INTRODUCTION

Finding My Roots

Digging up the History of DC's Public Schools

> A public school is supposed to be the symbol of advancement and the avenue to equality.
>
> —*Washington Post*, 1965

> Paul Laurence Dunbar Senior High School. Where leaders are cultivated and dreams are born.
>
> **—Banner on school building exterior, 2008**

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL in Washington, DC, was an institution of mythic proportions in my mind. It was the first public high school established for and by Black people in the United States.[1] It was also the first public high school established in DC for any student—Black or white. It held a central position in the Black American struggle for equality during the Jim Crow era. Its administrators, teachers, and alumni were a veritable who's who of Black achievement and firsts, ranging from Dr. Charles Drew, who pioneered blood plasma storage; educator Anna Julia Cooper, one of the nation's first Black woman PhDs; Carter G. Woodson, the father of Black history; Robert C. Weaver, the first Black person appointed to a cabinet-level position in the federal government; and Eleanor Holmes Norton, longtime representative to Congress from DC.[2] My aunt Donna attended Dunbar, and Great-Aunt Helen had taught there. Elegant

and statuesque, stern yet soft, Aunt Helen was the quintessential woman educator (figure I.1). She never married, never had children of her own. In the patriarchal cliché of her era, her students were her children. So were her numerous nieces and nephews. She lovingly encouraged my studiousness as a teen, showering me with hardcover versions of the classics, from *The Iliad* to *The Diary of Anne Frank*. So, on a sunny summer afternoon years ago, I made my first trip to Dunbar High School to pay homage to a history connected to me as a Black American, and through my maternal lineage.

Dunbar was a few blocks from my grandfather's home in LeDroit Park, the former residential destination for the New Negro intelligentsia of a bygone era. The area represented the epitome of Black achievement during the Jim Crow era, from the prominent historically Black Howard University, nicknamed "The Capstone of Negro Education" and later, "The Mecca," to LeDroit Park, a romantic streetcar suburb home to Robert and Mary Church Terrell, Walter Washington, Duke Ellington, and Paul Laurence Dunbar, to the U Street commercial corridor where Black businesses, music, and culture once thrived. I was proud that my grandfather lived in LeDroit Park—even though in my childhood of the 1980s and 1990s, most people referred to it as "the 'hood around Howard" or "the ghetto"—because I knew the history of the neighborhood and no one could take that away from me.[3] Growing up, I left the wide plains of Oklahoma City where I lived, to visit my mother's side of family in Washington almost every year, during summer break or on holiday vacation. This was the nucleus of Chocolate City, the only version of Washington I knew intimately, and Dunbar High School was a major anchor institution with which I had yet to become fully acquainted.[4] The monuments on the National Mall were just a backdrop to this storied landscape.

The neighborhood around Dunbar faced economic depression since the unrest of the late 1960s, when middle- and upper-middle-class Black residents left for greener pastures in suburban Prince George's County, Maryland (as their white counterparts had done in Montgomery County, Maryland, and northern Virginia a decade earlier in the face of school desegregation).[5] The condition in the neighborhood around the school grew even more dire in the 1980s and 1990s when the crack epidemic and gang-related violence gripped the city, and the city confronted an impending bankruptcy scare.

During my childhood and teenage years, many of the houses in the blocks surrounding my grandfather's home were bricked in or boarded up. The neighborhood sidewalks were uneven and unkempt. I had to gingerly dodge trash and broken liquor bottles as well as drug paraphernalia. Yet Howard University students passed through the neighborhood on their way to and from classes and dorms at George Washington Carver and Lucy Diggs Slowe Halls. They stopped to greet to Grandpa, "The Godfather," or "Mr.

LeDroit Park," as they called him. Grandpa would sit on the porch most days, with the widest assortment of people you could ever meet coming through the house: local politicians, folks suffering from addiction, community activists, neighborhood characters, church folk, corrupt folk. You name them, he knew them. His Christmas lights lined the porch year-round; his rusted metal chairs never moved an inch from their prominent porch location.

In the midst of all that, he would always remind me, the area had once been home to a proud and rich history through a collection of institutions and residents that made up the heart of Black Washington.[6] The city was unique in its powerful, well-educated Black upper class, which existed for over a century prior to the classic civil rights era, and its influential Black middle class, which grew out of the opportunities the federal government provided African Americans throughout Jim Crow.

By the time I was in college in the early 2000s, the neighborhood around Dunbar was changing again. It was on the precipice of a major demographic and economic turn. The word *gentrification* flitted through the air, as a few scattered white homebuyers began looking more closely at the section of Washington that had once been the cultural capital of Chocolate City.[7] It was then that I decided to take the history of Black Washington and its built environment seriously. An architecture major at Yale, I found my architectural history classes most compelling. In 2002 I elected to take a graduate-level seminar on historic preservation, and it was there that the foundation of my professional journey began to crystalize. When confronted with the question of what topic I would pursue for my senior thesis, I chose my grandfather's neighborhood. Similarly, when I attended graduate school at the University of Virginia, I completed a master's thesis on a cultural landscape that my grandfather referred to as Malcolm X Park (official name Meridian Hill Park) due to the stories he told me about that site. Indeed, it was family history and Black history, told to me by my maternal grandfather in Washington, DC, and my paternal aunt in Oklahoma, which set the course of my future research, teaching, and practice.

It was for these reasons that I selected Dunbar as the topic of a seminar paper when pursuing my doctorate at George Washington University. With the rapidly gentrifying status of the school's neighborhood, what would become of this educational landmark? I could follow my intellectual interests, remembering the stories my grandfather told me while sitting on his porch. By that time, a series of strokes rendered him nonverbal and confined to a bed in a Maryland nursing home. His best storytelling days were behind him.

I printed out directions from Google Maps in the house where, as an income-restricted graduate student, I rented an upstairs bedroom. Following

Figure I.2. View of Paul Laurence Dunbar High School looking southeast down New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC. Amber N. Wiley, photographer, 2012.

along the straight paths and turns from the stapled pieces of paper, doubt crept in when I arrived at my destination. I wasn't sure I was in the right place. The building towering in front of me looked nothing like the esteemed edifice I had fashioned in my mind. I had dreamt up an early twentieth-century garnet-red brick schoolhouse of austere classicized motifs, perhaps two or three stories high, crowned with a firm, powder-white pedimented portico. Something that signified history, tradition, pride. In place of my imaginary Dunbar stood a singular, mightily constructed building, sorely neglected, that sat anomalous and utterly oblivious to its immediate context. It was a tawny-brown brick-and-concrete ten-story high-rise brutalist fortress, monumental in the skyline, positioned in stark contrast to the colorful two- and three-story row houses that made up the surrounding neighborhood (figure I.2). One point was certain—Dunbar High School's design was meant as a visible statement; indeed, a proclamation—about the people who created it and the young scholars who would use it. The building was striking. It was purposeful, sculptural, and overpowering.

I estimated by the style and materials that it was a product of the late 1960s or early 1970s. The protagonists behind its design and construction were an

unknown variable in my equation—were "they," the creators of this building, a representative sample of an engaged local community? Or conversely, were "they" a system of white municipal and federal bureaucrats dictating the destruction and creation of the landscape to perpetuate a feeling of alienation and oppression in the Black community? These questions would become clearer in looking at the history of the school building itself. I presumed a white superintendent and architect had dumped the monstrous intervention on an unsuspecting Black neighborhood as a political statement—one that disrupted the urban fabric, one that reminded the surrounding community of who was really in charge.

But I was sorely wrong.

First, I had to get acquainted with the educational facility, which was no simple undertaking. The building had become a point of contention, and even shame, while its academic reputation fared no better. School administrators did not entertain the notion of an architectural historian (or anyone, for that matter) coming to examine the rugged facilities. But every year as summer came to a close, the District of Columbia Public Schools system (DCPS) hosted its annual Beautification Day, where businesses, nonprofit groups, and individuals adopted a school to clean before the academic year began. I took initiative as the local lead of the Washington chapter of the Yale Black Alumni Association to adopt Dunbar High School, and spent two years with a team of alumni, their children, and friends, preparing the school for the beginning of fall classes. Our tasks included giving the walls a fresh coat of paint, pruning bushes, pulling up weeds, planting flowers, sweeping up debris, cleaning windows, wiping down desks, and hanging welcome signs around the building. Inasmuch as it was a volunteer opportunity, it was also a research opportunity, a chance to explore the school's nooks and crannies and to pour love into it—a service that I associated with all that school provided, to which our community was indebted. Moreover, it was a learning opportunity for Yalies of all stripes to appreciate the depth of the history of Dunbar, and the many contemporary needs of the beleaguered school.

Though it had numerous entrances, most of the doors were chained shut from the inside. The defining exterior feature was the carbon-colored, water-stained patina trickling down its sand-brown concrete coursework. The escalators that once transported students from the entry lobby to class had long ceased to function. The vertical maze of its dim cavernous interior resembled a parking garage as one ascended the central pre-cast concrete ramps connecting floors and classrooms. At some point, workers rolled paint over the graffiti that adorned the ramps. The spot-stained and ragged slate-gray carpet appeared original to the 1977 building.

About halfway up the height of the school tower was the cafeteria—a magnificent space surrounded by windows on all but one side, giving it

an expansive and airy quality. Yet along the innermost wall hung a faded and peeling poster of 1980s movie star Steve Guttenberg promoting healthy eating. The comedian was a nonentity to Dunbar students born in the decade after his stardom peaked. Nevertheless, the school did reflect Hollywood in certain aspects. It could have easily been the setting for *Lean on Me*, *Dangerous Minds*, *Coach Carter*, and the like: a troubled school full of inner-city kids (read: poor, Black) in need of saving.

In many ways, art reflects life, and my experience with the school building and subsequent research and discoveries have left me spiritually unsatisfied. Where was the happy ending for this chapter in Dunbar's story? My visits to Dunbar were the beginning of an investigation that widened to other Washington schools built contemporaneously with this brutalist version of the school. Yet as I conducted extensive archival research on schools in Washington, I cultivated a greater appreciation for the brutalist Dunbar's design as well as the political maneuvering required for its construction. The ideals of Black activists, everyday people, students, parents, educators, politicians, and architects advocating for quality school facilities and community design came to the fore of my investigation, and this building was a product of those imaginings.

Had Black Washingtonians been able to capture the ideals that they fought so hard for since the establishment of this educational icon in the late nineteenth century? From the outside, this did not appear to be the case. But I took my cues from intellectual mentors like cultural theorist bell hooks, who demanded that Black historians excavate subjugated histories and document "a cultural genealogy of resistance."[8] For Black Americans, access to educational resources has been a tool of liberation, from the antebellum period to present. This book chronicles how Black Washingtonians used public education as a means of racial uplift, in the face of entrenched white resistance and repeated assertions of white supremacy. For Black Washingtonians, it was the school building—a permanent structure, made of sturdy material—that was the physical realization of Black liberation, agency, and the right to exist as citizens of the United States. Furthermore, it was the school building that stood as the litmus test to whether Black Washingtonians' citizenship was perpetually guaranteed, thus they fought with all the tools at their disposal—lobbying Congress, creating political liaisons with Black activists across the country, proposing land reform policies, expanding Black architects' oeuvre to include school design as a central facet of their work—to maintain access to quality education in the nation's capital.

The story of Black Washingtonians' educational ambitions, especially as they were manifest in the schools themselves, is a record of a quest to make permanent within the landscape their desire for education and thus intellectual and embodied liberation. The quest to establish public educational

facilities is a powerful blueprint for Black political and cultural assertion as well as a cautionary tale of white backlash and resistance to such Black autonomy and power. In the face of seemingly unsurmountable odds, Black Washingtonians insisted that their children deserved to be educated in the best possible schools, and to live with their families in decent housing. This determination endured from the founding of Washington, DC, to the present day, and while frustrated by the ruthless exercise of state power, unscrupulous developers, entrenched racism, and disputes with their own community about best outcomes and practices, Black Washingtonians succeeded in directing planning and design policy to improve schools for Black children.

As the nation's capital, Washington, DC, holds a prominent place in the American psyche, and is central to our tradition of nation-building and mythmaking. Born of revolution and molded in the image of a democratic republic, everything from street layout to the height of the buildings, to the Greco-Roman aesthetic conventions, to the material finishes on facades holds deep symbolic meaning for the rest of the country. Yet from inception it was a rural backwater locale, straddling the North and South. Black people have been central to all aspects of the city's history, born as it was from two enslaving states: Maryland and Virginia.[9] Free and enslaved people literally and figuratively built and maintained the institutions in which white male legislators determined the early tenets of a national culture, including the White House and the Capitol building. In 1926 famed Howard University sociologist, scientist, and educator Kelly Miller observed that Black people in Washington "necessarily color and complicate every feature of the community life."[10] Moreover, as architect Craig Barton has asserted, "Race as a social construction has had a broad and pervasive influence upon the spatial development of the American landscape."[11] This is as true in the nation's capital as it is more conspicuous locations in the Deep South.

In more modern times, Washington has been the nation's largest and most consequential majority-Black city from 1957 to the present day. In 1970, 71 percent of the city's total residents were Black. By 2020, that number had shrunk to 41 percent (table I.1).[12] While today less than half of DC residents are Black, this demographic group is still the largest in the city. Thus "race," as historians George Derek Musgrove and Chris Myers Asch contend, "is central to Washington history."[13] It makes sense to investigate the organizations and institutions that represent the hopes and dreams of Black Washingtonians, including their Black public schools.

I originally meant for *Model Schools in the Model City* to focus solely on secondary education in the nation's capital for several reasons. Since 1906, city law compelled Washington youth to receive public instruction up to the age of fourteen, and by 1925 the law barred children between the ages of

Table I.1. Washington racial demographics, 1800–2010

District of Columbia population by race and Hispanic origin, 1800–2010								
Year	Total population	Race						
		White	Black	American Indian and Alaska Native	*Asian	Other races	Hispanic/Latinx (any race)	White, non-Hispanic/ Latinx origin
2010	601,723	231,471	305,125	2,079	21,056	41,992	54,749	209,464
2000	572,059	176,101	343,312	1,713	15,189	35,744	44,953	161,260
1990	606,900	179,667	399,604	1,466	11,214	14,949	32,710	166,131
1980	638,333	171,768	448,906	1,031	6,636	9,992	17,679	164,244
1970	756,510	209,272	537,712	956	5,372	3,198	15,671	200,656
1960	763,956	345,263	411,737	587	4,690	1,679	(NA)	(NA)
1950	802,178	517,865	280,803	330	2,890	290	(NA)	(NA)
1940	663,091	474,326	187,266	190	1,309	(X)	720	473,606
1930	486,869	353,981	132,068	40	780	(X)	(NA)	(NA)
1920	437,571	326,860	109,966	37	708	(X)	(NA)	(NA)
1910	331,069	236,128	94,446	68	427	(X)	(NA)	(NA)
1900	278,718	191,532	86,702	22	462	(X)	(NA)	(NA)
1890	230,392	154,695	75,572	25	100	(X)	(NA)	(NA)
1880	177,624	118,006	59,596	5	17	Black		
1870	131,700	88,278	43,404	15	3	Total	Free	Enslaved
1860	75,080	60,763	14,316	1	—	14,316	11,131	3,185
1850	51,687	37,941	13,746	(NA)	(NA)	13,746	10,059	3,687
1840	33,745	23,926	9,819	(NA)	(NA)	9,819	6,499	3,320
1830	30,261	21,152	9,109	(NA)	(NA)	9,109	4,604	4,505
1820	23,336	16,058	7,278	(NA)	(NA)	7,278	2,758	4,520
1810	15,471	10,345	5,126	(NA)	(NA)	5,126	1,572	3,554
1800	8,144	5,672	2,472	(NA)	(NA)	2,472	400	2,072

— Represents zero or rounds to 0.0. (X) Not applicable. (NA) Not available.
Note: *Asian—Prior to the 2000 US Census, *Asian* included Pacific Islanders as well. In 2000 and 2010, Pacific Islanders are included in the race category Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander. Race category labeled "other races" in this table includes Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, Some Other Race, and Two or More Races. Hispanic/Latinx may be of any race.

Source: DC Office of Planning, "Demographic Characteristics of the District and Metro Area," *INDICES: A Statistical Index of District of Columbia Government Services*, 2011, 40, https://planning,dc,gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/op/publication/attachments/Chapter%25202,pdf.

fourteen and sixteen from holding a job until they finished the eighth grade. This legislation solidified the role of secondary education as a rite of passage for youth in the city, and the junior high school as an institution through which all children needed to pass to enter adulthood and employment. Furthermore, for the select Black students who matriculated to high school, their options were stunningly attractive—there was the elite college preparatory

Dunbar High School, the rigorous vocational Armstrong Technical High School, and the efficacious business school Cardozo High.

These Black secondary schools were veritable local and national powerhouses. Washington's Black public schools had graduated tens of thousands of students prior to federal desegregation in 1954. In fact, that same year, 80 percent of Dunbar High School graduates went on to college—the highest percentage of any school in the nation's capital, white or Black.[14] Meanwhile, less than half of the US adult population had a high school diploma or higher until 1970, when the percentage of diplomas obtained nationwide reached 52.3 percent. For the African American population, this figure was even lower—in 1970 less than a third had a high school diploma. Black Washingtonians, however, were above average in that regard, as 44 percent had obtained a high school diploma in 1970.[15] Even as late as 1980, only slightly over half of Black Americans nationwide had graduated from high school.[16]

Despite my interest in the role of secondary school education in Washington, I realized that I simply could not tell the story of Washington's Black schools without engaging the longer narrative of Black leaders' desires to establish and expand both primary and secondary school education in the Reconstruction era, and how early hopes and desires of these visionaries impacted the direction of the school system for over a century. Black educators in the postbellum period directly associated the cause of education with that of liberation. An educated Black person was a free Black person. This was not simply an exercise in rhetoric, as most enslaving states outlawed teaching enslaved people how to read.

I also found that, to discuss the problems of Black school facilities in the 1930s and 1940s, I had to excavate the history of urban planning to Black school siting as well as school closures and consolidations. What I learned was that the history of school closures tied directly with Progressive Era and City Beautiful initiatives in the first two decades of the twentieth century. These tactics are what historian Robert Weyeneth called the "spatial strategies of white supremacy."[17] As district commissioners, real estate lobbyists, and white citizens' organizations conspired to shut out Black residents in specific neighborhoods, they blocked school construction and expansion as well.

These policies dispossessed Black residents of their homes, displacing them to other Black enclaves in the city. These vindictive and willful strategies forced the closure of two of Black Washingtonians' most important cultural institutions—their churches and their schools.[18] Conversely, as urban historian Emily Lieb has shown, "White schools were also an insurance policy, a promise from the city to keep white assets safe from Black encroachment."[19] This was especially true in more rural areas of the District

outside the L'Enfant core, where Black schools closed and speculators created racially restricted white suburban residential developments in their stead. In lieu of an elected municipal system, presidentially appointed white district commissioners conspired with federal planning agencies and the white real estate lobby to dictate school siting in the Jim Crow era.[20]

The value of education as a means for social equality cannot be overstated—Black Americans wanted the American Dream to apply to them, and equal opportunity for quality education was at the forefront of making that dream a reality. But as education scholar James D. Anderson has contended, "Both schooling for democratic citizenship and schooling for second-class citizenship have been basic traditions in American education."[21] Therefore, the status of schooling, as well as school buildings, was a major issue for Black activists.

Washington's Black schools were the testing grounds through which Howard University–affiliated civil rights lawyers developed their desegregation strategies in the late 1940s. Despite the impressive accomplishments of the city's Black teachers, students, and administrators in the face of discrimination, their buildings teemed with students, especially the junior high schools, which incorporated multiple shifts to accommodate the cramped student body. Black children received fewer hours of instruction than their white counterparts, who enjoyed newer, larger, and underenrolled school buildings as white families moved to the expanding suburbs. Beyond their overcrowded condition, Black schools were also some of the oldest and most derelict, out-of-date facilities in the city. Black children were left to learn in the most appalling conditions. The desire to do away with hand-me-down white schools, and to create clean, state-of-the-art educational facilities for Black youth was a rallying cry for neighborhood activists. School design became a vital component of civil rights activism in Washington, DC.

Black Washingtonians were increasingly cognizant of the ways in which urban planning from on high negatively impacted their quality of life. For decades beginning in the 1920s, they consistently argued their case against the mechanisms of the planning process in front of Congress, and these public pleas reached an apex as an urban renewal bill moved through Congress in 1945. This book traces the ways Black citizens in the nation's capital began to exert their agency in the planning conversations, which catalyzed a Black-led urban renewal process in the mid-1960s centered on the design of an embattled majority-Black junior high school. This take is antithetical to most histories of urban renewal written to date.[22]

Black Washingtonians learned from the disastrous large-scale Southwest Urban Renewal project of the 1950s, advocating for collective bargaining and redefining inner-city urban renewal in the 1960s. As education historian

Larry Cuban has noted, "Disputes about the role of education in society erupted and continued post-*Brown v. Board of Education*—should education and schools serve as tools for integration, as community anchors to support declining neighborhoods, as places to learn the three R's, or as places to mold a young patriotic citizenship?"[23] In Washington's case, the city was already majority Black by 1957, so Black leaders focused on how they might use urban renewal to accommodate a growing African American population long relegated to overcrowded hand-me-down educational facilities.

This investigation into education, urban planning, and design in Washington spans more than a century of school building and educational debate—from the antebellum era, when free Black community members started schools in church basements and private residences, to the Second Reconstruction and the advent of home rule in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Black Washingtonians' political battles did not align neatly with those in the Deep South, nor those in northern industrial cities. As such, civil rights literature that focuses on the "classical" civil rights phase, lasting from the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court case to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, has long ignored this time period in Washington, aside from its location as a backdrop to federal civil rights legislation.[24] Black-and-white photographs of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial declaring "I have a dream" in 1963 are ubiquitous in textbooks across the nation. Images from King's 1967 speech at Cardozo High School commanding Black Washingtonians to "Prepare to Participate" in the Shaw School Urban Renewal plan are not. This book fills an increasingly important gap in the literature about how the Black freedom struggle manifested in late 1960s Washington and how education, urban planning, and design were at its center.[25]

While scholars of African American studies, civil rights, and American politics have extensively covered the story of the Second Reconstruction and the Black Power era in the fields of political science, history, and literature, they overlook the impact of Black activist architects and planners during this period. The nation's capital provides a perfect lens into the formation and evolution of Black activism in the built environment, as residents strove to leave their mark on a city in which Congress had consistently denied their rights and autonomy. Furthermore, many histories of Washington have painted the time after Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination in 1968 and the subsequent widespread civil uprising as one of utter failure and decline. Yet Howard-affiliated architects and recent graduates were fully engaged in the rebuilding enterprise, especially in the Shaw School Urban Renewal Area and the U Street commercial corridor. The establishment of Howard's School of Architecture and Planning in 1970 reflected the desire of ambitious young

designers to have their hand in the construction of schools, housing, churches, and libraries on a larger, more comprehensive scale. Thus, this book pushes against the commonly held narrative of decline by illustrating the creative and community-based initiatives of Howard-affiliated designers and planners.[26]

Given the centrality of Howard University in this narrative, as well as the extensive creative output of Black architects in Washington, this book argues the work happening in and around Howard University was the foundation upon which Black activist architects built. Within this cultural milieu of urban renewal, desegregation, and later, urban unrest, Black activist architects fought against and worked to leverage federal legislation to gain design commissions for projects ranging from housing to school buildings. Their story is one that is underdocumented and rarely told. Additionally, the literature on architecture programs at historically Black colleges and universities is nearly nonexistent.[27] Only one text engages directly with the idea of the Black activist architect of the Black Power era in the nation's capital. Other texts, as rare as they are, focus on design activism at predominately white institutions during this time in New York City.[28]

Washington's design and planning institutions and agencies, like those in New Haven, Boston, and New York City, were ruled by what historian Lizabeth Cohen calls "a masculinity of expertise."[29] This was true for the white-led urban renewal project of Southwest Washington as well as the Black community-led renewal of the Shaw neighborhood. Though never my intention, the narrative of this book focuses on charismatic male actors—congressmen, abolitionists, lawyers, reverends, architects. The archive and traditional historical record often silence women's voices, rendering their stories invisible. Black historians have dealt with these silences in a variety of ways. N. D. B. Connolly argued for a revolution of values, in "archival terms, a Black Power method [that] moves to destabilize or interrogate dominant white perspectives in mainstream media outlets, government records, and in the very definition of what constitutes a credible source."[30] Black feminist scholars K. T. Ewing and Saidiya Hartman have shown that, in looking for Black women in the archive, a counternarrative emerged, one that framed Black women's lives from the viewpoint of interiority and fugitivity, a desire to protect our own narratives from outside influence and destruction.[31] Thus, the silences are both prohibitive and protective.

Despite the archival silences, Black women were present in every single facet and corner of life described in these pages.[32] Black women testified on school siting and design proposals and urban renewal schemes countless times before Congress on behalf of their sororities, parent-teacher associations, and neighborhood civic associations. Black women led and taught in the public school system. Black women sat on the appointed school board

(like Mary Church Terrell in 1895), and much later, won the popular vote to serve as board president, as Anita Allen did in 1968. Celebrated artist Alma Thomas taught art and launched student exhibitions at Shaw Junior High School for thirty-five years. Eager Black girls filled the desks in classrooms across the city, outnumbering their male counterparts by a ratio of 3:1.[33] For most of their history, Black schools in Washington served the needs of Black girls and young women. Their presence is made visible in the historic photographs of classrooms produced by Frances Benjamin Johnston at the turn of the nineteenth century and Scurlock Studio graduating class photographs in the mid-twentieth century.

Black women comprised the administrative leads as well as the rank and file of countless War on Poverty organizations throughout the city. The Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) employed Black women as social workers. Marjorie Lawson, a lawyer who became the first Black woman to serve as judge on the District of Columbia court bench when President John F. Kennedy appointed her to the position in 1962, cofounded the Model Inner City Community Organization (MICCO) with the Reverend Walter Fauntroy. Lawson served as the organization's general counsel. Another MICCO woman leader was Flaxie Pinkett, head of real estate firm John R. Pinkett, Inc., and three-time president of the District of Columbia Citizens for Better Public Education.

On these inclusions and exclusions, I offer a word on sources. Over the course of this research, I poured over the meeting minutes and annual reports of the Washington district commissioners and Board of Education. The personal collections of major political figures and Black designers like Walter Fauntroy, Julius Hobson, Albert Cassell, and Howard Mackey supplied speeches, correspondence, flyers, newsletters, and other ephemera. Black Washingtonians, without a popular vote or local governance system accountable to them, spent their energies advocating for themselves in front of countless committees in various congressional chambers. As such, I spent days skimming over fifty years' worth of congressional testimony—an agonizingly tedious but necessary process for any history of the city.

Since the state of Black Washington was of national interest, I was able to source popular magazines such as *Ebony* and *Jet* as well as the journals of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the National Urban League—*Crisis* and *Opportunity*, respectively. Black architects came to national prominence in the late 1960s, thus their design projects, research, and activism can be found (sparingly) in the pages of the *American Institute of Architects (AIA) Journal*. My Howard architecture research leaned heavily on the annual reports in the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center as well as yearbooks, course catalogs, the *Howard Record*,

and the student newspaper *Hilltop*. Local newspapers covered school battles around overcrowding and funding, thus the *Washington Post* and, to a lesser degree the *Washington Star*, proved invaluable. Short-lived Black Washington newspapers such as the *Colored American* provided a glimpse into Black social stratifications in the early twentieth century, while national Black newspapers—the C*hicago Defender* and the *Pittsburgh Courier* in particular—gave a long view of Washington's importance in the larger Black public sphere.

Finally, site visits, floor plans, elevations, historic photographs, and maps proved exceedingly helpful in reconstructing the geography and design of Black public schools in Washington, DC. I was able to visit many of the schools I wrote about, though most no longer serve an educational purpose, and none dating from the 1960s and 1970s survive today. The city demolished those brutalist schools as I sat down to write their stories. Not all the design records of the schools survive, and where they do not, I relied on descriptions of them in the popular press to fill in the gaps. My wide variety of sources reflects the interdisciplinary nature of this research—to understand the social aspirations of Black Washingtonians, the development of the public school system, and the idyllic visions of Black designers who sought to alleviate the sordid conditions of the schools and their community.

Chapter 1, "Free to Learn: Building the Black Public School System," marks the trials and tribulations of building Black schools in Washington from the antebellum period through the end of Reconstruction, paying special attention to school siting and design. Black education came from the literal bottom—emerging from basements and army barracks, and later, surfacing in purpose-built wood and brick buildings. Black education was no longer hidden away, clandestine, practiced in fear and shadows. It was there to stay, as was Black emancipation, enlightenment, and ultimately, full citizenship.

Chapter 1 argues that Black citizens erected permanent buildings for education as a means of marking their status as free members of a democratic society, and as a way create monuments to those individuals who championed their cause, such as Radical Republicans Charles Sumner and Thaddeus Stevens. Black leaders in education embraced the ideals of the Common School movement to guarantee equal educational access to pupils of all backgrounds, both Black and white, though their early attempts at integration failed.

Chapter 2, "Hard Lessons: The Shackling of the Black Educational Landscape," chronicles the ways that city planners and real estate speculators implemented initiatives from alley clearance and the City Beautiful movement to create segregated residential and educational zones where they had not previously existed. It highlights the federal mechanisms of land dispossession that impacted Black Washingtonians at the turn of the twentieth century.

Earlier studies have argued that the mass displacement of Black residents from Georgetown and Capitol Hill were ways to increase real estate value and ensure racial homogeneity.[34] This book argues that white congressmen, members of the Alley Dwelling Authority (and its successor, the National Capital Housing Authority), white citizens' groups, and speculative land developers specifically tied their segregationist housing policies to the availability, or lack thereof, of public school facilities. The most numerous Black school facilities during this time were primary schools, thus it was this school type that was most directly impacted. By actively expelling Black residents from the alleyways of racially heterogeneous blocks or hindering the expansion and construction new Black primary schools, these planning bodies and groups delivered a death blow to the segregated Black schools that served those populations. Black primary school closures and consolidations went hand in hand with housing policy and City Beautiful initiatives.

Chapter 3, "Black Secondary Schools: Jim Crow Monuments to Racial Uplift," argues that secondary school design for Black Washingtonians was a ray of light for a beleaguered school system. After the failure of Reconstruction and the advent of Jim Crow, the approach to racial uplift was factional, reflecting the widely divergent views of leaders like Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois. Their ideals shaped the pedagogical changes within Black secondary school education, creating the hyper-elite M Street School and its successor, the Paul Laurence Dunbar High School, which catered to Du Bois's notion of the "Talented Tenth," and the industrial-focused Armstrong Manual Training High School, which was founded on Washington's hopes for practically applied pedagogy, self-determination and self-reliance. Into the twentieth century, schools were where the battle lines between local and federal, white and Black, and elite "old Washington" Black communities and recent Black southern migrants were drawn. This was true in the 1830s and remained so until the classical period of the civil rights movement over a century later.

Most histories of Black education of the early twentieth century focus on rifts between Washington and Du Bois. Those that take up DC's public schools are social histories of esteemed administrators, teachers, and stellar students. Scholarly studies that privilege Black school design focus primarily on the Deep South and the Rosenwald building program, or Black college campus design.[35] There are no architectural histories of Black secondary schools beyond this investigation. While I expect this work to invite further research into the design and expansion of Black schools, I must acknowledge that DC is both the exception and the rule. It is the exception in that DC's Black secondary schools in the early twentieth century were the largest, best equipped, and most stylish buildings for Black pupils at that time. It is the

rule because for every building constructed specifically for the purpose of Black secondary education, the designers hoped that they would serve as the models for the rest of the country. These were the units against which great school design should have been measured. It is a statement of fact that in reality, no other city or municipality lived up to the rule. DC was singular. It was the prototype. But it was the prototype that never went into production.

Chapter 4, "To Secure These Rights: Educational Equalization in the Postwar Metropolis," argues that the derelict condition of Washington's junior high schools formed the testing ground for the cases that would become *Bolling v. Sharpe* and *Brown v. Board of Education*, and demonstrates how desegregation of school facilities did not provide the needed relief in the school buildings themselves. The chapter follows the fight of parent groups, members of the local chapter of the NAACP, and other activist groups that contested local and federal policies that exacerbated separate and unequal school conditions. School construction stalled during the Great Depression and World War II, while Washington's population grew exponentially to support New Deal initiatives and the war economy. In the face of such population shifts, the white superintendent and board members regularly prioritized building funds for white schools, then transferred hand-me-down facilities from the white school division to the Black school division. Yet the Black student body population at the time was growing at a faster rate than that of the white study body, and Black youth were stuck in decrepit and overcrowded buildings, attending school in shifts, and receiving less instruction time overall.

Black parents and their allies tested the legality of such measures by holding the school district accountable to the notion of "separate but equal" as dictated in the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling. Their modes of attack shifted from a facility equalization strategy to an integration strategy when they found equalization did not work. Even with the desegregation of public schools in the District, parents continued to fight for equal opportunity for Black students.

Chapter 5, "With the People, By the People, For the People: Shaw School Urban Renewal," illustrates how Black clergy, parents, and interracial coalitions of young people collaborated to enact radical land reform in their communities. They advocated for a new Shaw Junior High School building, while also battling stereotypes that painted their neighborhood and its residents as culturally deprived and dysfunctional. Shaw students testified before Congress to keep a new neighborhood playground while also encouraging congressional appropriations for the purchase of land to build a new school. To circumvent the congressional committees that kept Washington schools underfunded, local clergy and activist the Reverend Walter Fauntroy

promoted Shaw Junior High School and the neighborhood around it as the basis of a Model Cities urban renewal project, thereby making it a recipient of Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society funding.

The urgency of the cause accelerated after Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis on April 4, 1968, and Black Washingtonians took to the streets to physically act out their grief, anger, and despair. The city burned for four days, affecting Black enclaves, including the Shaw neighborhood. After the unrest Fauntroy characterized his work as a "non-violent land reform" program imbued with the combined philosophies of slain leaders King and Malcolm X.[36] The first order of business was taking the profit out of the slums, then exercising ownership and control over the land. The rebuilding would be physical—rehabilitating row houses, creating affordable housing, and constructing new schools. Rebuilding would also be communal. New civic organizations throughout the city expanded their programming through funding opportunities offered by the OEO and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Citizens took the lead in creating novel paradigms for city governance that allowed for a modicum of resident representation and agency in the face of heavy-handed Congressional oversight.

Chapter 6, "Black Power and Brutalism: Activist Architects and Progressive School Design," traces how Black architects responded to community needs, chronicling the interplay between high-style architecture and educational policy in Washington during the burgeoning Black Power era. It connects Howard University's expansion into city planning as a way young Black architects and planners became integrated into the rebuilding process in the post-uprising city. The chapter also highlights the importance of local governance, in the form of school board elections and architect Charles Cassell's membership on the board, in increasing the impact of Black architects in Washington, especially with their commissions for public school facilities.

The chapter shifts to theories about education and race pride, and their ties to aesthetic materiality and programming priorities of the new school buildings themselves. Schools were symbols of progress in the Black community, monuments to present and future achievement, and linchpins in the renewal areas. A focal point of the chapter is the innovative design and programming for Howard D. Woodson Senior High School and Shaw Junior High School. Though a white architecture firm was selected to design H. D. Woodson prior to Cassell's advocacy for Black designers, the school's construction was the result of longtime rallying by Black leaders in the Far Northeast neighborhood of the city. Thus, these leaders, administrators, teachers, and students understood the singular design of the building—a brutalist high-rise structure—as emblematic of their collective power.

The design for a new Shaw Junior High School by the Howard-affiliated Black architectural firm Sulton-Campbell expressed broad-minded ideals for the children which it served, while betraying the firm's desire prove itself within the mainstream architecture currents of the time. Regardless, the design process of Shaw Junior High School—with its community-led battles around siting, programming, and design forged by Black activists and Black architects—was the realization of the dreams and desires of Black Washingtonians a century in the making.

Chapter 7, "Lessons Learned? The Politics of Preservation for Washington's Black Schools," chronicles the battle to preserve the 1916 Paul Laurence Dunbar High School building. By the early 1970s, Howard-affiliated architects from the Black firm Bryant & Bryant were already in the construction phase of the school's replacement—at $17 million, the brutalist behemoth was the most expensive school constructed in the Washington metropolitan area. Old guard alumni expressed public concern for their beloved alma mater as the skeleton framework of the new structure rose beside the castellated outline of the older building.

Black Washingtonians were on the verge of a seismic shift in political power, as the advent of Home Rule loomed near. The significant and influential Black upper middle class had long held political sway in the city, and this legislation challenged their position. Without a representational government, the monied of both the Black and white communities had been able to enact their influence in specific areas. These, of course, were the minority of both communities. The arrival of a representational government would certainly upend this system in favor of one that reflected the masses. In the Black community this included migrants, many southern transplants, the working class, and poor. In the same way that mayors Walter Washington and Marion Barry represented two different sides of Black Washington, disputes about Black heritage revealed shifts and desires for new representation. These clashes played out in battles around historic preservation in the city, including whether to preserve the older Dunbar High School building, an emblem of Black excellence, as well as Black elitism. The story of Black Washington—and who got to tell it—was up for debate.

The epilogue, "Rites of Passage: The Death and Life of Black Public Schools," brings us to the present day, asking the reader to reconsider the lingering legacies of Black school design and urban planning in the nation's capital. It gives the reader an update on the condition of the schools built in the post-uprising era—H. D. Woodson, Shaw, and Dunbar—all representations of the hard fought battles won by Black Washingtonians to decide where schools should go and how facilities would respond to student needs. It also briefly revisits the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century school buildings

that held so much promise for the elevation of Black Washingtonians, structures that at first symbolized the possibilities of their personhood, humanity, and citizenship, that later came to symbolize the ways in which Jim Crow policies solidified their second-class citizenship status. The epilogue reminds us that the American Dream, with its familiar iconography of a house with a white picket fence, can also be read in the physical manifestations of public school buildings. This reminder needs to be continuously asserted, as key civil rights legislation like *Brown v. Board* and *Bolling v. Sharpe* are often historically characterized as integrationist strategies to improve Black children's self-esteem, overlooking the role that the number, age, size, condition, location, cost, and overall adequacy of educational facilities—the buildings—had in the initial arguments for integration.

This book unravels the richly layered and intertwined histories of these educational institutions, focusing primarily on the everyday Washingtonians—parents, students, teachers, clergy, lawyers, architects, and planners—who dreamt up an alternative vision for education, urban planning, and design in the city from the antebellum period to the Second Reconstruction. They battled against more historically powerful and monied forces—the real estate lobby, bigoted congressmen, white businessmen and homeowners, and "professional planners" trained at elite historically white northern universities—who wished to create and maintain a policy of white supremacist spatial planning over the nation's capital. *Model Schools in the Model City* combines architectural history with educational and planning history as an investigation into the ways Black Washingtonians exerted their humanity, citizenship, and personhood in a hostile environment—segregated, Jim Crow, pre–home rule Washington, DC.

SLAVE MARKET OF AMERICA.

THE WORD OF GOD.

"ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER YE WOULD THAT MEN SHOULD DO TO YOU, DO YE EVEN SO TO THEM, FOR THIS IS THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS."
"AND THEY SIGHED BY REASON OF THE BONDAGE, AND THEY CRIED, AND THEIR CRY CAME UP UNTO GOD BY REASON OF THE BONDAGE, AND GOD HEARD THEIR GROANING."
"THUS SAITH THE LORD, EXECUTE JUDGMENT IN THE MORNING, AND DELIVER HIM THAT IS SPOILED OUT OF THE HANDS OF THE OPPRESSOR, LEST MY FURY GO OUT LIKE FIRE, AND BURN THAT NONE CAN QUENCH IT, BECAUSE OF THE EVIL OF YOUR DOINGS."

THE DECLARATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

"WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS TO BE SELF-EVIDENT;—THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL; THAT THEY ARE ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR WITH CERTAIN UNALIENABLE RIGHTS; THAT AMONG THESE ARE LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS."

THE CONSITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

"THE CITIZENS OF EACH STATE SHALL BE ENTITLED TO ALL THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF CITIZENS OF THE SEVERAL STATES." Article 4, Section 2.
"CONGRESS SHALL MAKE NO LAW ABRIDGING THE FREEDOM OF SPEECH OR OF THE PRESS, OR OF THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE PEACEABLY TO ASSEMBLE, AND TO PETITION THE GOVERNMENT FOR A REDRESS OF GRIEVANCES."—Article I, Amendment.
"CONGRESS SHALL HAVE POWER TO EXERCISE EXCLUSIVE LEGISLATION, IN ALL CASES WHATSOEVER, OVER SUCH DISTRICT (NOT EXCEEDING TEN MILES SQUARE) AS MAY, BY CESSION OF PARTICULAR STATES AND THE ACCEPTANCE OF CONGRESS, BECOME THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES."—Article I, Section 8.

CONSTITUTIONS OF THE STATES.

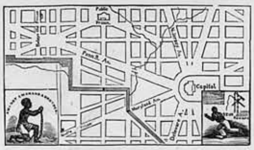
"EVERY CITIZEN MAY FREELY SPEAK, WRITE, AND PUBLISH HIS SENTIMENTS ON ALL SUBJECTS, BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ABUSE OF THAT LIBERTY." *Constitutions of Maine, Connecticut, New-York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Tennessee, Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, and Missouri.*
"THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IS ONE OF THE GREAT BULWARKS OF LIBERTY, AND THEREFORE OUGHT NEVER TO BE RESTRAINED."—*North Carolina.*
"THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS OUGHT TO BE INVIOLABLY PRESERVED."—*Maryland.*
"THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IS ONE OF THE GREAT BULWARKS OF LIBERTY, AND CAN NEVER BE RESTRAINED BUT BY DESPOTIC GOVERNMENTS."—*Virginia. Other States nearly the same.*

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

"THE LAND OF THE FREE."

READING OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

THE RESIDENCE OF 7000 SLAVES.



PART OF WASHINGTON CITY.

"THE HOME OF THE OPPRESSED."

CAPITOL OF THE UNITED STATES. "HAIL COLUMBIA."

RIGHT TO INTERFERE.

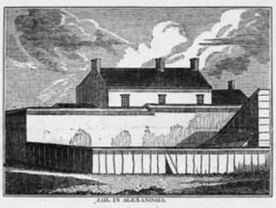
People sometimes say we have no right to interfere for the abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia. Now what are the facts in the case? Article 1, Sec. 8, of the Constitution (see above) gives Congress "power to exercise *exclusive legislation* IN ALL CASES WHATSOEVER, over such district."

But the terms of Cession! On the 23d of December, 1788, Maryland passed an Act to cede to the Congress of the United States, any district in the State, not exceeding ten miles square, which the Congress may fix upon, and accept for the Seat of Government of the United States;" and this with no proviso. On the 3d of December, 1789, Virginia did the same, and in these words, "And the same is hereby forever ceded and relinquished to the Congress and Government of the United States, in *full and absolute right*, and EXCLUSIVE JURISDICTION, as well of soil as of persons residing or to reside thereon, pursuant to the tenor and effect of the eighth section of the first article of the Constitution." This was accompanied with a provision touching the "Soil." "That nothing herein contained shall be construed to vest in the United States any right of property in the soil, or to affect the rights of individuals therein, otherwise than the same shall or may be transferred by such individuals." There was also the provision, "That the jurisdiction of the Laws of this Commonwealth, over persons and property of individuals residing within the limits of the cession, shall not cease UNTIL Congress, having accepted the cession, shall, by law, provide for the government thereof, under their jurisdiction in manner provided by the Article of the Constitution before recited"—plainly implying that *then* the jurisdiction of the State Laws *should cease*, and Congress "*exercise exclusive legislation*" over persons and property, "IN ALL CASES WHATSOEVER." And July 16, 1790, Congress accepted the cession, providing that the Laws of the State should remain in force "UNTIL the time fixed on for the removal of the Government thereto, and UNTIL Congress shall otherwise by law provide." It is therefore every Citizen's right, nay duty to interfere for the Abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia.

[NOTE.—The Slave coffle marching by the Capitol is not fancy, but literal fact. Dr. Torrey in his account of the "American Slave Trade," states on the authority of a Member of the House of Representatives, Mr. ADGATE, "That during the last Session of Congress, (1815–16,) as several Members were standing in the street near the new Capitol, a drove of manacled colored people were passing by, and when just opposite, one of them elevating his manacles as high as he could reach, commenced singing the favorite National Song, 'Hail Columbia! happy land,'" &c. Page 64.]

PUBLIC PRISONS IN THE DISTRICT.

Built by Congress with $15,000 of the People's money; perverted from the purposes for which they were built, and used by Slaveholders for the confinement of refractory Slaves, by licensed Slave-dealers as depots for their victims, and by kidnappers for the imprisonment of Free Americans, seized and sold to pay their jail fees!



JAIL IN ALEXANDRIA.

FACTS.

In 1826 Congress appropriated out of the public treasury $5000 "for the purpose of altering and repairing the jail in the city of Washington" and $10,000 to build "a county jail for the city and county of Alexandria."

In 1820 "the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled," empowered the Corporation of the City of Washington "to prescribe the terms and conditions upon which free negroes and mulattoes may reside in the city." On this authority, in May 1827, that Corporation enacted that "every free negro or mulatto, whether male or female, who may come to the City of Washington to reside, shall within thirty days, exhibit to the Mayor satisfactory evidence of his or her title to freedom to be recorded, and shall enter into bonds, with two freehold sureties, in the penalty of $500, conditioned on his or her good conduct, that they will not become chargeable to the Corporation for the space of twelve months"—the bond "to be renewed *every year for* THREE YEARS. On failure of this, he or she must depart the city or be committed to the workhouse not exceeding *twelve months in any one imprisonment*." And all negroes found residing in the city after the passage of this act who shall not be able to establish their title to freedom (except such as may be hired) shall be committed to the jail, as absconding slaves."

By this law color is made a crime, which first robs citizens of their constitutional as well as inalienable rights and is then taken as evidence that they are slaves; and then to crown all, a large posse of constables and other officers, some of them in the pay of government, are "charged" with the execution of the laws, and "forfeit and pay for every neglect or failure a fine not exceeding twenty dollars." City Laws, p. 196.

The result is that free citizens are often arrested, plunged into prison and then sold for their jail fees AS SLAVES FOR LIFE. In 1829, Mr. Miner, of Penn. declared in Congress, that in 1826–7, no less than *five persons* were thus sold. In July, 1834, in a Washington paper was the following

NOTICE.

"Was committed to the prison of Washington Co. D. C., on the 19th day of May 1834, as a run-away, a Negro man who calls himself DAVID PECK. He is 5 feet 8 inches high. Had on, when committed, a check shirt, linen pantaloons, and straw hat. *He says he is free* and belongs to Baltimore. The *owner or owners*, are hereby requested to come forward, prove him, and take him away, or *he will be sold for his prison and other expenses, as the* LAW DIRECTS.

JAMES WILLIAMS,
Keeper of the Prison of Washington County, District of Columbia,
For ALEXANDER HUNTER, M. D. C."

JAIL IN WASHINGTON,—SALE OF A FREE CITIZEN TO PAY HIS JAIL FEES!

FACTS.

The above is but a specimen. Four other persons, at least, who said they were free, have been advertised in a similar way within the last year. One keeper of the jail in Washington stated that in five years upwards of *four hundred and fifty* colored persons had been lodged there for *safe keeping*, i. e. until they could be disposed of in the course of the slave trade;—besides nearly *three hundred*, who had been taken up and lodged there as runaways.

The above gives some idea of the interior of the prison in Washington. Rev. A. A. Phelps, of Boston, visited it in April 1834, and makes the following statement.

"There are in the prison 16 solitary cells on the lower floor, the debtor's and criminal's rooms being above. These cells are mostly used for the confinement of slaves lodged there by the master as a punishment for some fault; of slaves "suing for their freedom" as they termed it, and of colored persons, bond or free, arrested as runaways, or lodged there by the slave dealers. We found not less than *thirteen* individuals in them at this time, every one of whom claimed that, on one ground or another, they were entitled to their freedom. In one cell we found a *Fanny Jackson*, with three little children, one of them an infant at her breast. Her husband, also in the prison, was in a separate cell. They were claimed by one Asa Buckner, of London co., Va., but having been in Washington several years, unclaimed by the master, they were suing for their freedom under some act which entitled them to it. They had lain in prison, awaiting their trial nine months. We spoke to the mother about her little ones, and we found she had indeed a mother's heart. The scene cannot be described.

"*Rachel Turner* was the occupant of another cell. She was young—had been owned for a limited time by Lewis Bromley, of Baltimore, and was to have been free in a year. Mrs. Bromley, (her husband being dead) sold her for that time, to a man, who either changed his name to that of Angl. de Nantenil, or sold her a slave for life to another person of that name. He took her to Washington, and lodged her in the jail for 'safe keeping' till he should call for her. Nothing had been heard from him. Meanwhile the girl had been in the prison more than six months, and the keeper assured me that she would soon be sold, *for her jail fees, as a slave for life*. The whole affair was doubtless a mere trick, to evade the law, and make her a slave for life."

"On returning from the prison, the lady who had accompanied me, and who had often aided the poor outcasts, said that her attention was first called to the subject by the following incident. Some seven years before, a poor colored man came to her door, walking on his knees—having lost his legs to the knee, and his arms also to the elbow. She asked him how it happened. He said he had been put in prison, as a runaway, though he was free, and the winter was so cold, and his covering so scanty, (having scarce a blanket to throw over him,) that his limbs were frozen, and it became necessary to *take them off to save his life!* Thus was a free American, made a cripple for life, for the crime of having a colored skin, and to pay the United States for the expense of having suspected him to be a slave!

VIEW OF THE INTERIOR OF THE JAIL IN WASHINGTON.—FANNY JACKSON.

PRIVATE PRISONS IN THE DISTRICT, LICENSED AS SOURCES OF PUBLIC REVENUE.

"For a license to trade or traffic in slaves for profit, whether as agent or otherwise, *four hundred dollars;*"—the Register to "deposit all monies received from taxes imposed by this act to the credit of the Canal Fund." Act to provide a revenue for the Canal Fund, approved July 28, 1831. City Laws, p. 249.

SLAVE HOUSE OF J. W. NEAL & CO.

This establishment was owned by W. Robey, who is also engaged in the trade. In May 1834, a gentleman visited it and fell into conversation with the overseer of the pen. He heard the clanking of chains within the pen. "O," said the Overseer—himself a Slave, "I have seen *fifty or seventy* Slaves taken out of the pen, and the males chained together in pairs, and drove off to the South—and how they would cry, and groan, and take on, and wring their hands but the driver would put on the whip and tell them to shut up—so they would go off and bear it as well as they could."

The standing advertisement of this house is as follows:

"CASH FOR 200 NEGROES."

"We will give cash for two hundred likely young negroes, of both sexes, families included. Persons wishing to dispose of their slaves, will do well to give us a call, as we will give higher prices in cash than any other purchasers who are now, or may hereafter come into this market. All communications will meet attention. We can at all times be found at our residence on 7th street, immediately South of the Centre Market House, Washington, D. C."

"JOSEPH W. NEAL & CO."

VIEW OF A SECTION OF ALEXANDRIA, WITH A SLAVE SHIP RECEIVING HER CARGO OF SLAVES.

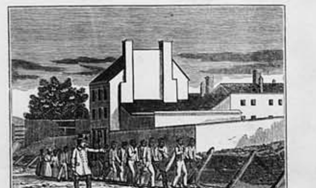
Franklin and Armfield alone shipped to New-Orleans in the year 1834, according to their own statement, not less than 1000 Slaves. They own brigs of about 160 to 200 tons burthen, running regularly every thirty days, during the trading season to New-Orleans, and carrying about one Slave to the ton. Armfield thus advertises in 1836.

"ALEXANDRIA AND NEW-ORLEANS PACKETS."

"Brig TRIBUNE Samuel C. Bush, master, will sail as above on the first of January; brig ISAAC FRANKLIN, Wm. Smith, master, on the 15th of January; brig UNCAS, Nath. Boush, master, on the 1st of February. They will continue to leave this port on the 1st and 15th of each month throughout the shipping season. They are all vessels of the first class, commanded by experienced and accommodating officers, will at all times go up the Mississippi by steam, and every exertion used to promote the interest of shippers and comfort of passengers. Shippers may prevent disappointment by having their bills of lading ready the day previous to sailing, as they will go promptly at the time.

Servants, that are intended to be shipped, will at any time be received for *safe keeping* at 25 cents per day.
29th Dec. tf. JOHN ARMFIELD, Alexandria."

In January, 1834, J. Leavitt, Editor of the New-York Evangelist, visited the "TRIBUNE," then in port and preparing to sail with a cargo of human beings the next week. He thus describes it: "The hold is appropriated to the Slaves and is divided into two apartments. The after hold will carry about 80 women, and the other about 100 men. On either side were two platforms running the whole length, one raised a few inches, and the other about half way up to the deck. They were about 5 1-2 or 6 feet deep. On these they lie, as close as they can stow away."



FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD'S SLAVE PRISON.

This establishment is in Alexandria. It is a handsome three story brick house, neatly painted, with green blinds, and the sign, FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD over the door. It has attached to it a large yard, perhaps 200 feet square, enclosed by a high close board fence neatly whitewashed, and filled with various small buildings. Mr. Leavitt visited it in 1834. One of the partners lives in New-Orleans, and the other in Alexandria. The latter, says Mr. L. "politely invited us to go and see the Slaves. We were first taken out into a paved yard, 40 or 50 feet square, with a very high brick wall and about half of it covered with a roof. This yard is appropriated to the men. He ordered the men to be called out from the cellar where they sleep, and they soon came up, to the number of 50 or 60, and ranged themselves irregularly before us. While they were standing, he ordered the girls to be called out, when the door opened, and about 50 women and small children came in. They were all clothed decently in coarse but apparently comfortable garments. Some three or four had children, so young that they brought them in their arms; and I thought I saw in the faces of these mothers some indications of irrepressible feeling. It seemed to me that they hugged their little ones more closely, and that a cold perspiration stood on their foreheads, and I thought I saw tears too. There were in all about 28 children under 10 years of age."

The standing advertisement of this house in the Washington papers is as follows:—

"CASH FOR 400 NEGROES."

"Including both sexes, from 12 to 25 years of age. Persons having likely servants to dispose of, will find it to their interest to give us a call, as we will give higher prices in cash than any other purchaser who is now, or may hereafter come into this market."

"FRANKLIN & ARMFIELD."

People of the United States, Congress alone possess the constitutional power to legislate for the District of Columbia; yet one hundred and sixty-three of your representatives are striving to perpetuate in the Capital of your Republic this system of robbery, cruelty and despotism. *House of Representatives, 8th February* 1836.—Certain petitions and resolutions respecting the Abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia were referred to a Select Committee with instructions to report, "THAT IN THE OPINION OF THIS HOUSE CONGRESS OUGHT NOT IN ANY WAY TO INTERFERE WITH SLAVERY IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA." Yeas 163—Nays 47.

YEAS.

MAINE. *Fairfield, Hall, Jarvis, Mason, Parks, Smith.* NEW HAMPSHIRE. *Bean, Burns, Cushman, Pierce, Weeks.* CONNECTICUT. *Haley.* *Ingham, Judson, Phelps, Toucey.* NEW YORK. *Barton, Bockee, Bovee, Brown, Cambreleng, Chapin, Cramer, Doubleday, Efner, Farlin, Fuller, Gillet, Huntington, Lansing, Lee, Leonard, McKeon, Mann, Jr., Mason, Moore, Page, Reynolds, Seymour, Sickles, Taylor, Turrell, Vanderpoel, Wardwell.* NEW JERSEY. *Dickerson, Schenck, Shinn.* PENNSYLVANIA. *Anthony, Ash, Beaumont, Fry, Jr., Galbraith, Henderson, Hubley, Klingensmith, Laporte, Logan, Mann, Miller, Muhlenberg, Sutherland, Wagener.* MARYLAND. *Howard, Jenifer, McKim, Pearce, Steele, Thomas, Washington.* VIRGINIA. *Beale, Bouldin, Claiborne, Coles, Craig, Dromgoole, Garland, Hopkins, Johnson, Loyall, McComas, Mason, Mercer, Morgan, Patton, Roane, Robertson, Taliaferro.* N. CAROLINA. *Bynum, Connor, Deberry, Graham, Hawkins, McKay, Montgomery, Pettigrew, Rencher, Shepard, Shepperd, Williams.* S. CAROLINA. *Manning, Pinckney, Rogers.* GEORGIA. *Coffee, Grantland, Haynes, Owens, Towne, Cleveland.* *Holsey.* ALABAMA. *Chapman, Lawler, Lyon, Martin.* MISSISSIPPI. *Claiborne.* LOUISIANA. *Garland, Johnson, Ripley.* TENNESSEE. *Bell, Bunch, Barter, Dunlap, Forrester, Huntsman, Johnson, Lea, Maury, Shields, Standifer.* KENTUCKY. *Allen, Boyd, Calhoon, Chambers, French, Graves, Hardin, Harlan, Hawes, Johnson, Underwood, White, Williams.* OHIO. *Chaney, Hamer, Howell, Jones, Kennon, Kilgore, McLene, Patterson, Spangler, Storer, Thompson.* INDIANA. *Boon, Carr, Davis, Hannegan, Kinnard, Lane.* ILLINOIS. *Casey, May, Reynolds.* MISSOURI. *Ashley, Harrison.*

NAYS.

MAINE. *Bailey, Evans.* VERMONT. *Allen, Everett, Janes.* MASSACHUSETTS. *Adams, Borden, Briggs, Calhoun, Cushing, Hoar, Jackson, Lawrence, Lincoln, Phillips, Reed.* RHODE ISLAND. *Pearce, Sprague, Jr.* NEW YORK. *Childs, Fuller, Granger, Hard, Hazeltine, Hunt, Lay, Love, Russell.* NEW JERSEY. *Parker.* PENNSYLVANIA. *Banks, Chambers, Clark, Darlington, Denny, Heister, Jr., Ingersoll, McKennan, Morris, Potts.* OHIO. *Bond, Corwin, Crane, Mason, Sloane, Vinton, Webster, Whittlesey.* INDIANA. *McCarty.*

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