# Honor and Slavery

*Kenneth S. Greenberg*
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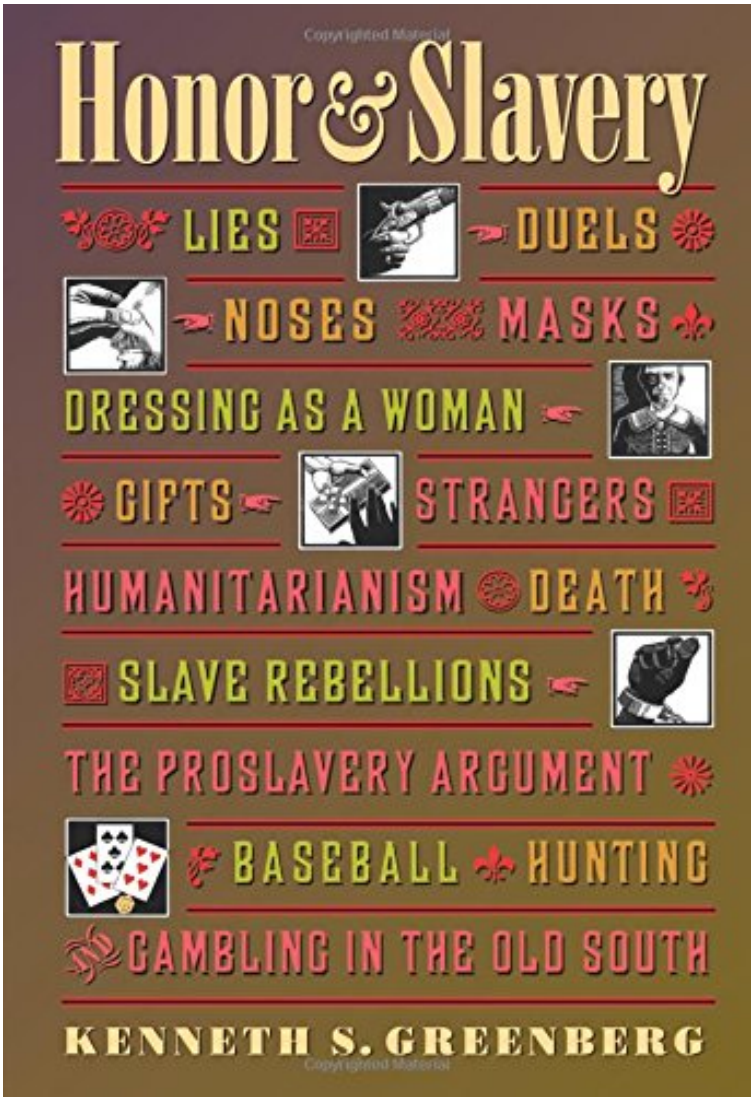




#838295 in Books Kenneth S Greenberg 1997-10-13 1997-10-13Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.20 x .49 x 6.30l, .69 #File Name: 0691017190192 pagesHonor and Slavery Lies Duels Noses Masks Dressing as a Woman Gifts Strangers Humanitarianism Death Slave Rebellions the Proslavery Argument Baseball Hunting and Gambling in the Old South | File size: 30.Mb

**Kenneth S. Greenberg : Honor and Slavery** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Honor and Slavery:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Fascinating Read on a Diverse Array of TopicsBy RDDKenneth S. Greenberg's "Honor and Slavery: Lies, Duels, Noses, Masks, Dressing as a Woman, Gifts, Strangers, Humanitarianism, Death, Slave Rebellions, the Proslavery Argument, Baseball, Hunting, and Gambling in the Old

South" explores honor culture in the American South during the antebellum period and just following the American Civil War. Greenberg draws upon the disciplines of social history, race history, economic history, and the history of sport. Greenberg principally seeks to answer, “who spoke the language of honor” in antebellum society (pg. xi).Like Bertram Wyatt-Brown, Greenberg firmly situates the language of honor in a social world in which honor only had meaning in people’s relations to each other. In this way, Greenberg writes, “Southern men of honor were ‘superficial.’ They were concerned, to a degree we would consider unusual, with the surface of things – with the world of appearances” (pg. 3). Greenberg returns to variations on the duel in order to demonstrate honor in action. His discussion of dueling recalls Wyatt-Brown’s elaboration of how the practice served to stabilize society. Greenberg writes, “The duel included elaborate displays of respect as all participants moved toward healing the rupture by a meeting of equals shooting pistols at each other” (pg. 58). This focus on equals and their relation to one another serves to link the two concepts of honor and slavery in Greenberg’s title. He writes, “Honor and dishonor, like mastery and slavery, were total conditions. A man was usually in one state or the other and only spent a brief moment in transition” (pg. 62). This dichotomy drives Greenberg’s argument.Also like Wyatt-Brown, Greenberg uses Freud to explain to qualify challenges to honor, specifically nose-pulling. He writes, “This concern for the body can be seen in many different contexts in the culture of honor” (pg. 15). An outward blemish reflected an inward failing. This world of appearances and psychology also permeated Southern politics. Greenberg writes, “Although many of these men [Southern elites] craved office as a sign that they had been honored by the people, they felt compelled to hide their desires” (pg. 77). An overeager Southerner was not a master of himself so he could not expect to wield mastery over others. Death, too, featured into this psychological world. Greenberg argues that Southerners felt it proper to face death bravely yet without submission if possible. A death in battle was ideal. Slavery presented an alternative to death, as it represented a submission in order to live and a rejection of honor. In this discussion, Greenberg links his argument to the paternalistic arguments of Eugene Genovese and Wyatt-Brown, though he links paternalism to these social and even biblical concepts of slavery and honor (pg. 111; Greenberg specifically addresses the biblical justification of slavery in which Southerners argued that Noah’s three sons represented white Americans, Native Americans, and African Americans. When Ham, the supposedly black son, saw his father naked, he forsook his honor and doomed his descendants to slavery).Greenberg’s estimation of Southern honor draws heavily upon the framework Wyatt-Brown established in "Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South". Additionally, he worked with Bernard Bailyn and Eugene Genovese in writing this monograph. Finally, Greenberg builds upon the work of John Hope Franklin, Edward L. Ayers, and Steven M. Stowe.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good resource materialBy Erica HillThis is an "easy read" for anyone who is studying southern culture during the civil rights/slavery era. It would be a good resource for researching papers.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Christine PoeschlHappy

The "honorable men" who ruled the Old South had a language all their own, one comprised of many apparently outlandish features yet revealing much about the lives of masters and the nature of slavery. When we examine Jefferson Davis's explanation as to why he was wearing women's clothing when caught by Union soldiers, or when we consider the story of Virginian statesman John Randolph, who stood on his doorstep declaring to an unwanted dinner guest that he was "not at home," we see that conveying empirical truths was not the goal of their speech. Kenneth Greenberg so skillfully demonstrates, the language of honor embraced a complex system of phrases, gestures, and behaviors that centered on deep-rooted values: asserting authority and maintaining respect. How these values were encoded in such acts as nose-pulling, outright lying, dueling, and gift-giving is a matter that Greenberg takes up in a fascinating and original way. The author looks at a range of situations when the words and gestures of honor came into play, and he re-creates the contexts and associations that once made them comprehensible. We understand, for example, the insult a navy lieutenant leveled at President Andrew Jackson when he pulls his nose, once we understand how a gentleman valued his face, especially his nose, as the symbol of his public image. Greenberg probes the lieutenant's motivations by explaining what it meant to perceive oneself as dishonored and how such a perception seemed comparable to being treated as a slave. When John Randolph lavished gifts on his friends and enemies as he calmly faced the prospect of death in a duel with Secretary of State Henry Clay, his generosity had a paternalistic meaning echoed by the master-slave relationship and reflected in the pro-slavery argument. These acts, together with the way a gentleman chose to lend money, drink with strangers, go hunting, and die, all formed a language of control, a vision of what it meant to live as a courageous free man. In reconstructing the language of honor in the Old South, Greenberg reconstructs the world.

From Publishers Weekly"I hope that I have established enough associations to have created an elementary primer of the language of honor," says Greenberg, a Suffolk University professor of history and author of Masters and Statesmen, at the end of this study of the Southern chivalric code. That code was held by "Southern Men of Honor" whose values, beliefs and behaviors determined what most Northern readers will see as not just one but many "peculiar institutions" south of the Mason-Dixon line. Many of Greenberg's observations offer revealing

contextualizations. Particularly interesting are chapters on death and on the duel and its rather less drastic variation, the tweaking of the nose, a symbol of masculine honor. Sometimes, he stretches his points, as with the issue of lying when John Randolph says to a would-be guest: "Sir, I am not at home." "This interaction illuminates one meaning embedded in the idea of 'giving the lie' in the culture of honor.... You did not own a lie until you were called a liar." (Greenberg also fails to make clear why he doesn't translate Randolph's "at home" in the 18th- and 19th-century sense in which it meant "accessible to strangers.") Greenberg argues that the slave-master relationship molded the conduct of Southern gentleman, conduct in which open confrontation, for example, by being associated with slaves was considered dishonorable. According to Greenberg, this same code caused baseball to be less popular in the South than in the North. "The act of running in baseball implied a change of position that seemed inappropriate to a man of honor." Gambling, on the other hand, was considered an appropriately elitist pastime and one, he says, that would inform Confederate strategists. "The Confederacy may well have lost the Civil War as a result of lessons learned at Southern card tables and racetracks." Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Library JournalGreenberg (Masters and Statesmen, Johns Hopkins, 1988) provides an in-depth study of the language of honor in the Old South. He skillfully demonstrates how this language embraced a complex system of phrases, gestures, and behaviors that asserted authority or maintained respect. His examples portray a range of situations in which the works and gestures of honor came into play, for example, during heated arguments on the floor of the House of Representatives or when an impetuous gesture could easily lead to a duel, as it did between Henry Clay and John Randolph. Greenberg makes the situations comprehensible to the modern reader. His work gives a clear view of what it meant to live as a courageous free man in the Old South and should be required reading for anyone interested in its life and culture before the Civil War.W. Walter Wicker, Louisiana Tech Univ., RustonCopyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Kirkus sA piercing--and decidedly offbeat--look into the mind of the Old South. ``This book," writes historian Greenberg, ``is a work of translation. It is a reconstruction and interpretation of a `dead language' "--the sometimes courtly, often evasive language of the cavaliers and landed gentry who guided the Confederacy into revolt. That language, he notes, was not always spoken; in the entertaining essay that opens his book, for instance, he writes of the strange Southern custom of nose-pulling; the essay draws in discussions of the South's dislike for the New England showman P.T. Barnum; the social history of practical jokes; and the Southern nobility's perception of self. Greenberg handles his arguments deftly, full as they are of odd digressions, to show that the Old South was a world of master and slave far removed in manner from our own, one with a unique code of custom and communication. Without an understanding of just how different it was, Greenberg suggests, much early Southern history will seem incomprehensible to the modern student. Thus, when relating the story of how at the end of the Civil War Jefferson Davis tried unsuccessfully to flee advancing Northern troops by dressing as a woman--a story subsequently enshrined by none other than P.T. Barnum, who ``understood that people would pay to see a re-creation of the humiliation of the Confederate leader"--Greenberg takes us through a leisurely dissection of the concepts of honor, power, and social masking, observing that to unmask a man of honor was a grievous and unforgivable insult. While this does little to explain Davis's choice of garb, it does shed light on the lingering sense of outrage over the war's conclusion in some Southern circles. Charged with ideas, this is a cheerfully speculative and valuable addition to the library of the Civil War. 