861, Bishop William Meade of Millwood, Virginia argues that because the South has been "appointed by Providence as [the] best guardians" of "a most amiable though unfortunate race"(10), it behooves his audience to attend to their slaves' spiritual interests. While Meade urges his listeners to reflect on their "improper feelings, words and habits of mind" toward their slaves' eternal welfare, and suggests that the war might be Divine punishment for "past neglects and as a help to more faithfulness in the future" (10), his sermon never provides the slightest hint that institutional slavery itself

might be at fault. He does not prompt his congregation to free their slaves, nor does he request that slave owners refrain from whipping them, shorten their work day, teach them to read and write, allow them to legally marry whom they please, give them enough to eat, provide them with adequate clothing and shelter, or extend to them legal representation. Instead, he reminds his congregation to consider their slaves' spiritual status, a toothless, abstract command.

I am fascinated and deeply disturbed by these ministers' apparent ability to justify the cruelty and exploitation of slaves implicit in their message of complete subjection. I am also troubled by the results of Larry Tise's extensive research which shows that "if one combined the nonclerical proslavery thinkers from all walks of life who publicly expressed their proslavery views, their number would not equal the number of clergymen who did so" (127). Of course, this statistic could be attributed to many causes, not the least of which might be a comparison of the ministers' literacy levels with the laity's literacy levels, or to James Silver's suggestion that perhaps "the more extreme and emotional high priests were the ones who got their views into print" (9). However, I feel forced to question the connection between the power inherent in the pastoral role and a theology which insists on the unquestioning obedience of one group of people to another. With the advent of civil war, these religious leaders came into their own by officially sanctioning secession as God's plan for maintaining the institution of slavery.

The overwhelming conviction that the Confederacy sides with the angels spills over into the assurance that each military success confirms God's support for the Southern way of life. Southern clergymen worked hard to foster the belief that righteousness resides in the slaveholder's breast and in the gray-clad boys fighting to

protect his way of life. James W. Silver argues that "Clergymen led the way to secession. They were quite successful in helping the people to identify God, the right, and the destiny of history with slavery, the Confederacy, and the war" (93). William Porcher Miles, who served in the Confederate House of Representatives as the chairman of the military committee, claimed in the February 23, 1865 edition of Christian Observer that "The clergy have done more for the success of our cause, than any other class. They have kept up the spirits of our people, have led in every philanthropic movement Not even the bayonets have done more" (qtd. in Silver 96). Confederate churchgoers heard over and over the same message: God fights for the Confederacy.

The conflation of pro-slavery theology with Confederate patriotism was further cemented by the institution of national fast days, a revival of a tradition established in the Massachusetts Bay Colony and continued during the American Revolution where citizens joined together in corporate worship and public fasting in order to beseech God's favor on the nation. Jefferson Davis himself called for nine days of national fasting, and the Confederate Congress, state legislatures, and individual religious groups called for additional fast days (Chesebrough, "God Ordained This War" 226). David Chesebrough observes that "these days were instrumental in reaching the largest number of people with a message Southern leaders wanted them to hear Fast days served as a means of unifying the Confederate States and people, and helped them to come to grips with the sacrifices that had to be made if their cause was to prevail" ("God Ordained This War" 226). Chesebrough observes that the national fast day sermons, as well as the broader spectrum of Confederate sermons, frequently wed the Confederacy's mission with the coming millennium, the long-awaited rule of Christ which these Southern preachers

assured their congregations would contain slavery.⁸ Chesebrough writes that "with the assurances that their cause was God's cause, that the Confederacy was a successor to ancient Israel in the role of God's chosen people, Southern preachers could confidently hold out hope when all seemed hopeless. God may chastise and discipline his special people, but he would not allow them to ultimately fail" (227).⁹

The early struggle over Fort Sumter provided a sign for ministers hungry for proof of Divine favor. About one month after the firing on Fort Sumter, William Brownlow, the infamous pro-Union Methodist minister referred to so frequently in the diary of Ellen Renshaw House, wrote that "the clergy of the South—without distinction of sects—men of talents, learning, and influence—have raised the howl of Secession, and it falls like an Indian war cry upon our citizens from their prostituted pulpits every Sabbath" (qtd. in Chesebrough 2, The Knoxville Whig, 18 May 1861). Perhaps John H. Elliott, the minister at St. Michael's Church in Charleston, was one of the clergymen who so infuriated Brownlow.¹⁰ Elliott reflects on the reclamation of Fort Sumter in his sermon entitled, "The Bloodless Victory." After reminding his congregation of their fervent prayers during the bombardment, and praising the soldiers and military commanders for their courage, Elliott concludes that "in all this it were profane and stupid not to see the mighty arm of Jehovah which has all along guided and defended the course of this great Revolution, and which, we believe, will guide and defend it so long as it continues to be the cause of righteousness and truth" (7). Elliott proclaims that the bloodless victory at Sumter contains not only a message of approval for the South Carolinians, but acts as "a voice from heaven bidding our enemies abstain from this unnatural and most unjust aggression" (7). Many ministers concur. Benjamin Palmer,

the New Orleans pastor who later preached at Emma LeConte's Columbia congregation, was unequalled "in his denunciations of the North, his defense of slavery and the Southern way of life, and his advocacy of separation from the Union" (Chesebrough, "God Ordained This War" 197).¹¹ On June 13, 1861, Palmer delivered a sermon to his New Orleans congregation entitled "National Responsibility Before God" in which he assures his audience that "in defending [slavery] against the assaults of a 'rose-water philanthropy,' we may place ourselves against all the past and feel the support of God's immovable ProvidenceLet us trust in God, and with an humble self-reliance take care of ourselves; prepared to recognize that gracious Providence which will work our deliverance" (qtd. in Chesebrough 219). Stephen Elliott assures his audience that "could the eyes of our fainting, dying children, have been opened" on the battlefield of Manassas "to see spiritual things, I feel sure that they would have seen horses and chariots of fire riding on the storm of battle, and making those that were for them, more than those that were against them" ("God's Presence With Our Army at Manassas!" 13-14). David Doggett reflects on the "rapid and brilliant succession of victories" (6) during the summer of 1862, and concludes that "God has looked down from his throne upon us with paternal solicitude, and according to the rectitude of our cause, we are constrained to conclude that his almighty hand has wrought our deliverance, and to exclaim with equal piety and truth, 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped us' " ("A Nation's Ebenezer" 8). Perhaps nowhere is this collapse of spiritual and military objectives so evident as in the widespread Confederate attitude toward "Stonewall" Jackson, a general whose well-known penchant for harsh discipline was counterbalanced by the religious reverence awarded him by the South's general population. As several of the diarists evince, Jackson was regarded as

God's avenging angel, sent to defend the South's honor against the godless Yanks. When Jackson is killed—by his own soldiers, no less—Confederates struggle to readjust their paradigm to account for this unexpected development.¹²

Southern clergy develop two major responses when the South's ultimate defeat becomes increasingly apparent. First, some ministers argue that victory and defeat reveal little to nothing about God's favor. Though, as earlier pointed out, most ministers perceive God's hand in winning even the smallest skirmishes until the last days of the war, several ministers adjust their theology to accommodate the reality of maimed teenagers and burned plantations. S. H. Higgins, for example, delivered a sermon in Milledgeville, Georgia on December 10, 1863 in which he points out that "if success is always to be taken as evidence of the friendship of God, then the bloody barbarians who overran Europe and Asia, known in history as the Goths and Saracens, were the very darlings of Providence" ("The Mountain Moved" 6). This proposition is sure to meet with his audience's disapproval. Asserting that "*the mere fact of success*, proves nothing in favor of any nation on whom it is bestowed" (6), Higgins seeks to refine his congregation's understanding of God's actions in the world in light of the recent "bloody baptism" (18). God's favor rests on those whose cause is just, and cannot be ascertained from military victories or the lack thereof.¹³

The clergy's second major response to the Confederacy's military losses is to proclaim that defeat results from the South's sinfulness, "a punishment of our sins—a Providential call to put away our iniquities, and show ourselves worthy of the Divine help we need" (Lee, "Our Country—Our Dangers—Our Duty 12-13).¹⁴ Although Richard Beringer speculates that a deep-seated sense of guilt over slaveholding produced a "sense

of ongoing sinfulness . . . [which] created an atmosphere of religious fatalism" (90), Southern sermons delivered in the later war years do not overtly treat this connection. Indeed, in the sermons reviewed for this study, the fact of owning slaves or slavery itself is never mentioned as a possible cause of the war. Instead, Southerners' shortcomings in performing religious duties are repeatedly catalogued. For example, Elder Thomas S. Dunaway of Lancaster County, Virginia chastises his Baptist congregation in April 1864 with having "failed or refused to observe the days of fasting, humiliation and prayer recommended by the chief magistrate of the Confederate States" (7), and for "ingratitude for past mercies—self-reliance and self-dependence—inordinate love of money—profanation of the holy Sabbath—taking God's holy name in vain—drunkenness—infidelity—rebellion against God's law and government" (8).¹⁵ Five months later, J. L. Burrows addressed his Augusta, Georgia congregation on a similar theme, identifying the true enemies of the Confederacy as those Southerners who "in selfish greed, are oppressing the poor, augmenting the general distress and enriching yourselves at the cost of your country's welfare—you who, in reckless ungodliness, despise God's commands, profane His name, scorn His law—you are doing more to delay and prevent the hour of peace than the armies of invaders" (8). While castigating one's audience for their sins is certainly no new rhetorical strategy for preachers, Burrows clearly articulates the frequently-hidden agenda behind such calls for national abasement. The Confederacy's repentance manipulates Divine favor, a type of cosmic tit-for-tat. Burrows' argument seems internally consistent: if military defeats result from sin, then repentance must result in victory. He informs his audience that

there is a method by which a nation may secure the intervention of this Power for its own welfare. If the people do but sincerely repent of their sins and renounce them, humble themselves before God, and submit their hearts and lives to His laws, he will put forth His power for their deliverance and security. There is no truth more clearly taught in God's word than this. How explicit is the text! A God fearing nation is unconquerable by any power earthly or infernal . . . Its foes must conquer God before they can destroy those whom God protects. (5)

Although ministers such as Burrows urge their congregations to return to the practice of pure religion, not one of the seventy-five sermons that I read indicates that these southern clergymen reevaluate their initial premise that God has ordained slavery as a viable social institution. In the face of military defeat, homelessness, starvation, death, the doctrine that lent religious impetus to the call for secession remains intact.¹⁶

Examination of Confederate women's Civil War diaries reveals that these women not only attended church services and regularly read their Bibles,¹⁷ but that their writings reflect the particular theological spin represented in my sample of Confederate sermons. Repeatedly, the diarists report pastoral support for the South's cause, as in the March 23, 1862 entry where Lucy Buck writes, "Mr. Berry's sermon was such a good one—the subject, the contest between David and Goliath, in which he so plainly proved the superiority of the physically weak, who rely upon a Higher power, to the might of the strong, who confide entirely in their own strength. It was so comforting" (39). Several months later, Buck returns to this theme as she records, "This was Thanksgiving day and we went to hear a Thanksgiving sermon . . . Dr. Hough delivered a most excellent

discourse from the text. . . 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord.' I liked his views with regard to retaliation so much" (139). Lucy Breckinridge, also writing from Virginia, comments on September 24, 1863, "We all at last got into church and heard such a sweet, comforting sermon from Uncle Wilmer. He alluded so appropriately to the times and addressed some remarks particularly to those who had lost dear ones in the terrible conflict" (153). On April 23, 1865, after surviving months of near starvation and terror, sixteen-year-old Emma LeConte writes, "Dr. Palmer this morning preached a fine and encouraging sermon. He says we must not despair yet, but even if we should be overthrown—not conquered—the next generation would see the South free and independent" (95). Finally, On May 7, 1865, while sitting in a church service attended by soldiers from the occupying army jammed alongside rabid Confederates, Eliza Andrews writes that she "went to the Baptist church and heard a good sermon from Mr. Tupper on the text: 'For now we live by faith, and not by sight.' There was not a word that could give the Yankees a handle against us, yet much that we poor rebels could draw comfort from" (225).¹⁸ In each of these cases, as in dozens of others scattered throughout Confederate diaries, readers find evidence that diarists embraced the patriotic theology pouring from Southern pulpits.

One of the diaries that most clearly illustrates how interaction between religious discourse and the diarist's own text affects her sense of ethnicity is the one penned by Georgian Dolly Lunt Burge. Burge's diary runs from February 6, 1848 to September 29, 1879, roughly one third of which covers the Civil War years. Her circumstances mark her as an atypical Confederate diarist in many respects: instead of eighteen, single, wealthy, Episcopalian, and Southern-born, "thirty-year-old Dolly Lunt Lewis had already

married, left her family and native state of Maine, moved to Georgia with her struggling physician husband, lost him and their only child to illness, and established herself in Madison, Georgia, as a school-teacher and devout Methodist" (Carter xi). Although the outbreak of civil war finds Dolly a newly-widowed member of Georgia's planter class, apparently comfortable with her slaveholder status, and a loyal Confederate, the fact that she maintains ties with her Northern family gives her a unique perspective on the conflict between the Union and Confederate States.

Burge begins her diary by reflecting that she has "been thinking for sometime past that [she] would every day put down the incidents thereof thought—feelings, &c. &c. in other words keep a regular journal" (3). She observes that "every day matters. . . .make up one's life," an insight which leads her to question "Of what trifles are life composed & yet when called to render an account of them will they then be as trifling & unimportant to us as they now seem to be?" (3) Despite claims of theorists such as Naomi Schor and Elizabeth Hampsten that attention to detail marks a diary as "feminine" (Schor 4-11, Hampsten 80-81), Burge's intense interest in "every day matters" grows out of her belief that the accumulation of seemingly commonplace occurrences will ultimately determine the character of her soul. The entry's subsequent emphasis on prayer, awareness of God's presence, and discussion of various sermons indicates that Burge intends to follow in a well-established tradition of journaling as an aid to spiritual introspection (4). Spiritual assessment pervades entries during the subsequent thirteen years, as when Burge records that she "has once again pledged [herself] openly to seek for a purer life" (9), or regrets that she is not "striving mightily for that straight and narrow way which alone leads to God" (14), or that she longs for "the son of righteousness [to] beam upon my heart as the

natural sun is casting its broad beautiful and fertilizing light upon the earth" (18). Repeatedly, the diarist reports on sermons she has heard, noting the sermons' Biblical references, carefully summarizing major arguments, commenting on particular points with which she agrees or takes issue, and observing the direct influence these sermons exercise over her conduct, all of which establishes a pattern of reciprocal interaction between spoken and written religious discourse and Burge's own text written during the years preceding the Civil War. Though several of the other diaries parrot published sermons in more conventional ways, Burge's expressed spiritual focus marks her diary as especially useful for studying the interaction between religious rhetoric and ethnicity.

Attention to entries from the years 1861-1865 indicate several lines of continuity with the antebellum years. Dolly Burge continues her long-standing habit of including and meditating on sermons that she has heard, while her summaries subtly reflect what Chesebrough identifies as a wide-spread conflation of Protestant theology and the Confederacy's political and military goals (Chesebrough 5-7). Burge's April 13, 1861 entry illustrates this shift as she remarks that she

heard an excellent sermon from Rev Thomas Pierce from the words of St. Pauls I count not myself to have apprehended but this one thing I do forgetting those things which are behind I reach forward to the prize & reaching forth unto those things which are before I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He went on to show that if the Apostle would not look back to his experience to His trials why should we? Heard that fighting was going on in Charleston Harbor.
(116-117)

The next Sunday finds Burge once again sitting in her pew, listening as Elder Yarbrough "preached Secret things belong to God the revealed to us and our children. . . . Of the present state of our country at War & the soil stained with the blood of our brethren of the natural laws in regard to rain . . . & finally wound up with the written word of God as a sheild [sic] to all of our temptations. News came that Fort Sumpter had surrendered to the Carolinians" (117). Particularly in the second case, Burge notes the speaker's connection between the Biblical text discussed in the sermon and the military struggle currently embroiling his congregation, a link underscored by reporting news of the latest battle developments immediately following the summary of the sermon. Both sermons employ images of struggle and war, implicitly identifying the faithful Christian with the loyal Confederate.

In addition to incorporating the voices of various preachers into her text, Burge continues her periodic "spiritual checkups," particularly on the dates of her birthday, anniversary, year's end, and year's beginning, such as the September 29, 1862 entry when she writes, "I am forty five years old to day! Little did I imagine when twenty four that I should live so many years & that I should be a widow for the second time & situated as I am. But Thanks unto God who has kept preserved & been with me all my life long & now that I am going down the shady side of life I trust He will still be with & sustain me whether in prosperity or adversity" (132). On January 3, 1864, Burge observes, "Sabbath the first in sixty four. . . . I want this year to serve God & be a better woman than I have ever been. His Mercies are abundant towards me & mine. May I praise & love Him all the days of my life" (143). Finally, after enduring months of severe deprivation following Sherman's infamous march through Georgia, Burge laments, "New years night.

It has been very cloudy & cold & to night is exceedingly so. & how gloomy to me—I have read & prayed, prayed, for comfort for aid & protection, but O how dark are my prospects Will the Lord have mercy on me & spare me another year! May I enjoy more of His presence more love more joy than I ever have—" (167).

A third point of continuity rests in her attitude toward her slaves. While she does run her large plantation through her slaves' labor, she also expends effort to minister to their spiritual, intellectual, and physical needs. As early as 1850, Burge notes that she has been alone all Sunday evening because her husband "stopped to attend Negro Class" (56-57), and her entry for January 29, 1865 indicates that she has passed on some of her family's concerns to her young daughter: "Sunday again, no church. I am at home reading. Sadai teaching the little negroes to read" (170). Despite reflections on the worthiness of her slave's souls,¹⁹ she unhesitatingly demands their obedience and labor and occasionally she exacts punishment.²⁰ Her husband dies in 1858, charging Dolly with the oversight of the plantation as well as the spiritual leadership of the Burge family, both slave and free. Long before hostilities break out she has assumed these traditionally male-gendered duties, experience which enables her to avoid some of the widespread power struggles with slaves used to obeying only the Master.

Perhaps more instructive than the lines of continuity are those points of divergence between the pre-war and mid-war entries. Readers can detect fissures in the mosaic of themes and figurative language connecting Burge's religious and ethnic consciousness. As with any of the diarists, her attitudes are complex and often self-contradictory, but two major shifts consistently pervade entries written during 1861-1865.

First, although Burge refuses to repudiate her Northern heritage, she clearly aligns herself with her adopted country in this conflict and joins the voices of hundreds of Confederate ministers in proclaiming that God fights for the Confederacy. As in the other diaries under consideration, Burge uses the first person plural when referring to the Confederacy's troops and officers, reporting on the sacrifices of "our" soldiers and the courageous maneuvers of "our" generals. Burge makes her Confederate loyalty overt when she reflects on the July, 1861 battle at Manassas by writing, "This is a month in the annals [sic] of this Southern Confederacy long to be remembered for upon the 21st a battle was fought at Manassas, Va which resulted in a grand victory for our troops. To God be all the praise" (121). Almost a year later, she reports that "the Battle [at Richmond] is still raging. The victory is on the side of the Confederates through great loss of life and limb. The blessing of God is on our arms & may His Spirit incline all Hearts to Peace—" (129). In both cases, as in dozens of her other war-time entries, Burge articulates her belief that God himself wields the sword on the South's behalf.

Burge's tendency to dichotomize the Confederate and Union armies into the forces of righteousness and evil intensifies in 1864 as Sherman and his troops burn their way through Georgia. She has repeatedly demonstrated during the seventeen previous years of diary entries that she values a Christian ethic which expresses itself in reason, frugality, and charity toward the poor, the stranger, and the slave. Thus, the Yankees' apparently unreasoning wastefulness which falls hardest on the poor deeply offends her. As she anticipates the approach of Sherman's army in July of 1864, she indignantly records that the Yankees

robbed every house on their road of provisions sometimes taking every piece of meat blankets & wearing apparel silver & arms of every description. They would take silk dresses & put them under their saddles & things for which they had no use. Is this the way to make us love them & their union? Let the poor people answer whom they have deprived of every mouthful of meat & of their stock to make any. (149)

She lives the next four months in constant anxiety, with almost every entry recording sightings of "blue coats," or allusions to the troop movements of both armies. When Union troops actually pass through her plantation in mid-November, she presents herself as calmly walking to the gate, then hastening back to the big house to protect and defend her "frightened servants" (159). In contrast to her reasoned, self-sacrificing behavior, she fumes that Sherman's "soldiers could not be restrained," that they behaved like "vandals," and that they "wantonly" tore down her "garden palings [and] made a road through my back yard. . .desolating my home. . . . when there was no necessity for it" (161). For the first and only time in her diary, Burge employs the present tense to describe a scene which she prays never to see repeated, even if she "live[s] to the age of Methuselah" (161):

But like Demons they rush in. My yards are full. To my smoke house, my Dairy, Pantry, kitchen & cellar like famished wolves they come, breaking locks & whatever is in their way. The thousand pounds of meat in my smoke house is gone in a twinkling my flour my meal, my lard, butter, eggs. . . . Wine, jars, & jugs, are all gone. My young pigs are shot down in my yard, & hunted as if they were the rebels themselves. (159-160)

The present tense verbs inserted in the middle of a long passage written at the day's weary conclusion illustrate the vivid horrors of those hours for Burge. She lends force to accusations that Yankee soldiers have behaved demonically by referring to the experiences of a favorite neighbor, Mrs. Joe Perry, who is "very strong Secesh": "When the army first came along they proffered to guard her house but she told them she was guarded by a Higher Power & did not thank them to do it. She says that she could think of nothing else all day when the army was passing but the devil & his Hosts" (164). Reflecting Confederate sermons which demonize Union invaders, Burge reconfigures Christianity to embody "Southern" virtues of courage, loyalty, and compassion toward both white and black family members. As her diary's representative of Confederate values, Burge portrays herself sheltering her slaves while Yankees "rifle" their cabins of "every valuable," (161), and tearfully imploring Union officers to protect her family, while Union soldiers storm through the rooms, "cursing. . . & threatening to shoot" slaves who refuse to abandon the Burge plantation (160). The passing of Sherman's army completes a process fed by Southern pulpits—instead of responding with a broken spirit, Burge concludes that she is now "a much stronger rebel" (163).

Though Burge's participation in official fast days and her overt statements of favorable Providential intervention establish her Southern sympathies, her diary reveals a consciousness acutely aware of war's terrible price. She frequently prays for peace. Prompted by concern for her neighbors' husbands and children, she writes on December 31, 1861 that "this too has been a momentous year one never to be forgotten in the history of this country. Our once united & prosperous country is in the midst of civil war. Battle after battle has been fought & it still goes on. . . . Some of the best blood of

the country has been spilled. O the horrors of war. . . . O that it might cease & that Peace may again be ours" (122). Six months later she observes that " a most bloody battle near Richmond on the Chickahominy" was fought with hundreds "killed on both sides. . . . What the End will be the All Wise one only knows" (128). And at the end of the summer of 1862, Burge writes that "This month the 17th & 18 has been fought the bloodiest battles of the war. My heart sickens when I think of it & the affliction it has brought upon thousands & thousands of our countrymen" (132).²¹ When 1864 dawns, Dolly Burge pauses to assess the new year's possibilities, lamenting the fact that instead of peace, "a bloody war is still decimating our nation & thousands of hearts are to day bleeding over the loss of loved ones. Scarcely a family in the land but has given some of its members to their country. Terrible terrible indeed is war. O that its ravages may soon be stopped. Will another year find us amid carnage & bloodshed. Shall we be a nation? Or shall we be annihilated?" (142)²² Multiple entries testify to Burge's yearning for a peaceful resolution to war; however, she repeatedly identifies Northerners as the aggressors, explicitly blaming the Union for the deluge of blood.

A second major shift between Burge's pre-war and mid-war entries is that she uses a new metaphor to describe her relationship with God. During the antebellum years, she frequently refers to God as "Master," a metaphor which emphasizes God's sovereignty while legitimizing and in some ways sanctifying her own position relative to her slaves. For instance, she remarks that Jackson Harwell, Thomas Burge's uncle, blew the trumpet at camp meetings because "he felt that he could Honour & serve his Master who had called him to this service" (70), and when she longs for her beloved dead husband she cries out, "O could I see my husband. Could it have been the Masters Will

to have spared him to us how grateful I should have been" (102). In late 1860 and early 1861 when she considers the plantation's dependence on rain she writes, "Rain this evening the first for some weeks for which I desire to be very thankful. How good My Heavenly Master is!" (109); and later she prays, "I hope the good Master will send the rain & sunshine in due season & make it bring forth abundantly" (115).

By the end of July 1861, this metaphor has disappeared completely. Despite its pre-war frequency, Burge does not refer to God as Master for the remainder of the war. Instead, she relies heavily on the image of God as Father, a metaphor which emphasizes his tender care and discipline rather than his power and sovereignty. In contrast to her homage given to a benevolent master a few months before, in late July 1861, Burge writes, "We have every reason to be grateful to our Father in Heaven for the timely rains which have continued over a week indeed I may say all of July" (121). When her daughter Sadai survives a dangerous fall in 1862, Burge prays "What shall I render unto Thee O my Father for all Thy mercies & benefits?" (128) In the aftermath of Sherman's destructive march, Burge offsets the massive loss of crops, livestock, and property which she estimates at 30,000 dollars by rejoicing that the main house escaped the torch: "My Heavenly Father alone saved me from the destructive fire" (162). And, on Christmas morning in 1864, after listening to her little daughter and young slaves sobbing at their empty stockings, she cries out, "Oh My Heavenly Parent give me patience & grace to bear the troubles & misfortunes that surround me. Sanctify them to my good & may I love the world less & long for my Heavenly home more & more—" (167).²³

Burge's changing perception of God sheds light on her changing attitudes toward her slaves. While she provides no hint that she considers God a harsh taskmaster, the

replacement of that metaphorical relationship with one which highlights his paternalistic attributes parallels her evolving relationship with the Burge slaves. During the war years, Burge writes more frequently and extensively about her slaves, about her relationship with them, and about the institution of slavery itself. Christine Carter, the editor of Burge's diary, comments on this third major shift in Burge's diary, writing that "until the Civil War, Dolly mentioned the Burge slaves only occasionally in the diary, usually to record tasks completed, births, deaths, and illnesses" (xxxix). Instead of encrypting "Martha Mid Sally sick" (105), she displays overt concern by writing "Unfortunately Bob stumbled as he was getting out of the way of a tree & broke his leg by the top of the sapling falling upon it. It is broken below the knee in two places so says Dr. Perry who has set it. I feel very sorry. Bob is a good boy—" (126). Instead of dashing off "Lost by death William *a good boy* died unexpectedly sick only about 36 hours" (91), she takes the time to explain that she "was summoned early this Sabbath morning to go to Hannah who was dying. I sat by her several hours. She is ready & willing to go. She bade us all farewell & dropped asleep in Jesus at a few minutes after ten o'clock. Thus one after another of our family depart for the Kingdom. Mr. Burge had the greatest confidence in Hannah's piety & I trust they have met ere this in the Spirit land" (144).

The increased attention given to the slaves in Burge's diary stems from her growing sense of responsibility toward these men, women, and children whom she perceives as totally dependent upon her largess and protection, just as the war's unpredictable events have reinforced her sense of dependence on God. Though many incidents reflect Burge's paternalistic attitudes, perhaps nowhere is this better illustrated than in the confrontation between the members of the Burge plantation and the soldiers of

Sherman's army. Repeatedly, she notes her attempts to help her women prepare for Sherman's arrival and her outrage that Union soldiers plunder her slaves' meager belongings. However, she reserves her deepest concern and most eloquent laments for her "boys," a group of slave children forced from her home at "the point of the bayonet" (160). Toward the conclusion of that nightmarish day, Burge records that

This was after night the greater part of the army had passed. . . . My room was full nearly with the bedding of & with the negroes. . . . They lay down on the floor. Sadai got down & under the same cover with Sally while I sat up all night watching every moment for the flames to burst out from some of my buildings. The two guards came into my room & laid themselves by my fire for the night. I could not close my eyes but kept walking to & fro watching the fires in the distance & dreading the approaching day which I feared as they had not all passed would be a continuation of horrors. (162)

Burge pauses at the close of this day to note that she has welcomed her people with the remnants of their possessions into her bedroom, that her daughter huddles "under the same cover" with a slave woman, and that she assumes the role of watchman, faithfully guarding the sleepers while keeping an eye out for flames.

Her concern for her slaves certainly pre-dates the war years. Her brief pre-war references to the family's slaves indicate that Mr. Burge allowed the slaves to keep a portion of the plantation's corn and cotton crops, a practice which Burge continues,²⁴ and she outlines the plantation's three principle slave families at the back of her diary (Carter xxxi), an ambiguous fact which could indicate respect for these people or a desire to

keep track of her property, much in the same way that she records the price received for cotton or how many acres have been planted in sorghum. What appears to be a major departure in her ethnic attitudes is the manner in which she overtly questions the morality of slavery toward the end of the war. On November 8, 1864, eleven days before Sherman's army storms through the Burge plantation, she writes

To day will probably decide the fate of this confederacy if Lincoln is reelected I think our fate is a hard one, but, we are in the hands of a merciful God & if He sees that we are in the wrong I trust that He will show it unto us. I have never felt that Slavery was altogether right for it is abused by many & I have often heard Mr. Burge say that if he could see that it was sinful for him to own slaves, if he felt that it was wrong, he would take them where he could free them he would not sin for his right hand. The purest & holiest men have owned them & I can see nothing in the Scriptures which forbids it. I have never bought nor sold & have tried to make life easy and pleasant to those that have been bequeathed me by the dead. I have never ceased to work, but many a Northern housekeeper has a much easier time than a Southern matron with her hundred negroes.

(156)

In this telling passage, Burge rehashes many of the most popular arguments supporting slavery: the "holiest" of men have been slaveholders; the Scriptures allow it; she has refused to participate in the slave trade while tenderly caring for those men and women who formed her inheritance; and—finally—she has worked alongside her slaves, never succumbing to the sin of laziness. Although her conscience troubles her, ultimately her

actions rest on the key fact that the late, sainted Mr. Burge owned slaves, making Burge's position problematic, but not sinful.²⁵ She struggles to operate within the context of her society and, perhaps as importantly, her religious convictions which shout conflicting messages about the necessity of assuming individual responsibility for one's actions while simultaneously respecting the authority of male leadership represented in the person of husband and minister.

Unlike so many of the other diarists, Burge does not answer the Confederacy's defeat with withering comments on the ludicrousness of African Americans' self-governance. Instead, when she hears that "our negroes are all freed by the US government," she responds by cautiously observing that "this is more than I anticipated yet I trust it will be a gradual thing & not done all at once but the Disposer of All knows best & will do right—" (173). The remaining four entries for May of 1865 record Burge's struggle to balance her willingness to "carry out the orders when we know them" (174), with her powerful paternalistic sense of duty toward these people over whom she has claimed ownership and who share her surname of Burge. These entries allude to conversations with various ministers and neighbors concerning the slave situation, attesting to the continued importance Burge places on receiving counsel from respected advisors. On May 29, 1865, her last entry before a six-month silence, Burge articulates the self-contradictory attitudes struggling for ascendancy: "I thank God that they are freed & yet what can I do without them?" (174)

Apparently, by year's end, she has resolved this internal conflict. Her freedmen have chosen to stay with her, working for one-sixth of the crop, and the plantation's affairs have settled down enough that Burge is able to gather presents for Sadai's stocking

which Sadai promptly divides amongst the "eight little negroes sitting around her" on Christmas morning. Though the scene of the young mistress bestowing the overflow of her bounty is classic antebellum lore, Burge's next lines throw a different light on the scene. She breaks the self-imposed boundaries of her diary to directly address her former slaves, a sign of respect which she follows with a Biblical allusion: "'Tis the last Christmas we shall probably be together Freedmen! Now they will I trust have their own homes & be joyful under their own vine & figtrees with none to molest or make afraid" (175). The second half of the last sentence is a direct quotation from Micah 4:4, where the prophet foretells the restoration of the Jewish exiles to their own land and birthright. A popular quotation used in many of the diaries to project the fate of the Confederacy,²⁶ Burge here applies it to her former slaves, effectively acknowledging their right to economic and political freedom, and—in the context of Burge's text—spiritual equality.

Throughout my study of published Confederate women's diaries, I found no evidence of criticism directed at Southern ministers or the largely homogenous religious rhetoric pouring from Southern pulpits. Although their autobiographical writings certainly indicate varying degrees of spirituality, these diarists uniformly identify themselves as "Christian" and endorse the religious party line which weds Christianity and patriotic fervor, implicitly portraying God as a Confederate. The authority of church leaders remains absolute, even for the handful like Burge who question the morality of slavery. I would like to argue that diarists such as Burge, Lomax, or Chesnut who record struggles with their own attitudes toward particular slaves are motivated by a growing spiritual maturity, an argument which would effectively counter the observations of Douglass and Jacobs concerning the connection between religious conversion and

increased cruelty. However, my study can not support that conclusion. Some of these diarists who quote Scripture most freely, who attend church most regularly, who care for the poor most eagerly seem the most violently racist. Of course, "true" spiritual conversion is subjective, ultimately measured by the weight of one's life. This information is not deducible from a diary. Though Dolly Lunt Burge's diary does record her deep spiritual commitment, her ethnic attitudes apparently evolve through the force of external circumstances and age.

JOURNALISTIC INFLUENCES

On December 4, 1864, Kate Stone returned to her family's refugee home in Tyler, Texas after a six-month visit to Louisiana. After commenting on the cramped living conditions, the heartbreak of a stolen pony, and the time-consuming task of renovating old dresses and sewing a suit in Confederate gray for her brother Jimmy, Kate ends the entry by writing, "I found Mamma trying to do without a paper, but I at once subscribed for this necessity of life" (308).

Kate Stone was hardly unique in her attitude toward the press. Newspapers and periodicals offered a precious link to the battlefield, and ranked—for many diarists—as one of the necessities of life, comparable to a bolt of calico or a sack of fine flour. The facts and opinions expressed in these papers made their way not only into the homes of these diarists, but into the pages of their records. For instance, on May 1, 1861, Emma Holmes refers to one of the many papers she regularly reads, writing that, "As 'the Mercury' says, [Lincoln] has shown himself in his true colors 'with *God* forever on his lips, & *self* ever in his heart' " (41), a quotation which implies that the opinion of this

Charleston Mercury editorial is irrefutable. In the midst of their long retreat from Chattanooga, Kate Cumming pauses in her twenty-hour work day to record more than a thousand words in response to an article and several letters in the Mobile Advertiser and Register, commenting that she believes that "if any thing would arouse to a sense of duty those whom it is meant for" it would be the stirring contents of this letter penned by an Alabama woman (134). Pauline DeCaradeuc, after noting that she rode five miles "on horseback" to retrieve the mail, concludes her entry with a paragraph full of specific numbers and details concerning the battle at Vicksburg drawn from that day's papers and incorporated into her own prose (17-18). Other diarists such as Mary Chesnut comment on their dependence on the press. The month after Lee's surrender, Chesnut laments, "No mails any where—so no letters written or received. No newspapers—no safety valves of any kind. So to day I had a violent fit of hysterics" (246). In each of these cases, periodicals shape the diarists' perceptions of events, their attitudes toward their slaves and the North, and their understanding of their own ethnicity.

Throughout Kate Stone's diary, the availability or lack of current news presents a pressing concern. Frequently, Stone reports gathering with her family around the fire in the evening to read the newspapers, or waiting at the gate for the arrival of the latest edition. Fox-Genovese observes that "periodical literature linked women to each other and to the men of their class in a common cultural network" (263), providing a medium for shared information, ideas, and values especially crucial during the war years. Her study indicates that the Southern Literary Messenger, Littell's Living Age, Harper's, Godey's Lady's Book, Putnam's Magazine, Graham's, and Blackwood's were among the periodicals commonly found in Southern households (263). While Confederate families

continued receiving several of these weekly and monthly periodicals until mail service was interrupted, many of these diaries indicate that the urgency of the war effort increased women's interest in dailies which featured more up-to-date information and editorials on various aspects of the national conflict. In his study of Civil War newspaper war correspondents entitled Blue & Gray in Black & White, Brayton Harris reports that the "total wartime journalistic output was more than 100 million words; on average, 50,000 words per day were filed from Washington, DC, alone," most of which came from some 350 special correspondents for the North and some 150 for the South (ix-x). This avalanche of words was printed in approximately 2,500 newspapers, 373 of which were published daily then rushed to eager readers in outlying areas via the new rail service (9).

The Stone family proved avid consumers of the journalists' efforts. Kate Stone's second diary entry lists the newspapers to which her family subscribes: "*Harper's Weekly and Monthly*, the *New York Tribune*, *Journal of Commerce*, *Little's Living Age*, the *Whig and Picayune* of New Orleans, and the Vicksburg and local sheets" (14). After completing her list, Stone muses, "What will we do when our mails are stopped and we are no longer in touch with the world?" (14) She answers her own question several months later when the blockade begins to slow down the arrival of the daily papers, until finally the only one making it to the Stone's plantation is the New Orleans *Picayune*. She complains that her family receives "no war news or any other kind," a lack of information which prompts her to exclaim, "Oh, this inactive life when there is such stir and excitement in the busy world outside. It is enough to run one wild. Oh! To be in the heat and turmoil of it all, to live, to live, not stagnate here" (87). The uncharacteristic

repetition and lyricism of her outburst underscore her stated desire for current news. The newspapers not only satisfy Stone's intellectual curiosity, but provide her with a surrogate for the actual battle. Less than a week later, contemplating the silence from the outside world, she writes emphatically, "We will subscribe for others" (88).

During periods when the papers are reaching their plantation, Stone devotes large portions of each journal entry to summarizing the news. During the two-week period running from May 30 to June 13, 1862, for example, five of the six entries detail the latest news gathered from the *Whig* and other dailies. For instance, on May 30, she begins the day's entry by recording

We have a paper of the twenty-seventh. It brings the good news of a battle or surprise by Stonewall Jackson at Winchester and Front Royal and the capture of all the stores at the former place and many prisoners. All the news is rather encouraging. We are holding our own at Fort Pillow. At Corinth the enemy are reported in retreat to their gunboats which, now that the Tennessee River is falling, they are compelled to get out at once. All is well in Virginia. And nearer home at Vicksburg there is nothing to discourage us. The slight shelling did no harm, and the soldiers are full of hope and anxious for the Yankees to land to give them the 'worst beating they ever had in their lives' " (114).

This information precedes musings on the one-year anniversary of My Brother's and Uncle Bo's departure for the army, the noteworthy receipt of pressed violets from the trenches around Yorktown, and speculations on the love affairs of a family friend. Not only does the summary's position and length point to its importance for Kate, but here—

as in many other cases when she recaps the day's news—she writes in first person plural which increases the feeling of personal participation. In spots, her own thoughts blend with the newspaper summary which makes it difficult to determine where her voice stops and the journalist's begins, perhaps indicating that she sees no distinction between the two.

Her repeated summaries of newspaper accounts indicate her high level of dependence upon this popular voice. Frequently, Stone conflates the newspaper account with the actual person being spoken about, as in her June 20, 1862 entry where she writes, "Good news from My Brother. We see from the last *Whig* that he is now Adjutant of the 2nd Miss. Battalion. I am so glad" (121). Though the first sentence leads the reader to assume that Stone has received a letter, that misimpression is quickly set straight. The daily papers bring coveted information concerning troop movements and battle outcomes, act as surrogates for missing letters, and lead to endless speculation regarding her brothers' safety.²⁷ Stone certainly expresses more emotional intensity toward reports that potentially reflect her siblings' safety; however, she does not confine her interests to those battle accounts. The papers also provide her with commentary on the larger political scene, such as rumors of European recognition of the Confederacy's sovereignty, the price of cotton in other Southern states, and reports on Lincoln's policy decisions. The popular press represents connection for Stone, a lifeline between the secluded, idyllic Stone plantation and the tumultuous events convulsing the nation. Silence and physical isolation are equally unnerving. On May 26, 1863, as Stone and her family flee to the relative security of Texas, she writes, "How I dread being secluded on

some remote farm in Texas, far away from all we know and love and unable to get news of any kind. It is a terrifying prospect" (214).

Stone's diary dramatically demonstrates the key role periodicals played in shaping public opinion and rousing feelings of fervent patriotism. Southern newspapers drummed up ardent support for the war by urging all white men—regardless of age or class—to enlist in the Confederate army. On May 23, 1861, Stone writes that the papers are full of "nothing but 'War, War' from the first to the last column. Throughout the length and breadth of the land the trumpet of war is sounding, and from every hamlet and village, from city and country, men are hurrying by thousands, eager to be led to battle against Lincoln's hordes" (14). She uses the imagery of the trumpet again several months later when she observes that while the reports in the newspapers are gloomy, "they have aroused the country with a trumpet call" (93), resulting in patriotic fervor throughout Louisiana. She observes that "the papers are making most stirring appeals to the people to give and to enlist. The *Whig* is most eloquent" (98). Interestingly, Stone grammatically equates giving and enlisting, making women's contributions to the war effort on par with men's. The *Whig's* eloquence is attested to not only by the fact that within a few weeks both Stone's Brother Coley and Brother Walter enlist, along with many other parish boys who "think and talk only of war" (93), but that her entire family—including her young brothers—embark on a knitting and sewing frenzy calculated to clothe half the Confederate army.

The following spring, on May 23, 1862, Stone refers to a recent copy of the *Whig* which contains the correspondence between the town officials of Natchez and Vicksburg and the Union invasion forces. The *Whig* reports that both cities refused to surrender,

and Vicksburg sent the message that "we will fight to the last" (111). Such bravery meets with Stone's approval as worthy of true Southerners. The Mississippians' gallantry stands in stark contrast to what Stone terms "Butler's last infamous proclamation" (111).²⁸

Although Butler's decision to allow his soldiers to respond to insult in kind seems intended to subdue the women of New Orleans, Stone believes that it will achieve the opposite effect. Instead of quieting Louisiana's men and women, she writes, "Let us hope this [proclamation] will rouse the spirit of the people who still linger at home and send them to the battlefield" (105). Stone believes that both the May 1861 and the May 1862 issues of the Whig function as effective military recruitment tools.

In addition to overt pleas for volunteers, Southern papers encouraged patriotism by frequently exaggerating Southern victories. For instance, on July 11, 1862, Stone writes that "The last accounts are that McClellan lost 20,000 killed and wounded, 30,000 prisoners, and thirty miles of wagons . . . the Yankee army is completely demoralized" (131-132). On July 16, 1863, she reports that "we have won a glorious victory back of Vicksburg, repulsing one wing of Grant's army and opening communication with Vicksburg and replenishing her supplies. Also we hear of surprising the enemy in south Louisiana and capturing many men and stores" (227). On May 29, 1864, Stone writes that "the news this morning is enough to make one hurrah. Grant is repulsed with a loss of 45,000 and Johnston is victorious at Dalton with 10,000 prisoners captured. Providence is smiling on our arms this year. Not a defeat" (285). Southern papers consistently portrayed the Confederate forces as undaunted, recklessly brave, and fully confident of the South's ultimate victory. Although the immediate effect of these reports is to buoy Stone's spirits, and—according to her reports—whip her family and neighbors

into a patriotic fervor, all three of these reports, along with many others that Stone records, eventually prove to be either wildly exaggerated or outright falsehoods.

Throughout the opening months of Stone's journal, she records fabulous Confederate victories without questioning the newspaper accounts' accuracy. By the beginning of 1862, however, her references to "how gloriously our arms are triumphing everywhere" (139) are balanced against her references to Southern cities abandoned "without a shot or shell on either side" (96). Undoubtedly, Stone longs to believe the favorable reports, and only repeated confirmation of the various papers' inaccuracies moves her from uncritical acceptance of all she reads to openly questioning the press' reliability. Frequently, single entries embed this contradiction, such as the entry for June 8:

What a budget of news we heard the fight at Fort Pillow, the evacuation of Vicksburg, the occupation of Memphis, the defeat of our gunboats and the loss of seven out of nine, and the falling back of Beauregard from Corinth to Holly Springs. What a long list of disasters. But there is some good news to offset it. Mrs. Dancy sent out Friday's papers giving an account of the victory at Chickahominy after a two-day fight, capturing camp, breastworks, and ten guns. Stonewall Jackson has crossed the Potomac, whipped Banks army, and ten thousand Marylanders have flocked to his standard We are hoping the bad news is all false and the good all true. (117-118)

Her entry of October 2, 1862 records her revised understanding of Jackson's push into Maryland: "There is great disappointment over Maryland. It was thought there would be

a great uprising of the people as soon as the Stars and Bars should wave across the Potomac, but nothing of the kind. There has been but little enthusiasm and few recruits. Well, let the Old Bay State go, if her people had rather be slaves in the Union than masters in the Confederacy" (146). Apparently, the bad news was all true, and the good news false.

By mid-1863, Stone has become much more circumspect in relating Confederate victories. On June 3, she records that "the news from Vicksburg is very contradictory, but there seems to be constant fighting going on" (216). On June 10, Stone reports that "the news of today is that our men were repulsed at Miliken's Bend and are falling back to Delhi. A very different account from the first" (218). A month later on July 16 she records that "*We hear* that we have won a glorious victory back of Vicksburg Also we *hear* of surprising the enemy in south Louisiana and capturing many men and stores. We also *hear* that Gen. Lee's army is laying waste Pennsylvania" [emphasis mine] (227). Her repetition of the word "hear" underscores the tentative nature of the information, so that readers are not surprised when less than a month later on August 10 Stone writes, "Our list of victories last month were all a mistake. Gen. Lee has recrossed into Virginia, and our march into Pennsylvania seems to have been barren of results. We do not hold nor have we destroyed a single Northern city, as we so much hoped" (233).

By 1865, Stone has learned through repeated disappointments to put little faith in the popular press. On January 29, she writes that "the very air is rife with rumors but nothing reliable. The favorite is that the Confederacy will certainly be recognized by all foreign powers immediately after the fourth of March, and we may look for a speedy peace with much more to the same. But we have been exalted and depressed by these

rumors too often to let them weigh with us now" (313). How does the unreliable nature of the Southern press affect Stone's sense of herself as "Southern" and her belief in Southern superiority? Though she uses the term "rumors" with increasing frequency to describe information in the Southern papers, and though she more openly expresses her doubts regarding the veracity of Southern reporters and Southern generals, she nevertheless continues to believe in the Confederacy's destiny. Toward the end of her war journal, Stone discusses the inaccuracies and political machinations of the Southern newspaper. On April 28, 1865, Stone writes vindictively of her joy at Lincoln's assassination, then proceeds—as she has so many times in her diary—to summarize the day's news:

There is great gloom over the town. All think that Lee and his army have surrendered Rumors, rumors, but nothing definite. Lee is certainly captured. Our strong arm of victory, the chief hope of our Country, is a prisoner with an army variously estimated at from 6,000 to 43,000 men captured on their retreat from Richmond. Dr. Kunckers told us as a secret that Johnston with his entire army has surrendered, but that news is suppressed through motives of policy. Our papers say Johnston's army has been reinforced by the flower of Lee's army, that he has a band of tried veterans and will make a determined stand. We know not what to believe Maybe after a few days we can rally for another stand. Now, most seem to think it useless to struggle longer, now that we are subjugated. I say, "Never, never, though we perish in the track of their endeavor!"

Words, idle words. What can poor weak women do? (333-4).

While Stone refers to her own passionate outburst as "idle words," the phrase could also be applied to the flood of words pouring forth from the daily press. Her feelings of impotence spring not only from society's rules which keep her safely in the drawing room, but from the barrier between her and the accurate information she so desperately craves. She expresses awareness that the official reports are often manipulated for political purposes; nevertheless, Stone continues to read, hungry for information concerning the battles which affect her brothers and her fledgling country.

Perhaps Stone's ambivalent response to the Southern papers springs from an awareness that they are not the only ones given to exaggeration and blatant propaganda. While Southern papers successfully stoked the fires of patriotism, Northern papers inflamed Confederate hearts with their depictions of brutal slaveholders.²⁹ In May 1861, Stone writes that "the Northern papers do make us so mad! . . . Why will they tell such horrible stories about us? Greeley is the worst of the lot; his wishes for the South are infamous and he has the imagination of Poe" (14). Ralph Fahrney asserts that "all contemporaries, friends and foe alike, testify that the *Tribune* exerted the greatest influence upon public opinion of any journal in the country" during the Civil War years, having a subscription of nearly three hundred thousand and an estimated readership of over one million (1). Harris concurs in this estimation, calling Greeley "one of the most influential newspapermen of the age, if not of all time" (5). Horace Greeley had served as editor of the *Tribune* for twenty years by the outbreak of the Civil War, and exerted iron control over the editorial opinions expressed in its pages. Though the *Tribune* strongly advocated for peaceable secession as late as November 1860, pointing out that while the right of secession "may be a revolutionary one . . . it exists nevertheless" (qtd.

in Fahrney 43—*Daily Tribune*, Nov. 9, 1860), by the early months of 1861, Greeley had reversed his policy, stridently arguing the unconstitutionality of secession and characterizing any compromise that would allow legal slavery to spread further in the western territories as a "national calamity" (Fahrney 60). Editorial headlines screamed, "NO COMPROMISE! NO CONCESSIONS TO TRAITORS! THE CONSTITUTION AS IT IS!" (qtd. in Fahrney 62, *Daily Tribune* February 18 to March 2, 1861). Although Greeley had been widely known as a pacifist, during those winter months of 1861 he began applying pressure on the Lincoln administration to commit to war. On April 3, 1861, the *Tribune* impatiently demanded, "Let this intolerable suspense and uncertainty cease! The Country, with scarcely a show of dissent, cries out—If we are to fight, so be it" (qtd. in Fahrney 73, *Daily Tribune* April 3, 1861).³¹ No doubt, Greeley's portrayal of Southerners as spineless traitors, combined with declarations such as that of May 14, 1861 which announced that "The Republic must live, even though Slavery should have to die!" (qtd. in Fahrney 112), prompted Stone's outburst against Greeley. While she does distinguish Greeley as an individual voice, she simultaneously allows him to speak for all Northerners. The *Tribune's* editorials help solidify the distinctness between Northerners and Southerners for Kate, and allow her to justify a vindictive attitude in response to the grossly inaccurate portraits of Southern gentlemen and ladies.

Another periodical which frequently made its appearance in the Stone household was *Harper's Weekly*. In an effort to document the media's shifting portrayal of African Americans, Richard Schneider has compiled over twelve hundred articles and editorials and over four hundred and seventy illustrations from major newspapers of the second half of the nineteenth century in *African American History in the Press, 1851-1899*. Although

he includes articles and illustrations from thirteen newspapers, David Dennard, a member of Schneider's advisory board, argues that Harper's Weekly was by far the "most prolific chronicler of events related to African Americans" (219). An overview of this pro-Union paper during the war years reveals a consistent anti-slavery editorial policy, but a radical shift in attitudes toward abolition which reflect the changing attitudes of Harper's northern readership.

During the ten years prior to the outbreak of war, Harper's stories and editorials dealing with African Americans centered on reports of renegade slave traders, public executions of various African Americans, various pieces of legislation dealing with the expansion of slavery into the western territories, and the political upheaval occasioned by the Dred Scott case and the John Brown affair. While many of the more sensational stories were located in the South, Harper's draws little to no overt connection between institutional slavery and supposedly inherent Southern character flaws.³¹ Within the course of the next three years, that claim would be made explicit. Loyalty to the Union and Lincoln's administration becomes synonymous with advocacy of immediate abolition, and all white Southerners living within the polluting reach of institutionalized slavery become demonized. While the political contours of slavery come into sharper focus, Harper's Weekly—along with many other northern newspapers—moves to identify the corroding evils of racism as a Southern problem. As Harper's begins reporting and editorializing on the conflict between the states, the enemy's face gradually takes shape, and that face belongs to the slaveholder.

In the early months of 1861, newspaper editors devoted their energies to covering the rapidly deteriorating relationships between the northern and southern states (Dennard

169). On March 30, Harper's published "The Two Constitutions," which was foundational in wedding a religiously zealous belief in abolition to a fervent Union patriotism. In this article, the Confederacy's constitution is identified as a "copy of the original Constitution of the United States, with some variations" (Schneider 180-81, "The Two Constitutions." Harper's March 30, 1861, pg. 194). Worse than plagiarizing the venerated Constitution of the United States, he accuses the Confederates of corrupting it.

³² Harper's further identifies slavery as a specifically Southern character flaw by publishing articles about slavery which caricature Southern speech and mannerisms,³³ or that name particular persons, a change in editorial policy from the pre-war years where the names of particular slaves or slave owners were generally withheld. For instance, on July 29, 1861, Harper's published a long letter from a Union soldier stationed at Fort Monroe. Comp. K. reports how his scouting party "captured" the houses and goods of rebels Mr. J. Watson and Mr. Loppan of Newport News, and liberated their slaves who were all too eager to help the Union soldiers, particularly one "darkey who was pale enough to pass for a white man" (195). At the letter's conclusion, the editor appended a detailed description and illustration of a whipping post belonging to "Mr. West, a wealthy man at Newport News. He is the owner of several hundred negroes, and is now at Yorktown, in Secession Army" (Schneider 196, "Our Army at Fortress Monroe." Harper's June 29, 1861, 413).

The rhetorically skillful inclusion of the slave's light coloring and the horrific details of Mr. West's whipping post both serve to justify the actions of General Butler, whose controversial decision to label fugitive slaves presenting themselves at Fort Monroe as "contraband of war" received much press during the summer months of 1861.

Butler's refusal to return runaway slaves to their masters prodded Lincoln's government to confront more forcefully the status of the African American. If the slave was indeed property as the Confederates maintained, then, Butler argued, that captured property could be used in the service of the Union army (Schneider 191-192, "Contraband of War." Harper's June 8, 1861 p 354); to this argument, the Secretary of War responded on behalf of the President that "General Butler is instructed not to permit any interference by his troops with the slaves of peaceful citizens, not encourage them to leave the service of their master, nor prevent the voluntary return of any fugitives to those from whom they may have escaped" (Schneider 202-203, "Domestic Intelligence." Harper's August 24, 1861, pg. 531). The months intervening between these two position statements saw the publication of several articles in Harper's highlighting the moral complexity of the Union army's responsibility toward those slaves who turned to them for sanctuary, eventually resulting in a more aggressively pro-emancipation stance taken by the periodical's editorial staff, a trend that continued into 1862.³⁴

Contrary to Dennard's claim that newspapers well into 1862 "continued to reveal [that] slaves and their white allies were responding with marked indifference to the Union's failure to deal forthrightly with the issues of slavery and emancipation" (217), examination of articles published in Harper's Weekly indicates deep engagement with the day's issues and a proactive editorial policy. For instance, on February 15, the periodical published an article entitled "An Instrument of Torture Among Slaveholders" describing a peculiarly shaped "heavy iron ring, fitting closely round the neck, from which extended three prongs, each two feet in length, with a ring on the end." Sergeant Charles Dewey,

Harper's correspondent, includes a sketch of the device, which a fugitive slave had been wearing for over two months. Dewey writes,

It is needless to say that we did not send the negro back to his master, but so far as we were concerned, left him perfectly free to do his own will.

The name of the person who has thus proved himself destitute of all humanity is Dudley Wells, of Montgomery County, Missouri. He is now a prisoner, held as a traitor to his country, and awaiting the punishment due his crime; and if he does not receive it at an earthly tribunal he certainly will at the tribunal of an outraged conscience. (Schneider 222, "An Instrument of Torture Among Slaveholders." Harper's February 15, 1862, pg. 108)

Though Wells technically belongs to the Union, Dewey carefully identifies him as one of the "secession slave-masters of Missouri," and verbally classifies him not only as a traitor to the ideals of his country, but as inhuman, a trend which will gain force and intensity as the year progresses. As further evidence of the nation's changing attitude toward those who participate in institutionalized slavery, Harper's reports that on Friday, February 21, New York City resident Nathaniel Gordon was executed for long-standing engagement in the slave trade. Though the slave-trade had officially been classed as piracy for forty years, punishable as a capital offence, the article notes that no one had ever been executed under that law. Gordon's hanging, the journalist notes, indicates that "the Administration of Mr. Lincoln has turned over a new leaf in this respect" (Schneider 224, "The Execution of Gordon, the Slave-Trader." Harper's March 8, 1862, p. 150). Both of these articles effectively remove the possibility of a loyal Unionist in sympathy with

slavery. No longer will participation in the slave trade be overlooked in the interests of keeping peace, the journalist editorializes, because those who are truly loyal to President Lincoln's administration and Northern ideals recognize the moral bankruptcy in such a position. After detailing the horrific conditions surrounding the transport of 897 men, women, and children on board Gordon's slave ship the *Erie*, the Harper's article concludes with a description of Gordon's execution: "The body swayed hither and thither for a few moments, and all was quiet. No twitchings, no convulsions, no throes, no agonies. His legs opened once, but closed again, and he hung a lump of dishonored clay" (Schneider 226). The uncharacteristic indulgence in purple prose underscores the message—traffic in slaves will not be tolerated, not by the government, and not by the press. Despite Lincoln's repeated claims that his "paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery" (Schneider 247, "The President on the Negro Question." Harper's September 6, 1862, p. 563), throughout the course of 1862 Northern patriotism and a pro-emancipation stance continue to be linked with ever stronger cords. Newspapers such as Harper's participate in interpreting what it means to be a Unionist, what characterizes a "true" Yankee man or woman. As newspaper editors and journalists interpret current political and military situations, they seek to shape not only their readers' opinions, but their self-perceptions. In so doing, the press shapes the public's ethnic identity.

Harper's seeks to eliminate ambiguity and ethnic complexity through articles such as "Abolition and Free Trade," which discusses the Confederacy's supposed plans to purchase national recognition from European powers by granting "absolute free trade for fifty years, and by decreeing the emancipation of every negro born at the South after the

recognition." After dismissing the proposal as the most foolish of rumors, the journalist asserts that "no Southern man at the present day believes that emancipation is desirable or possible at any future time Slavery is, in a word, the cause, end, and aim of the present rebellion" (Schneider 222, "Abolition and Free Trade." Harper's March 1, 1862 pg. 130). The message is clear: every Southerner is rabidly pro-slavery, and every loyal Northerner, by definition, supports emancipation. These articles seek to eliminate any middle ground. Harper's had long caricatured African Americans by employing terms like "picaninnies" and transcribing African American speech in dialect. Now those same techniques serve to distinguish the North/South ethnic divide, effectively reducing all Southerners to uni-dimensional Simon Legrees.

As 1863 dawns, a major concern of Harper's editorial staff centers upon the enrollment of African American troops in the United States army. Though Congress had passed a measure on July 17, 1862 authorizing President Lincoln to employ fugitive slaves in whatever capacity he deemed appropriate, heated controversy continued to engulf the issue of African Americans serving in the military. Throughout the year, Harper's steadily published news items and editorials emphasizing the military necessity as well as moral efficacy of issuing uniforms and rifles to the multitude of African Americans eager to fight, while acknowledging the unsettled nature of public opinion. As thousands of former slaves flooded the Union lines in the wake of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, the question is asked with increasing urgency, "Shall there be colored soldiers?" (Schneider 275, "The Inevitable Question." Harper's February 14, 1863, p. 98) In "The Inevitable Question," the Harper's writer argues that

The late slaves know that our lines are the lines of liberty. Thus hundreds of thousands of able-bodied men are made dependent upon the guidance of the Government, which requires, and will long require, a large military force. The men so dependent are trained to obedience. They are by nature docile and brave. They have every thing to fight for, and they know it.

The war has the same desperate earnestness to them that it has to their late masters. One side fight for property: the other for life and liberty. Is not the solution providential? (February 14, 1863 p.98)

In a familiar strategy, the writer weds military expediency and Providential design in an effort to simplify the situation's ambiguities. The February 14 article is followed by a series of stories about former slaves conscripted by General Banks to dig trenches for the Union army quartered in Louisiana, aged refugee slaves attached to Company C of the Fifty-first Massachusetts Regiment, the First Louisiana Native Guards' valor coupled with marked Caucasian facial characteristics, and the white soldiers' testimonials concerning the African Americans' docility and ability to master basic military maneuvers. Dennard writes that between May and December, Harper's Weekly published over two dozen separate articles which "offered its readers a truly extraordinary. . .account of black life in the Union army" (264). This abundance of positive press, coupled with multiple engravings depicting "our colored troops at work," aimed at shifting the tide of public opinion toward acceptance of African Americans as legitimate and valued members of the Union army. In an April 18 editorial entitled "Loyal Soldiers," the writer observes that "the prejudice against black soldiers is steadily disappearing before the record of their bravery in the field. There is no instance of their

ill-conduct. In the various expeditions upon which they have been sent . . . they have shown an obedience, an alacrity, a steadiness, and bravery which are of the best augury for the future" (Schneider 288, Harper's April 18, 1863 p. 243). Interestingly, the writer praises characteristics which reassure readers that white officers have retained control, rather than emphasizing ingenuity, initiative, or ferocity, traits traditionally associated with outstanding warriors. Similarly, the writer affirms the success of the various operations in which these "black soldiers" have participated, but hastens to add that "none of them have been of the greatest importance" (243). Surely Harper's readers clearly understood the comforting message this journalist offers: the violence accompanying the Haitian revolution and other prophesied abolition horrors were not to be visited upon these loyal Unionists who were compassionately—and patriotically—supporting emancipation of this docile and obedient race. Harper's heralds a millennium of racial harmony, blocked only by the fiends wearing Confederate gray.³⁵

Writers such as Frederick Douglass and Lydia Maria Child had written extensively of the sexual dynamics of slavery; however, prior to 1864 Harper's had only alluded to the realities of sexual bondage existing on many Southern farms and plantations. "Slave Children," an article published on January 10, asserts that the commencement of war guaranteed two inevitable results: "first, that the loathsome secret history of the slave system in this country would be exposed; and second, that the appalled and indignant common sense of the people would see that no honorable peace was possible except upon condition of the annihilation of the system" (Schneider 322, "Slave Children." Harper's January 10, 1864, p. 66). What was this secret that Southern gentry tried so desperately to conceal, even at the cost of plunging the nation

into war? Harper's offers "a terrible illustration of this truth of the outrage of all natural human affections . . . in the engravings, from photographs, of slave children" whose fair complexions and golden hair demonstrate that they "are, of course, the offspring of white fathers through two or three generations" (Schneider 322, "Slave Children." Harper's January 10, 1864, p. 66). The accompanying article offers biographical sketches of the pictured children, carefully noting that eleven-year-old Rebecca Huger "was a slave in her father's house," the father of six-year-old Rosina Downs serves "in the rebel army," and eight-year-old Charles Taylor "has been twice sold as a slave. First by his father and 'owner,' Alexander Wethers, of Lewis County, Virginia" (Schneider 322-323, "White and Colored Slaves." Harper's January 30, 1864, p. 71). The journalist highlights the Caucasian coloring of these "emancipated slaves" and reminds readers of the "true" origin of the national conflict by asserting that "the moment these gentry saw political power pass from their hands they knew that the terrible truth would be told, and annihilate their 'institution,' and therefore they made their grand and desperate movement to destroy the Government and plunge us all into common ruin" ("Slave Children" p. 66).

Harper's argues that the degenerate character of the Southern rebels is further revealed by General Forrest's April 12 attack on Fort Pillow. According to the New York Times, after the surrender of Union troops, Confederate soldiers, "insatiate as fiends, bloodthirsty as devils incarnate . . . commenced an indiscriminate butchery of the whites and blacks, including those of both colors who had been previously wounded" (Schneider 333, "Black Flag." New York Times, April 16, 1864, p.224). A week later, Harper's weighs in on the massacre at Fort Pillow. With characteristic sarcasm, the writer observes that "the annals of savage warfare nowhere record a more inhuman, fiendish

butchery than this perpetrated by the representatives of the 'superior civilization' of the States in rebellion" (Schneider 336, "The Massacre at Fort Pillow." Harper's April 30, 1864 p. 283). The behavior of Southern troops, according to the Harper's journalist, not only justifies the vengeful attitude of Northern troops, but also compels them to participate in the same "savage practices."

Perhaps the most dramatic of those savage practices was the live burial of an estimated two to five living African American soldiers. On May 7, Harper's published an extended first-hand account of Daniel Tyler, one of the men who was buried alive. Aside from the greater length (approximately two thousand words as opposed to the more typical length of five hundred to one thousand words), the article stands out as one of the first to date in Harper's written from an African American perspective. The writer introduces himself as one whose "skin is dark, as my mother's was before me" (Schneider 338, "Buried Alive." Harper's May 7, 1864, pg. 302). After recounting his escape from his father's Alabama plantation, Tyler narrates the destruction of his all-black regiment at Fort Pillow. According to his account, four hundred African American soldiers and two hundred and fifty white Union soldiers sought to defend the make-shift fort against a Confederate force of six thousand. At four o'clock in the afternoon, the Union soldiers surrendered, throwing down their weapons and asking for quarter. According to Tyler, "Murder was in every rebel heart; flamed in every rebel eye. Indiscriminate massacre followed instantly upon our surrender" (Schneider 339). Describing the Confederates in terms such as "savages," "monster," and "devils," Tyler provides multiple examples of what a later article will label "rebel atrocities": hands hacked off, repeated post-surrender shootings, splitting skulls. Tyler himself reports being shot twice, having an eye put out,

and then being buried alive in a ditch along with many other Union soldiers.

Understandably, Tyler collapses the complexities of the Civil War into one issue: slavery. As so many other Harper's writers have done, Tyler intensifies the regional distinctions by generalizing the behavior of Forrest's troops to all Southerners. He concludes his narrative by praying that "God [may] speed the day when this whole slaveholder's rebellion—what remains of it—shall be 'Buried Alive' " (Schneider 340).

In stark contrast to the demonic portrayals of Confederate officers and soldiers, Harper's drenches Sherman in light. Though numerous sources, including several of the diaries under consideration, provide evidence of the atrocities committed by Sherman's soldiers on their infamous march to the sea, he is portrayed in Harper's as a Christ-like liberator. "Gen. Sherman's 'Thousand Slaves'," published on January 21, 1865, provides a rare window on a Northern newspaper's reading of a Southern newspaper, both of which interpret the same events in diametrically opposing ways. Commenting on "the most amusing of the late stories in the Richmond papers," the Harper's writer cites an article from the Richmond Dispatch which "quotes" a conversation in which General Sherman "declared his belief in the immortality of slavery, and his expectation of owning a thousand slaves after the war" (Schneider 365, January 21, 1865, p. 34). The Harper's journalist responds with characteristic irony that indeed Sherman "has been signally successful in extending the area of slavery by force of arms. He has just marched through Georgia riveting chains, and, of course, branding his future property" (Schneider 366). In keeping with the tone of articles published in 1864 which increasingly demanded universal emancipation as the inescapably moral response to institutionalized slavery, Sherman is depicted as Lincoln's anointed apostle for implementing the

Emancipation Proclamation. Though early in the sectional crisis Harper's had declared, "If [the Southern States] can do better without us than with us, God forbid that we should keep them!" (Schneider 178, "Reconstruction" Harper's March 9, 1861, p. 146), by mid-1864, the editorial staff boldly asserts that "the war was inevitable" because freedom and slavery could not co-exist. Only by embracing slavery on a national scale could war be avoided, an option no "honorable American citizen or Christian man seriously regret[s]" not taking (Schneider 354, "Liberty and Union." Harper's August 6, 1864, p. 498). The journalist in "Sherman's Freedmen" writes confidently that "It was hoped, it was known, that Sherman's great march would bring thousands of slaves with it. It has done so" (Schneider 367, Harper's January 28, 1865, p. 50). He alludes to Christ who "led captives in his train and gave gifts to men" (Ephesians 4: 8), and presents Sherman as a national savior followed by thousands of former slaves who will learn from him "how a Yankee soldier keeps his word" (Schneider 366). During the last months of the war, stories of ratification of the Constitutional amendment abolishing slavery dominate Harper's pages, as the Union is swept with an apocalyptic fervor.

Regardless of this blatant ethnic stereotyping, Kate Stone and many other Confederate diarists consume the pages of Harper's Weekly whenever they find it available. Though Kate goes for weeks on end without identifying the specific source of the information that she's summarizing, lumping Southern and Northern papers together in one unreliable mass, the reader can deduce from her reports of occupied territories that many entries relate events through the lens of a Northern periodical, such as the rumor that "Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi, and Tennessee have applied for admission into the Union again" (239), or the premature announcement that "Charleston has fallen,

Louisiana and Arkansas are to be entirely deserted by our troops" (244). Early in March, 1863, Kate writes that her family "get[s] no Southern papers but occasionally a Northern paper" (175), which they devour despite the frequently slanted reporting and pro-abolitionist sentiments. Brayton Harris observes that "by February 1864, the number of daily Southern papers had dwindled from about eighty to thirty-five, and was steadily decreasing" (115), and that toward the end of the war, "most Southern papers had long since been relying on news from the Northern press or from Southern newspapers being published in Yankee-held territory, which was about the same thing" (317). My perusal of extant issues of the Vicksburg Daily Whig from 1862 and 1863 support Harris' conclusions. Both before and during the occupation of Vicksburg, the Whig includes reports from Union newspapers and the Northern Associated Press, at times alerting readers that the following blurbs are an "interesting summary of truths, rumors and lies" (No. 96, May 15, 1862), but more frequently inserting the borrowed reports without comment. Readers are left to sift truth from lies, and to speculate on the political complicity of certain Confederate newspapers. Such is the case when Mary Chesnut comments in June 1865 that suspected Union sympathizers on the Charleston Mercury were safe from political and economic reprisals because the Yankees would never "touch a hair of any body's head who was connected with the Mercury. The Yankees know too well who has most aided them here" (261).

Why does Kate and—presumably—the rest of her ardently Confederate family read often inflammatory reports from the Northern press? ³⁶ One answer is simply that Kate willingly takes information wherever she can get it. Although the most frequently cited sources of information in Kate's journal are the various dailies and periodicals that

the Stone family manages to receive or borrow throughout the War, Kate also reports information she gathers from her brother's letters, from letters that neighbors have received, from gossip at church socials, and from various refugees who travel through their Louisiana and later their Texas home. She even reports her own and her neighbor's speculations concerning probable troop movements and the whereabouts of runaway slaves. Kate Stone's journal reflects eagerness to participate in the momentous events swirling around her, and her equations of access to information with a form of participation. The lines among her own thoughts, those of her mother, and those of the New Orleans Picayune frequently blur, indicating her willingness to include these outside voices in her record of the War. Even Northern papers are included when they are perceived to be unbiased or conciliatory, such as when Kate writes on February 15, 1865, "Have just finished the New York News of January 4. It is strongly in favor of peace and very encouraging to the South" (317). As a writer herself, Kate understands the power of words not only to reflect but also to mold national thought. She does not allow the editorials or her brothers to speak for her, losing herself in their language and ideas; rather, she actively chooses what she will incorporate into her book, freely and powerfully molding a record which reflects her consciousness of herself as a literate Southern lady, and of Louisiana as part of a valiant, yet deeply conflicted young nation.

Perhaps an even stronger motivation than her desire for accurate information propels Kate to expend energy on procuring and reading the dailies. On Christmas night, 1863, Kate summarizes her recent literary excursions: "Mrs. Lawrence has been kind about lending us her books, but we have about finished her library. Have read history until I feel as dry as those old times. Have nearly memorized Tennyson and read and

reread our favorite plays in Shakespeare. Fortunately he never grows old." After detailing the contents of Mrs. Lawrence's library, Kate returns to a familiar theme: "We hope Mr. McGee will be able to get Harper's to us. We wrote to him for it. That would keep us stirred up for awhile at least. The literature of the North is to us what the 'flesh pots of Egypt' were to the wandering Israelites—we long for it" (270). Kate's insatiable hunger for texts encompasses letters, sermons, the Bible, both Confederate and Union periodicals, and any poetry or fiction on which she can lay her hands. Because the ability to read and write is inextricably woven into her self identity, she devours all texts, using her diary as a forum for discussing, embracing, and refuting the ideas to which she exposes herself. Though Kate realizes the problematic nature of Northern "literature," she must have something to read. And if that text comes from the pen of Horace Greeley, then so be it.

LITERARY INFLUENCES

As Union forces swept toward Port Hudson, Louisiana in March of 1863, diarist Sarah Morgan and her sisters prepared to face the enemy. Amidst the panic of hiding valuables, secreting consumables, and carting away slaves, Morgan writes,

I was lamenting to myself all the troubles that surround us, the dangers and difficulties that perplex us, thinking of the probable fate that might befall some of our brave friends and defenders in P. Hudson, when I thought too of the fun we would miss. . . . But worse than that, I was longing for something to read, when I remembered Frank told me he had sent to Alexandria for Bulwer's "Strange Story" for me, and then I

unconsciously said 'How I wish it would get here before the Yankees!' I am *very* anxious to read it, but confess I am ashamed at having thought of it at such a crisis. (437)

Far from expressing an anomalous attitude toward literature, Morgan joins diarists Lucy Breckinridge, who declares that she "shall have to read to be comforted" (138); Kate Stone, who longs for "the literature of the North" (270); Emma LeConte, who writes that her books have sustained her through the horrors of war, for "in them I have lived and found my chief source of pleasure" (22); and Lucy Buck, who reflects that "there seems to be so little real happiness that I would like to make for myself an imaginary life in the mimic world created by the author's pen. I like to merge my individuality into that of the imaginary characters, enter into all their joys, share their trials and forget the ugly realities of real life around me" (41). For these five women, along with the majority of the other diarists considered in this study, literature provides an alternate narrative frame through which to reconfigure wartime's inevitable horrors and boredom.

Confederate women were not unique in their love of literature. Historians have long acknowledged nineteenth-century middle- and upper-class women as "the chief consumers of the novels that became, as the *Southern Literary Messenger* proclaimed in 1854, the 'characteristic literary effort of the present age' " (Faust 153-154). The sale of "sentimental" or "domestic" fiction, characterized by attention to the romantic fate of female characters and the intricacies of family relationships, accounted for a substantial wedge of America's publishing industry profits, and supported the careers of female novelists such as Caroline Gilman, E. D. E. N. Southworth, Marion Harland, Susan Warner, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Augusta Jane Evans (Faust 154). Numerous

references to these authors fill Confederate women's diaries. While the popularity of novels such as Charlotte Temple or Beulah is unquestioned, Confederate diarists also fill their pages with allusions to Charles Dickens, Anthony Trollope, George Eliot, William Makepeace Thackeray, Charlotte Bronte, Walter Scott, Victor Hugo, Alfred Tennyson, William Wordsworth, George Byron, John Milton, William Shakespeare, Geoffrey Chaucer, Thomas Moore, and dozens of other novelists, poets, and historians. In light of their largely eclectic reading habits, what can we deduce about the influence of literature on the consciousness of these particular diarists?

Much of this ground has received sound critical treatment. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese argues that Southerner Sarah Gayle uses fiction in her antebellum journal "to create a haze of romance through which to view imperfect human relationships, physical decay, and frontier conditions" (14). Drew Gilpin Faust notes similar influences among Confederate women, asserting that sentimental fiction offered Confederate women a means to "invent new lives and . . . imagine new selves, new identities, and new meanings that seemed too frightening to contemplate outside the world of literary fantasy" (178). Of course, since we are unable to interview these Confederate women, the evidence supporting Fox-Genovese's and Faust's arguments must rest in the diaries themselves. Though Faust documents the frequency with which Confederate diarists mention reading fictional works and soundly argues that their reading prompts them to write, she approaches her analysis of the interaction between literature and diary from the perspective of Augusta Jane Evans' Macaria, which leads her to unduly privilege the role of the sentimental novel.³⁸ Steven Kagle and Lorenza Gramegna arrive at many of the same conclusions as Fox-Genovese and Faust. They identify a common "gender-related

pattern" (40) found in early American women's diaries which "involves the borrowing from fictional works of plot elements, character behavior, and values that are so exaggerated, romanticized, and / or stylized that they would be questioned if presented in a realistic context" (41). Kagle and Gramegna argue that using literary models enables diarists to "redefine the past, alter the perception of the present, and control the future; the frightening can be made to seem exciting or comical and the improbable hope, possible" (41). Each of these studies focuses on the important realization that literature offers agency to women struggling to cope with life's disruptions, and each raises intriguing questions concerning the influence of particular texts, literary themes, and characters on diary production.

However, the portions of these three arguments which seek to establish causality between "creative" literature and diary literature ³⁸ deal inadequately with two significant obstacles: (1) the diarists' great variety of reading material, and (2) the fact that, unlike formal autobiographies where a single literary model might be imposed upon an entire work, lines of influence shift in periodic writing as the diarist exposes herself to new texts. Cathy Davidson observes that efforts to deduce how individual "novel readers. . . react[ed] to the individual books they individually read" are doomed due to lack of information (75). While critics might conjecture concerning the relationship between a diarist's reading selections and the subsequent appearance in her diary of specific themes or—in terms of our study—ethnic attitudes, I would suggest that such causal relationships are tenuous at best. Unlike the largely homogenous voices issuing from the contemporaneous pulpit and press, the literary voices these diarists heard were much more diverse. Arguments which identify a monolithic or uniform influence uniting a

single diary or diaries from this time period ignore the enormous amount of heterogeneous information, patterns, and motifs cascading into the minds of diarists who devour multiple texts in rapid succession, and who seldom refer back to previously mentioned literary texts.³⁹

Some of these pitfalls can be avoided by focusing attention on techniques diarists use to diffuse the boundaries between the "fictional" world of their reading and the "factual" world of their diaries. Kagle and Gramegna suggest that a diarist's use of literary techniques results in the "fictionalization" of her text (38) which allows her to more overtly craft her self-image, her portrayal of other people, and her understanding of experiential reality. Instead of focusing on the influence of a particular work of literature or the emergence of a clearly identifiable theme, I will examine how one diarist fictionalizes her text, then suggest ways in which these characteristics point toward ethnic consciousness.

As in our discussion of the influence of sermons and popular periodicals, the most obvious evidence of literature's influence on the consciousness of Confederate diarists is the enormous number of references they make to literary texts. They record what they read, and record reading out loud to each other (Faust 156-157). While all of the diarists considered in this study frequently mention poetry, plays, novels, or other works of fiction they are reading, Lucy Breckinridge's diary refers to an unusually large number of novels,⁴⁰ a feature which uniquely suits her text for the study of literary influences.⁴¹ Lucy Breckinridge of Botetourt County, Virginia was nineteen years old when she began her diary in August of 1862. The daughter of the county's largest slaveholder, whose pedigree included a Botetourt county colonial justice and a brigadier general,

Breckinridge and her eight siblings grew up awash in wealth (Robertson 2, 4). Although her tutors and governesses confined her formal education to "French, literature, poetry, religion, needlework, art, music, and manners," Breckinridge supplemented this traditionally female course of study with reading selections from her family's extensive library (12). While readers might wonder why she reaches for particular books in the family library, or how particular novels reappear in her diary, these questions lead only to vague speculation. Perhaps a more compelling question asks how the literature she consumed influences the way she perceived reality. Lucy Breckinridge's text demonstrates an abundant inclusion of fictional allusions, self-conscious use of fictional forms, and an acute awareness of audience, three characteristics which contribute to her self-portrayal as an educated, white, Southerner.

Not only titles, but fragments of poems, plays, and novels find their way into Confederate diaries. The vast majority of these diarists incorporate literary fragments in their texts, both other authors' work and, occasionally, their own efforts. This pervasive pattern indicates that these writers saw textual boundaries as permeable, a characteristic previously noted in our examination of sermons and popular periodicals. At times, the diarist copies a memorable passage into her entry, noting the author and explaining its presence in her text. Such is the case when Breckinridge copies a full paragraph from The Spectator into her diary and comments that the piece chastises her for feeling superstitious (91-92), or when Chesnut reproduces a section of Augustine's Confessions, presumably as penance for skipping Sunday worship (202). More frequently, these diarists include short quotations which apparently capture their mood, comment on the entry's action, or act as proverbs. For instance, after recording that she has broken her

engagement with David Houston, Breckinridge quotes, " 'Oh! woman, fair woman, light as a feather, false as fair weather. Who will believe her?' " (88). During a particularly strong period of nostalgic melancholy, she quotes, " 'How oft heart-sick and sore I've wished I were once more a little child' " (164). And when quarreling with her new fiancé, she notes her agreement with "the Duke of Buckingham that, 'The truest joys they seldom prove, Who free from quarrels live, 'Tis the most tender part of love, Each other to forgive' " (182). Sometimes, the diarist acknowledges the source of the quotation; just as frequently, quoted material bleeds into her own sentences, or is distinguished only by quotation marks. This inclusion of profuse quantities of specifically literary material suggests that these women identify themselves with the poets and novelists whose words they lay alongside their own. They, too, are writers. They, too, create highly allusive texts. And like the majority of these published authors, they are articulate, well-read, genteel, and Anglo-Saxon.⁴²

The boundaries between literary source material and diary become further blurred by the diarists' appropriation of fictional character types. Although Confederate diarists utilize character types from a variety of sources such as Shakespeare's plays and the Bible, Breckinridge favors more contemporary models. In one typical passage, Breckinridge finishes Trollope's The Bertrams, and decides that the book's interest is enhanced because "the characters remind me of people that I know" (43). In another entry, Breckinridge records her sister's reaction to her riding partner, Dr. Archer: "Sister Julia saw us gallop up to the door, and said she did not know whether that splendid looking man was the hero of the novel she is writing, 'Earle Hastings,' or some real *character*" [italics mine] (164). Reality folds into literature, so that both of Julia's

options frame Dr. Archer as a fictional construct. Apparently, Breckinridge sympathizes with her sister's confusion, because she concludes the segment by observing that "he does look magnificent on horseback, his curls flowing in the breeze" (164).

Though Archer cuts a charming figure, he cannot compete with Breckinridge's second fiancé, Lieutenant Thomas Bassett, whose idea of conducting a correspondence in code links him to her favorite romantic protagonists. The cipher is based on the phrase A SOLEMNITY, with numerical values attached to each letter. Breckinridge and Bassett use the code for several weeks in their exchanged love letters, and she encodes those portions of her diary containing details pertinent to her relationship with Bassett. For instance, on November 21st, 1863, she writes "8 57glg5d 60254f 93 485u9 b122599 9h82 w55k & d3 43v5 h86 v5r0 6uch 739 9h5 2165 w108 43v5d 6r h3u2937" which translates as "I engaged myself to Lieut. Bassett this week and do love him very much—not the same way I loved Mr. Houston" (165). Bassett's idea of initiating a cipher appeals to Breckinridge's romantic and literary inclinations. Indeed, it is his unusual facility with words—his wit, his ability to "quiz" her sisters, his powerful letters—that seems to charm her most. Through this verbal outpouring, he conspires with Breckinridge to turn himself into the type of character she finds so irresistible.

Not only does Breckinridge allude to novels and poems, but she deliberately chooses a literary form for her diary, a decision influenced by her reading of epistolary novels. Instead of engaging in epistolary exchanges like a conventional epistolary novel, Breckinridge frames her diary as a one-sided correspondence addressed to the imaginary Harriet Randolph, who she creates in her first entry:

I am going to keep an Acta Diurna, no, that would not be an appropriate name—I think I shall write in the epistolary style, telling all the events of the day, my thoughts, feelings, etc. . . . Well, the question presents itself; what sort of friend shall I choose? A discreet female of advanced age? A respectable maiden aunt? A young and intimate school mate? Or an old and attached governess or tutor? It is a hard question to decide. Upon reflection, I think I shall select a female, rather older than myself and a great deal smarter, but whose sweet and gentle disposition shall call forth all my confidence, an expression of all my feelings and doubts, etc. . . . I never had such a friend and I shall love her so much. So, my dear, kind, blue-eyed friend, my fidus Achates, here comes my first letter, dated—

Monday, August 11th, 1862

I have not written to you for so long, sweet friend, that I shall very frequently have to resort to the past. You have not seen nor heard from us for five years?—that is shocking. The earliest and most delightful associations I have are connected with your name, Harriet Randolph. You are named after an old and valued friend of my mother's, one of the noblest and most beautiful characters I ever heard of, whose life seems more like some sad romance than anything else, and you are *my* friend Harriet, talented and good, as was my mother's. (25-26)

In this remarkable first entry, Breckinridge overtly chooses a persona for her diary, picking up and discarding several possibilities before settling on "a female, rather older than myself and a great deal smarter" (25). Although the majority of Breckinridge's

entries assume a reader without explicitly personifying her journal, she does frequently address remarks to Harriet Randolph, the imagined recipient of her epistolary novel. In the ten-page chapter entitled "In Maiden Expectation," for example, Breckinridge addresses "dear Harriet" (173 & 178); "dear H." (173); and "my old friend" (174). While readers can surely suggest literary models for each of the personifications proposed in this first entry, it is significant to note that Breckinridge herself identifies Harriet as the namesake of "an old and valued friend of my mother's" who was "one of the noblest and most beautiful *characters* I ever heard of" [italics mine] (26). The diarist's "Harriet" originates from her mother's stories, a "real" woman whose life reminds Breckinridge of "some sad romance" (26). The diary, thus, stands on multiple layers of fictionalization: Breckinridge chooses a conventional literary structure for her diary, then addresses it to a created character, who grows out of her mother's stories about a "real" woman whose life seems fictional. This absorption of empirical reality into the world of literary texts and Breckinridge's own imagination is demonstrated repeatedly over the next twenty-eight months of her diary, indicating a tendency to approach lived experience through the lens of literature.

Breckinridge forcefully returns to her conception of her diary as a novel in her next to the last diary entry:

My life is like a plain, little novel, written by a silly, but practical schoolgirl. I sometimes, of a windy night, pick up this brown-backed novel, which is now somewhat old and worn out, and sit down on the floor near the hearth and read it by firelight. I glance carelessly over some portions—they fail to interest me. Some chapters I scarcely ever read,

they are gloomy and filled with accounts of my enemies. . . . Others, though they are sad, very sad, are yet sweet to remember, and I read them often and always with a softened, penitent heart. But one of my favorite portions is near the end of the book(God grant it may be!). It is the heroes and heroines of that chapter whom I have had in my heart all day—whose faces and forms I have been recalling with such sadness and regret. That chapter of the last four months is the one I shall read with most pleasure. . . the tears will come when I think of it for I fear that this last beautiful episode, so full of love and joy and poetry to me, will be the last bright one throughout this old volume. (220).

While Robert Fothergill observes that diarists frequently "think of themselves as engaged in the composition of a book" (63) whose ultimate shape "lean[s] towards acknowledged literary forms" (52), he observes that diarists' comprehension of the thematic patterns and overall form of their text occurs most commonly in retrospect. He notes that "the diary so to speak becomes conscious of itself, and the writer grows to appreciate the shape that his own image and likeness have taken" (45). Breckinridge's initial articulation and her consistent maintenance of the epistolary framework forcefully indicate that she perceives herself as an author engaged in crafting a coherent work.

In addition to her overarching narrative design, Breckinridge's text often articulates a more localized sense of shaping plots or "scenes" from the raw material of lived experience. Many other Confederate diaries follow suit. Ellen Renshaw House, Eliza Andrews, and Mary Chesnut, for example, repeatedly insert set pieces into their texts which are distinguished from the surrounding entry by the quotation of dialogue

(frequently in dialect) and an increased awareness of physical movements and expressions of "characters" who perform on the stages of their diaries. Sarah Morgan frequently steps outside her diary's narrative flow to comment overtly on the constructed nature of particular "scenes." In one remarkable passage, she returns to an earlier recorded incident in an attempt to capture the complexity of experience. After offering another "brief sketch" of this "brain picture" (496), Morgan observes that each of the story's three participants experienced a different reality: "There are three versions of it, however. The story 'John' knows, as he felt it, the story Sarah tells as she knows it, and the story Miriam remembers as she witnessed the byplay, or at least one part of it" (498). Though Morgan proceeds to explore the consequences of all three "versions," she remains aware that as the storyteller, the power to shape the incident ultimately rests with her.

Breckinridge, likewise, demonstrates acute awareness of her role as storyteller or playwright. For instance, on November 17, 1862, Breckinridge remarks that "Upon entering the parlor, we were introduced to Captain Frank Clarke of New Orleans Then entered upon the scene Mr. Willie Michel of Washington, a conceited, smart, handsome, interesting, diminutive gentleman Later in the evening the stage was rendered more thrillingly interesting by the appearance of Dr. Todd and *Lieut. Richardson* (!) of Louisiana" (78-79). In this entry, she describes the day's action and setting in terms of a play, where she alone remains aware of the literary construction. Several months later, Breckinridge records a particularly tender parting between her family and her would-be lover Charlie Kelterwell. Although she portrays herself as

heartbroken, she nevertheless cannot resist breaking the scene's emotional boundaries in order to comment on its comedic aspects:

Then they all told us goodbye. Mr. K. lingered after the others. My heart was almost breaking, but I am unfortunate enough to see something ludicrous in everything. His eyes were full of tears (so were mine); he shook hands with me, then putting my hand in his left one and containing it all the while, shook Mary's, then Annie's, and stood holding Annie's and mine as if he could not tear himself away. . . . And so we stood until the car commenced to move and I told him to go. He looked at us all, his eyes running over, and in a choking voice, and so fervently said, 'God bless you!' and tore himself away. That's the last we saw of our 'Brother Charlie' (208-209).

Do Breckinridge's recorded recollections of these two incidents coincide with her lived experience? Aside from the obvious futility of such a question, Kagle and Gremegna note that "the line between an accurate rendering of events and a creative manipulation of reality is not always apparent even to the diarists themselves" (42). The salient point with regard to the present discussion is that literary form structures experience.

The role of storyteller requires an audience. Although Breckinridge's text appears to be unique among Confederate diaries in its highly self-conscious creation of a fictional audience for her diary, several other diarists utilize an implied epistolary format. For instance, Cornelia McDonald's diary was begun as a daily record for her husband (Gwin 4), and Ellen Renshaw House wrote her diary for her brother (House 200). Kagle and Gremegna note that epistolary diaries were not uncommon in the eighteenth century, a

trend which they attribute to the popularity of epistolary novels (48). While epistolary diaries share a strong sense of audience with more conventional letters, Kagle points out that the completion of large sections (or indeed the entire diary) before receiving response from the intended recipient marks an essential difference between the two genres (American Diary Literature 88). Because the diarist spends little to no time responding to return letters, she is "able to impose. . . her conception of the addressee's reaction. As a result, the diary as audience increasingly becomes a creation of the diarist's mind and decreasingly becomes an accurate approximation of the real person addressed the author of an epistolary diary may create the intended recipient with much of the freedom that a novelist has in creating a character" (88). The audience, thus, becomes an elaborate construct operating within the pages of the diary.

Even when a specific reader remains unnamed, these diarists frequently express an insubstantial sense of audience, prompting them toward self-reflexive remarks such as "How very matter of fact and uninteresting my journal is" (Breckinridge 93); "Every thing is so trite, so stale, so tedious and matter of fact, so dry and uninteresting, that I am strongly tempted to throw [my diary] in the fire every time I look at it" (Morgan 494); "When I tried to chronicle the painful events transpiring I found I could not. It would not only take too much time, but perhaps it is best not to put all I felt and suffered on paper. One of these days I may think those feelings were wicked" (LeConte 98); or "I have seen, heard & forgotten so much—that. . . I must regret not keeping a daily record" (Chesnut 6). Each of these comments implies awareness of a future reader—a child or posterity—who will evaluate the style and reliability of the record, and perhaps pass judgment on the character of the diarist. Sometimes the diarist imagines a sympathetic audience,

comparable to Morgan's delight at hearing that her brother Gibbes had read aloud her letters to fellow officers who "would often ask if he had received another letter from his 'smart, pretty little sister' " (281). More frequently, when these diarists have no specific reader in mind, they imagine a hostile audience composed of voyeuristic Yankees. As Sherman's army marches toward Columbia, Emma LeConte records that she has "destroyed most of [her] papers," rather than have them "share the fate of Aunt Jane's and Cousin Ada's . . . which were read and scattered along the roads" (31). Though Sarah Morgan refuses to part with her journal, she acknowledges the probability that if it falls into Union hands that it "will be read aloud to me to torment me" (437). And when the Union army approaches Grove Hill, Breckinridge laments, "Poor, old journal—it doesn't like Yankee raids. It came so very near being consigned to the flames last Friday (the 13th of May) when we thought the Yanks were coming, but Ma hid it away in the folds of an old dress—and so 'twas left to tell its tale to generations yet unborn" (187).

The tales these diaries most frequently tell identify Confederate women as heroes, slaves as children or traitors, and Union soldiers as scoundrels. Many Confederate diarists voice fears that Union soldiers will behave like barbarians, reading and ridiculing their texts instead of observing the acknowledged rules of civility which protect the privacy of a woman's papers. As diarists imagine their words providing entertainment at the soldiers' mess, their feelings of humiliation and anger reinforce the negative ethnic stereotypes which they willingly believe. Under these imagined conditions, reading becomes an invasion, an exposure of a female space. As the record of her perceptions and experiences, a woman's letters and the diary itself act as surrogates for her actual body. Just as the soldier's body can attack or be captured by the enemy, so too can the diary

participate in the aggression and causalities of war.⁴³ While these diarists' fears might seem exaggerated to modern-day readers, William Decker notes just such an incident when captured Confederate letters fell into the hands of Union officer William Lusk: "Of course we had to read them. . .and I blush to say we read with special interest the tender epistles which fair South Carolina maidens penned for the eye alone of South Carolina heroes" (101). Interestingly, several of these Confederate diarists record reading confiscated Union letters. Breckinridge, who frets over the fate of her own writings, reports that "we amused ourselves reading some Yankee letters that Capt. Harris captured. They were very amusing" (51).

Frequently, the imagined audience is the diarist's future self. As a form of autobiography, the diary by definition seeks to encode images of the writer's past and present self. However, diarists also look forward, attempting to gauge reactions of more mature selves to present writing. Breckinridge frequently engages in this activity. When she feels tempted to destroy her diary, she determines to "keep it until the 11th of next August, as a reflection of my faults and follies, inconstancies and inconsistencies. Whenever I wish to try my blushing faculties I can read the first month of my journal. Yes, I'll keep it as an antidote to vanity" (107). In other cases where Breckinridge imagines rereading her text, she seems preoccupied with creating an "interesting" account, so that both her projection of her older self and her self contained in the pages of the diary become characters. Breckinridge seeks to clarify her present feelings toward her fiancé David Houston by creating alternate future personas. In one scenario, she pictures herself as "fat, old Mrs. Jones" and Houston as "a settled down plain, old lawyer, married to *somebody*" (64). Upon reaching that imagined plateau, she writes that "I and my old

man will amuse ourselves reading over this nonsense and wondering how I ever could have fancied such an uninteresting old fellow, or anybody, indeed, except Mr. Jones" (64). Two and a half months later, after Breckinridge has broken her engagement with Houston, she records another projection. This time, she sees herself as a young mother with a precocious, blue-eyed child thumbing through her old diary:

Some of these days my 'little daughter' will be reading this charming work, sitting in her little arm chair beside me. . . . Looking down into that sweet, childish face I shall find the large eyes wide open with astonishment as she exclaims, 'Oh! Mamma, here is something so curious. Were you ever engaged to that Mr. H. who was here the other day?' 'Yes, child, put up that book and get your knitting!' (Takes the book and hides it where little blue eyes won't find it) 'Mamma' does not enjoy such inquiries.

(93-94)

Breckinridge's closing entries indicate that she samples the self-reflexive pleasures of rereading her own text while still involved in its creation. As she weeps over the "love and joy and poetry" of her life's "novel" (220), she joins other Confederate diarists who approach their texts as literature, and see themselves as authors. When Breckinridge's younger brother advises her not to break her engagement to Captain Houston because it "would distress him very much for [her] to. . . spend the rest of [her] life writing love novels" (41), he little knows that his sister is doing just that.

CONCLUSION

How do the incorporation of literary fragments and character types, the appropriation of fictional forms, and the acute awareness of an audience influence these

diarists' conception of their own and others' ethnicity? While I reject the notion that these women model themselves after particular sentimental heroines or collapse their lives into Scottish romance, their texts do value a particular level of literacy traditionally associated with the European elite. Familiarity with Macaria, as well as Hamlet, Ivanhoe, and Les Miserables helps unite a group of women scattered across the South, and acts as cultural currency, allowing these women access to an ethnic heritage which predates the firing on Fort Sumter. Not only does their ability to navigate this wide range of literary texts distinguish them from their unlettered slaves, but it links them to England, Scotland, and France, a long-standing connection which assumes deeper significance as seceding Southern states struggle to reshape a national identity. These literary texts, along with sermons, news reports, and editorials, find their way into the pages of these women's diaries, and their voices contribute to the diarists' formation of ethnic consciousness.

Perhaps more important, these Confederate diarists see themselves as writers. Although sermons and periodicals infuse the diaries with their ideas and actual words, diarists interact with those texts differently than they do with novels, poems, and plays. While these diarists frequently pose as preachers or journalists, they seldom sustain that voice over multiple entries or use the theological or research tools which distinguish those genres. Not so with literature. Not only do they consume these literary texts, but they also generate their own. The self-conscious use of literary language, the intertextual ties with a variety of genres, and the self-reflexive quality of these diaries all privilege a conception of language as formative rather than descriptive. Because they create their own worlds, these diarists can write into existence societies where the ethnic other disappears or reifies into a uniform evil. They are able to erase the troubling "mulatto"

child, and recast the Confederacy as the heroic descendent of the American Revolution.

Ultimately, they shape how future generations read Southern history.

Notes

¹ Lucy Breckinridge rejects her suitor for his inability to handle English grammar: "Capt. Harris and I got very well acquainted last night, far enough advanced to cast gentle and reproachful looks at each other, which does not mean in this case that we like one another very well. He does not speak good grammar enough to make him very fascinating, even with that beautiful face of his" (52).

² Two centuries later, E. D. Hirsch invokes Jefferson's widely-known thesis that an educated populace is the foundation of a democratic society. While Hirsch overtly identifies America's "traditional, Jeffersonian" position as one which values "a broadly literate culture that unites our cultural fragments enough to allow us to write to one another and read what our fellow citizens have written," his influential essay entitled "Cultural Literacy" covertly identifies that literate populace as one familiar with the canonical texts of Western literature, able to understand the intricacies of geometry as well as appreciate Michelangelo's *Pieta* and Pope's "Dunciad" (372). Patricia Bizzell argues that Hirsch's theory of "cultural literacy," which parades as an apolitical advocacy of common bodies of knowledge, obscures its political agenda of reinscribing the academy's literary canon. Thus, while Hirsch "does not wish to claim that everyone ignorant of his academic canon is inferior," Bizzell asserts that the weight of Hirsch's argument insists that "everyone ignorant of this canon *in America* is inferior because knowledge of his canon is necessary to enter the national literate forums" [italics mine] (454). According to Hirsch, literacy consists of familiarity with certain inherently superior texts and ideas, a doctrine which links him with Jefferson in ways which he may not have intended.

³ To Jefferson's definition of literacy, Hirsch would add a "rich vocabulary" as an indication of a "high level of literacy" (365). Although Hirsch declares that "literacy is not just a formal skill; it is also a political decision" (367), Bizzell insists that "humanist literacy scholars," such as Hirsch, "do not acknowledge their conflation of literacy and academic literacy" (449). Bizzell further asserts that the refusal to articulate this conflation obscures the definition's political underpinnings which effectively restrict "any cognitive gains to be had from any kind of literacy" to the "mastery of academic literacy" (Bizzell 449), a position which implicitly shapes literacy into what educator Henry Giroux calls a "pedagogy of chauvinism dressed up in the lingo of the Great Books" (3). For a solid overview of the various definitions of literacy, see Paulo Freire's Literacy: Reading the Word and the World, pages 142-149.

⁴ In her treatise An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans, Lydia Maria Child recounts some of the anti-literacy laws designed to exclude African Americans from the benefits and power that accompany reading and writing

In Virginia, *white* persons who teach any colored person to read or write, are fined not exceeding fifty dollars; for teaching slaves for pay, from ten to twenty dollars for each offence. In Georgia, a similar offence is fined not exceeding five hundred dollars, and imprisoned at the discretion of the court. Knowledge seems to be peculiarly *pokerish* in Georgia. In North Carolina, if a white person teach a slave to read or write, or give or sell him *any* book, &c., he is fined from one to two hundred dollars. In Louisiana, any white person, who teaches a slave to read or write, is imprisoned one year. (66).

⁵ In his article "The Roots of Literacy," David Hawkins insists on the interrelation of all texts. Not only do authors choose individual words and phrases whose meanings are colored by local usage, but their ideas and attitudes grow out of the written and oral texts they have ingested. Hawkins argues that "the text itself is always part of a larger text, a weft already woven, hence *context*. In this sense. . . each text is embedded in prior text, or at least in prior discourse. I say discourse, to include the oral traditions that are inseparably interwoven with the written" (6). Historian Elizabeth Fox-Genovese concurs. In her chapter entitled "The Imaginative Worlds of Slaveholding Women: Louisa Susanna McCord and Her Countrywomen," Fox-Genovese emphasizes the crucial relationship between primary texts and the ancillary texts which color and shape the writer's attitudes: "Ultimately, our understanding of [slaveholding women's] identities depends upon our ability to read their own representations of themselves—to evaluate, in the vocabulary of literary critics, text and context. The problems of reading and the attendant problems of sources cannot be trivialized or ignored" (242).

⁶ Although government agencies (such as the Census Bureau) have kept generally accurate statistics on literacy rates since America's Civil War, scholarly debate rages over the actual level and practice of literacy prior to 1865. Some researchers suggest that documentary evidence indicates an almost universal ability to read and write among white males from America's Colonial period forward, while other researchers argue against such sweeping generalizations. While I do not propose to settle the debate on the number of "educated" adults in the antebellum South, I do believe that attending to the interconnectedness of diaries with available oral and written texts provides insight into how this group of Confederate women viewed literacy. For an overview of major

approaches to American education, see Harvey Graff's chapter entitled "Literacy and Social Development in North America," in The Labyrinths of Literacy.

⁷ Several diarists note familiarity with Stephen Elliott and his work, such as Eliza Andrews who remarks that an acquaintance, Colonel Maxwell, "is very handsome—next to Bishop Elliot, one of the finest specimens of Southern manhood I ever saw" (105). Mary Chesnut refers to Elliott twice, on November 27th, 1861 (208), and on May 25th, 1865 (see note #6, 251), and Emma Holmes notes that "Bishop Elliott and other ministers are preaching with great effect in the Army of Tennessee; a religious revival has taken place, & many soldiers confirmed, among them Gen. Bragg" (266). Three weeks later Holmes returns to Elliott, this time referring to his opinion on Divine interposition in the Confederate army's affairs, indicating that she is familiar with and has adopted some of his views (278).

⁸ Emma Holmes, for instance, remarks on the conflation of the Confederacy and ancient Israel, a metaphor frequently used by the Puritans, as well as other religious groups, to justify political and economic revolution:

Today being appointed by the President as the day of 'fasting, Humiliation and Prayer,' all the churches in the city were open for service and the congregations quite large. The service was remarkably solemn & Mr. [W. B. W.] Howe gave us a most admirable sermon from I Kings 19:33-34 showing an exact parallel between the separation of the Israelites from the Jewish Nation under Rehoboam's oppressive rule and our secession and said that this very case has often been quoted in the U. S. Senate. (57)

⁹ On April 4th, 1863, Cornelia McDonald pauses to record that the occupying army held Easter services in "our own dear church—that church hallowed by so many precious memories of undisturbed worship, and communion with our Father and Saviour." The disjunction causes her to reflect on the Biblical prophecy recorded in Lamentations, chapter one referring to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish exiles:

"How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people!" "The ways of Zion do mourn because none come to her solemn feasts." "Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction all the pleasant things she had in the days of old when her people fell into the hands of the enemy." It seems to me the description of our own desolation as the prophet pours out his sad soul in a wail for the voice of gladness and the voice of mirth.

(134-135)

McDonald joins her voice to others who conflate the Confederacy's destiny with that of ancient Judah's as a way of explaining the death of sons and the destruction of Southern cities while maintaining the framework of the Confederacy as God's chosen people.

¹⁰ Floride Clemson notes sitting in John Elliott's audience several times, such as on the Friday, March 10th Confederate day of fasting: "Mr. Elliot gave us a good sermon, & I hope that the earnest prayers offered on that day may be heard in behalf of our precious cause" (780). Emma Holmes also records hearing John Elliott speak on several occasions, after one such sermon remarking that it was "One of the most beautiful and interesting sermons, I've ever heard" (215).

¹¹ Kate Cumming writes that Benjamin Palmer stopped over in Cherokee Springs, Georgia while she worked there, and "looked the worse for wear. He had just come from

Chattanooga, and I have been told was holding divine service when that place was shelled, and went on with it as if nothing was the matter" (131). Emma LeConte also notes hearing Dr. Palmer preach (95).

¹² On May 11, 1863, Kate Cumming mourns Jackson's death. Her dual biblical allusions, one overtly questioning the ways of God, the other comparing Jackson's death to the awful sacrifice of Jephtha's innocent daughter, ensconce Jackson in a heroic, almost saintly role, while pondering Providence:

News has just been received that one of our brightest stars has left us; he has gone to shine in a more glorious sphere than this. The good and great General Stonewall Jackson has fallen; he was wounded at the battle of Chancellorsville, and lived a few days afterward. When I first heard of it I was speechless, and thought, with the apostle, "how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways are past finding out. For who hath known the mind of the Lord." Dark and mysterious indeed, are his ways. Who dare attempt to fathom them, when such men as Jackson are cut down in the zenith of their glory, and at the very hour of their country's need? The honor of taking this great man's life was not reserved for the foe, but for his own men, as if it were a sacrifice they offered to the Lord, as Jephtha gave up his daughter. (103)

Lucy Buck, in her June 21, 1862 entry, writes of Jackson with similar adulation: "I laughed at my fears, for I trust in Jackson and his God" (108).

¹³ Eliza Andrews' description of a Georgia congregation demonstrates the familiar conflation of Confederate patriotism and "true" spirituality:

I went to worship with a little band of Episcopalians, mostly refugees, who meet every Sunday in a school house The services were conducted by old Mr. George, who used to come out to the Tallassee plantation, as far back as I can remember, and hold mission services for father's and Mr. Nightingale's negroes, sometimes in Uncle Jacob's cabin, sometimes in the little log chapel on Mr. Nightingale's Silver Lake place. . . . He has spent his life in mission work, laying the foundation of churches for other men to build on. . . . He wore no surplice, and his threadbare silk gown was, I verily believe, the same that he used to wear in the old plantation chapel. It was pathetic to see him—his congregation still more so. It consisted mainly of poor wounded soldiers from the hospitals. . . . They came, some limping on crutches, some with scarred and mangled faces, some with empty sleeves, nearly all with poor, emaciated bodies, telling their mute tale of sickness and suffering, weariness and heartache. I saw one poor lame fellow leading a blind one, who held on to his crutch. Another had a blind comrade hanging upon one arm while an empty sleeve dangled where the other ought to be. I have seen men since I came here with both eyes shot out, men with both arms off, and one poor fellow with both arms and a leg gone. What can our country ever do to repay such sacrifice?

(137-138)

Andrews' emotionally-charged description of this small congregation incorporates several of the themes discussed in this section. She identifies old Mr. George as a missionary who is particularly worthy of honor due to his long-standing work among her father's

slaves. Although she begins the passage by stating that the congregation consists "mostly [of] refugees," she modifies that judgment as the entry progresses: "it consisted mainly of poor wounded soldiers from the hospitals." This new focus allows her to comment on one of her favorite themes, that the Confederacy struggles in a holy war.

¹⁴ In October of 1862, Lucy Breckinridge responds to this common ecclesiastical interpretation of the Confederacy's defeats, remarking that she feels "despondent" about the nation's difficulties: "It is so hard to believe that war is a punishment to a nation, administered by a merciful and just God. If it was a fiery ordeal through which we would come out purified and humbled, I could see the mercy of it; but it seems to me that people are more reckless and sinful than ever. It ruins our young men and has an immoral effect upon everyone. But, of course, it is just and wise, as God orders it so" (70).

¹⁵ Emma Holmes records that the subject of the November 15th, 1861 fast day consisted in "a solemn sermon on the sins for which God is now punishing us: pride & boasting, profanity & Sabbath breaking" (98).

¹⁶ Eliza Andrews articulates an oft-repeated fear that the Confederacy's sins will draw down God's punishment. In this particular case, Andrews records tales of horrific suffering at Anderson: "Yankees though they are," she fears that "God will suffer some terrible retribution to fall upon us for letting such things happen" (78). Pauline DeCaradeuc Heyward articulates a similar concern: "Yesterday was appointed by Davis as a day of fasting and prayer. I fear our self-confidence, boasting and pride of the successes accorded us by God, have weighed heavily in the balance against the justice of our cause in the hand of our Creator, and these reverses and terrible humiliations, come

from Him to humble our hearts and remind us of our total helplessness without His aid" (22).

¹⁷ Almost all of the diaries under consideration refer to and quote from the Bible, indicating familiarity and influence from that text. For example, Mary Chesnut alludes to and/or quotes from Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Samuel, Job, Psalms, and Proverbs. While frequent reference to the Bible is in itself significant, perhaps more important for this particular study are the indications that these diarists embrace the party line, interpreting this much-disputed text in roughly similar ways which underscore the pervasive and unified influence of the Southern clergy.

¹⁸ Kate Cumming also records numerous instances of the Southern clergy's support for the war effort, as on July 19, 1863: "This morning Dr. Quintard preached to a crowded house. Almost every general in the army was present. . . . Dr. Quintard preached a very fine sermon. His text was, "For we are journeying unto the place of which the Lord hath said, I will give it you." Cumming then proceeds to devote the next five paragraphs to summarizing the content and implications of Quintard's sermon. (117). Anna Marie Green makes a similar point when she notes that she "heard a glorious sermon from Mr. Flinn. A large audience had assembled in the Methodist Church to hear Mr. Holland but I suppose no one left disappointed. It was a fine effort and glowed with true noble patriotism, that kindled enthusiasm in every breast" (59).

¹⁹ Burge's attitude toward her slaves' spiritual status is reflected in her February 21, 1864 entry where she records that she spent several hours on a death watch by Hannah's side, a slave inherited from her late husband. Aside from her willingness to

attend to her slave's last physical needs, her comments place Hannah on a spiritual par with the sainted Mr. Burge (144).

²⁰ Burge notes that she has "punished John for stealing" (131).

²¹ Christine Carter notes that there "were more casualties at the Battle of Antietam on September 17, 1862, than on any other day in American military history. Lincoln claimed victory, but Lee's troops were allowed to retreat into Virginia" (235-36).

²² Burge's diary entries repeatedly point to her complicated attitude toward ethnic identity. She determines to stand by her adopted country, while implicitly questioning the motives which propelled the South into the bloody struggle. She seeks to reframe her doubts about the righteousness of the Confederacy's cause as a theological question:

The state of our country is very gloomy. General Lee has surrendered his army to the victorious Grant. Well if it will only hasten the conclusion of this war I am satisfied. There has been something very strange in this whole affair, to me, & I can, attribute to nothing but the hand of Providence Working out some problem which has not yet been revealed to us poor erring mortals. At the commencement of the struggle the minds of men their wills their self control seemed to be all taken from them in a passionate antagonism to the coming in president Abraham Lincoln. Our leaders to whom the people looked for wisdom were led by them into this perhaps the greatest error of the age. We will not have this man to rule over us was their cry. (171)

²³ Although Dolly Burge's text indicates confidence in God Himself, she does occasionally express doubt concerning her soul's status. These instances of doubt cluster

around times of personal upheaval and danger, such as during the initial waves of Sherman's march through Georgia when Burge writes, "Bro Branham preached For ye have need of patience that after ye have done the will of God ye might receive the promise. After which was the Sacrament. I fear that I often take of it unworthily. Oh that I may live nearer to Him & feel the blessed assurance in my heart that I am His child" (153).

²⁴ Burge indicates that the slaves have their own supply of corn, wheat, and cotton (101 and 153).

²⁵ In this reassessment of the relationship between slaveholder and slave, Burge inserts comments which further distance her from her Northern roots, exposing the connections she makes between slavery, religion, and the Confederacy. She expresses the conviction so often present in these sermons that the Union does not care for the souls of the slave.

I had not believed they would force from their homes the poor doomed negroes, but such has been the fact here cursing them & saying that Jeff Davis was going to put them in his army but they should not fight for him but for them. No indeed! No! they are not friends to the slave. We have never made the poor cowardly negro fight & it is strange, passing strange, that the all powerful Yankee Nation with the whole world to back them. Their ports open, their armies filled with soldiers from all nations. Should at last take the poor negro to help them out, against this 'little Confederacy' which was to be brought back into the Union in sixty days time. (160)

²⁶ Lucy Buck alludes to this passage from Micah several times in her diary, such as when she prays, "may our nation worship under it's own vine and fig tree with none to vex or make hem afraid" (160). Burge's use of this familiar Bible verse provides an interesting example of shifting a text's context and, thus, our interpretation of the text.

²⁷ Many of Stone's diary entries indicate the effort expended on combing causality lists. For example, on July 21, 1862, after waiting for nearly a month to read the lists of killed and wounded from the Battle of Seven Days, Stone writes

Oh, this long, cruel suspense. No news yet. Surely, if they were both alive, they would have communicated with us by this time. Every day adds to my conviction that My Brother is desperately hurt. . . . We see in one of the last papers that his brigade suffered terribly—nearly all of the field officers disabled, and My Brother's Colonel, John G. Taylor, whom he loved so much, among the killed. We are relieved about Uncle Bo. His regiment did not suffer greatly. We have seen the list of killed and wounded and his name is not there. We are thankful for his escape. . . . I must conceal it all for Mamma's sake. . . . We did not let her see the report of My Brother's brigade. . . . She noticed the torn place in the newspaper and I had to tell a story to account for it. (133-34)

²⁸ In this same issue, the *Whig* reports that "it seems that the openly expressed scorn and hatred of the New Orleans women for Butler's vandal hordes has so exasperated him that he issues this proclamation: That henceforth if any female by word, look, or gesture, shall insult any of his soldiers, the soldier shall have perfect liberty to do with her as he pleases. Could any order be more infamous?" (111).

²⁹ On April 25, 1861, Emma Holmes fumes that, "The accounts of the northern papers of the 'evacuation of Fort Sumter by Anderson on his own terms begged by Beauregard' make us wrathful" (39). Holmes' mention of her anger is noteworthy not only because it confirms Stone's reaction, but because Holmes' incorporates the actual words of this enemy newspaper into her diary, marking her text's inclusiveness.

³⁰ On May 1, expanding his role as editor to include military strategist, Greeley outlined his battle plans:

as soon as preparations were complete, a couple hundred thousand men would march 'right through (not around) Baltimore, Richmond, Raleigh, Charleston, Savannah, and Montgomery,' join a similar force from the West, and celebrate Christmas in superb style at New Orleans. After 'one or two considerable battles,' the Federal government would accept 'the unconditional submission of the traitors,' dissolve the Montgomery government, retrieve stolen Federal property, and return the seceding states in obedience to the laws of the land. (qtd. in Fahrney 80-81, Daily Tribune May 1, 1861)

³¹ One of the most dramatic stories offered during this time period deals with the "torture and homicide" of Samuel More at Auburn State Prison on December 3, 1858. After allegedly threatening someone in the prison, More was dragged to a "shower-bath," a device used in several New York prisons of the day, where the prisoner "sits in a chair which reminds one of the old 'stocks.' His legs and arms are pinioned: his neck fits into a sort of dish, which closes tightly round his throat . . . [then] a cloth is put into the dish to prevent the water escaping too fast." Once the prison official pulls the string to release

the flow of water, the prisoner's main concern becomes keeping his mouth and nose above the water line. The Harper's article reports that "the negro More, it seems, was subjected to an incessant stream of water at 32 deg. Fahrenheit for half an hour" ("Torture and Homicide in an American State Prison." Harper's December 18, 1858, p. 808. Schneider 91-93). This indictment of a famous New York State prison, a follow-up to a previously run story concerning the gross mismanagement of New York State poorhouses, reflects Harper's determination to expose injustice occurring in Northern as well as Southern states.

³² After noting that the preamble of the Confederate constitution has been changed to "We, the people of the Confederate States, each State acting in its sovereign and independent character," this article then focuses on "the most important innovations attempted at Montgomery." The writer claims that while the framers of the old constitution were "all heartily ashamed of slavery the framers of the new Constitution entertain no such scruples." The writer then quotes at length from the offending document, citing several sections which govern the importation and transportation of slaves, and guarantee that in all newly acquired territory and in any future state, "the institution of negro slavery, as it now exists in the Confederate States, shall be recognized and protected by Congress and by the Territorial Government, and the inhabitants of the several Confederate States and Territories shall have the right to take to such territory any slaves lawfully held by them in any of the States or Territories of the Confederate States" (qtd. in "The Two Constitutions" Harper's March 30, 1861, pg. 194. Schneider 180-81). The journalist concludes his article by pointing out the

similarity between these principles and the Breckenridge platform, then dryly observes, "These clauses require no comment."

³³ On July 13, 1861 Harper's published a narrative account and illustration of a slave auction held in Montgomery, Alabama, complete with dialogue depicting the Southerners' languid drawls as they bartered for human flesh, and moving descriptions of the "merchandise" put up on the auction block. The article ends with the picture of a "fat, flabby, perspiring, puffy man" auctioning a girl with "a pair of large sad eyes." Frustrated in his attempt to sell the girl for "an upset price of \$610," the disgusting auctioneer says, "Not sold to-day, Sally; you may get down" ("A Slave Auction at the South." Harper's July 13, 1861, 447. Schneider 198).

³⁴ In an open letter to Secretary Cameron, Butler queries,

"Is a slave to be considered fugitive whose master runs away and leaves him? Is it forbidden to the troops to aid or harbor within their lines the negro children who are found therein; or is the soldier, when his march has destroyed their means of subsistence, to allow them to starve because he has driven off the rebel master? Indeed, how are the free-born to be distinguished? In a loyal State I would put down a servile insurrection. In a State of rebellion I would confiscate that which was used to oppose my arms, and take all that property which constituted the wealth of that State and furnished the means by which the war is prosecuted, beside being the cause of the war; and if, in so doing, it should be objected that human beings were brought to the free enjoyment of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, such objection might not require

much consideration." ("Domestic Intelligence." Harper's August 17, 1861, pg. 515. Schneider 200-201.).

The moral enigma introduced by General Butler prompted Harper's to modify its editorial stance on abolition.

³⁵ Though Harper's Weekly and other Northern newspapers published multiple stories reporting the heroic and honorable behavior of African Americans in the military ranks, the New York City riots of late July, 1863, indicated that racism was far from dead in the North. Sparked by attempts to enforce the draft, the white rioters quickly directed their fury at the city's African American population, resulting in multiple murders, destruction of homes and businesses, and the burning of an orphanage sheltering between 600 to 800 children which Harper's described as "a noble monument of charity for the reception of colored orphans." (Schneider 299, "The Draft." Harper's July 25, 1863 p. 466) Harper's responded with a barrage of articles condemning the night's infamous events. Though contemporary estimates number the mob in the thousands, representing a sizable segment of New York City's population, Harper's styles the riot as the demonic aberration of "scoundrels," spurred on by cowardly newspapers, of which, we can assume, Harper's itself was not one ("The Late Riot." Harper's August 22, 1863, p 530. Schneider 308).

³⁶ Reading Northern newspapers was not confined to individual Southerners. Mary Chesnut reports a rumor that "*our* state department pays 30 dollars a month for the *Herald* & gets it two days after it is published—360 dollars a year" (148). Her inclusion of this bureaucratic tidbit in an entry discussing the relative faithfulness of various individuals to the Cause would seem to question the judgment of these Confederate

politicians. However, we know from other entries that Chesnut was only too willing to read reports from the Northern press when she could get them, so perhaps her ire is raised by the fact that this official department is able to obtain the Northern periodical so quickly.

³⁷ Although I generally concur with Faust's conclusions regarding the influence of sentimental fiction on these diaries, my reading has not verified her assertion that "nearly every Confederate woman who discussed her reading in a diary or in her correspondence mentioned Macaria" (175).

³⁸ "Creative" literature here refers to the genres of poetry, play, novel which are widely-recognized as shaped, invented constructs. Of course, this study has repeatedly argued that diaries are also literary constructs.

³⁹ In Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America, Cathy Davidson cautions against assuming that "reading more books necessarily betoken[s] an increasingly passive form of consumption or comprehension" (72). I do not mean to suggest that Lucy Breckinridge's extensive reading "diluted the process. . . and thereby cheapened it" (Davidson 72); rather, I argue that the enormously large number of texts to which she refers and the infrequency with which she returns to any particular text preclude the possibility of drawing one-to-one correspondences between a text (or even a particular set of texts, such as sentimental novels) and her behavior. Breckinridge's diary does not demonstrate the type of connection between literature and life that Davidson proposes when she cites the "young women who made a grave in New York City for poor Charlotte Temple; who for two generations, left wreaths, locks of hair, and mementos of lost loves upon that grave; and who, when they discovered that Charlotte

was not a 'real' person but merely a fictional creation, felt utterly betrayed and enraged, for they had—they said—lost a friend" (73).

⁴⁰ Lucy records reading the following novels during the course of her twenty-eight month diary: Marion Harland's Alone (28) and Moss Side (184); Anthony Trollope's The Bertrams (39) and Castle Richmond (45); George Eliot's The Mill on the Floss (45); Margaret Oliphant's The Laird of Norlaw (67) and The Quiet Heart (144); Julia Pardoe's The Confessions of a Pretty Woman (68); William Edmondstone Aytoun's The Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers (85); Thomas DeQuincey's Klosterheim (130); John Ruffini's Lavinia (130); Caroline Fry's The Listener (131); William Makepeace Thackeray's Pendennis (139) Legend of the Rhine, and Rebecca and Rowena (181-182); Miriam Coles Harris' Rutledge (144); Ferna Vale's Natalie (144); Augusta Jane Evans Wilson's Beulah (144) and Macaria (187); Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre (144); Charles Dickens' Barnaby Rudge (147); Edward George Bulwer-Lytton's A Strange Story (162); William Wilkie Collins' The Woman in White (168); Victor Hugo's Les Miserables (174); Tobias George Smollett's Peregrine Pickle (177); Christian August Vulpius' Rinaldo Rinaldini (178); Mary Elizabeth Braddon's Darrell Markham (178). After reading these last two, Lucy records, "I read two novels today, Rinaldo Rinaldini, and Darrell Markham, both very ordinary" (178).

⁴¹ Breckinridge did not confine herself to novels, although they do seem to be her staple reading into which she introduces correctives of various serious or religious literature. While her editor quotes from Breckinridge's journal that she began writing at a time when she had "no inclination to read anything but the Bible and the newspapers," her self-assessment (and the implicit judgment of her editor) is belied by her broad range

of reading materials which she intersperses into her steady diet of novels. During 1862, for example, Breckinridge mentions reading Jules Michelet's La Femme (33); Churchmans (44); The Spectator (45,79, 90-91, 93, 95); various sermons by William Bacon Stevens (60-61, 65, 70) and Joseph Butler (62-66, 68-70, 72-73); Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (80); Lord Alfred Tennyson (85).

⁴² Although these diarists occasionally read works in French, the overwhelming majority of their reading material was written in English by British or American authors. Even those classic literary or devotional texts which several of the diarists mention were apparently read in English translation, which erases some of their "otherness."

⁴³ Letters were not the only souvenirs removed from the battlefield. In Tara Revisited, Catherine Clinton includes a cartoon from Harper's Weekly Illustrated titled "Secesh Industry" dated June 7, 1862. This cartoon depicts various ornaments and decorative household items made from the bones, teeth, and scalps of Northern soldiers. Clinton notes that "one southern woman's diary confirmed reports of a Confederate woman keeping a Yankee skull on her dressing table" (60).

CHAPTER FIVE

"As a Discourager of Self-conceit There is Nothing Like an Old Diary":

Editorial Intervention in Confederate Women's Diaries

Since this study has drawn conclusions based primarily on published diaries, I must eventually confront the question of how significantly editorial intervention affects a diarist's intended presentation of ethnicity. Has the editor doctored the text in some fashion which would make it less authentic? Has the editor eliminated certain types of passages which dilute or elide offensive ethnic attitudes? Has the editor redirected the manuscript's focus through the inclusion of annotations, textual interpolations, forewords, or appendices? Has she or he obscured the diarist's presentation of ethnic self-perception as well as attitudes toward others' ethnicity? How do we compare the activities of an external editor to the textual manipulation which the diarist herself performs?

The availability of published diaries makes them an appealing choice for surveys such as my own where not only the writer but also the readers can explore and test the validity of the study's conclusions. However, the inescapable traces of an editor's hand must be acknowledged and then treated within a critical framework. Do editors "ruin" diaries? Or, can we read annotations, textual emendations, and introductions as a separate creative activity providing an additional layer to the text? Part of the challenge rests in punctuating the editorial process: exactly when does a diary first feel the editor's touch? Long before the blue pencil is employed, a diarist shapes her experiences, so that editors continue a process begun by the diarist herself.

AN EDITOR'S INFLUENCE

How might various editorial practices alter a reader's understanding of a text? Determining whether or not to standardize spelling, punctuation, and entry headings not only affects the text aesthetically, but influences readers' perceptions of the writer's literacy and—by extension—her ethnicity. In A Guide to Documentary Editing, Mary Jo Kline outlines five distinct editorial methods: "printed typographical facsimiles, diplomatic transcription, inclusive texts, expanded texts, and clear texts" (118). Of these five types of editions, the facsimiles most closely reproduce the literal appearance of the original, and the clear texts allow for the most editorial intervention, often making "recovery of the details of the original extraordinarily difficult" through extensive silent emendations (118). Each of these five approaches operates under its own scholarly conventions which seek to regulate what kinds of changes editors make, and the manner in which they report those changes to readers.¹ The full range of editorial practices is displayed in the publication of Civil War diaries. Charles East, who prepared the 1991 edition of Sarah Morgan's diary, restores passages deleted from the 1913 edition, and claims to have transcribed Morgan's text exactly with only two exceptions: 1) he has introduced paragraph indentations, and 2) he has "occasionally introduced a comma or removed one, or added some other mark where one was missing" (xxix).² Other editors take more liberties with texts. Mary Robertson, editor of Lucy Breckinridge's diary, announces that in addition to "minor changes to correct errors in punctuation, spelling, and dates [which] have been made in the original text only when deemed necessary for the sake of clarity," she has "divided the journal into chapters for each of the three years, and selected chapter titles in keeping with the mood of the author and the spirit of the

times" (xviii). James Bonner tackles Anna Maria Green's "ineptitude" in "spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure" (6), and John Anderson meticulously lists his many "emendations" to Kate Stone's diary:

The Journal is here presented as nearly as possible in the form in which it was written, although certain emendations were made in order to make the text more readable. Spelling was made to conform to modern practice, with the exception of such words as 'cosy,' 'grey,' 'necessaries,' and 'eatables' which were retained for their historical flavor. Punctuation was supplied where necessary to present the author's text clearly.

Abbreviations, especially frequent in names for which the author often used initials only, were spelled out. Capitalization was modernized, except for important words such as Cause, Government, Nature, and Heaven which the author wished to emphasize. A very few additions of words were made; incomplete sentences, so characteristic of diaries, were completed by addition of subject, verb, or connective when the sense would otherwise not be clear. . . . In a few instances, grammatical structures were altered to avoid misreading. . . . Dates of entries were verified and corrected occasionally when the author, often without a calendar, was uncertain. Proper names, some of which were spelled several ways, were verified by United States Census reports and other records; when such verification was impossible, the most frequent spelling was adopted. (vii-viii)

Each of these decisions to alter the text affects meaning as well as the reader's perception of the writer herself. Regularization of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation not only reflects current standards of proper English, but also necessarily stems from judgment regarding authorial intent. The common practice of breaking a diary into chapters which are then labeled with the segment's "main idea" influences the way readers approach the text, encouraging them to read one entry as more significant or compelling than another. This type of localized editing aims at reducing textual ambiguity, aligning the text itself as well as the diarist with the major discourse community. In the case of these Confederate diaries, increasing the text's comprehensibility necessarily entails increasing the distance between the white, wealthy, educated, articulate diarist and the diarist's presentation of the ethnic Other who generally speaks in grossly distorted dialect or remains silent.

Editorial practice not only affects diaries on the local level, but also often restructures the overall text through decisions to exclude certain entries or types of entries, and to comment on others by way of annotations. Some of these excisions seem relatively minor, such as C. Vann Woodward's decision to eliminate Mary Chesnut's quotation of Psalm 51; others are much more extensive. For instance, William P. Buck, editor of Lucy Buck's diary Sad Earth, Sweet Heaven, writes that "the amount of material is too great to justify reproducing the diary in its entirety. To avoid monotonous repetition, many entries have been eliminated even though by so doing it was necessary to mar the complete picture of the peaceful days at Bel Air intervening between the more exciting episodes, and to omit references to many of the relatives and friends who were

guests at The Old Home during that period" (5). Richard Barksdale Harwell, editor of the 1959 edition of Kate Cumming's diary, writes that the

length of the original publication has necessitated some reduction of it. Miss Cumming quoted poetry at the drop of a cliché. Most of her quotations have been excised, but enough have been retained to hold the flavor of the original. A few short passages of religious musings (similar to passages retained) have been omitted, and a few discursive anecdotes of no point to the main line of her journal have been eliminated. (vi)

James C. Bonner, editor of Anna Maria Green's diary, avers that "the journal itself is by no means a literary achievement," an opinion which causes him to eliminate "approximately a third of the original journal, judged by the editor too trivial for reproducing" (6). And despite Warrington Dawson's insistence that he has "taken no liberties, [has] made no alterations, but [has] strictly adhered to [his] task of transcription, merely omitting here and there passages which deal with matters too personal to merit the interest of the public" (xxxix) in his 1913 edition of Sarah Morgan's diary, Charles East, who prepared a new edition of Morgan's text for publication in 1991, argues that Dawson's "editing crossed the line into rewriting," where frequent misreadings were combined with such extensive cutting that "a little less than half of the original" diary made it into the published 1913 edition (x).

Certainly editors are motivated to excise portions of a text for a variety of reasons; however, Elizabeth Hampsten, author of an extensive study of Midwestern women's diaries, cautions that readers should exercise special care when handling autobiographical writings edited by the writer's family:

people cherish tender feelings toward immediate family history, a fact that obliges any reader of private writing to consider its lineage: the reason for its being written in the first place, the confidence demonstrated between writer and intended reader, the age of both, the obvious omissions. One wants to know in whose keeping each document has been, and under what conditions. And, crucially, is there reason to suppose that parts have been changed or thrown away? . . . People's motives are never simple, and in the case of manuscript donors, vanity and shame may well conflict. (8)

Hampsten also encourages students of diaries to recognize that "women, by their own account, do all they can to keep stable the lives of others in their care; they work so hard to see that as little as possible 'happens' that their writing obliges us to look deeper, to the very repetitive daily-ness that both literature and history have schooled us away from"

(2). Repetition acts as a diarist's tool, allowing her to foreground attitudes, events, and relationships which she considers important. Though the diarists considered in this study differ from Hampsten's turn-of-the-century midwesterners by possessing an acute awareness of their era's uniqueness, her argument concerning repetition applies equally well to this set of texts. As these Confederate women record the march of seasons and the eternal exchange of social calls, they exert narrative control over the tumultuous events threatening to explode the pattern of their days; as they fill their journal's pages with quotations from Biblical or literary texts, they contextualize their experiences. Editors who reduce or eliminate these repetitions may increase "readability," but also subtly alter the text's texture.

Although all published diaries have been edited, most critics agree that some editorial practices are more intrusive than others. Harriet Blodgett, the author of Centuries of Female Days: Englishwomen's Private Diaries, for instance, acknowledges that editors censor diaries in order to protect privacy, "a problem that [she] could not circumvent," but one which she feels will not invalidate the conclusions she has drawn from published sources (18).³ More difficult for historians or literary critics are texts where editors have attempted to reshape a diarist's image by omitting improper or sexually frank passages, sections where the diarist complains or appears angry (Blodgett 18), or material that calls the diarist's character into question. When editors seek to purge the diary of all personal or "problematic" material, scholar Robert Fothergill asserts that they not only purposely destroy the manuscript, but that they publish books which "are often no more than anthologies of dated observations" (5).⁴

Choices about which information to annotate or what kinds of editorial apparatus to include within the text also affect the text's presentation. For instance, William Buck, Lucy Buck's editor, chose to intersperse Lucy's entries with numerous rather lengthy historical comments in order to foreground the war's military narrative.⁵ Buck also includes several editorial comments within the body of the text instructing the reader to view Lucy's experience from a spiritual perspective. Buck's concluding affirmation that "Lucy was a Christian and because of her personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, she had the ability to meet each situation that confronted her" (299) cements a much-repeated observation in Lucy's diary that the Confederates were "good Christians."⁶ Some editors foreground a particular relationship, such as Lela McDowell Blankenship, the editor of her aunt Amanda McDowell's diary, who surrounds Amanda's diary entries

with the "interpolated story" of Amanda's love for Larkin Craig which is "built into the gaps, making a frame for the original" (v). In his edition of Kate Cumming's journal, Richard Harwell chooses to "restrict the notes to those which add to the medical and social history that the journal reflects. The many opportunities for notes on military and political history have purposely been passed over" (vi), a choice that presents Cummings' text as more apolitical than it really is. The "subordination of a diary's general interest to a specialist one, retaining only what is of use to the political or religious historian, for example" (5) receives Robert Fothergill's vote for worst editorial practice since it distorts the text's focus, sometimes creating a whole new center of gravity.⁷

While each of the editors mentioned above subtly affects the diarists' self-presentation by portraying her as more religious, more tender, or less political, each characteristic contributing to the mythic Southern belle, some editors comment on ethnic concerns much more explicitly. Not only do prefatory and concluding remarks influence readers' perceptions of a diarist's attitudes, but these comments betray the editor's own historical and ethnic biases as well. Such is the case with Yates Snowden who edited diaries replete with the "sufferings and fortitude" of two sisters who were "raided by roving bands of negro soldiers" (2), a comment which describes the text as an ethnic confrontation between white women and African-American men, tellingly ignoring the texts' many other sources of conflict. In a similar move, Lindsay Lomax Wood appends an epilogue to her 1943 edition of her grandmother Elizabeth Lindsay Lomax's diary. Continuing the story where her grandmother's diary leaves off, Wood relates that Elizabeth's son Lindsay moved the family to a farm outside Warrenton, Virginia after the war. Though the farm produced a bountiful supply of vegetables and livestock, Wood

records that the presence of "servants galore, also little pickaninnies galore to feed" (236) stressed the family financially, a complaint that casts the Lomax family in the role of providers while implicitly criticizing the newly-freed African Americans for whom they felt responsible. Wood interjects the following story into her family history, relating how she met a childhood family servant long after he left her father's employment:

I met old Uncle John Marshall on the streets of Warrenton not so many years ago and I said to him, "Why, isn't this Uncle John Marshall who used to work for General Lomax at Belle Vue?"

"Yes, Miss," he replied, removing his hat from his gray head. "Dat is," he added, smiling and showing his white teeth, "if you calls it workin'—de Ginneral an' me used to go fox huntin' mos' ebery morning', but us did a pile o' work de res' ob de day. He sho was a fine gentman."

I pressed a small note into his old black hand thinking what a pity it was that such a fine, faithful type should ever become extinct. (236)

Wood notes that after selling the farm, her father, Lindsay Lomax, was appointed a member of the Gettysburg Battlefield Commission, where "day after day he drove over the battlefields. . . in a vehicle the colored driver called a surrey" (237-238). She records a reconciliation between North and South demonstrated in the men flocking to Gettysburg who were hosted by her father: "Every day brought visitors to the battlefield, principally Englishmen and Northern officers, and the battles were fought over again, but always amiably; there was no bitterness between these men who had fought on opposite sides" (238). Though readers can only speculate concerning Elizabeth Lomax's post-war attitudes, her granddaughter's feelings are forcefully captured in this epilogue: African

Americans are still servants, smiling and scraping when the bountiful mistress acknowledges them, while white, Anglo-Saxon gentlemen have once again been united under the powerful influence of blood.

Rather than dismissing the editorial apparatus as irrelevant to the text, or despairing that it has somehow ruined the original, Margo Culley suggests that readers "think of the editorial process as an activity separate and distinct from the production of the life-record, one that may be creative and artistic in its own right" (17). Through their choices concerning presentation of the text as well as their extended comments in notes and introductions, editors indicate their own ethnic agendas. While editorial practices are clearly becoming less intrusive, *any* intervention impacts the text. This issue should certainly concern students dealing with published sources; however, editors merely continue the shaping process begun by the diarists themselves.

THE AUTHOR AS EDITOR

Readers naively searching for pristine, authentic, non-filtered transcriptions of the diarist's perceptions and actions inevitably meet disappointment. While critic Mary Jane Moffat calls upon diary readers to "honor these spontaneous feelings of women—who they were on a given day rather than what they remembered (and forgot) in the assensive voice of autobiography" (10), Robert Fothergill points to the danger of raising spontaneity or "shapelessness" to a critical virtue. Fothergill asserts that "most theoretical considerations of diary-writing proceed deductively from the assumption that its defining characteristic is an unpremeditated sincerity" (40) so that naiveté or shapelessness assumes the status of an ethical standard against which conscious "literary"

qualities (i.e. the desire to write well, or to impose structure) seem inauthentic and "poor." This standard, Fothergill reasons, "assert[s] a rigid and unrealistic scale of merit" (40) based on an over-simplified dichotomy between sincerity (good diary) and "conscious, premeditated utterance" (bad diary) that is ill-equipped to judge the relative merits of various periodic writings.

Instead of existing as an empty mind channeling perceptions onto the blank pages of a daybook, diarists shape each entry, editorializing on incidents or chance comments which seem particularly significant, and "editing" out those feelings and experiences which are too personal to commit to paper or which cast them in an unfavorable light.⁸ Harriet Blodgett contends that "the diarist has become a character in a construct apart from her life" (7), a theoretical position with which Shari Benstock concurs. Benstock argues that contrary to the male notion of a unified self objectively existing in "history" who passively waits for the writer's transcription, women writers consciously create a persona out of the raw material of life's experiences. Thus, Virginia Woolf "views the past not as a 'subject matter'—a content as such—but rather as a method, a scene making" (29). Diarists select ideas from the raw material of their lives to paint a self portrait, creating, as Sarah Morgan phrases it, "the story of my life" (533), a "precious autobiography" (51) whose next chapter remains shrouded to writer and reader alike.

Readers must give attention not only to which details are included in the text, but also to which details the writer excludes. Blodgett observes that "the consequence of the various social pressures on women is inarticulateness in their diaries. An intense moment for a diarist is more likely to elicit silence than statement, especially concerning relationships with males" (54). "Diaries," Blodgett continues, "are a form of self-

presentation through language well before they are records for posterity, and self-presentation can be a powerful silencer" (62).

Confederate war diaries attest to the accuracy of Blodgett's observations. In dozens of entries, Amanda McDowell notes her inability or unwillingness to record the day's events, such as on March 25, 1863 when she writes, "Got nothing interesting to write, feel rather dull, another fit of the blues coming on" (178); or on May 12, 1863 when she complains that "I have not written anything, for I have had nothing to write" (188). And on September 13, 1863 she wryly observes that "I feel lonely and wretched, would like to write some today but believe I will not make a fool of myself as long as I can help it conveniently" (215). Diarist Sarah Morgan comments more extensively about the self-constraints governing her diary entries:

If I dared keep the diary that is ever in my thoughts, what a book this would be! But it is not to be thought of. Wandering about the world as I now am, with no sacred or convenient spot where I can place any thing with security, it would [be] impossible to do so with any pleasure; for there are some inward thoughts which I would shrink from having rudely exposed. . . . So I keep to myself all that is worth recording, and industriously compile a whole volume of trash which even I will never have the patience to review, and which curiosity mongers would soon abandon as a fruitless undertaking. And yet, if I gave away to impulse, I *could* write a diary! Such a one perhaps, that I could actually look over again. (215-216)

Months later, Morgan returns to the discrepancy between her imagined and actual diary. While she admits that "fear it should fall in the hands of those it is not intended for" serves as a powerful inhibitor, she also candidly admits what every writer knows, that constructing the "very amusing" diary she imagines "would be too much trouble" (494). Motivated by the desire for privacy and the awareness of one's own creative limitations, diarists edit their experiences and perceptions before ever committing them to paper.

Besides the initial choice of which material to record, diarists also actively edit the written text, eliminating passages which might be compromising or inflammatory, expanding others which appear particularly confusing or interesting. According to Amanda McDowell's editor, the diarist excised large portions of her diary mentioning her lover, Larkin Craig, when she decided to marry another man (v), and Eliza Frances Andrews writes that though she kept a diary "with more or less regularity for about ten years the bulk of the matter . . . was destroyed at various times in those periodical fits of disgust and self-abasement that come to every keeper of an honest diary in saner moments" (4), for "as a discourager of self-conceit there is nothing like an old diary, and I suppose no one ever knows what a full-blown idiot he or she is capable of being, who has not kept such a living record against himself" (5). Her introduction records that when a relative suggested that Andrews preserve the section of her diary covering the war years as a "family heirloom," she tore "out bodily whole paragraphs, and even pages, that were considered too personal for other eyes than her own. In this way the manuscript was mutilated, in some places, beyond recovery" (4-5). Stephen Kagle comments that "as a result" of Eliza Frances Andrews' omission of "tiresome reflections, silly flirtations . . . thoughtless criticisms and other expressions that might wound the feelings of persons

now living" (Andrews 6), "the surviving work is less complete than a serious diary reader might wish" (Kagle 40). Conversely, Catherine Ann Devereux Edmondston indicates in her two paragraph introduction to the text that she has interwoven narrative into the gaps of "one or two little Diaries, skeletons as it were that I have kept at intervals for the past three years" in her efforts to create an interesting journal where "no 'Jack Horner' can 'put in his thumb' without 'pulling out' a juicy sugar of a 'plum' !" (1). The text that Crabtree and Patton present as Edmondston's "diary" thus appears to be the result of her creative reconfiguring of more telegraphic journal entries, a work perhaps more akin to a memoir where themes and patterns can be imposed on a text retrospectively rather than to the more open-ended, organic diary. However, readers must necessarily approach the distinction between Edmondston's and Andrews' texts as one of degree, realizing that both authors actively edited their diaries, molding their personalities and their country's story with an eye toward future readers.

Several authors append forewords, afterwords, or explanatory notes to their diaries, all of which influence the way their texts are read. One of the first Confederate diaries published was written by Kate Cumming who prepared her journal for publication in the fall of 1865. Richard Harwell notes that "there are no indications that the original manuscript was doctored for publication, and errors in grammar and misdated entries are evidence to the contrary." Cumming's diary was published first in Louisville and the next year in New Orleans under the "cumbersome title" A Journal of Hospital Life in the Confederate Army of Tennessee from the Battle of Shiloh to the End of the War: With Sketches of Life and Character, and Brief Notices of Current Events During That Period (xvii). As a Scottish immigrant, though she had "never seen Scotland to remember her"

(5), Cumming frequently refers to her birthplace, and in her introduction compares the South's struggle with Scotland's centuries-long quest for independence from England. The thrust of her argument is that despite hundreds of years of bitter conflict between the two nations, they now exist in harmony while still retaining their distinct ethnicities: "Is a Scotchman to-day an Englishman? or, *vice-versa*, an Englishman a Scotchman? All know they are as distinct in nationality as the first day they were united. Where is there such a union for harmony? Not on this earth" (6). Cumming argues that the North and the South, also distinctly different peoples, can likewise learn to live together. Although her introduction preaches a message of reconciliation, it recognizes the barrier between peoples living on either side of the Mason-Dixon line which can be tolerated but never erased. Her introduction heralds an ethnic sensibility repeatedly demonstrated throughout her diary.

Although Sarah Dawson Morgan apparently never wrote a full introduction to her diary, she did edit her own diary at several points in her lifetime. Warrington Dawson, Morgan's son and editor of the 1913 edition of her diary, relates that his mother sealed her diary in a cedar chest, not returning to it until 1896 when she cut the stitches of the diary's linen wrapping, and for the first time since the war, took out the books (xxviii). Her current editor remarks that "presumably it was at this point, or not long after this, that she made some of the alterations that we find—marginal comments, excisions, an occasional correction of spelling" (xxxiii). East dates further annotation of Morgan's wartime diary to 1904 and 1906 (xli). Though many of her explanatory notes seem as inconsequential as the one prefacing her opening entry which informs readers that "This was an old book Brother had in Paris, before I was born. He gave it to me for my 2d

Journal, though I call it my First. The other was begun when I was Eleven years old" (5), other editorial notes prove more illuminating. On November 4, 1862, for example, Morgan records that she and two female companions "retired to exchange our pretty dresses for plain ones," as their party moved from the parlor to the sugar house (326). Editor Charles East notes that years later, Morgan returned to this incident, "writing diagonally across the page" that "Some of the gentlemen remarked that very few young ladies would have the courage to change pretty evening dresses for calico, after appearing to such advantage. Many would prefer wearing such dresses, however inappropriate, to the sugar-house. With his droll gravity Gibbes answered: 'Our girls don't want to be stuck up.' " (n. 326) Morgan's insertion fosters an image found throughout her journal of courageous, practical, self-confident young Confederates, women who stand in vivid contrast to the spoiled, simpering blossoms of popular lore.

One of the more dramatic and explicit pronouncements on the subject of ethnicity comes from Eliza Frances Andrews who edited her own diary for publication in 1908. Besides footnotes containing phrases such as "our army" (34 n.) which suggest Andrews' continuing identification with the Confederacy, Andrews includes an extensive foreword and conclusion which she intends as a frame for the diary's events. In the foreword, Andrews spells out her brand of Marxism which explains, she believes, the South's attachment to slavery:

The Old South, with its stately feudal *regime*, was not the monstrosity that some would have us believe, but merely a case of belated survival, like those giant sequoias of the Pacific slope that have lingered on from age to age, and are now left standing alone in a changed world. . . . the spirit of

chattel slavery was in the race, possibly from its prehuman stage, and through all the hundreds of thousands of years that it has been painfully traveling from that humble beginning toward the still far-off goal of the superhuman, not one branch of it has ever awakened to a sense of the moral obliquity of the practice till its industrial condition had reached a stage in which that system was less profitable than wage slavery.

(11-12)

Rather than being an issue rooted in religious doctrine, as she once thought it, Andrews now believes that slavery "was a pure case of economic determinism, which means that our great moral conflict reduces itself, in the last analysis, to a question of dollars and cents" (13). She struggles to re-envision the Civil War as the inevitable pangs attending economic evolution; nevertheless, Andrews' ethnic biases continue to creep into her justification of the antebellum South.

What is implicit in her prefatory comments becomes overt in her editorial conclusion: military defeat cannot quell the nobility of the Anglo-Saxon pureblood. Despite the smoking swath cut across the South by Sherman's army, Andrews urges her readers to embrace belief in Southern triumph. This "most glorious of all conquests" belongs to Southerners who "cheerfully" and "honorably" bore disaster. Though Andrews' recurrent references to "property" and "millions" seek to focus her pronouncement on monetary matters, her ethnic prejudices repeatedly steal center stage:

By the abolition of slavery alone four thousand millions worth of property were wiped out of existence. As many millions more went up in the smoke and ruin of war We, on this side of the line, have long since

forgiven the war and its inevitable hardships. We challenged the fight, and if we got more of it in the end than we liked, there was nothing for it but to stand up like men and take our medicine without whimpering. It was the hand that struck us after we were down that bore hardest; yet even its iron weight was not enough to break the spirit of a people in whom the Anglo-Saxon blood of our fathers still flows uncontaminated; and when the insatiable crew of the carpet-baggers fell upon us to devour the last meager remnants left us by the spoliation of war, they were met by the ghostly bands of 'The Invisible Empire,' who through secret vigilance and masterful strategy saved the civilization they were forbidden to defend by open force Forced against our will, and against the simplest biological and ethnological laws, into an unnatural political marriage that has brought forth as its monstrous offspring a race problem in comparison with which the Cretan Minotaur was a suckling calf . . . giving millions out of our poverty to educate the negro, and contributing millions more to reward the patriotism of our conquerors . (385-387).

Presumably, Andrews intends to affirm her Southern readers' sense of ethnic superiority, and in the absence of contemporaneous book reviews, I can only speculate regarding her success. However, some ninety years later, her insistence that "it is good to feel coursing in your veins the blood of a race that has left its impress on the civilization of the world wherever the Anglo-Saxon has set his foot" (387), strikes me as distressingly racist. Instead of persuading me to approach her diary as a documentation of the South's economic struggles, her appended remarks indicate the continuation of the ethnic biases

she held as a young Confederate. Andrews bookends her diary with an introduction and conclusion which announce her current attitudes and which prove worthy of study in their own right.

THE DIARY OF EMMA LECONTE: A CASE STUDY

Emma LeConte, eldest daughter of South Carolina College's chemistry professor Joseph LeConte, was seventeen years old when she opened her diary on December 31, 1864. During the next eight months, she chronicles a traumatic chapter in Columbia's history: the advent of William T. Sherman and his Union troops who burn and pillage the picturesque college town. Though LeConte writes several additional manuscripts in later years, her Civil War diary ends on August 6 1865, forming one of the more concise and vivid portrayals of the collision between North and South.

Four versions of her diary are available for portions of February 16-18, 1865. The first and oldest is a single piece of stained, unlined, brown letter paper, folded in half and inserted into LeConte's recopied journal on the corresponding dates. Her close, tight writing stretches to the edges of the paper on both sides, attesting to her efforts to conserve paper. The second version of her February 16-18 entries appears in her recopied diary, a manuscript penned some four to ten years after the war (Scott vii-viii). Determined to preserve her wartime record, LeConte copied her diary into a book of lined white paper with a sewn red binding, patterned paper cover, and paisley-patterned page ends. Handwritten and hand numbered on both sides of 252 pages, the manuscript includes several brief editorial comments by LeConte, such as on page 220 where she writes, "(There is a hiatus here of about a month ___ I do not know where [sic] some pages

are lost or whether there were no entries made (E Le C F)." ⁹ The third version of the entries for February 16-18, 1865 occur in a typed transcript housed with the single original piece and recopied diary, and available on the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's web site for the Southern Historical Collection. This typescript was completed in May, 1938 by the Historical Records Survey of the Works Progress Administration. Finally, in 1957 Earl Schenck Miers edited the diary for publication by Oxford University Press under the title When the World Ended: The Diary of Emma LeConte. Miers' edition, complete with his introduction, was republished in 1987 by the University of Nebraska Press, with a new foreword by noted historian Anne Firor Scott. The multiple versions and editors of Emma LeConte's diary make her work ideally suited for studying the impact of editorial intervention on a text's presentation of ethnicity.

In Anne Firor Scott's foreword, she refers to a typescript of an unpublished manuscript entitled "Recollections of Emma Florence LeConte's Youth," held by Lester D. Stephens of the University of Georgia (Scott xix). In this memoir, LeConte recalls the circumstances surrounding the writing of her Civil War diary:

I suppose it was a kind of New Year's start that would have been dropped but that events crowded with so much of horror and disaster that I could but try to chronicle them. It was written on pieces of brownish Confederate letter paper. I took it with me when I married and finding it was wearing to pieces, and much of it being in pencil, was fading into illegibility, I undertook to copy it, or at least most of it, what seemed of any general interest. (qtd. in Scott vii-viii)

One page of this original diary remains, tucked into the pages of LeConte's recopied and edited manuscript, both of which are housed in the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill's Southern Historical Collection. Although Scott alludes to the existence of this original manuscript through her quotation of LeConte's memoir penned in her old age, neither Scott nor Miers address the fact that the manuscript which provides the source document for the published diary is actually LeConte's edited version, nor do they acknowledge the existence of this manuscript fragment. Instead, Miers asserts that the published diary "has been here reproduced exactly as Emma wrote it," working from the "original copy of Emma's diary" located at Chapel Hill (xxx-xxxi). Comparison of this fragment, penned while Sherman's troops were visible from her bedroom window, with LeConte's edited version gives insight into the persona which she sought to project through her manuscript and provides clues to the continued development of her ethnic identity.

LeConte's edited manuscript shares two important similarities with the original fragment. First, the basic content and story line remains consistent, with none of the extensive elaboration or "reconstructing" of details that readers find in Mary Chesnut's A Diary from Dixie.¹⁰ If we extrapolate LeConte's editorial style based on her revision of this fragment, then we can feel fairly certain that the recopied text is historically accurate, recording the facts of LeConte's experiences as they actually occurred. Second, the punctuation style of LeConte's recopied version proves consistent with the original fragment, where extensive use of exclamation marks and dashes are used to indicate increased emotional intensity. For instance, in the original, LeConte writes that "At 6 ___ o'clock Sherman give the signal, a blast on the bugle, for the cessation of the fire and in

15 minutes __ the flames ceased spreading" (3-4); the recopied text reads, "Then too about this time even the Yankees seemed to have grown weary of their horrible work __ The signal for the cessation of the fire __ a blast on the bugle was given __ and in fifteen minutes the flames ceased to spread __ " (89). This similarity proves significant for readers wishing to establish an identifying link of authorship between the two manuscripts.

While readers should note these similarities, major differences between the fragment of LeConte's original diary and her recopied diary hint at LeConte's continuing efforts to both shape and project a particular image. First of all, the two differ in form. The original fragment is written on inexpensive, unbound, brown "letter" paper, folded in half. The lines and words are written closely together and to the edges of the paper, a typical practice for Confederate diarists since paper of any kind was scarce during the war's latter stages. The recopied diary is not only bound as described above, but sports more expansive handwriting, ink throughout, and several dozen empty pages at the back of the journal.

Beyond material form, the two manuscripts differ rhetorically. The fragment contains forty-three sentences, most of which are simple, compound, or loose in construction, with only five of the forty-three using introductory clauses and two formed as questions. In LeConte's recopied diary, thirty-one sentences cover the same material, with double the number of sentences using introductory clauses and no questions. Although the decreased number of sentences partially reflects deleted information, the primary cause of fewer sentences is extensive sentence combining in the latter version. For example, the fragment reads, "It was about 6 o'clock, still quite dark & all in the

room were buried in profound slumber when we were suddenly aroused by a most terrific explosion. The house shook and a broken window frame fell on the floor. We started up frightened half to death" (2). LeConte conveys the same information in her recopied version, but in a more complex form: "At about six o'clock while it was still quite dark and all in the room were buried in profound slumber, we were suddenly awakened by a terrific explosion __ The house shook, broken window panes clattered down and we all sat up in bed, for a few seconds mute with terror" (71). Instead of evenly distributing the first sentence's weight between each thought segment, her revised version focuses attention on the "we" which moves out of the dependent clause into subject position. In the revised second sentence, LeConte combines a compound with a simple sentence, embedding the aural detail of clattering panes. The increased number of subordinate clauses marks an increased textual sophistication. Again, in the fragment, seventeen-year-old LeConte writes, "I think it was about 6 o'clock that a crowd of drunken soldiery assaulted the campus gate & threatened to overpower the guard They swore the college buildings should *not* be spared" (4). Revisiting this incident in her twenties, she condenses the original to read, "About six o'clock a crowd of drunken soldiers assaulted the campus gate and threatened to overpower the guard __ swearing the buildings should not be spared" (90).

Similar to the increased complexity of sentence structure, LeConte revises the wording of her account of Sherman's rampage through Columbia, replacing several straightforward expressions with more consciously literary constructions. For instance, instead of describing the "broken window frame [which] fell on the floor" causing the family to feel "frightened half to death," (2), LeConte relates that "broken window panes

clattered down and we all sat up in bed, for a few seconds mute with terror" (72). She originally records that on the morning after the munitions explosion "the day was beginning to break & the air out of doors was still filled with smoke" (2), a description which she revises to read that "the day was beginning to break murkily and the air was still heavy with smoke" (72). Although readers can only speculate why she makes these and many other revisions, the effect of additions such as "clattered," "mute," "murkily," and "heavy" is to make her revised text more sensorily vivid. The increased sophistication of LeConte's text strengthens the persona of a highly literate, Southern lady, one who demonstrates command of herself and her situation through command of language. From this powerful position, LeConte further distances herself from her text's barbaric Northerners and childlike slaves.

In several spots, the revised diary appends or deletes phrases which increase the emotional distance between LeConte and her family's former slaves or between LeConte and the invading Union army. For instance, when the family fears that their house has been struck by midnight shelling, she records that they "lit the candles & sent Jane to inquire of Henry the cause of it. He did not know ___" (2); whereas the recopied diary reads, "we lit the candle and Mother sent Jane to enquire [sic] of Henry the cause. Of course he did not know" (72). The subtle shifts in identifying Mother as the author of Jane's command and editorializing on Henry's ignorance help cement the boundary between slaveholder and slave. Similarly, LeConte adjusts her account of the hospital's escape to downplay the Union soldiers' significant role. The original fragment records that when Dr. Thomson asks the Union officer if he "would suffer his own men to be burnt up," this question "altered the case entirely. The officer said the hospital *must* be

saved. He & some of his men came to Dr T's assistance and by desperate efforts it was saved" (3). The recopied diary alters the passage to read, "When all seemed in vain Dr. Thomson ~~when~~ went to an officer and asked if he would see his own soldiers burnt alive ___ He said he would save the hospital and he and his men came to Dr T's assistance ___ Then too about this time even the Yankees seemed to have grown weary of their horrible work ___" (89). LeConte revises the segment to decrease Union participation in the hospital's rescue and to align Yankees once again with monsters delighting in destruction.

While LeConte confides personal fears and misgivings in the fragment, the revised manuscript edits out many of these intimate details. For instance, at the end of the February 16 entry as seventeen-year-old Emma awaits the arrival of Sherman's troops, she cries, "But I must put by my pencil for to night. I consider what I will have to write next time! Oh! If I could only guess what is to be our fate!" (1) In the recopied journal, she ends the same day's entry with, "But I must put by my pencil for tonight. I wonder what another day's entry will be!" (70) When Emma agonizes over Columbia's burning, wondering if her home too will be consumed in flames, she originally writes that Union soldiers declare "they would not leave a house standing. What would become of us? It was a fearful question. Then I thought of our beloved house. I could almost see the flames consuming it ___ I thought of father's library ___ every book of which I love ___ I thought of my own dear rooms ___ Oh it was dreadful! We owe our safety to the presence of Yankee wounded in the hospital" (3) Several years later, when recopying this section of her diary, LeConte revises the passage to read, "they said they would not leave a house ___ and what would become of us! ___ I suppose we owe our final escape to the presence of the Yankee wounded in the hospital ___" (89). And in a third instance,

Emma originally writes that only "when there was no longer any danger we went down stairs again" (4), an observation completely deleted from the revised diary. The textual deletions from the original segment reshape passages where LeConte's fear or indecision creeps into the pages of her diary, or where she acknowledges a debt to the protection of her slaves or Columbia's Yankee conquerors. She alters these signs of dependence to present a portrait of increased strength consistent with passages where she records Union soldiers and officers commenting on the courage and fortitude of Confederate women.¹¹ As LeConte edits her own diary, she revises her self-portrayal by augmenting her existing qualities of independence, stamina, and calmness,¹² her portrayal of the family slaves by subtly increasing the distance between slaveholder and slave, and her portrayal of the Union soldiers and officers by diminishing her dependence on their protection and painting them more uniformly evil.

The third version of LeConte's diary entries for February 16-18, 1865 consists of a typescript of LeConte's recopied journal prepared by the Historical Records Survey of the Works Progress Administration in May, 1938, currently housed in the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill's Southern Historical Collection. By adding commas to set off dependent clauses,¹³ changing underscores to periods at the ends of sentences and deleting others that fall in mid-sentence,¹⁴ and altering spelling, verb tense, vocabulary, and paragraphing,¹⁵ the transcriber of LeConte's recopied journal alters the text to help it conform with current guidelines for standard English.

The final version of LeConte's text appears in an edition prepared by Earl Schenck Miers entitled When the World Ended: The Diary of Emma LeConte. Miers announces in his 1957 introduction that "the diary has been here reproduced exactly as

Emma wrote it, although occasionally, for greater clarity, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing have been altered" (xxx-xxxi). While Miers does indeed make few changes from the 1938 typescript, his alterations of LeConte's actual text are more extensive than his introduction indicates. For example, out of the twenty-three changes that the transcript makes in the first fifteen sentences of the entry for February 17, 1865, Miers' edition maintains twenty of those changes, adding four of his own. In the middle of the February 18, 1865 entry, the transcript makes thirty-eight changes within fifteen sentences; Miers keeps thirty-six of the changes and adds ten more of his own. As in the 1938 typescript, Miers' editorial changes appear to be motivated by the desire to make LeConte's text conform to the conventions of twentieth-century standard English. How do the textual changes introduced by the 1938 transcriber and by Miers affect a reader's understanding of LeConte's ethnicity? Although no ethnic slurs appear to have been added or deleted, and no details present in LeConte's recopied journal suppressed, the numerous modifications of LeConte's diary which wrench her text into conformity with twentieth-century ideals of "standard" English shape how we as readers approach her text.

Facile use of standard English—understood as the type of English approved in the academy—is connected by many not only to a certain educational background, but also to a particular socio-economic stratum, as well as indicating ethnic origin. In the 1860s, writers quickly and effortlessly communicated ethnic differences in their texts' characters by having those characters speak in dialect, stumble over a verb tense, or misuse a pronoun. Thus, in those few times that slaves actually speak in these diaries, they invariably use non-standard English. The diarists frequently employ this same writing

strategy when transcribing the speech of Union soldiers, particularly those of a lower social class, or those seen interacting with African Americans. This strategy is still used today, so that literacy (use of academic prose, adherence to the rules of standard English, the ability to allude to certain "classic" / canonical texts, the indication that the writer commands his or her subject through vivid description, abundant detail, and linear organization) becomes connected to ethnicity. In fact, the very idea of "standard" English privileges certain ethnic groups or educational levels over others. Miers' editorial decisions thus affect the text's ethnic flavor as well as its accessibility.

Perhaps no editorial activity reveals an editor's biases more clearly than his or her introduction. Given the opportunity to have the first word, editors seek to spin the text, influencing the manner in which readers will approach the novel, the poem, or—in this case—the diary. Which material will be foregrounded and which sections pushed to the margins? How much historical or biographical information will be included, encouraging the reader to establish relationships between the text and external events or influences? How clearly will the editor explain methodology? The introduction or foreword warrants close attention in its own right, rewarding careful readers with a peek into the editor's own ethnic sensibilities. Earl Schenck Miers' introduction for the Oxford University Press edition of LeConte's diary fits in this category.

Clearly privileging the public figure over the private individual,¹⁶ Miers' introduction emphasizes Sherman and his march through the South, arguing that LeConte's experience illustrates "an episode without parallel in American history" (xxiii). Of the introduction's seventeen paragraphs, six refer in some fashion to Emma LeConte's life and attitudes, two treat textual concerns, and nine full paragraphs detail Sherman's

life and military career, making him clearly the focus of Miers' introduction. Although not all of Miers' comments on Sherman are laudatory, the sheer number of words devoted to him and his role in the Confederacy's defeat indicate Miers' primary area of interest: LeConte's text deserves attention because of its illumination of Sherman. Miers' concentration on Sherman, "one of the great warriors of his age" (xxviii), encourages readers to view LeConte's experiences in relationship to Sherman's, and by extension view Columbia's experiences in relationship to her Union conqueror. No mention is made of the LeConte slaves, or slavery at all. The closest Miers approaches the subject is when he comments that when Sherman marched into South Carolina, "the cause was lost, the dream ending, a way of life dying" (xxv). In addition to chastising Northern newspapers which accused Sherman of insanity, Miers observes that although "the stricken girl [Emma] saw Sherman as a robber and an incendiary. . . for the dispassionate historian [such as Miers] it is difficult to find among the generals of the North one who became more intrinsically the friend of the South than William Tecumseh Sherman" (xxvii). Sherman, misunderstood by Northern press as well as Southern maidens, emerges as the real hero of Miers' introduction.

Anne Firor Scott, who wrote a new foreword for the University of Nebraska Press' 1987 reissue of Mier's edition, takes an entirely different tack. Instead of concentrating on the "emotions of southerners living in Sherman's path," Scott believes that LeConte's text reveals "a good deal about certain kinds of southern women" (vii). Aside from mentioning that LeConte remains calm throughout military upheaval, that Emma returns to her studies in "post-Sherman Columbia" (viii), and that Columbia's women hold a bazaar while awaiting Sherman's arrival (ix), Sherman, the Union army,

and indeed the war itself are largely elided from Scott's foreword. Scott replaces the discussion of Sherman's childhood and military career with details concerning LeConte's education, skill as a writer, family connections, and post-diary activities drawn from later diaries and memoirs kept during a trip to California, during World War I, and during the 1920s. Scott highlights LeConte's independence, applauding her capable handling of the family's plantation and her daughters' education and remarking that in "her old age Emma had become enough of a feminist not only to cheer the passage of the suffrage amendment but to remember with dismay her mother's disappointment at the birth of a third and then a fourth girl" (xviii). As evidence of LeConte's uniqueness, Scott focuses on her literary activities, concluding that although she typifies Southern womanhood in many respects, her abilities as a "gifted writer" (xviii) distinguish her from her peers. Interestingly, the majority of the material Scott uses to establish this perspective on LeConte's character comes not from the Civil War diary itself but from LeConte's later writings, an emphasis that implicitly undercuts claims of agency in LeConte's first manuscript.

Scott also gives considerable attention to LeConte's shifting attitudes toward African Americans, a subject missing entirely from Miers' introduction. Scott argues that LeConte's "offhand comments" regarding the slaves' role in saving the family from starvation in post-Sherman Columbia "reveal deep-seated racism," springing from her belief that "blacks [are] unchangeably inferior" (ix). Scott returns to LeConte's ethnic attitudes toward the end of the foreword, observing that the African-American kitchen servants make her later volunteer work and her extensive network of social visits possible. Ironically, one of her volunteer efforts consists in raising funds for children

attending a poorly-equipped school for African Americans. Although Scott acknowledges LeConte's ethnic prejudices, she softens her censure by remarking that in her old age she wrote that the war had been fueled by "fanaticism on both sides," and might have been avoided altogether "with coolness and freedom from prejudice and passion" coupled with the realization that slavery's time was past (qtd. in Scott xviii). Scott's message seems clear: though the teenage LeConte was prejudiced, her actions and attitudes must be read in light of the older LeConte's greater understanding. While this charitable method certainly presents a more rounded view of her ethnic attitudes over the course of a lifetime, it is a critically suspect method to modify one's reading of a text based on another text written almost sixty years later. Scott's choice to de-emphasize Emma's passionate patriotism in order to foreground her intellectual achievements and personal independence emerges from an editorial agenda as surely as Miers' disproportionate attention to Sherman. LeConte emerges from the pages of Scott's foreword as an intelligent, independent woman, who is largely apolitical and whose ethnic biases are corrected with age.

CONCLUSION:

Publication always alters the original text in some manner, a fact worth remembering for students of published texts. Editorial intervention comes through two main avenues: the author herself may alter the original text in some manner or an outside editor may adjust the text, both activities apparently motivated by the desire to make the text more "publishable." In either case, the pristine text—the diary entry which records unfiltered impressions, attitudes, details—is a myth. Margo Culley reminds readers that

"the original record is itself a reconstruction of reality and not 'truth' in any absolute sense" (17): diaries are always shaped. Diarists decide when and where to write, choosing now to keep a daily record and then to skip three months, or even three years. Diarists choose to include certain details and to erase others. They choose to present themselves in a particular light, so that from the initial writing of a diary entry their experience and perceptions are "edited." For the historian seeking to establish some sort of "extratextual" reality, this editorial process which begins with the diarist and extends through the various people who handle the text can prove problematic, propelling the historian to search for the authentic text, or the original combination of words that transcribed the diarist's reality. Textual critics face similar problems.

For readers who view the text as a literary construct, editorial intervention becomes part of the text's evolving story, a facet of the text demanding critical savvy rather than posing an insurmountable hurdle. Editors also shape a diary's ethnic message, influencing the way readers perceive the diarist's ethnic attitudes as well as subtly revealing some of the editor's own ethnic biases. Do the many changes made to LeConte's text, both by herself and by later editors, invalidate the study of her published text? Do editors, as Sir Arthur Ponsonby asserted, always "spoil a diary" ? (5). Editors certainly affect a diary, but their touch is an inescapable influence beginning when the diarist first puts pen to paper. Studies drawing on published diaries, such as my own, should acknowledge the editorial process, realizing that editors help form the nuances of a text, while adding yet another layer to the text's ethnic message.

Notes

¹ See Kline's Introduction to A Guide to Documentary Editing for a solid historical overview of editing practices in America. Because my study concerns itself with texts generally considered the purview of historians, Kline's information pertaining to the development of distinct editorial traditions for historical scholars and literary scholars proves especially noteworthy (1-29).

² Attention to the prefatory material in recently published diaries indicates that current publications of Confederate diaries generally fall into Kline's categories of "inclusive" or "expanded" texts, an editorial approach which minimizes substantive changes and clearly announces "editorial tinkering" to the reader (121). East's edition of Sarah Morgan's diary can be described as an expanded text, as can Mary Robertson's edition of Pauline DeCaradeuc's journal. Robertson writes that although she worked from a transcript of the original diary, she is "grateful for the transcriptionist's sense of history, which presumably, resulted in a reproduction of the journal with few, if any emendations. This editor has likewise intruded as little as possible into the body of the text in order to retain the authenticity and historical flavor of the original manuscript" (xiii). C. Vann Woodward's edition of Chesnut's diary takes textual integrity one step further: though he details changes made to regularize spelling of proper names and notation of numbers, Woodward also carefully records measures taken to include Chesnut's marginal and interlinear emendations, effaced words or those which Chesnut crossed out, as well as her later editorial notes. To aid the reader, Woodward keys all of these textual recoveries so that they are easily distinguishable from one another. Other editors, such as Lela McDowell, who insists that while making "slight changes in punctuation—to make the

sense clear" the diary has been "kept word for word" as it was written (v), undercut their claims by massive editorial interpolations or excisions.

³ Blodgett continues her defense of working with published sources by arguing that "manuscript diaries will largely sustain the conclusions I have drawn about published ones" (Blodgett 18).

⁴ After reviewing several destructive "editorial habits," Robert Fothergill concludes that "all these factors add up to a major problem when one wishes to speak of the diarist's selective rendering of experience or consciousness—not knowing how much selective organization has been introduced by another hand" (5). After raising these "major" problems, however, Fothergill posits no method of circumventing these difficulties; instead, he ends the segment on editorial practices with the transition statement, "So much for the state of the texts; what of the state of criticism in the field?" (5)

⁵ William Buck inserted numerous historical vignettes into the text of Lucy's diary, such as the following passage which breaks into the middle of her entry for February 12th, 1862: "Capt. Robert Simpson (later major) was commander of 'Warren Rifles' , Co. B., Seventeenth Virginia Infantry. This was the first company of Confederate soldiers recruited in Warren County. Before the war, Captain Simpson conducted a school known as the Front Royal Academy on Crescent Street" (29). Although these numerous editorializations function as explanatory notes akin to footnotes or endnotes, the choice to interrupt her text with long passages of italicized comments—some of which exceed a full page—places William Buck's comments on a much more equal footing with Lucy's diary than other editorial styles.

⁶ William Buck follows his dedication to "Lucy's Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ" with comments which paint Lucy's attitudes and actions in a golden wash of Christian piety. Buck encourages readers to deal generously with Lucy by remarking that

although a Christian since she had trusted in, relied on, and clung to the fact that Jesus Christ had paid the penalty for her sins; perhaps [Lucy] had not at this time in her life learned the Christ-controlled life. That life is one in which a person lives moment by moment, step by step, breath by breath, with an attitude of total dependence on Jesus Christ. (41)

⁷ Though Fothergill specifically criticizes full-length diaries which have been mutilated by editors wishing to highlight particular aspects of the text while necessarily suppressing or eliminating others, his comments could also bear on anthologies which excerpt diaries, yanking portions of entries out of context and treating them as representative of the entire diary. While the best anthologies avoid skewing the text through editorial comments which hint at the text's complexity and range, others subordinate a diarist's frequently self-contradictory ideas and personality to the anthology's unifying theme, so that the text becomes a tool to make the editor's point. Though this practice proves a great temptation, I consciously seek to avoid distorting the diaries by testing my observations against whole texts.

⁸ Blodgett argues that writers edit their own diaries in order to eliminate references to wounded pride, inner feelings, and bodily functions. Although diarists frequently express a desire to be candid in the diary, "the intent to be candid does not necessarily translate into the practice of candor" (50).

⁹ An example of a lengthier observation comes on the last page of LeConte's manuscript where she remembers that

"The marriage of Mary Palmer took place in the early Fall. I did somehow manage to get the white muslin for the occasion __ my first party! Aunt Josie dressed my hair and put in a pretty spray of artificial white roses. I have a vivid memory of the unfortunate young man who was the groomsman with me, but have forgotten his name. He was probably a young Presbyterian theolog __ and as ill at ease as was I. (252)

¹⁰ See C. Vann Woodward's Mary Chesnut's Civil War for multiple examples of Chesnut's reconfiguring of incidents, conversations, and private reflections originally alluded to in her Civil War journals. In her dissertation entitled "The Creation of History and Myth in Mary Boykin Miller Chesnut's Civil War Narrative," Kendra Lynne McDonald joins Woodward in arguing that Chesnut's 1880 "diary" uses her earlier records to create a consciously constructed history of the Civil War (15).

¹¹ On February 26, 1865, Emma LeConte exults, "The Yankee officers while here paid the tribute to the women of this State of saying they were the most firm, obstinate and ultra-rebel set of women they had encountered—if the men only prove equally so!" (68) Editorial changes made by LeConte appear geared to bring her actions in line with this Yankee pronouncement which she considered complimentary.

¹² In Tara Revisited, Catherine Clinton argues that antebellum novelists created the "plantation legend," depicting warm relations between submissive, content slaves and strong, fairminded slaveholders (192). During the years following the Civil War, the strength of Southern women played a more active role in these literary dramas, in many

cases forming characters "not simply pivotal to the plot, but [which] come to symbolize the South itself" (193). Diarists such as LeConte contribute to the development of this persona of the rebel belle.

¹³ The transcription of Emma LeConte's diary attempts to standardize the punctuation of dependent clauses, setting them off with commas. For example, in the manuscript, LeConte writes, "It is now about 11 o'clock and the longest morning I ever lived through. I threw myself on the bed late last night or rather early this morning without undressing, feeling if I did not take some rest I would be sick—" (70); the transcription of this passage reads, "It is now about eleven o'clock, and the longest morning I ever lived through. I threw myself on the bed late last night, or rather early this morning, without undressing, feeling if I did not take some rest I would be sick." (26)

¹⁴ The 1938 transcription of LeConte's text changes underscores to periods at the ends of sentences, and deletes or changes to commas most underscores that fall in mid-sentence: for example, the manuscript reads ". . . thinking of the tumult that was reigning up town __ At last I fell into a heavy sleep __" (71), while the transcript states "thinking of the tumult there was reigning uptown. At last I fell into a heavy sleep." (26); the manuscript records "There we stood watching and listening to the roaring and crashing __ It seemed inevitable __ they said they would not leave a house __ and what would become of us! __" (89), and the transcript states that "There we stood watching listening to the roaring and crashing. It seemed inevitable – they said they would not leave a house, and what would become of us!" (33).

¹⁵ Note the following examples of the transcriber's alterations in spelling, verb tense, and vocabulary: "that" to "there" (71 / 26); "knew" to "know"; "enquire" to "inquire" (72 / 26); "effectually" to "effectively"; "preceding" to "preceeding" (72 / 27); "engage" to "engaged"; "house" to "home"; "experiences" to "experience"; "care" to "give" (90 / 33).

¹⁶ Of Miers' 64 editorial notes, 9 of them refer specifically to Sherman, 24 to Union military or political affairs, 26 to Confederate military or political affairs, 4 to Emma's father, Joseph LeConte, 1 to Emma's sister, and 0 to Emma herself.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

"Rivers Deep & Strong Has been Shed & Where are We Now?"

In the 1760's, American colonist James Shearer imported bricks, moldings, and furnishings from his native Scotland to construct a mansion befitting his position as a Virginian gentleman. Besides a stunning view of the Potomac, his windows gazed out over the family's formal gardens and his impressive plantation. What stayed hidden below the ridge were the rows of slave cabins which housed the men and women upon whose labor his wealth depended, as did the wealth of his sons and grandsons. Several years ago, my family and I visited our ancestral home in Glen Falls, Virginia. Shearer's "mansion" passed out of our family's hands in the early 1900's, and was—at the time of our visit—occupied by a family with young children. After studying the building's well-kept façade and visiting the family graveyard, we traipsed through the unmowed grass to the site of the former slave quarters. They, of course, had not fared as well. In fact, every trace of the one-room cabins had been erased, and if we had not had access to old plantation maps, the meadow where we stood would have been undistinguishable from the surrounding fields. The Virginia landscape had swallowed up the physical evidence of my grandfathers' slaves, casting a blanket of sweet grass and wildflowers over old brutalities.

I have thought of that afternoon many times over the years, and have struggled to reconcile the recorded fact of my ancestors' slaves with family tradition which pictures the Shearers as intelligent, freedom-loving, compassionate individuals. Personal history, fueled by readings in slave narratives, abolitionists' writings, and finally the diaries of Confederate women have led me back to an old enigma: how could any right-thinking

person believe slavery justifiable? Standing behind this puzzle are a number of related questions. How and to what purpose does a group form an ethnic identity? How does gender interact with the construction of ethnicity? What shared assumptions do writers employ to create meaning out of experience? What rhetorical patterns emerge as significantly connected to the formation of ethnic identity? In an attempt to answer these questions, this study has focused on the life writing of women who were embroiled in the bitterest and the most wide-spread ethnic conflict of our nation's history.

The diaries of these Confederate women illuminate some of the ways ethnicity is maintained and formulated. First, examination of the manner in which these diarists refer to their slaves and discuss the issue of slavery reveals several widespread patterns. In those rare instances that slave behavior, religious practice, or familial relationships are acknowledged, diarists consistently express the incapacity—or unwillingness—to identify kindred emotions or motivations. This lack of emotional connection allows the diarists to maintain the illusion of concrete ethnic barriers which assign refined emotional, intellectual, and spiritual responses to Americans of Western European descent, while fixing slave actions within the confines of childlike or animalistic passions. The more common method of encoding the ethnic division between white and black is to elide the slave's presence from the text. This is accomplished in two major ways: (a) by referring to one's slaves as "servants" which reconfigures the power dynamic of the master/slave relationship to resemble the employer/employee relationship of middle- and upper-class British families; (b) by appropriating the slave's labor so that diarists write of "planting fields" or "baking cakes" as if they had actually done the work themselves, a writing strategy which forces the slave to grammatically disappear while

enhancing the diarist's self-portrayal as competent and in control. At times these diarists follow a long-standing tradition of referring to their political position as slavery. The use of this metaphor by women who are themselves slaveholders is especially poignant, particularly since none of them articulates an awareness that their "servants" live out a literal bondage which realizes the political and economic disenfranchisement that these diarists imagine for themselves. Perhaps their ability to unselfconsciously appropriate the language of slavery arises from the beliefs that they are unjustly enslaved, while "nature" mandates the African American's enslavement. With rare exceptions, these diarists utilize writing strategies which serve to maintain the current power distribution. Each of these three patterns of encoding the ethnic boundary privileges the writer, who intensifies the distinctions between white and black by writing into existence a persona of continued competence, grace, and power.

Not only do these diaries address ways in which ethnic boundaries are maintained, but they offer insights into the formation of ethnic identity. Although regional distinctions between the Northern and Southern states had been gaining strength for decades, the formation of the Confederacy forced these women to reassess their nationality. Overnight, men from Pennsylvania and New York were transformed from potential suitors into enemies. Because such a large portion of the war was fought on Confederate soil, these diarists repeatedly confronted Union soldiers which caused them to conceive of the war in gendered terms. Although Union boys and Union mothers remain in an ethnic no-man's zone, Union officers and soldiers rapidly move from different nationality, to different race, to devils. How does one combat an ethnic other whose very humanity is questioned? These diarists fight with words. Picturing

themselves as intimately involved in the war rather than as observers or passive victims, they create powerful portraits of Confederate womanhood by grammatically linking themselves with the battlefield, by recording brilliant, biting verbal exchanges with Union soldiers, and by figuring their diaries as weapons. Many express awareness that they are writing history and that the opinions of future generations will be influenced by their records. They write themselves into the war, and in so doing reshape their own ethnic identity.

Of course, their diaries do not exist in a vacuum; rather, they grow out of the contemporaneous textual milieu. The very fact that these women carve out time to read extensively and to regularly record their experiences testifies to the importance they place on literacy. Their facility with language and their familiarity with a wide range of texts not only act as cultural currency, but help them define themselves ethnically. Unlike the inarticulate slave and the caricatured Yankee, these diarists see themselves as authors who join in the production of texts that will document the Confederacy's history. They view their diaries as texts with permeable boundaries, and repeatedly incorporate and respond to ideas and information from both oral and printed sermons, from newspapers, and from classic and popular literature. The voices of Southern ministers who justify the godliness of slavery and secession find a place in the pages of these diaries, as do the myriad reports on battles, troop movements, and the latest decisions of both Union and Confederate governments. Beyond simply parroting these texts, however, Confederate diarists reshape the voices they include, so that the diary grows beyond a fragmented ledger into the author's story. Most of these diaries use literary techniques, such as the conscious construction of "scenes" and "characters," as well as expressing a strong sense

of audience. The inclusion of concerns such as these pushes diarists toward a conception of their text as a literary construct, their "novel" or "book."

This perception of the diary as a shaped representation of the self and of the Confederacy helps explain their readiness to edit their own diaries. Certainly, diarists edit their texts as they choose which experiences to record, and which to withhold. But many of these Confederate diarists practice a more active editing, recrafting sentences, ripping out whole pages, even rewriting encounters and observations. Awareness that these diaries represent constructed experience rather than the diarist's unfiltered consciousness allows us to reflect on the motivations behind those choices, and paves the way for us to see the diary's editor participating in an activity analogous to what the diarist has already begun.

Though many Confederate diarists profess that ethnicity is rooted in "the real distinctions which nature has made" (Jefferson 145), their texts tell a different story. Their awareness of their own ethnicity forms and becomes defined through confrontation with the ethnic other, revealing that ethnicity is not a "thing but a process" (Sollors, "Introduction" xv). As they interact with slaves, freedmen, and Union soldiers, their understanding of the ethnic divide evolves, a process that is repeatedly documented in the pages of their diaries. But their writing is not only descriptive, it is formative. While analyzing the rhetorical strategies Confederate diarists use to encode ethnic identity offers little insight into my ancestors' involvement in slavery, it does shed light on the motivations of these particular women. Through articulating perceived difference, their writing actively maintains power structures which privilege "white" people, and helps them navigate the shoals of Emancipation. Their writing contributes to the reshaping of

their national consciousness, enabling them to attribute war's deprivations and loss to a clash between irreconcilably distinct peoples, and allowing them to create difference where it did not formerly exist. Treating themselves and others as characters in the pages of their books allows them to manipulate their perceptions of lived experience and to purposefully—and courageously—deal with tumultuous change. Through the medium of language, these diarists participate in the construction of Southern ethnicity.

Ultimately, when we make ethnic distinctions we exercise power. We recognize certain differences while choosing to ignore potent similarities. We name those differences and assign meaning to them, and through this linguistic process we further solidify our group identity and reify the ethnicity of others. It is in this space formed by the conviction of one's uniqueness that injustice and intolerance are allowed to exist alongside earnest dedication to freedom and truth. This space allows Sarah Morgan to mock her slaves' worship while calling on God to protect the Confederacy. This space allows Ellen Renshaw House to hurry past battle-mutilated Yankee soldiers while lavishing attention on imprisoned Confederates. And this space allows Lucy Buck to own slaves while chaffing under Union enslavement. The periodicity of the diary genre gives physical form to this space, enabling diarists to create texts which are simultaneously spontaneous and highly crafted, transparent and opaque, fragmented and continuous. Self-contained entries grant greater latitude for the self-contradictory attitudes that we each possess. Through the practice of diary-keeping, these Confederate women reinvented their own ethnicity, courageously confronting the devastation of war at the expense of those unlike themselves.

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VITA 2

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Doctor of Philosophy

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