



“To educate themselves”: southern black teachers in North Carolina’s schools for the freedpeople during the Civil War and reconstruction period, 1862–1875

AnneMarie Brosnan

To cite this article: AnneMarie Brosnan (2019) “To educate themselves”: southern black teachers in North Carolina’s schools for the freedpeople during the Civil War and reconstruction period, 1862–1875, *American Nineteenth Century History*, 20:3, 231–248, DOI: [10.1080/14664658.2019.1690743](https://doi.org/10.1080/14664658.2019.1690743)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14664658.2019.1690743>



Published online: 26 Nov 2019.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 1895



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)



Citing articles: 2 View citing articles [↗](#)



“To educate themselves”: southern black teachers in North Carolina’s schools for the freedpeople during the Civil War and reconstruction period, 1862–1875

AnneMarie Brosnan

Department of Learning, Society and Religious Education, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, Limerick, Ireland

ABSTRACT

Between 1862 and 1875, most of the teachers in North Carolina’s schools for the freedpeople were black. The vast majority of these teachers were from the South, mostly North Carolina, and many were former slaves. Yet, for over a century, the teachers of the freedpeople had been consistently portrayed as northern white women. Using North Carolina as a case study, this article examines the life and work of southern black teachers during the Civil War and Reconstruction eras, 1862–1875. In particular, it investigates how formerly enslaved men and women organized and mobilized to create a sustainable system of schooling for both themselves and their children. In doing so, this article demonstrates that southern black men and women were not passive recipients of northern largesse. Instead, it argues that North Carolina’s black population played a powerful role in shaping the contours of southern black schooling.

KEYWORDS

Freedpeople; school; education; Reconstruction; North Carolina

Introduction

During the spring of 1862, Martha Culling, a former slave, opened North Carolina’s first known school for the freedpeople on Roanoke Island.¹ Described by Reverend Horace James, a Freedmen’s Bureau official, as “a bright, smart mulatto girl,” Culling taught on the island for two additional years under the sponsorship of the National Freedmen’s Relief Association.² Robert Morrow, born a slave in Orange County, also began teaching the freedpeople in 1862. During the first year of the Civil War, Morrow had served as Confederate General James J. Pettigrew’s body servant. Upon escaping to Union lines after the Confederate attack on New Bern, Morrow established Camp Totten Freedmen’s School and was assisted by Mary Burnap, a white teacher from Roxbury, Massachusetts. Described as “an enthusiastic and excellent teacher,” Morrow enlisted in Company B of the First North Carolina Heavy Artillery and was transferred to Roanoke Island, where he taught until his death in 1864.³

Between 1862 and 1875, most of the teachers in North Carolina’s schools for the freedpeople were black. The vast majority of these men and women were from the South, mostly North Carolina, and like Culling and Morrow, many were former slaves.⁴ Yet, for

over a century, the teachers of the freedpeople were consistently portrayed as northern white women.⁵ Although historical interpretations of Reconstruction changed over time, ranging from the caustic diatribes of those associated with the Dunning school of thought to the glowing affirmations of revisionists, the image of the freedpeople's teacher as a northern white schoolmarm remained remarkably unchanged. As Sandra E. Small concluded in her study of the "Yankee schoolmarm," the freedpeople's teacher was "one of the most persistently stereotyped Americans" of the Civil War and Reconstruction period.⁶

In 2010, Ronald E. Butchart's seminal study of freedpeople's education successfully challenged the notion that most of the teachers in southern black schools were young, unmarried northern white women. In *Schooling the Freed People: Teaching, Learning, and the Struggle for Black Freedom, 1861–1876*, Butchart found that three distinct groups of teachers worked in southern black schools: northern whites, southern whites, and black men and women from both the North and the South. Some years previously, Heather A. Williams and Christopher Span laid the groundwork for Butchart's thesis by demonstrating that the southern black population was central to the school-building process.⁷

Based upon the findings of the Freedmen's Teacher Project, a large-scale database which identifies almost 12,000 men and women who taught the former slaves, Butchart's monograph has paved the way for fresh analyses and reinterpretations of freedpeople's education, particularly at the state level. However, there is no comprehensive study of freedpeople's education in North Carolina which explores the significant contributions that black teachers made to the growth and development of southern black schooling. Indeed, those that exist are predominantly focused upon examining the role that northern white teachers and some government agents played in post-war society.⁸ While others briefly examine the white response to freedpeople's education, little attention is paid to the southern men and women, whether black or white, who actually taught in the freedpeople's schools.⁹

Using North Carolina as a case study, this article reconstructs the accepted image of the freedpeople's teacher in North Carolina by highlighting the significant contributions that southern black teachers made to the growth and development of freedpeople's education. In particular, it investigates how formerly enslaved men and women organized and mobilized to create a sustainable system of schooling for both themselves and their children. To do this, I have used both qualitative and quantitative research methods, including a data analysis of a section of the Freedmen's Teacher's Project which provides biographical information on 1419 men and women who taught the freedpeople in North Carolina between 1861 and 1875. Although complete data is not available for every teacher, the database can identify their full name, gender, race, birth year, family relationships, religion, parents' occupation, the teacher's occupation before and after teaching in the black schools, changes in marital status, educational level attained, institution they attended, years they taught, locations they taught, and home.

Background

Since the earliest days of freedom, formerly enslaved men and women demanded access to education. Although North Carolina's enslaved population was not legally freed until Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, many slaves self-

emancipated at the outbreak of war by fleeing to the Union lines in the easternmost part of the state.¹⁰ Despite arriving cold, hungry, and often entirely destitute, escaped slaves placed the acquisition of education high on their list of priorities. While stationed in New Bern during the spring of 1862, North Carolina's Superintendent of the Poor, Vincent Colyer, was utterly amazed to find that, in spite of their poverty, "the colored refugees evinced the utmost eagerness to learn to read."¹¹ Thus, with the permission of Union General John G. Foster, Colyer established two schools for black children and one for poor whites. According to one northern soldier, who also served as teacher, the two black schools were always "full to overflowing."¹²

Gradually, as the Union Army gained control of Confederate territory, northern aid and missionary societies, such as the American Missionary Association (AMA), the New England Freedmen's Aid Society (NEFAS), and a host of denominational organizations, established schools throughout the South and hired teachers to work in them. In 1863, the AMA was the first organization of its kind to send northern teachers to North Carolina, having previously engaged in school-building activities in the Sea Islands of South Carolina.¹³ However, as Jacqueline Jones has argued, these aid and missionary societies were responding to, rather than inspiring, the freedpeople's persistent demands for education.¹⁴

When the Civil War ended in 1865, formerly enslaved men and women continued to fight for increased access to education and throughout North Carolina, educators, Freedmen's Bureau officials, school superintendents, and other members of the public often commented on the freedpeople's profound desire to become literate. "The people are in great poverty," wrote Michael P. Jerkins, a black teacher in Morehead City, "still there is a strong thirst for knowledge."¹⁵ H. S. Beals of the AMA similarly observed that, in spite of their abject poverty, and in the face of "actual starvation," North Carolina's freed population "beg harder for a school than for food or clothing."¹⁶ According to John W. Alvord, the Freedmen's Bureau Superintendent of Education, the freedpeople's thirst for knowledge was not exaggerated, and in his first semi-annual report on schools he wrote:

This is a wonderful state of things. We have just emerged from a terrific war; peace is not yet declared. There is scarcely the beginning of recognized society at the south; and yet here is a people long imbruted by slavery, and the most despised of any of earth, whose chains are no sooner broken than they spring to their feet and start up an exceeding great army, clothing themselves with intelligence. What other people on earth have ever shown, while in their ignorance, such a passion for education?¹⁷

In her contemporary assessment of freedpeople's education, Harriet Beecher Stowe, the best-selling author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, reiterated Alvord's observations and argued that throughout history no other group of formerly enslaved people had demonstrated such an insatiable thirst for knowledge. The freedpeople's "enthusiasm and impulse was not for plunder, or for revenge, or for drink, or any form of animal indulgence," she extolled, "but for *education*."¹⁸ Interestingly, and as somewhat of an aside, Stowe's remark betrays some of the misconceptions that many northern white men and women, including antislavery activists such as herself, had about the freedpeople. As James D. Anderson explained, northern white teachers and missionaries were often concerned that the freedpeople would resort to a life of drunken idleness upon emancipation, and this concern drove many of them into black classrooms.¹⁹

Southern black teachers in North Carolina's schools for the freedpeople

An analysis of the Freedmen's Teacher Project indicates that most of the teachers in North Carolina's schools for the freedpeople were black, 705 to be exact. Five hundred and twenty-three teachers were white, and the race of 191 is unknown. Significantly, over 80 percent of the black teachers were from the South, the vast majority of whom were from North Carolina. Although the database indicates that only 29 of the North Carolina teachers were born in slavery, Butchart speculated that most of the southern black teachers were probably former slaves, rather than free-born. "It is often not possible to establish the slave or free status of African Americans," he explained. "If they appear in the decennial census, they were most likely free. However, many free blacks avoided census takers, and census takers may have not bothered to enumerate free blacks."²⁰

Although some southern black men and women began teaching the freedpeople from as early as 1862, most did not enter the classroom until the late 1860s.²¹ This was primarily due to restrictive state slave codes which prevented enslaved men and women from acquiring even the most basic literacy and numeracy skills. In 1740, South Carolina passed the first anti-literacy law which made it a crime to teach slaves to read or write.²² Thereafter, almost every state in the slaveholding South had outlawed the literacy instruction of slaves. Essentially, southern lawmakers feared that educated slaves would become dissatisfied with their subjugated status and attempt to overthrow the institution of slavery. As North Carolina's anti-literacy law of 1831 read:

Whereas the teaching of slaves to read and write has a tendency to excite dissatisfaction in their minds and to produce insurrection and rebellion to the manifest injury of the citizens of this state ... any free person who shall hereafter teach or attempt to teach any slave within this State to read or write, the use of figures excepted, Shall be liable to indictment in any court of record in the State having jurisdiction thereof.²³

In spite of such laws, a distinct minority of the enslaved population succeeded in acquiring a degree of literacy, and, as the stories of Culling and Morrow attest, it was these men and women who operated North Carolina's first schools for the freedpeople. According to W. E. B. Du Bois, approximately 5 percent of the enslaved population could read by 1860, while Eugene D. Genovese suggested that this number could have been closer to 10 percent.²⁴ In 1863, Henry Clapp, a Massachusetts soldier stationed in New Bern, observed that about one in 15 freedmen and women could read. "We find that many learned, or began to learn, before they were freed by our army -," he wrote, "taking their instruction mostly 'on the sly' and indeed in the face of considerable danger."²⁵

As Clapp's observation suggests, the freedpeople's desire for education began long before the first firing on Fort Sumter. While some enslaved people attended surreptitious schools taught by neighboring whites and free blacks, others were taught basic literacy skills by their masters or mistresses. Harriet Jacobs, for instance, former slave, abolitionist, and renowned author of *Incidents of the Life of a Slave Girl*, was taught to read and spell as a child by her mistress, Margaret Horniblow. More still learned by eavesdropping upon white children as they completed their schoolwork.²⁶ Regardless of how they learned, once a slave became somewhat proficient in either reading or writing, they passed their knowledge on to other members of the slave community. In this way, enslaved blacks used literacy as "a symbol of resistance."²⁷ This tradition continued long after slavery had ended, and in 1866 a teacher in New Bern noted: "it is a fact which every one observes, that the

freedman no sooner learns even the first letter of the alphabet than he is teaching them to his fellows."²⁸

As the Reconstruction era progressed, the number of southern black teachers increased. This was partly due to increased educational opportunities, but also because a limited supply of northern teachers meant that the task of educating the freedpeople often fell to the freedpeople themselves. As Alvord remarked in 1866:

Throughout the entire South an effort is being made by the colored people to educate themselves. In the absence of other teaching they are determined to be self-taught; and everywhere some elementary text-book, or fragment of it, may be seen in the hands of negroes. They quickly communicate to each other what they already know, so that with very little learning many take to teaching.²⁹

Although northern aid and missionary societies made a concerted effort to send enough teachers to the South, inadequate funding and geographical constraints often meant that they were unable to meet the freedpeople's demands for education. In 1865, Alvord reported visiting a number of "native schools" in North Carolina that were not only supported but also entirely staffed by local black men and women. One particular school, located in Goldsboro and serving upwards of 150 pupils, was taught by "two young colored men, who but a little time before commenced to learn themselves." According to Alvord, these teachers told him that he was the first white man to visit the school.³⁰ Estimating that "at least 500 schools of this description [were] already in operation throughout the South," Alvord visited a similar school in Halifax County, which was "the first of *any kind* which had been opened in that county since the war."³¹

The final decades of the Civil War and Reconstruction period saw a precipitous decline in the number of northern white teachers. Although an inadequate supply of teachers had plagued the growth of southern black schooling from the earliest days of freedom, by the early 1870s northern interest in freedpeople's education was decidedly on the wane. This meant that northern aid and missionary societies began to look to the southern black population as a potential source of teachers.³² As the AMA explained in 1867, "The idea of educating a million of freed children, requiring at least twenty thousand teachers, very naturally suggests the thought of raising up, among the Freedmen themselves, teachers to aid in this work."³³ Although the AMA took the lead in teacher education, other organizations quickly followed suit. In 1867, the Presbyterian Committee on Missions for Freedmen established Biddle Institute in Charlotte to train black men to become teachers and preachers. "The object of the institute is to educate the most talented and pious of the Freedmen, that they may go out and educate the people," wrote the editors of Biddle's first annual catalogue. "The various Missionary associations engaged in the work are now adopting the same plan, educating the teachers rather than the masses."³⁴ Similar institutions included Shaw University in Raleigh, Scotia Seminary in Concord, Gregory Institute in Wilmington, and Bennett College in Greensboro. Due to limited funding, few aid societies had the means to establish an extensive network of teacher training institutes in the South. Accordingly, many schools incorporated "normal classes" into the regular system of education. Containing some of the most advanced students, these classes trained black students to become teachers.³⁵

In 1868, North Carolina's Constitutional Convention created a system of free public schooling for all children, regardless of race, between the ages of 6 and 21. Although

the predominantly Republican delegation successfully defeated efforts to include a provision for segregated schools in the new constitution, the School Law of 1869 separated schools on the basis of race.³⁶ Initially, most of the black schools were supported, either fully or in part, by the Freedmen's Bureau, northern aid and missionary societies, and local black communities. This began to change in 1877, when occupying forces were withdrawn from North Carolina and all private and federally funded schools transferred to the state. As northern white teachers retreated from the state, North Carolina's Democratic-controlled legislature unsuccessfully attempted to replace black teachers with whites from the South. This was partly done in an effort to gain greater control over the black community, but also in an attempt to provide white southerners with jobs. Determined to maintain control over their own schools, black people vehemently challenged this move. In the end, school boards recognized that black teachers would be cheaper to employ, so they opted to maintain the black teaching force. Nevertheless, the efforts of the black community to mobilize against white encroachment on black education ultimately helped to create a professional class of black teachers.³⁷

Motivations

The reasons why southern black men and women became involved in freedpeople's education are complex, varied, and ultimately as individual as the teachers themselves. Although some of these men and women elected to become teachers, others began teaching almost incidentally, usually at the behest of the local black community. Indeed, southern black communities invariably preferred to be taught by members of their own race. As one black teacher explained, "no one can enter so fully into the sympathy of the negro's condition as the negro himself."³⁸ Writing to Edward P. Smith of the AMA in 1867, F. A. Fiske asked for a black teacher to be sent to a school in Harnett County. The people "would prefer a colored man who would preach to them Sundays," he wrote. "If he cannot be obtained they would like a colored female teacher. If neither, a white lady will do, but I would not recommend sending the latter."³⁹ Fiske did not recommend sending a white woman because the school was "sixteen miles from Raleigh – in the country – no village there – population mostly colored."⁴⁰ Although Freedmen's Bureau officials such as Fiske worked steadfastly to grow a sustainable network of schools, many harbored deep-rooted racial biases, particularly towards black men, who were often deemed violent, barbaric, and prone to criminality.⁴¹

Other southern black men and women engaged in freedpeople's education because teaching offered a source of employment. Former slave Lucy Brown admitted that she took up teaching "to support and educate my little ones."⁴² Unable to secure employment with an aid or missionary society, Brown was forced to establish an independent school that was principally supported by tuition fees. However, as was often the case, Brown's students were too poor to pay for their schooling. Thus, during the spring of 1868, she pleaded with the Freedmen's Bureau for assistance in paying the rent of her school building. "Rev. sir," she wrote F. A. Fiske, "if you can assist the fatherless in any way please do it."⁴³ Brown did not resume teaching the following year, so it is unlikely that the aid she received from the Bureau, if any, was sufficient to support her work as a teacher.⁴⁴

Teaching was also a respectable occupation. Alongside ministers, teachers were held in high esteem by other members of the black community, and many were viewed as the

leaders of their race. As Fiske wrote in 1876, “the school, in the freedmen’s estimation, stands next in importance to the church and the preaching of the gospel, and the teacher next to the preacher.”⁴⁵ This is particularly evident in the number of black teachers who were selected to represent their communities in political affairs. Although he did not feel in the slightest way qualified, local freedmen chose northern-born educator Robert Fitzgerald to represent them at Virginia’s 1867 constitutional convention. As his nominators explained, “we believe you are the most reliable we can send to represent our interests in that important Body. We therefore beg that you accept this nomination.”⁴⁶

Of course, many southern black teachers were motivated to support freedpeople’s education by a desire to facilitate racial uplift. In a letter to North Carolina’s governor, William W. Holden, Mary A. Best, born free in Duplin County, wrote that “I feel it is my duty to try to elevate the mindes of my color,” before adding that she hoped “to elevate the poor colored children so they would not always be troden underfoot [sic].”⁴⁷ Ex-slave Robert Martin also perceived his work as a form of racial uplift, and in an application to the Freedmen’s Bureau for aid he wrote that “without help we can’t begin to be elevated and prepared for the duties that seem to await us.”⁴⁸

A sense of racial solidarity also moved many southern black people to involve themselves in education. As Sara G. Stanley expressed in her letter to the AMA:

My reasons for asking to engage in the work of instructing the Freedpeople of the South are few and simple. I am myself a colored woman, bound to that ignorant, degraded, long enslaved race, by ties of love and consanguinity; they are socially and politically, “my people.”⁴⁹

Born to a prominent black family of mixed-race ancestry in New Bern, Stanley and her family relocated to the North shortly after she enrolled at Oberlin College in Ohio.⁵⁰ In 1864, Stanley applied to the AMA for a position in the South, and specifically requested to be sent to a school in “Eastern Virginia or any portion of North Carolina.”⁵¹ Having worked as a common school teacher since 1857, Stanley’s application was particularly strong, arguably more so than those of many northern white applicants, who often lacked comparable qualifications or experience. Regardless, the AMA ignored Stanley’s request and instead she was sent to schools in Missouri, Kentucky, and Alabama.⁵² According to Judith Weisenfeld, incidents such as this were not uncommon within the AMA, which was often accused of deliberately sending black teachers to remote rural locations.⁵³ Evidently, while school officials recognized the dangers of sending white women to such locations, the same caution was not extended to black female teachers.

Expectations of education

Formerly enslaved men and women placed great value on education. On a practical level, literacy served many functions, not least of which was the ability to read the Bible. “I am determined to make the effort to learn to read my Bible before I die,” declared one old woman in 1866, “and if I fail I will die on the way.”⁵⁴ Although this particular woman was from Maryland, her words epitomized the views of countless freedpeople throughout the American South. As Betsey L. Canedy, a white native of Massachusetts, wrote of her 96-year-old student in New Bern: “He came to learn his alphabet, that before tempting death he might enjoy the pleasure of reading his Bible.”⁵⁵ According to Heather Williams, a desire

to learn to read the Bible motivated many freedpeople, but particularly adults, to pursue education.⁵⁶ This desire was amply reflected in North Carolina's black schoolhouses, which were often filled to overflowing with students of all ages. Indeed, it was commonplace to find two and even three generations learning together.⁵⁷

For other freedpeople, schooling served as a means of acquiring economic success and upward mobility. Unless one learned basic arithmetic, wrote Isaac W. Brinkerhoff in his *Advice to Freedmen*, "you cannot succeed in business, cannot tell whether you are buying or selling to advantage or not."⁵⁸ Indeed, many freedpeople attended school to learn how to read, understand, and negotiate contracts. This function of schooling became significantly more pressing as more and more freedpeople were compelled to seek work in the fields or on the plantations. Rather than working for subsistence such as food, clothing, and lodging, as many employers offered, the freedpeople demanded wages or, at the very least, a portion of the crops.⁵⁹ This necessitated the creation of labor contracts. However, many employers took advantage of the freedpeople's illiteracy and lack of basic mathematical skills to cheat them out of their wages.⁶⁰ As a freedman in Trent Camp, North Carolina, warned his fellow men, "We must learn to keep books and do our own business, for already the white man is marking and thinking how cheap he can hire us, and how easily he can cheat us out of our pay."⁶¹ Confirming the freedpeople's fears in 1866, Alvord came across one labor contract that was "purposely constructed to be misunderstood." According to the Freedmen's Bureau agent, this particular contract "stipulated that 'one-third of seven-twelfths of all corn, potatoes, and fodder, &c. Shall go to the laborers."⁶² Thus, for many freedpeople, schooling served as a safeguard against re-enslavement. As one New Bern student astutely declared, "If we are *educated*, they can't make slaves of us again."⁶³

The enfranchisement of black men in 1868, through the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment, also stimulated increased calls for black education. Although the loudest voices were those of northern white men and women, who, by and large, feared the social, political, and economic implications of black freedom, the freed population also recognized that political responsibility necessitated schooling. "Freedpeople wanted to ensure that they counted as voters and as legislators who could exercise power over their own future," wrote Williams. "Illiteracy, they knew, would impede their ambition for full participation in this public, political sphere; therefore, education took on added significance."⁶⁴ During the early, relatively positive years of Reconstruction, southern black men successfully used their votes to shape the contours of their newfound freedom. In April 1868, the black vote helped ratify North Carolina's "most liberal constitution" by a vote of 93,086 to 74,016.⁶⁵ Significantly, this new constitution provided for the establishment of free public schooling for all children, regardless of race, between the ages of 6 and 21.⁶⁶

Community mobilization in North Carolina

Recognizing that literacy was fundamental to their survival in post-war society, southern black men and women energetically campaigned for a system of education, and, at the grassroots level, freedmen and women throughout North Carolina built schoolhouses, hired teachers, purchased land, and provided classroom materials. Many black communities established committees to organize and manage the school-building process. In

1866, freedpeople in Warren County met to build “a School to educate our poor ignorant children.”⁶⁷ One year later, in Burke County, freedmen and women organized “to solicit funds for the education of our ignorant brethren.”⁶⁸ What is particularly striking about these freedpeople’s efforts is the way in which they worked together to ensure that every member of the community had access to education. Two years after the fall of the Confederacy, a local black man in Alamance County rented a schoolhouse at the cost to himself of four dollars per month so that his neighbors could attend school.⁶⁹ Elsewhere in North Carolina, F. A. Fiske reported that a poor black man “built a log school house with his own hands, and hired a teacher on his own responsibility in order that his neighbor’s children, in the depth of their poverty and ignorance, might enjoy the benefits of a school.”⁷⁰ In many places, the freedpeople entirely financed the establishment of local schools, either by making donations, paying the teachers’ salary, or charging tuition fees. In 1865, William Cawthorn, a black resident of Warren County, rented and remodeled a schoolhouse entirely at his own expense. He also intended to pay the teachers. According to Cawthorn, northern teachers would have no trouble finding a place to board, for “the most respectable of colored people will be able to take a teacher and give a splendid fare.”⁷¹

When the freedpeople were too poor to make a financial contribution towards the cost of their schooling, they offered their time, labor, and limited resources instead. In lieu of tuition fees, many black students paid their teachers “in kind” through the provision of goods and services, such as food, fuel, lodging, and transportation.⁷² Others provided the labor necessary to construct a schoolhouse. Writing on behalf of the freedpeople in 1867, Edward Payson Hall, a white Quaker teacher, assured Fiske that, if the Bureau financed the construction of a schoolhouse, the freedmen would provide the means to build it. They will “cut and hew the logs,” he wrote, “and put up said building and will do all they can in labor – they are so poor they could not raise but a very little money.”⁷³

Above all, southern black men and women were determined to maintain control over their own institutions and this, they knew, necessitated playing an active role in the construction of southern black schooling. Predictably, many white teachers and school officials were reluctant to allow the former slaves exclusive control over these new institutions. Shaped by a fundamental belief in black inferiority, this reluctance was particularly evident in Chapel Hill during the spring of 1866, when Mary Bowers, a local white teacher, intervened in the freedpeople’s plans to build a new schoolhouse. Concerned that the building was not being constructed in a timely manner, Bowers asked the Freedmen’s Bureau for permission to let it in its current, unfinished condition, as well as the funds to hire someone to complete the project.⁷⁴ Although her request was granted, the black community was furious when they learned of Bowers’ plans. As Jordan Swain, a Chapel Hill resident, explained,

Suppose the white people had some business on hand and some old *nigger wence* was to come in and try to take it out of their hands, she would be drummed out of town and it ought to be so [*sic*].

According to Swain, “it was for *them* to say whether those logs should lay there and rot or even be made a home of.”⁷⁵

Not surprisingly, a lack of funds prevented the freedpeople in Chapel Hill from constructing the schoolhouse in a timely manner. Thus, taking matters into his own hands,

Swain appealed to the Freedmen's Bureau for assistance. "The collard friends will not or cand not pay the expenses – to finish the hous – so i have undertaken to finish the hous with the help of God i am Determen to finish it," he wrote Fiske in November 1866. "Dear sir with a little help from our northen friends I cand git a long – i must have a little help from some whers [*sic*]." ⁷⁶ Contrary to what Bowers had argued earlier that year, Swain's objections to her interference did not stem from any indifference towards education. He was simply frustrated that a white person had attempted to take control of a project that the black community was working on. As he explained in his letter to Fiske, Swain was still more than willing to allow Bowers to teach in the new schoolhouse once it was constructed.

The former slaves also organized politically to ensure greater access to education. Shortly after the Civil War ended, 117 black men from 42 different counties gathered at the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the state's capital of Raleigh to open the first Freedmen's Convention in the South. ⁷⁷ Elected at meetings held throughout North Carolina, but particularly in the black-majority counties in the eastern region of the state, these black delegates called for friendly relations with whites, increased access to education, equal employment opportunities, and "to have all the oppressive laws which make unjust discriminations on account of race or color wiped from the statutes of the state." ⁷⁸ One year later, on 2 October 1866, a second convention was held in the same location. Organized by James Henry Harris, a free black educator from Granville County, the focus of this convention was on education, race relations, and politics, and it succeeded in establishing the Freedmen's Educational Association of North Carolina, the aim of which was to "aid in the establishment of schools, from which none shall be excluded on account of color or poverty and to encourage unsectarian education in this State especially among the freedmen." ⁷⁹ The convention's efforts appear to have paid off. Two months later, in December 1866, Fiske reported that of the 95 reported schools for the freedpeople, 15 were "sustained by freedmen," while another twenty were "sustained in part by freedmen." Twenty-two school buildings were owned by the freedpeople. ⁸⁰ In this way, formerly enslaved men and women not only laid claim to the rights of citizenship previously denied to them, but also established a process of sustaining black citizenship for future generations.

Challenges to freedpeople's education

A significant challenge that black teachers faced in post-war North Carolina was opposition to their work. While southern black men and women worked tirelessly to create a sustainable system of schooling, many white southerners actively attempted to thwart these efforts through any means necessary. Indeed, white opposition to black education took many forms, ranging from mildly passive acts of aggression to more openly antagonistic behavior. In many places, for instance, local whites refused to board teachers, while others were unwilling to sell or lease land and property for the purpose of a school building. Robert Harris even had difficulty procuring fire wood. "The whites near us refuse to give or sell any wood for school purposes," he complained to the AMA, "and warn us not to cut any on their land." ⁸¹ In Wake County, William Elliott experienced similar problems. There is "not one man in This place that is Willing to Let me Build or Rent a House on Theair Land," he wrote Fiske. "They are so

much *opposed* To Colard Mens Education that they will do all in thiar power to pull it down [*sic*].”⁸²

Many white southerners fought the growth of black schooling through violence, threats, and intimidation. Arson was particularly pervasive during this period, and hundreds of schools were burned down throughout the American South. In Magnolia, Duplin County, two black men were forced to close their school after just one day because hostile whites threatened to burn it down.⁸³ Likewise, in 1869, William Smith’s schoolhouse was burned to the ground just eight days after he had opened it.⁸⁴ According to Butchart, “Schools taught by black teachers may have been at greater risk for incendiaryism than those taught by white teachers.”⁸⁵ In North Carolina, this appears to have been the case. Although white teachers frequently faced the wrath of hostile white southerners, black teachers posed a particular threat to the hierarchal southern social order, and so, it would appear, they were subjected to greater levels of racial violence. Regrettably, young black students did not escape hostility, and in 1866 Robert Harris reported that two of his students were attacked “by a party of white trash and had all their books taken from them.” “The boys said or did nothing to provoke the attack,” he claimed. “It is by such despicable acts of meanness that they strive to hinder the colored children from attending school.”⁸⁶

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) was a particularly powerful oppositional force during this period, and members actively attempted to undermine anyone or anything that was contributing towards racial elevation. Not surprisingly, black schools and teachers of both races were frequently targeted by the KKK. Northern-born teacher Robert Fitzgerald was often subjected to Klan threats and intimidation, partly because of his role in educating the freed-people, but also because of his active support of the Republican Party.⁸⁷ Although Fitzgerald reported that race relations were relatively amicable in Orange County during the early stages of Reconstruction, Klan activity increased during the autumn of 1869. “The infamous Ku Klux Klan has visited our post town Hillsboro and kill’d a black man who was supposed to have burned a barn,” wrote Fitzgerald in September of that year. “They have also marched or paraded in Chapel Hill & are committing depredations on Union men all around. They are unwilling to be governed by law and should therefore be considered Out Laws and dealt with accordingly.”⁸⁸ Shortly after the Klan’s arrival in Hillsboro, their attention turned to Fitzgerald, and he and his wife were forced to temporarily vacate their home in fear of attack.⁸⁹

In addition to the hostility black teachers often faced from outside forces, many encountered racism within the very organizations they were working for, particularly in relation to their housing arrangements. Generally, the black teachers who worked in the countryside boarded in their own homes or with a local black family, while those who worked in the towns and cities lived with other teachers in the mission house.⁹⁰ Of course, only the teachers who were employed by an aid or missionary society could avail themselves of this service. However, black teachers working in urban centers were often required to find their own accommodation. When Blanche Harris was first sent to Mississippi, she complained that the AMA did not assist any of the black teachers to find accommodation, nor did it pay for their board. “The distinction between the two classes of teachers [white and black] is so marked that it is the topic of conversation among the better class of colored people,” she wrote.⁹¹ Harris spent just two years working for the AMA before securing the sponsorship of the FFA and moving to Goldsboro, North Carolina.⁹²

Unsurprisingly, interracial mission houses were often a cause for concern, not only within the southern white community which, by and large, feared racial equality, but also amongst the northern white teachers themselves. In 1866 a controversy arose within the AMA regarding the housing arrangements of Sallie Daffin, a black teacher from the North. Samuel Ashley, the AMA Superintendent of Schools, decided that Daffin should board with a local black family, rather than in the mission house with other white teachers. According to Maxine Jones, Ashley was worried that an interracial housing situation would intensify white hostility. However, he was also aware that some white teachers were “uncomfortable living with Blacks.”⁹³ In an attempt to justify his decision, Ashley wrote the AMA:

Colored teachers are needed at the South – they *must* come South. But then, it does not seem to me to be wise to send them in company and to board in company, with white teachers. There are very few places in the North where it would be wise to do this. Such a course at the South brings your white teachers out and in such sharp contact with prejudices of the southern people that their (the teachers’) situation is made almost intolerable. We are charged with endeavouring to bring about a condition of *social equality* between Blacks and whites – we are charged with teaching the Blacks that they have a right to demand from the whites social equality – now. If they can point to mission families or teachers homes where there is complete social equality between colored and white, they have proved to their own satisfaction at least, their assertion. They can say that if not in theory, we do in practice, teach social equality.⁹⁴

Ashley’s response to the AMA illuminates the constraints of working in the South at this time. While blacks demanded freedom, southern whites called for their political re-enslavement, and school officials such as Ashley were often required to mediate between each group in the hope of maintaining support and reducing friction.⁹⁵ Unfortunately, this mediation often undermined black people’s educational endeavors, and southern blacks were offered a limited and restricted equality instead. In the end, Daffin refused to board outside of the mission house, and she began working for the FFA in 1867.⁹⁶

Challenges to freedpeople’s education were also mounted by the state legislature. Although North Carolina’s new system of public education initially operated under the premise of “separate but equal”, the rise of a “redeemer” government in 1870 signaled the demise of southern black schooling. While cuts were relatively equal across white and black schools during the early years of Redemption, black schools increasingly bore the brunt of educational cutbacks.⁹⁷ As such, in the decades that followed Reconstruction, black schools became chronically underfunded, understaffed, and under-resourced. Moreover, black teachers were so poorly paid “that only the poorest local talent” would teach.⁹⁸ Reflecting upon one of his first southern teaching positions, W. E. B. Du Bois admitted that, although he was “haunted by a New England vision of neat little desks and chairs ... the reality was rough plank benches without backs, and at times without legs.”⁹⁹

In 1877, Federal troops were withdrawn from the South. Seven years previously, the Freedmen’s Bureau had ceased its operations in North Carolina and, with some exceptions, northern white teachers and missionaries retreated from the state. Yet Reconstruction did not end in 1877. Nor did the struggle for black education. Indeed, throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, black men and women continued to fight for increased access to education, a fight which eventually culminated in, but did not cease with, the Supreme Court’s *Brown vs Board of Education* decision and the resulting desegregation of the nation’s public schools.¹⁰⁰

Conclusion

Since the earliest days of freedom, formerly enslaved men and women demonstrated a profound desire to become literate. Fueled by a complex mixture of practical, spiritual, and political goals, and in the face of mounting opposition and hostility to their work, black North Carolinians organized and mobilized to create a sustainable system of schooling for both themselves and their children. Although the work of northern aid and missionary societies was undeniably of huge importance, southern black communities were not passive recipients of northern largesse. Indeed, through their political activism, community mobilization and sheer determination to maintain control over their own schools, North Carolina's black population played a powerful role in shaping the contours of southern black schooling.

Notes

1. Click, *A Time Full of Trial*, 35; H. S. Beals to Rev. S. S. Jocelyn, August 18, 1863, American Missionary Association archives, Amistad Research Centre, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana, hereafter cited as AMAA.
2. James, cited in New England Freedmen's Aid Society, *Second Annual Report*, 71; Click, *A Time Full of Trial*, 213; Ronald E. Butchart, *The Freedmen's Teacher Project*, 2013, used with permission, hereafter cited as "the FTP." The Freedmen's Teacher Project is a large-scale database of almost 12,000 men and women who taught in southern black schools during the Civil War and Reconstruction period, 1861–1876. The database has identified 1419 teachers who taught the freedpeople in North Carolina between 1862 and 1875.
3. Click, *A Time Full of Trial*, 85; James, *Annual Report, 1864*, 44; Butchart, "The FTP."
4. Butchart, "The FTP."
5. See, for example, Swint, *The Northern Teacher in the South*; Jones, *Soldiers of Light and Love*; Butchart, *Northern Schools, Southern Blacks, and Reconstruction*.
6. Small, "The Yankee Schoolmarm in Freedmen's Schools," 381–402. Historians associated with the Dunning school of thought viewed Reconstruction as an attack on the South and the southern social order. They were particularly aggrieved by the arrival of northern white teachers, businessmen, and politicians to the South, as well as by any perceived attempt to move the freedpeople towards racial equality. The so-called Dunning School was named after Columbia University professor William Archibald Dunning, whose writings, along with those of his students and supporters, dominated Reconstruction scholarship for much of the twentieth century. During the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, a new wave of revisionist scholarship emerged which offered a more positive interpretation of Reconstruction and its key players. For more information on the historical interpretations of Reconstruction, see Foner, "Reconstruction Revisited," 82–100.
7. Butchart, *Schooling the Freed People*; Williams, *Self-Taught*; Span, *From Cotton Field to Schoolhouse*.
8. Browning, "Bringing Light to our Land," 1–17; Goldhaber, "A Mission Unfulfilled," 199–210.
9. Alexander, *North Carolina Faces the Freedmen*; See also Browning, "Visions of Freedom and Civilization," Escott (ed.) *North Carolinians in the Era of the Civil War*, 69–100.
10. By January 1864, 17,419 freedpeople had escaped to Union lines in Beaufort, Washington, Roanoke Island, Plymouth and Hatteras Bank. See James, *Annual Report, 1864*, 3.
11. Colyer, *Report of the Services Rendered by the Freed People to the United States Army, in North Carolina, in the Spring of 1862, after the Battle of Newbern*, 43.
12. Northern soldier, cited in Browning, "Bringing Light to our Land," 1–17, quotation p. 4.
13. Browning, "Bringing Light to our Land," 4. For more information on the AMA's activities on the South Carolina Sea Islands, see Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction*.
14. Jones, *Soldiers of Light and Love*, 3.

15. Michael P. Jerkins to Edward P. Smith, January 29, 1869, AMAA.
16. H. S. Beals, in the *American Missionary* (January 1867), 4. See also *American Missionary* (March 1867), 49.
17. Alvord, *First Semi-Annual Report on Schools*, 10. For more information on the Freedmen's Bureau, formally known as the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, see Harrison, "New Representations of a 'Misrepresented Bureau,'" 205–29.
18. Stowe, "The Education of Freedmen," 605–15 (emphasis in original).
19. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 6. For an analysis of the ways in which northern white educators and the textbooks they created attempted to teach the freedpeople about the value of sobriety, see Brosnan, "Representations of Race and Racism," 718–33.
20. Butchart, *Schooling the Freed People*, 201.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Williams, *Self-Taught*, 13.
23. North Carolina anti-literacy law, reprinted in Williams, *Self-Taught*, 206.
24. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 563.
25. Henry Clapp, cited in Browning, "Bringing Light to Our Land", 3.
26. For a comprehensive overview of slave education in the antebellum South, see Williams, *Self-Taught*, 1–45.
27. *Ibid.*, 8.
28. American Tract Society, *Fifty-second Annual Report*, 51.
29. Alvord, *First Semi-Annual Report on Schools*, 9.
30. *Ibid.*, 10.
31. *Ibid.* (emphasis in original).
32. Butchart, "The FTP."
33. *American Missionary* (January 1867), 10–11.
34. Biddle Memorial Institute, *First Annual Catalogue*, 16.
35. See, for example, Diary of Robert G. Fitzgerald, March 24, 1868, Fitzgerald Family Papers, 1864–1954, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, hereafter cited as Diary of Robert Fitzgerald; State Superintendent's Monthly School Reports, February 1866, Records of the Superintendent of Education, M844:13.
36. *Journal of the Constitutional Convention*, 338–41. Documenting the American South (<http://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/conv1868/conv1868.html>); *School laws of North Carolina, as ratified April 12th, A. D. 1869*, 57, Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/stream/schoollawsofnortnort#page/n5/mode/2up/search/four>.
37. Rabinowitz, "Half a Loaf," 565–94.
38. Harris, cited in Rabinowitz, "Half a Loaf," 565–94.
39. F. A. Fiske to Edward P. Smith, January 25, 1867, Records of the Superintendent of Education, M844:1.
40. *Ibid.* See also Fiske to Reverend Kennedy, February 22, 1867, Records of the Superintendent of Education, M844:1. Interestingly, Fiske did not consider the possibility of sending a white male teacher to the school outside Raleigh. This was most likely due to a number of factors. Firstly, most of the northern white teachers in North Carolina were female, 74 percent to be exact. Secondly, most of the northern white male teachers were in their fifties or sixties when they first began teaching the freedpeople, and many were married. This made it decidedly more difficult to accommodate male teachers and their families in these locations. Finally, the AMA was much more likely to appoint male teachers to administrative or managerial roles. As such, their service was typically required in towns and cities, rather than in remote and rural locations. Butchart, "The FTP."
41. For more information on racial bias within the Freedmen's Bureau, see Litwack, *Been in the Storm So Long*, 385–6.
42. Lucy Brown to F. A. Fiske, March 21, 1868, Records of the Superintendent of Education, M844:7.
43. *Ibid.*
44. Butchart, "The FTP."
45. *The Raleigh Register*, October 25, 1867.

46. Diary of Robert Fitzgerald, July 10, 1867.
47. Mary A. Best to W. W. Holden, February 2, 1869, Records of the Superintendent of Education, M844:11.
48. Robert P. Martin to F. A. Fiske, September 30, 1867, Records of the Superintendent of Education, M844:7.
49. Sara G. Stanley to George Whipple, March 4, 1864, AMAA.
50. Weisenfeld, "Who is Sufficient for These Things," 501–5. Stanley's family situation was somewhat unique. Her great-grandfather, John Wright Stanley, was a white slave-owner and shipper in New Bern. His son, John Carruthers Stanley, Sara's grandfather, was born a slave to an enslaved black woman – he was later manumitted for faithful service. John Carruthers Stanley inherited a plantation and many slaves from his father. He was active in the manumission movement, and by 1816 he had freed 20 slaves, including his immediate family. According to Weisenfeld, he was one of the wealthiest men in New Bern by 1830. His son, Sara's father, ran a store and taught free black children. See Weisenfeld, "Who is Sufficient for These Things?," 503–4, and Williams, *Self-Taught*, 244.
51. Sara G. Stanley to George Whipple, March 4, 1864, AMAA.
52. Butchart, "The FTP."
53. Weisenfeld and Newman (eds.), *This Far by Faith*, 209; Lawson, *The Three Sarahs*, 89.
54. Alvord, *Third Semi-Annual Report on Schools*, 9.
55. *Utica Morning Herald and Daily Gazette*, September 8, 1863.
56. Williams, *Self-Taught*, 41. See also Butchart, *Schooling the Freed People*, 9–10.
57. See, for example, Friends' Freedmen's Association, *Report of the Executive Board*, 23; NEFAS, *Extracts from Letters of Teachers and Superintendents*, 14.
58. Brinkerhoff, *Advice to Freedmen*, 37.
59. Spivey, *Schooling for the New Slavery*, 6. For many freedpeople, sharecropping was preferable to working for subsistence, as it provided them with more autonomy and the hope of landownership. See Heinemann, Kolp, Shade & Parent, Jr., *Old Dominion: New Commonwealth*.
60. See, for example, Charles Hill to Horace James, September 6, 1865, Records of the Field Offices for the State of North Carolina, Bureau of Freedmen, Refugees, and Abandoned Lands, 1865–1872, M1909:35.
61. Freedman, cited in Williams, *Self-Taught*, 169.
62. Alvord, *First Semi-Annual Report*, 15. During the early years of Reconstruction, few freed people had adequate numeracy skills so this mathematical problem would be particularly confusing.
63. New England Freedmen's Aid Society, *Extracts from Letters of Teachers and Superintendents*, 13.
64. Williams, "Clothing Themselves in Intelligence," 372–89. See also Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 18.
65. Haley, *Charles N. Hunter*, 19.
66. *Journal of the Constitutional Convention*, 338, Documenting the American South (<http://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/conv1868/conv1868.html>).
67. Freedpeople, cited in Alexander, *North Carolina Faces the Freedmen*, 152.
68. *Ibid.*
69. *The Raleigh Register*, October 25, 1867.
70. *Ibid.*
71. William Cawthorn to F. A. Fisk, November 25, 1865, Records of the Superintendent of Education for the State of North Carolina, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, M844:10, hereafter cited as Records of the Superintendent of Education. William Cawthorn was a black politician who was elected to the North Carolina House of Representatives from Warren County in 1868 and 1870. He also served as secretary of the Freedmen's Convention in 1865. See Padgett, "Reconstruction Letters from North Carolina," 232–47.
72. Span, *From Cotton Field to Schoolhouse*, 41.
73. Edward Payson Hall to F. A. Fiske, August 7, 1867, Records of the Superintendent of Education, M844:7.

74. Mary Bowers to F. A. Fiske, March 21, 1866, Records of the Superintendent of Education, M844:10 (emphasis in original).
75. Bowers to Fiske, April 4, 1866, Records of the Superintendent of Education, M844:10.
76. Jordan Swain to F. A. Fiske, November 29, 1866, Records of the Superintendent of Education, M844:10.
77. Haley, *Charles N. Hunter*, 9; Alexander, *North Carolina Faces the Freedmen*, 17.
78. Dennett, *The South As It Is*, edited by Henry M. Christman, 154.
79. The Freedmen's Convention of North Carolina, *Minutes of the Freedmen's Convention*, 12. Documenting the American South (<http://docsouth.unc.edu/nc/freedmen/freedmen.html>).
80. State Superintendent's Monthly School Reports, December 1866, Records of the Superintendent of Education M844:13.
81. Robert Harris to Samuel Hunt, March 1, 1866, AMAA.
82. William Elliott to F. A. Fiske, April 14, 1866, Records of the Superintendent of Education, M844:10.
83. Alexander, "Hostility and Hope," 115.
84. *Ibid.*
85. Butchart, *Schooling*, 165. See also Williams, *Self-Taught*, 125.
86. Robert Harris to Samuel Hunt, March 1, 1866, AMAA.
87. Diary of Robert Fitzgerald, September 29, 1869.
88. *Ibid.*, September 1, 1869.
89. *Ibid.*, September 29, 1869.
90. Sterling, *We Are Your Sisters*, 271.
91. Blanche Harris to George Whipple, January 23, 1866, AMAA.
92. Butchart, "The FTP."
93. Jones, "They Are My People," 86.
94. Samuel Ashley, cited in Jones, "They Are My People," 87 (emphasis in original).
95. For a detailed analysis of the ways in which northern missionary organizations dealt with the issue of "social equality," see McPherson, *The Abolitionist Legacy*, 178–82.
96. Jones, "They Are My People," 86; Butchart, "The FTP." A similar incident regarding interracial housing arrangements occurred in Virginia. See Weisenfeld, "Who is Sufficient For These Things?," 497. Ashley's response is also interesting because it highlights the inherent racism that existed and persisted in the North throughout the Civil War period. Indeed, C. Vann Woodward argued that racial segregation originated in the North during the antebellum period before moving to the South following the collapse of Reconstruction. See Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, 17.
97. Rabinowitz, "Half a Loaf," 111. Redemption' refers to the period of American history in which southern Democrats, known as Redeemers, 'redeemed' the South by ending Republican rule.
98. Washington and Du Bois, *The Negro in the South*, 103.
99. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 63.
100. For an analysis of segregated schools in North Carolina, see, for example, Walker, *Their Highest Potential*.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Notes on contributor

AnneMarie Brosnan is a lecturer in History of Education at Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick. She received her doctorate in 2016 and is currently preparing her first monograph, which examines freedpeople's education in North Carolina during the Civil War and Reconstruction era. AnneMarie's doctoral research was supported by a Fulbright Scholarship and fellowships from the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and the North Caroliniana Society.

Bibliography

- Alvord, John W. *First Semi-Annual Report on Schools and Finances of Freedmen, January 1, 1866*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1868; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1980.
- Alexander, Roberta Sue. "Hostility and Hope: Black Education in North Carolina during Presidential Reconstruction, 1865–1867." *North Carolina Historical Review* 53, no. 2 (1976): 113–132.
- Alexander, Roberta Sue. *North Carolina Faces the Freedmen: Race Relations during Presidential Reconstruction, 1865–1867*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1985.
- American Tract Society. *Fifty Second Annual Report of the American Tract Society, Presented at Boston, Mass., May 30, 1866*. Boston: American Tract Society, 1866.
- Anderson, James D. *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860–193*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.
- Biddle Memorial Institute. *First Annual Catalogue and Circular of the Biddle Memorial Institute, Charlotte, N.C. 1867–68*. Pittsburgh: J. M'Millin, 1868.
- Brinkerhoff, Isaac W. *Advice to Freedmen*. New York: American Tract Society, 1864; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1980.
- Brosnan, AnneMarie. "Representations of Race and Racism in the Textbooks used in Southern Black Schools During the American Civil War and Reconstruction Era, 1861–1876." *Paedagogica Historica* 52, no. 6 (2016): 718–733.
- Browning, Judkin. "'Bringing Light to our Land ... When She was Dark as Night': Northerners, Freedpeople, and Education during Military Occupation in North Carolina, 1862–1865." *American Nineteenth Century History* 9, no. 1 (2008): 1–17.
- Butchart, Ronald E. *Northern Schools, Southern Blacks, and Reconstruction: Freedmen's Education, 1862–1873*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980.
- Butchart, Ronald E. *Schooling the Freed People: Teaching, Learning, and the Struggle for Black Freedom, 1861–1876*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010.
- Click, Patricia C. *A Time Full of Trial: The Roanoke Island Freedmen's Colony, 1862–1867*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.
- Colyer, Vincent. *Report of the Services Rendered by the Freed People to the United States Army, in North Carolina, in the Spring of 1862, after the Battle of Newbern*. New York: Vincent Colyer, 1864.
- Dennett, John Richard. *The South As It Is, 1865–1866*. Edited by Henry M. Christman. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1968.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. *Black Reconstruction in America: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860–1880*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1935.
- Foner, Eric. "Reconstruction Revisited." *Reviews in American History* 10, no. 4 (1982): 82–100.
- Friends' Freedmen's Association. *Report of the Executive Board of the Friends' Association of Philadelphia and the Vicinity for the Relief of Colored Freedmen*. Philadelphia, PA: Sherman, 1864.
- Genovese, Eugene. *Roll Jordan Roll: The World the Slaves Made*. New York: Pantheon, 1874.
- Haley, John. *Charles N. Hunter and Race Relations in North Carolina*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987.
- Harrison, Robert. "New Representations of a 'Misrepresented Bureau': Reflections on Recent Scholarship on the Freedmen's Bureau." *American Nineteenth Century History* 8, no. 2 (2007): 205–229.
- James, Horace. *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Negro Affairs of North Carolina, 1864*. Boston, MA: W. F. Brown & Co., Printers, 1864.
- Jones, Jacqueline. *Soldiers of Light and Love: Northern Teachers and Georgia Blacks, 1865–1867*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980.
- Jones, Maxine D. "They Are My People: Black American Missionary Association Teachers in North Carolina during the Civil War and Reconstruction." *Negro Educational Review* 36, no. 2 (1985): 78–89.
- Lawson, Ellen Nickenzie. *The Three Sarahs: Documents of Antebellum Black College Women*. New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1984.

- McPherson, James. *The Abolitionist Legacy: From Reconstruction to NAACP*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975.
- New England Freedmen's Aid Society. *Extracts from Letters of Teachers and Superintendents of the New England Freedmen's Aid Society, Fifth Series*. Boston, MA: Office of the New England Freedmen's Aid Society, 1864.
- New England Freedmen's Aid Society. *Second Annual Report of the New England Freedmen's Aid Society*. Boston, MA: Office of the New England Freedmen's Aid Society, 1864.
- Padgett, James A, ed. "Reconstruction Letters From North Carolina." *North Carolina Historical Review* 21, no. 3 (1944): 232–247.
- Rabinowitz, Howard. "Half a Loaf: The Shift from White to Black Teachers in the Negro Schools of the Urban South, 1865–1890." *Journal of Southern History* 40, no. 4 (1974): 565–594.
- Rose, Willie Lee. *Rehearsal for Reconstruction: The Port Royal Experiment*. New York: Vintage Books, 1964.
- Small, Sandra E. "The Yankee Schoolmarm in Freedmen's Schools: An Analysis of Attitudes." *Journal of Southern History* 45, no. 3 (1979): 381–402.
- Span, Christopher M. *From Cotton Field to Schoolhouse: African American Education in Mississippi, 1862–1875*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009.
- Spivey, Donald. *Schooling for the New Slavery: Black Industrial Education, 1868–1915*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978.
- Stowe, Harriet Beecher. "The Education of Freedmen." *North American Review* 128 (1879): 605–615.
- Swint, Henry L. *The Northern Teacher in the South, 1862–1870*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1941.
- Walker, Vanessa Siddle. *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.
- Weisenfeld, Judith. "'Who is Sufficient for These Things': Sara G. Stanley and the American Missionary Association, 1864–1868." *Church History* 60, no. 4 (1991): 501–505.
- Weisenfeld, Judith, and Richard Newman, eds. *This Far by Faith: Readings in African American Women's Religious Biography*. New York: Routledge, 1996.
- Williams, Heather Andrea. "'Clothing Themselves in Intelligence': The Freedpeople, Schooling, and Northern Teachers, 1861–1871." *Journal of African American History* 87 (2002): 372–389.
- Williams, Heather Andrea. *Self-Taught: African American Education in Slavery and Freedom*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005.
- Woodward, C. Vann. *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1955.