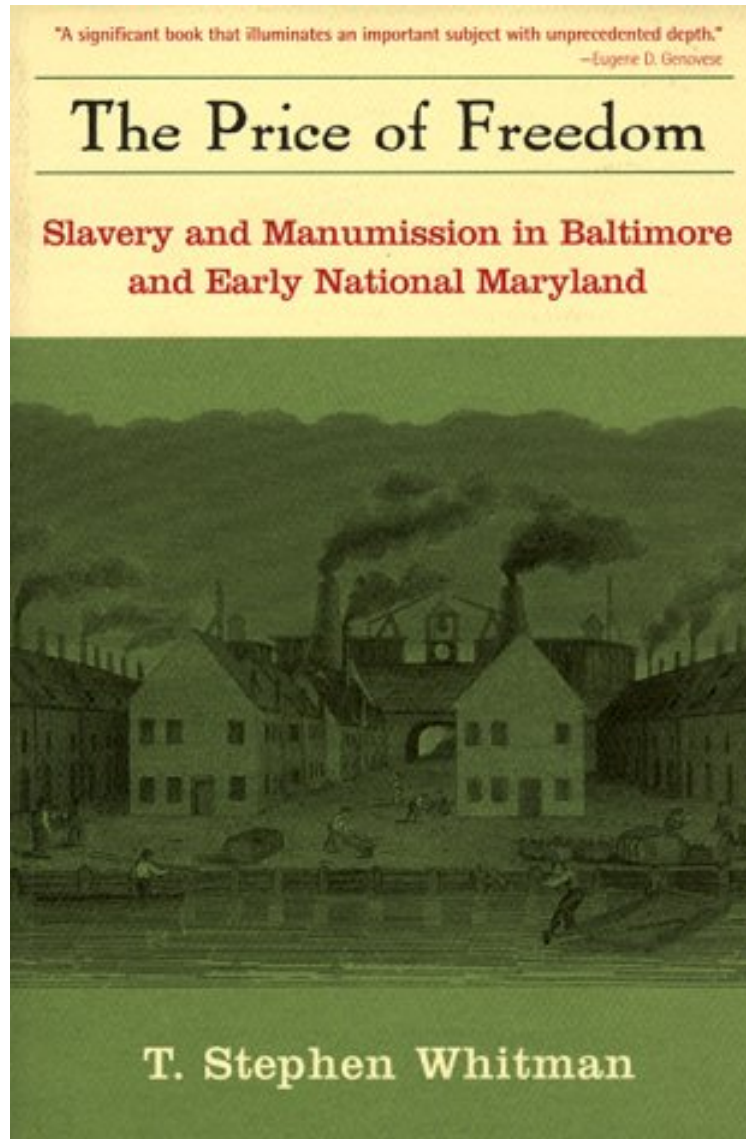


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The Price of Freedom: Slavery and Freedom in Baltimore and Early National Maryland

T. Stephen Whitman

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T. Stephen Whitman : The Price of Freedom: Slavery and Freedom in Baltimore and Early National Maryland before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Price of Freedom: Slavery and Freedom in Baltimore and Early National Maryland:

The Price of Freedom carefully examines how urban slavery, long neglected by historians, became an important step in the path from bonded to free labour. The author argues that the creation of "term slavery" and the increase in manumission in Baltimore during the post-revolutionary era should be attributed to economic self-interest rather than humanitarian impulses founded in republican ideology or religion. Using the leverage of flight, the author shows how skilled slaves wielded considerable power in negotiating the terms of their labour. This meticulous study sheds new light on free and unfree labour during the early national period.

From Library Journal
Whitman (history, Mount St. Mary's Coll., Maryland) examines the complexities of slavery and master-slave relations in early Federal Baltimore. The ownership of slaves was a sizable investment, and Whitman illustrates that masters minimized the risk of their running away by gradual manumission, freeing the slave after a certain period of service. He also shows that slave flight was often a means of extracting from the master more favorable terms of service within the condition of slavery. Whitman thus reveals that slavery was a more intricate process than most readers assume, involving hired slaves, industrial slaves, gradual freedom, and the status and condition of the freed slave. A scholarly examination of the subject appropriate for students doing research who can handle the statistics and demographics.
Robert A. Curtis, Taylor Memorial P.L., Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio
Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Nothing so reveals the nature of slave society than the slaves' access to freedom. No one has explored the character of manumission in Maryland with greater sensitivity and in greater depth than T. Stephen Whitman. In tracing slavery's transformation, The Price of Freedom stokes the debate over the viability of slavery in the Upper South and suggests how changes on the margins were defining the course of slavery to the South and freedom to the North. It is a work of signal importance." -- Ira Berlin, Professor of History, University of Maryland and author of Many Thousands Gone
About the Author
T. Stephen Whitman is assistant professor of history at Mount Saint Mary's College in Maryland.