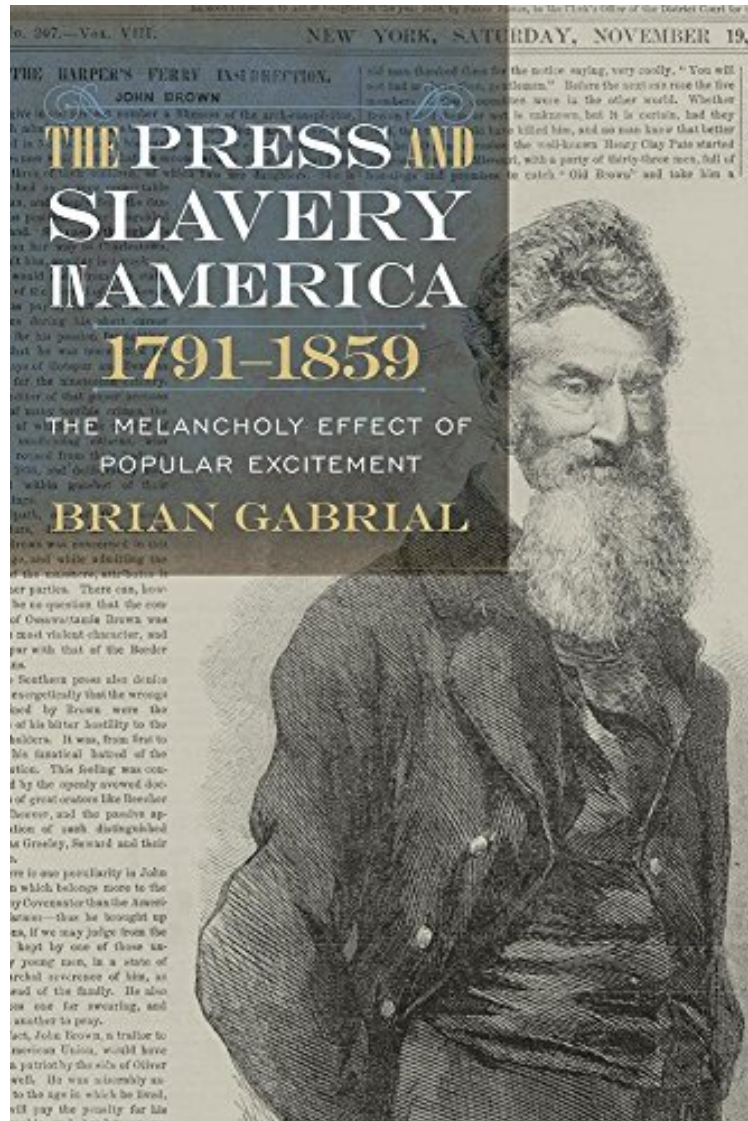


The Press and Slavery in America, 1791–1859: The Melancholy Effect of Popular Excitement

Brian Gabriel

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Brian Gabriel : The Press and Slavery in America, 1791–1859: The Melancholy Effect of Popular Excitement before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Press and Slavery in America, 1791–1859: The Melancholy Effect of Popular Excitement:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By James C. Foley Great price and service! Thank you.

Slavery remains one of the United States' most troubling failings and its complexities have shaped American ideas about race, economics, politics, and the press since the first days of settlement. Brian Gabriel's *The Press and Slavery in America, 1791–1859* examines those intersections at times when the nation and the institution of slavery were most stressed, namely when slaves revolted or conspired to revolt. Such events frightened white, slave-owning society to its core and forced public discussions about slavery at times when supporters of the peculiar institution preferred them to be silent. Gabriel closely reads the mainstream press during the antebellum years, identifying shifts in public opinion about slavery and changes in popular constructions of slaves and other black Americans, a group voiceless and nearly invisible in the nation's major newspapers. He reveals how political intransigence rooted in racism and economics set the country on a perilous trajectory toward rebellion and self-destruction. This volume examines news accounts of five major slave rebellions or conspiracies: Gabriel Prosser's 1800 Virginia slave conspiracy; the 1811 Louisiana slave revolt; Denmark Vesey's 1822 slave conspiracy in Charleston, South Carolina; Nat Turner's 1831 Southampton County, Virginia, slave revolt; and John Brown's 1859 Harper's Ferry raid. Gabriel situates these stories within a historical and contextual framework that juxtaposes the transformation of the press into a powerful mass media with the growing political divide over slavery, illustrating how two American cultures, both asserting claims to founding America, devolved into enemies over slavery. What the nineteenth century press reveals in this book are discourses, ways of thinking and expression that have retained resonance in contemporary race relations and American politics. They connect to ideas about the press and technology, changing journalistic practice, and, importantly, the destruction wrought by the dysfunction of the nation's political parties.

"Gabriel successfully shows how the news media of the 19th century shaped national and local understandings of slavery, racial ideologies, and resistance to human bondage by both black slaves and white and black abolitionists. This is an important book that crosses disciplinary boundaries, informing scholars of slavery and journalism about how their fields interacted." —Paul Finkelman, Ariel F. Sallows Visiting Professor of Human Rights Law, University of Saskatchewan College of Law and Senior Fellow, University of Pennsylvania Program on Democracy, Citizenship, and Constitutionalism

About the Author Brian Gabriel is an associate professor and chair of the department of journalism at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada. He earned his Ph.D. in mass communication from the University of Minnesota. Previously, Gabriel worked as a television newscast and field producer for the ABC and NBC affiliates in Minneapolis–St. Paul, Minnesota, and Omaha, Nebraska. He also edited and wrote for a small, monthly newspaper *The American Citizen Press* in Omaha. Gabriel has been published in journals such as *American Journalism*, *Journalism History*, and *Canadian Journal of Communication*.