

“To Fit you All for Freedom”: Jamaican Planters, Afro-Jamaican Mothers and the Struggle to Control Afro-Jamaican Children during Apprenticeship, 1833–40

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In 1837, one year before apprenticeship ended on the island of Jamaica, ten women from Lansquinet Estate in the parish of St Ann refused to carry their children into the fields with them because it was raining. Staying in their huts until the rain stopped, the women came to the fields after breakfast with their children in tow. Although Lansquinet managers allowed mothers to work with their children tied to their backs, their tardiness guaranteed them an appearance before Special Magistrate Pryce. Unlike his more sympathetic peers, Pryce sentenced the ten women to work six Saturdays of extra labor in the fields. They refused, stating that their provision grounds were more than six miles away. Since Lansquinet managers deprived them of their additional salt-fish allowance, the women argued, they needed that time to work their grounds for extra provisions. Incensed by their audacity, Pryce sent the women to the St Ann Workhouse where they worked in chains and wore iron collars in the penal gang with their children tied to their backs. On their return to Lansquinet, Pryce ordered “a strong body of police be sent on the estate, where ‘a barrack was prepared for them’ to quell, we presume . . . a rebellion among the nursing mothers”.¹

Although it is unknown whether the women on Lansquinet succeeded in obtaining the goals of their resistance, women throughout the island significantly affected the workings of their estates. Just two months after apprenticeship began in Jamaica, many planters felt sugar production in the parish of St James would end if the women’s acts of passive resistance were not stopped.² One year later, Governor Sligo received a report from Special Magistrate J. Kennet Dawson concerning the district of Manchioneal in the parish of St Thomas in the East. According to Dawson, “the conduct of the women retards greatly the well-doing of the estates, being extremely turbulent, obstinate, and insolent”.³ Other women threatened the bookkeepers and estate managers whom they blamed for the changes taking place on their estates. On Albany Estate in Westmoreland, estate managers summoned the police in August of 1834 to reason with the female apprentices who “wanted to commit murder. . . on the bookkeeper”.⁴

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Although apprenticeship gave freedom to their children, female apprentices in Jamaica clearly resented the actions of those in authority on their estates whom they blamed for the changes they experienced. These women, who once felt pressure and coercion from above to have more children, now saw the disregard their owners and overseers had for the lives they created. While some women agreed to work extra hours for the care and support of their children, others refused to allow the system to attach a price to the freedom of their children. As planters made it clear that free Afro-Jamaican children were unwanted entities on their estates, the actions of their female apprentices showed their owners that they valued their position as mothers and their children's freedom above anything in the world.

Children's experiences under apprenticeship have long been neglected by historians, despite new trends developing in the field of childhood and family studies with the study of slave childhood.⁵ These studies, however, failed to discuss how children and their families made the difficult transition from slavery to freedom.⁶ In fact, the post-emancipation Caribbean is a relatively new field of inquiry for Caribbeanists.⁷ While early studies focused primarily on the political or economic aspects of emancipation in the Caribbean, it is only recently that Caribbeanists have begun to examine the politics of emancipation from the perspective of the apprentices themselves.⁸ Yet, these studies fail to address how ideas of freedom specifically related to the family or childhood. Without delving specifically into how Afro-Jamaicans made this difficult transition from slavery to freedom, specifically how this transition affected their everyday lives, one cannot fully understand the legacies of slavery or emancipation. No Caribbeanist to date has undertaken such an examination until now. While this article will only begin that process of understanding, it is an important first step in the study of freedom and citizenship in the post-emancipation Caribbean.⁹

With apprenticeship, planters and their adult laborers negotiated the contours of the emerging post-emancipation civil and political economy between 1833 and 1840. The most important site of these negotiations was the family, specifically the free children who suddenly enjoyed full freedom. While these negotiations took place throughout the British Caribbean, Jamaica's experience serves as an excellent case study.¹⁰ While scholars such as Hilary Beckles and Jennifer Morgan have argued that slavery was a gendered institution, dominated at every turn by considerations of profit as well as reproduction and natural increase, I argue that the politics of emancipation were as well.¹¹ Despite intense pressure from planters, most Afro-Jamaican mothers insisted on making their own fertility choices, deciding their children's fate and bearing the costs of their children's care. With apprenticeship, planters struggled to coexist with a system that threatened economic ruin, while their apprentices realized their ability to negotiate the freedom of their children. This transition to freedom not only changed the nature of Afro-Jamaican family life and childhood, but it redefined the relationship between black women, their employers and the Jamaican state.

The Problem

British Caribbean planters long strategized ways to maximize both the productive and reproductive capacities of enslaved laborers. Before 1807, planters not only imported more Africans but also became more selective in exactly who they purchased, strategically buying more women and youths who they deemed to be the most important investments. Furthermore, planters throughout the British Caribbean shifted their attentions to the problem of natural increase on their estates.¹² This period, known as amelioration,

witnessed the implementation of a series of ameliorative programs devised at improving the living conditions of the slaves and providing incentives for natural increase. As a result, children's lives gradually improved in medical, social and quantitative terms.¹³ Once the abolition of slavery moved from threat to reality, planter opinion shifted again. By 1815, planters eventually impressed English and Christian values on their estates' slave children in an effort to socialize them into laborers who would be more manageable in the future.

By 1833, planters had no choice but to accept the inevitability of emancipation. That year, Parliament passed a law that abolished slavery in all British dominions.¹⁴ Rather than give immediate freedom to the slave community, parliamentarians created a six-year apprenticeship period "in order to fit you all for freedom".¹⁵ Beginning on 1 August 1834, newly apprenticed slaves throughout the British Caribbean worked for wages while being housed, clothed and fed by their estates. All children under the age of six were freed and became the complete responsibility of their parents. Special Magistrates presided over the system and heard complaints from both slaves and planters as a means of ensuring fairness and a smooth transition. Although the law prohibited the flogging of females, Jamaica installed treadmills in each public workhouse or prison as the preferred form of punishment.¹⁶ Lastly, England granted £20 million sterling as compensation to be divided among her colonies for the planters who filed by the deadline.¹⁷ Skeptical that this system would work, many planters asked: "What is to become of the revenue of Jamaica?"¹⁸

Jamaican planters immediately attacked the problem by reorganizing and reinforcing the labor on their estates in an effort to extract as much labor as possible from their apprentices before the end of apprenticeship. Young children bore the brunt of their profit maximization schemes. All children six years old and above continued laboring in the fields and great houses from sunup to sundown. That way, "not an acre of land, not a sugar cane, not a labouring slave will be taken away from the owners".¹⁹ Before apprenticeship, natural decrease motivated planters to give children less laborious assignments with the hopes that they would survive into their adulthood and continue working on their estates. With full abolition on the horizon, many of these children would never enter the first gang in their adulthood. Consequently, overseers now had an incentive to work apprenticed children just as hard as adults, shortening their already brief childhood in the process.

The last vestiges of amelioration slipped away as female apprentices with six or more children returned to the fields. When Rebecca Stewart, a mother of nine on Chester Vale Estate in Port Royal, returned to the fields after a two-year hiatus, she lost her extra allowances of salt.²⁰ In St James, Worcester Estate managers sent previously exempt Mary and Diana Hall back to the first gang, but Elenor Hall joined the second gang as she had an aged mother and six young children under her care.²¹ Although some planters were more lenient in their placements of these women, the fact that women previously exempted from field labor returned to the fields shows the full extent to the changes in planter opinion towards motherhood and childhood that took place with apprenticeship. Under slavery, labor exemptions not only motivated women to have more children, but these exemptions rewarded those women who were able to keep their children alive. Under apprenticeship, natural increase was no longer an issue. Planters did not want to offer any sort of incentive for fertility, and they certainly could not afford to reward it.

Reorganization efforts stretched to the estate hospitals as well, as planters tried to ensure the profitability of their estates. As many plantation hospitals stopped providing food for those receiving medical care, others downsized their staff in order to put more laborers in the fields.²² Some hospitals closed entirely, only to become estate prisons.²³ Although

these changes affected everyone on the estate, other modifications specifically affected pregnant women and children. By law, physicians no longer provided medical care and attention to children not bound to the estates.²⁴ Therefore, rather than waste medical supplies and treatment on children who would never benefit the estate, medical care disappeared for many children below the age of six. Prenatal care ended as well, sending a message to pregnant women as to how the birth of their child would be received. Motherhood was no longer a welcomed visitor to the island.

Slave children working in the Great House or under the tutelage of tradesmen and skilled slaves who received a higher standard of living under amelioration, joined the second or first gangs as apprentices. In 1835, Special Magistrates conducted an inquest on the suicide of a cattleman on an unknown estate in Jamaica. Since apprenticeship began, the cattleman's owner reassigned the boys who were assisting him with the cattle to the fields. As a result, the cattleman was unable to manage the cattle alone and was flogged by his overseer for negligence. Soon after, the cattleman committed suicide. Although his owner felt that he was putting the boys to better use in the fields, he now had to find an apprentice to manage the estate's cattle. As young domestics began cutting cane and picking coffee for the first time in their lives, children preparing for a life as tradesmen and skilled workers left their tools and livestock duties behind for more menial tasks in the fields where they would be more profitable.²⁵

Although apprenticed children were not required to work the 12-hour days they did as slaves, they were now responsible for their own food and water. In their labor reorganization efforts, planters discontinued the usage of field cooks and water carriers on their estates. These former slaves joined the first and second gangs in the fields.²⁶ While amelioration provided extra food or special morning meals for slave children, estate managers discontinued these extra allowances and expected apprenticed children to provide and cook their own food during their short lunch breaks. Some planters retaliated against the labor restrictions set in place by expecting their laborers to work without breaks for lunch and water. At Latium Estate in St James, bookkeeper Benjamin M'Mahon witnessed a gang of young boys and girls from nine to 12 years of age working in the fields from "dawn of day till dark at night, without giving them time to eat a single meal; and this they were obliged to do in all weathers. . .returning at night, with cold and hunger".²⁷ Other planters allowed lunch breaks but restricted their apprentices from leaving the fields to get water when needed.²⁸

As planters reorganized the labor on their estates, they habitually tried to convince their laborers to bind their free children as apprentices to their estates.²⁹ Much to their frustration, most laborers refused. In October of 1834, just two months after apprenticeship began, planters desperately petitioned the Assembly "to oblige negro apprentices, who are parents of children under six years of age, to bind them as apprentices".³⁰ Although planters pleaded with the Assembly to amend the law in their favor, no amendment came.

Jamaican planters explained apprentices' refusal to bind their children to their estates in a variety of ways. "I think it is only natural that they should wish them to remain as they are", planter William Tharpe told the Jamaican Assembly in 1834.³¹ Unable to accept that their apprentices preferred to support their children themselves rather than turn their children's care over to the estate, planters convinced themselves that there was a secret underground agency persuading the apprentices not to bind their free children to the estate.³² Although no one could provide proof, many planters pointed fingers at the clergymen ministering on their estates.³³ In reality, aside from protecting their children

from a life of labor, apprentices fought for a negotiated freedom for their children, as well as the integrity of the Afro-Jamaican family. As they increasingly realized the importance their owners and overseers placed on the economic possibilities childhood presented to them, the island's former slaves understood that they held the upper hand in this situation.³⁴ Not only did planters need children on their estates to ensure a labor force after apprenticeship, but planters also needed parental permission in order to bind those children to their estates.

As Jamaican planters lamented the economic and political pressures beset by the new labor restrictions put into place under apprenticeship, only nine Afro-Jamaican children below the age of six became apprentices between 1834 and 1838.³⁵ Meanwhile, apprenticeship complicated the nature of childhood as it existed on the island. Under slavery, children rapidly shifted from childhood to adulthood when they left the plantation nurseries for the fields. Once children below the age of six became free in 1834, their childhood had an opportunity to continue without planter interference. These children would no longer grow to be laborers, tradesmen or "breeding wenches". Furthermore, children were no longer born into a state of slavery. Instead, they were born free. For children between the ages of six and 15, however, their "childhood" suffered even more under apprenticeship. Thrust into an accelerated adulthood in terms of labor expectations, these children were expected to work at an even greater capacity than they did as slaves.

As a result, the nature of childhood became age specific. While children below the age of six gained the freedom to be children, children between the ages of six and 15 abruptly became adults. Children below the age of six, suddenly became worthless as planters lost future laborers. As slaves, these children began fulfilling their investment potential once they joined the children's gangs at the age of five. Under apprenticeship, planters now had children on their estates who would never join the workforce. Furthermore, any natural increase of the apprenticed population was of no benefit to Jamaican planters, because all children born on or after 1 August 1834 were free.³⁶ The planters who once valued motherhood and nurturing above all else, suddenly discouraged pregnancy among their female apprentices. While motherhood served its purpose under amelioration, planters now valued profits more. As older slaves died, a new generation of laborers would not replace them. Suddenly, the struggle against infant and child mortality and low fertility was a moot issue. What became a serious issue, was the presence of these free children on Jamaica's estates.

The Struggle

It was no secret that many planters felt their apprentices over-indulged the free children on their estates. Jamaican missionary Hope Masterton Waddell noted that some apprentices regarded their children as the "King's free children", considering them to be superior in status, above work and beyond punishment.³⁷ Consequently, many planters argued that their slave villages were overrun with idle children, whose freedom turned them into lazy and troublesome vagrants.³⁸ As they worked to extract as much labor as possible from the children and adults apprenticed to their estates, these free children became a threat to the civil and political economy of the island. Persuading parents to bind their children to the estates was proving to be unsuccessful, and planters began to view these children as a threat to their very livelihoods.

Since Parliament prohibited planters from apprenticing free children to their estates without their mothers' permission, free children lived "in a certain degree at the expense of the estate".³⁹ On Bounty Hall Estate in St James, bookkeepers noted in 1837 that the estate financially supported 134 free children at a rate £5 currency per annum.⁴⁰ Apprenticeship law, however, did not require planters to feed, clothe or house these free children.⁴¹ Furthermore, if parents were unable to feed or clothe them, "they became dependent on their old masters, they would come under the law of the apprenticeship, and have to work out their time".⁴² In other words, any free child who did not receive sufficient food and clothing from their parents could become an indentured laborer until his or her twenty-first birthday.⁴³ Although apprenticeship was scheduled to last for a period of six years, the law said nothing about indentured servitude.

Meanwhile, the Jamaican Assembly tried to appease their constituents with the passage of a bill allowing for the importation of field laborers and mechanics from Europe in November of 1834.⁴⁴ Although this in no way duplicated the volume imported during the slave trade, some planters took advantage of this new bill. While archival sources do not indicate the exact number of European laborers brought into Jamaica during this time, these sources do suggest that planters imported a significant number of children. In 1837, Cape Clear Estate in St Mary had nine such indentured servants, with six of them being 15 years old and younger.⁴⁵ On Belmore Castle in Trelawney that same year, a little over half of the 44 mechanics and field laborers who recently arrived from Liverpool were children.⁴⁶ While we do not know exactly how many indentured children came into Jamaica during the apprenticeship period, their presence suggests that some planters still regarded children as an investment to their properties. By investing their money in more children than adults, the owners of Cape Clear Estate and Belmore Castle guaranteed themselves laborers well acclimated to field labor in their adulthood. As young white indentured laborers from England and Europe began joining Jamaican apprentices in the fields, parents increasingly realized that while the apprenticeship of these children may have been illegal, their indentureship was perfectly legal in the eyes of the law.

As a means of protecting their free children from this economic loophole, some parents moved them off their estates and away from planter influence either to nearby estates or properties as far as the other side of the island. On John Salmon's Jamaican properties, "the greater part...are off the property staying here and there with their friends as the parents say".⁴⁷ While the apprentices on Salmon's properties chose to send their free children elsewhere, some planters considered this option as well. When John W. Cooper inspected Simon Taylor's properties in the parish of St Thomas in the East in 1835, he noted that Burrowfield Pen should send the majority of the holding's free children to neighboring Lysson's Estate as "much alteration is required here if it is decided to continue in its present state".⁴⁸ Although Cooper reported that the pen's apprentices were "very mismanaged", his recommendation to transfer Burrowfield's children to Lysson's Estate is very telling.⁴⁹ On a small pen like Burrowfield, overseers needed every hand working in the fields in order to maintain their pre-apprenticeship profits. Cooper felt that free children drained the pen's resources, but an estate the size of Lysson's could afford to support the children better than Burrowfield. On either property, however, the children were still a burden. Cooper's suggestion merely tried to alleviate that burden somewhat by delegating responsibility from a small, struggling pen to another, more profitable estate.

Some apprentices mistrusted planters, while others went so far as to state that they would rather see their children dead than apprentice them to their estate.⁵⁰ In their

inspections of the apprentices on several Jamaican estates in 1838, Thomas A. Thome and Horace Kimball noted that no laborer was below the age of six. “None of them will work for hire, or in any way put themselves under his control”, they wrote, “as the parents fear there is some plot laid for making them apprentices, and through that process reducing them to slavery.”⁵¹

Planters, now denied access to a major portion of the Afro-Jamaican workforce, also reckoned with another calamity: parliamentary restrictions on the number of hours apprentices could work each day and each week. Under apprenticeship, Parliament limited the time Jamaica’s laborers spent in the fields to 40 hours per week at a maximum of nine hours per day.⁵² Although this significantly reduced the 12 hours that the apprentices averaged a day as slaves, planters felt the pressure of falling profits. Fewer hours in the fields yielded smaller sugar and coffee shipments, and planters feared an apprenticeship-induced bankruptcy.

In response to falling profits and desperate to keep workers in the fields, planters again used children as leverage in their bid to extract maximum profits. Some planters exploited apprenticed mothers by offering to support children whose mothers would consent to extra labor. On Lysson’s Estate in St Thomas in the East, estate managers sustained clothing and food allowances for the estate’s free children so long as their parents supplied “an equivalent portion of extra labor”.⁵³ Other estates offered their laborers the same option, hoping that the extra labor would aid in raising their profits. Planter Thomas McCornack happily reported to the Jamaican Assembly in 1834 that his slaves worked 45 hours each week instead of 40, while George Gordon’s apprentices continued working the same hours they did as slaves during harvest.⁵⁴

Other planters offered medical care to free children in an effort to entice their laborers to work extra hours on the estate. Using expensive medical supplies on children who would never work on the estate was simply a waste of money. Yet, extra labor from the estate’s apprentices was a way to justify the expense and it contributed to the estate’s profitability. On Rio-Magno Estate in St Catherine, the former slaves of the estate worked together to ensure medical care for every free child by beginning work an hour earlier each day.⁵⁵ Other planters could not justify the expense. On Llanrumney Estate in St Mary, planters provided herrings and cloth to the free children on the estate, but barred them from the plantation hospital no matter how long their parents labored in the fields.⁵⁶

Although it is difficult to measure the value the slave community placed on their children before apprenticeship, their willingness to work extra hours without pay adds insight. As apprentices on Rio Magno Estate banded together to protect the children of the estate from sickness and death, their actions illustrate the importance that the apprentice community placed on freedom and childhood. Under slavery, slaves knew that their children faced a life of hard labor and harsh punishment, and would grow up to be slaves. These children were the first generation to experience freedom, and that freedom gave them opportunity to live as children rather than as chattels. Working extra labor ensured that these children received the food and care they needed in order to experience that future to its fullest. Understanding this, planters reassigned the value they placed on these free children from burden to bargaining chip. If planters could not use these children as apprentices, they would use them as an incentive to increase the productivity of those apprentices already working in the fields.

As planters re-evaluated the problem of childhood, pregnancy and pre-natal care posed another problem to the economic viability of the labor force. Elizabeth Nimble,

apprenticed to Resource Estate in Port Royal, continued working into her eighth month of pregnancy. Now that Resource Estate's slaves were apprentices and their unborn children were burdens, "Busha make woman with Child work in the field till they deliver along with the Great Gang and two weeks after delivery make them turn out to the field".⁵⁷ Eliza Smith, an apprentice on Mount Pleasant Estate in St Elizabeth, had a similar experience. While working alongside the first gang in August of 1834, Eliza gave birth to a stillborn child in her seventh month of pregnancy.⁵⁸ Instead of receiving the customary month off from labor after giving birth, Eliza returned to the fields in just two short weeks.⁵⁹ As if apprenticeship turned back the hands of time, planters once again believed that pregnancy reduced productivity on Jamaican estates. Pregnancy made their work slow, or kept them out of the fields after bouts of morning sickness or miscarriage. Although there is no evidence that planters tried to discourage their female apprentices from becoming pregnant, natural increase was no longer profitable. Once again, planters felt it more rational to use their female laborers to their full potential in the fields. Only this time, these women were not easily replaceable commodities as they were before the abolition of the slave trade.

Other overseers severely punished pregnant women if their work was slow in order to send a message to slave women that motherhood and pregnancy was not an option for them under apprenticeship. In 1835, when Sarah Murdoch's morning sickness affected her field duties on London Ridge Estate, she received 14 days' hard labor and time on the treadmill. On her fourth day in the workhouse, Sarah prematurely gave birth to a stillborn child. Unable to find someone to bury the child, Sarah performed the burial herself on the workhouse grounds. Although an extreme case, Sarah's experiences show the complete disregard the white community held for her unborn child. Under slavery, workhouse administrators would have buried the child at the expense of Sarah's owners. That was now Sarah's responsibility.⁶⁰

While planters attempted to separate production and reproduction, Afro-Jamaican female apprentices aggressively defended their dual identities as workers and mothers by tying their children to their backs and taking them into the fields. As Special Magistrates noted the closings of plantation nurseries on many estates, they discovered "the intemperate conduct of the overseers" who refused their female apprentices the necessary time to breastfeed their children.⁶¹ Apprentice James Williams remembered one overseer who "say the children free, and the law don't allow no time to take care of them; it is only the good will of the driver that ever let woman suckle the children".⁶² Some planters compromised by allowing their female apprentices to take turns wet-nursing all of the children at once.⁶³ Others expected nursing mothers to make other arrangements for their infants, as "they do not do one third of the work of the others".⁶⁴ Some women, like the slave women on Rio Magno Estate in St Catherine, received a few extra hours in the morning to attend to their children before coming to the fields.⁶⁵ If some women left the fields during the day to feed their children, like Margaret McDonald of Berwick Estate in St George, they were punished.⁶⁶ As planters forced their female apprentices to work as much as possible, they reinforced the idea that the free children on their estates were only a burden.

Many women resisted such policies. Ann Johnstone, an apprentice on Recess Plantation in St Thomas in the Vale, was one such woman. When Ann came to the fields one morning with her 11-month-old tied to her back, estate manager Mr Gyles ordered her to take the child home. Ann refused, stating that there was no one in her hut to mind the child.

Gyles then ordered her to turn her baby over to an old woman named Lettice. Objecting to the responsibility put before her, Lettice informed both Gyles and Ann that she was not able to mind herself let alone an 11-month-old child. Frustrated with the situation and the presence of this child, Gyles told Lettice “if [she] would not mind the child, she might throw it in the pasture”. Gyles then ordered the driver to take Ann’s baby to Lettice if she returned to the field with the child strapped to her back. Despite her orders, Ann returned to the field with her child, who was immediately taken to Lettice. Lettice refused to mind the baby, and put it in the pasture where it stayed until nightfall. That evening, Ann collected her child and returned to the fields the next day with her child tied to her back. This time, Ann’s child was not taken to Lettice. Instead, Ann was allowed to keep her child with her. Although it is unknown whether the driver overlooked Ann’s child or Gyles thought it best not to push the issue with Ann any further, Ann continued to work in the fields with her child tied to her back.⁶⁷

Some planters and overseers were much more accommodating than Gyles. In November of 1836, Stephen Hannaford, owner of several properties in the parish of St Dorothy, petitioned the Jamaican Assembly for economic support for an orphaned infant on Top Hill Estate. For months Hannaford supported the infant after the child’s mother, an apprentice named Dolly, died. While procuring a wet nurse for the infant, he repeatedly asked the child’s reputed father, head cattleman on Hannaford’s Kelly Estate, to take the baby. The father refused, so Hannaford approached Dolly’s remaining family. They too refused, and Hannaford turned to the St Dorothy Special Magistrate for permission to take the child to a caretaker. That request denied, Hannaford appealed to the Assembly to enact a law “which would compel a father to support his reputed children”. The Assembly refused, knowing such law would set a devastating precedent in motion that would require all fathers to support their illegitimate children, no matter their color. Archival sources do not indicate what ultimately became of Dolly’s infant.⁶⁸

Although Hannaford’s case was a rare one in that no other planter appealed to the Assembly for financial assistance in supporting the free children on their estates, it adds insight to the changing nature of childhood under apprenticeship. While the law stipulated that Hannaford could indenture Dolly’s infant until his or her twenty-first year, he did not. To do so would mean that he still had to support an infant who would not be of workable age until 1842. Hannaford needed laborers, not investments, in 1836. Dolly’s orphan was a risky investment at that, since the infant’s father and family refused to offer their support. As Hannaford pleaded for governmental aid to ease the financial burden this infant presented, he sought to stop this from happening to others in his position in the future. Yet, while Hannaford desperately tried to remove the child from his care, he did not just stand aside and let the child die. Even though there would have been no penalty according to the law, Hannaford was trying to do the right thing despite his frustration. Hannaford’s aggravation over the burden this infant brought to his estate’s economic standing during apprenticeship is representative of how other planters felt with the changes taking place on the island and in the British Caribbean as a whole.

Although Hannaford’s perception of Dolly’s infant as a burden is to be expected, the reaction that came from the child’s kin shows a change taking place in the value of children in the apprentice community as well. No one was willing to support Dolly’s child. According to apprenticeship laws, free children became the responsibility of their parents. Yet, the infant’s reputed father was not willing to add another mouth to feed to his household. His refusal shows that he too felt Dolly’s infant would be a burden.

Furthermore, although Dolly may have worked hard to provide for her child, her family did not feel any responsibility towards the infant at all. By refusing to take Dolly's child, the baby's extended kin forced Hannaford to choose between his profits and his paternalism. In the end, after the family disavowed the orphan, Hannaford recognized Dolly's infant as a child that was worth saving during a time when his peers refused to do so.⁶⁹

Although apprenticeship meant freedom for many Afro-Jamaican children, their living conditions often dramatically worsened in the proto-emancipation era. While the ameliorative policies passed before 1834 improved their lives in social, medical and quantitative terms, apprenticeship transported their quality of life back to early eighteenth-century standards overnight. Pregnancy and motherhood were no longer rewarded, but discouraged. Free children were no longer investments, but useless burdens to the estates' faltering profitability. Consequently, planters sent a strong message to Afro-Jamaican mothers: there is no room for your children here. Even as their right to nurture was challenged, Afro-Jamaican women challenged authority through significant acts of resistance, effectively sending their own message to the state. While their fates were sealed, apprenticeship opened the door for the island's free Afro-Jamaican children. Yet, just as Afro-Jamaican women began to win the fight and secure the freedom of their children and their right to nurture, the state soon issued another set of challenges.

Education and Freedom

As Jamaican planters realized that the free children on their estates were useless to the country's economic profitability during the apprenticeship period, they intensified their efforts at child socialization in order to make these children useful after this period ended. Many whites were of the opinion that apprentices "took too much care of their children, going to the extreme of over indulgence".⁷⁰ As a result, free children "are bred up in absolute idleness".⁷¹ Parliament likewise believed that the future economic prosperity of the island—and a smooth transition from slavery to freedom—depended on educating and socializing Afro-Jamaican children.

As early as 1810, planters responded to nineteenth-century threats against slavery by educating slave children for their roles as free workers. Therefore, an island that was once against the religious conversion of the slave population reluctantly accepted missionaries of all denominations in the hopes that they would aid them in their efforts at making slave children loyal and controllable commodities.⁷² Once abolitionists succeeded in their fight against slavery and planters found themselves supporting the free children on their plantations, estate managers and bookkeepers asked for the clergy's help. Echoing past sentiments that "increased knowledge and civilization [could] enlarge their ideas, improve their morals and manners. . . and render them good subjects and fellow citizens admitted to respectability of character", Parliament extended Jamaica the funds necessary to increase their educational efforts of the island's children.⁷³ As Parliament allocated £25,000 sterling for education in the colonies, with more promised when needed, Jamaica built more schools and applied to London for more instructors.⁷⁴

Meanwhile, parish vestries came forward with petitions calling for increased legislation and financial assistance to support the increased education efforts of the island. The parish of Portland, was alarmed "at the portentous aspect which the affecting state of these children bear on the future well-being of the island; no longer subject to the commands

of their former masters. . . free from every controlling power”.⁷⁵ The Westmoreland vestry argued that the future cultivation of the island depended mainly on “the increased civilization” of these children.⁷⁶

As public opinion from London and Jamaica pushed for the education of free children, the legislature felt pressure from Governor Sligo to make education more accessible. Although the Jamaican Assembly complained about the inadequacy of education on the island to the House of Commons in 1836, Governor Sligo angrily noted in a speech before the Jamaican Assembly that same year that they “*have taken no steps to make it available*”.⁷⁷ Unless these children received an education, Jamaica’s apprentices would continue to raise their children in idleness.

Convinced that the religious socialization and basic education of free children were key factors to ensure the smooth transition from apprenticeship to full emancipation, planters intensified their efforts at socially conditioning the children of the island. While continuing to impress ideas of morality, honor and loyalty, the clergy could link ideas of “disgrace and irreligion to the disobedient and the sluggard”.⁷⁸ In other words, religious education could be used to enforce the idea that idleness was a sin. Blaming parental over-indulgence and immoral influence for this idleness, planters felt that it was more important than ever to remove free children from their parents’ control.

As missionaries and teachers impressed English customs and beliefs on their young students, estate schools allowed planters to take advantage of a loophole in apprenticeship law. On Hopeton and Lenox Estates, free children of apprentices performed light tasks around the estates.⁷⁹ Therefore, educating free children not only ensured a more controllable and “civilized” population after emancipation, but education enabled planters to put free children to use on the estate performing duties that more able-bodied apprentices need not perform. Although free children were still a burden to the estate, their presence there was a little more justified than before. Furthermore, since the majority of the children being educated on the island were free, planters assigned less importance to the education of children between the ages of six and 15. This not only shows that planters expected these children to work in the same capacity as the adults on their estates, it also suggests that some planters considered even a six-year-old child to be an adult after 1834.

Jamaican proprietor William Miller offered to pay his apprentices for any extra time they might work if they placed their children in school.⁸⁰ Others favored educating their child apprentices, but only if work did not suffer on their estates. Estate manager John Salmon suggested that employer James George Crabbe create a schedule on his estates, where “so many hours daily be given to instruction & so many to labor” to guarantee that the children still appeared in the fields but only after they received the education they needed.⁸¹ Just as they did with food and medical care, planters used education as a bargaining chip with their apprentices.

The largest incentive was the care and support that these children received while they were in school. For mothers and parents who could not support their children to the extent that they were maintained under slavery, education was a viable solution to the problem of childcare. Although apprentices worked extra hours in the fields, many could not find the time to work their provision grounds, make clothing and take care of their children. Furthermore, plantation nurseries ceased to exist. Although some women brought their children to the fields with them, they were punished if their work was slow or they attended their children. Other women knew bringing their children with them to the fields would result in a severe punishment. Schools served as a surrogate nursery of sorts, creating

a suitable environment where women could place their children and still fulfill their labor and household duties.

Despite growing enthusiasm among both planters and mothers for island schools, substantial obstacles remained. In 1838, C.J. Latrobe, at the behest of the House of Commons, began investigating the state of education on the island. After attending and inspecting each school on the island and detailing the number of students, administration costs and the amount of government aid each school received, Latrobe offered another detailed report on the many difficulties planters faced in building schools, motivating the slaves and providing educators throughout the island's parishes. According to Latrobe, planters found it hard to find both land and workers available to build schools in rural and urban areas. Not only did the island experience a shortage of artisans and skilled laborers after apprenticeship, the majority of Jamaica's land was used for sugar and coffee. Planters were reluctant to sacrifice crops to build schools during this time of falling profits.

Furthermore, despite island-wide efforts to educate more children, Latrobe noted a lack of organization on the part of missionaries and the Jamaican Assembly to make education more accessible. Although parish and church schools remained open after apprenticeship, "there exists a great diversity of opinion in the island as to the probable success that many attend" the estate and plantation schools of the island. Furthermore, three-quarters of those in attendance were the free children of apprentices. Child apprentices attended in low numbers and received "the scantiest proportion of instruction", either out of a lack of encouragement or out of a lack of time. In other words, education was not an option for these children, who were expected to work in the fields in the same capacity as the adults. Indeed, as planters denied children between the ages of six and 15 the same educational opportunities as the children not working on their estates, planters made it clear that they now viewed these young apprentices as adults. Therefore, Jamaica's free children received the most benefit from the island's schools.⁸²

Despite the problems outlined by Latrobe, the number of free children in Jamaican schools grew. In 1834, only 8,321 free children attended school.⁸³ Four years later, planters reported 38,754 of the total 38,899 free children on the island in attendance.⁸⁴ Therefore, apprenticeship created an opportunity for a sharp increase in the education of plantation children. Education also created an opportunity for many planters to win the struggle against who would control Afro-Jamaican children.

Although women tried to keep their children away from English influence, the apprenticeship system actually worked against their efforts at protecting their children's freedom by creating a situation that forced women to place their children in school where they received the care and support they needed. As a result, free children progressed through their childhood in an environment that became increasingly more English. While apprenticeship freed children below the age of six, it established an environment that enabled the continuation of the outside influence and manipulation that challenged the stability of those beliefs and traditions these children retained from their parents and kinship groups as slaves. Jamaican children grew to adulthood influenced by both English and African cultural traditions and beliefs.⁸⁵ What developed was the creation of a uniquely Jamaican cultural identity.

Conclusions

Between 1833 and 1840, Jamaican planters and Afro-Jamaican mothers struggled to define the meaning of freedom in the emerging post-emancipation civil and political economy.

As apprenticeship changed the nature of childhood in Jamaica, children shifted from investment to liability overnight. As planters desperately tried to extract as much labor as possible out of their apprentices, both sides faced numerous challenges in the struggle over who would ultimately control the status and freedom of the island's free Afro-Jamaican children. Yet, just as planters devalued the children on their estates and used them as bargaining chips, the abolition of slavery in Jamaica enables us to see the value the former slave community placed on these children. Afro-Jamaicans, especially mothers, demanded and often received a negotiated freedom for their children during this transitional period.

Ultimately, apprenticeship created a paradox of sorts in Jamaican slave society as it attached its own value to childhood and child worth. Although Parliament granted freedom to children below the age of six, it made no provision for their care and support. As children changed from investments to burdens overnight, they became useful as bargaining chips for the Jamaican planters who feared economic ruin. Although the nature of slavery had always been exploitive in Jamaica, ameliorative policies disappeared as planters desperately tried to secure the profitability of their vulnerable estates. Consequently, the standard of living on Jamaica's plantations deteriorated to early eighteenth-century standards as Jamaican planters desperately tried to protect their estates from economic ruin. Despite this, Jamaican children faced the prospect of an undefined childhood after apprenticeship, one that was free from planter control and gave all Jamaican laborers hope for the future.

With the passage of apprenticeship law, the politics of emancipation became a gendered process, just as slavery was before it. Indeed, this difficult transition from slavery to freedom fostered a critical discussion about employer-employee relations, the Afro-Jamaican family and the role of the Jamaican state. Many Afro-Jamaican mothers succeeded in making their own fertility choices, deciding their children's fate and bearing the costs of their children's care, despite the challenges they faced from above. These women refused to accept that their existence was based solely on field production, and insisted that their value as working mothers and nurturers was also of importance. This struggle continued, not only for Afro-Caribbean women but for East Indian and Asian indentured laborers, throughout the post-emancipation period.⁸⁶ Therefore, this strategy implemented by Jamaican planters was used again and again as their peers throughout the British Caribbean used similar strategies on their own estates.

It is the collective experience of these children that allows us to create a fuller picture of everyday life during this transition from slavery to freedom. Afro-Jamaican children experienced great suffering and dislocation during apprenticeship, no matter their age, as their parents and former owners bargained with their lives. With apprenticeship, the nature of childhood in Jamaica changed overnight. Suddenly, planters differentiated between children who were below the age of six and left to the responsibility of their parents and children above the age of six who were still part of the labor regime. Under this new system, apprenticed children were thrust immediately into a premature adulthood, more so than they were under slavery. Planters worked them harder than ever before, while trying to devise ways to get free Afro-Jamaican children into the fields as well. As apprenticed children entered adulthood at an even earlier age than before, free children suffered as well as their living conditions sunk to a new level.

Suffering along with these children was the Afro-Jamaican family, which struggled in its own right to stay afloat during this transitional period. While profits continued to fall, Afro-Jamaican families fought to survive as state-supported educational programs

threatened their very existence. Forced to choose between control over their children and their children's survival in a system that failed to support them without a price, many Afro-Jamaican mothers found themselves surrendering the notion that they could successfully maintain their pre-emancipation status as working mothers. In taking children out of their maternal care, the state succeeded in establishing an environment where English influence could continue to chip away at African cultural traditions and beliefs.

Despite these hardships, free children became the only "real" children in Jamaica. As Afro-Jamaican women worked to protect their children from a system that continued to exploit them by assigning them a conditional freedom, the value of childhood in the apprenticed community became clearly defined. This new generation of children had the opportunity to experience a childhood outside slavery. While shifting between burden and bargaining chip in the eyes of Jamaican planters, they gave former slaves hope for the future and Afro-Jamaican women continued to fight for the freedom of their children.

To this end, the apprenticeship system equated "childhood" with freedom, but it also set a powerful precedent for the civil status of emancipated Afro-Jamaicans after 1840. Emancipation—and more particularly, the struggle over the meaning of freedom for children—helped to create the modern Jamaican citizen and state. With emancipation, Afro-Jamaicans began to claim control of their future despite the challenges they faced. While this struggle was far from over, apprenticeship did lay the foundation for the shift in power that would take place in Jamaica's post-emancipation economy.

Notes

¹ Joseph Sturge and Thomas Harvey (1838) *The West Indies in 1837* (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co.), pp. 217–218.

² Governor Sligo to Thomas Spring Rice (15 Oct. 1834) Sligo Letterbook, 1834–1836, National Library of Jamaica, MS 281.

³ Votes of the Assembly (1835) no. 2, f. 90.

⁴ *The Kingston Chronicle* (1834) 16 Aug.

⁵ See Wilma King (1995) *Stolen Childhood: Slave Youth in Nineteenth-Century America* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press) and Marie Jenkins Schwartz (2000) *Born in Bondage: Growing Up Enslaved in the Antebellum South* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press). While these two works stand as the most extensive examinations of slave childhood to date, both King and Schwartz presented static and homogenized histories that fail to examine how the idea of childhood changed over time. The study of slave childhood in the Caribbean is a field only beginning to come into its own. Historians such as Barbara Bush, Richard Sheridan, Kenneth Kiple and Richard Steckel all discussed how slave mothers' workload, malnutrition and harsh treatment contributed to the astounding infant and child mortality of the slave community. Barbara Bush, along with other Caribbeanists such as Marietta Morrissey, Lucille Mathurin Mair and Hilary Beckles, also examined slave childhood in relation to the complexities of mother-child relationships in much larger examinations of gender and slavery in the British Caribbean. See James Trussell and Richard Steckel (1978) The age of slaves at menarche and their first birth, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 8, pp. 477–505; Kenneth Kiple (1984) *The Caribbean Slave: A Biological History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); Richard Sheridan (1985) *Doctors and Slaves: A Medical and Demographic History of Slavery in the British West Indies, 1680–1834* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); and Barbara Bush (1996) Hard labor: women, childbirth, and resistance in British slave societies, in: David Barry Gaspar and Darlene Clark Hine (eds), *More Than Chattel: Black Women and Slavery in the Americas* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press), pp. 194–217. For a comparison to the United States, see Herbert S. Klein and Stanley L. Engerman (1978) Fertility differentials between slaves in the United States and the British West Indies: a note on lactation practices and their possible implications, *William and Mary Quarterly*, 35, pp. 357–374. For slave childhood as it related to gender ideologies under slavery, see Lucille

- Mathurin Mair (1987) *Women Field Workers in Jamaica During Slavery* (Mona: Department of History, University of the West Indies); Marietta Morrissey (1989) *Slave women in the New World: Gender Stratification in the Caribbean* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas); Barbara Bush (1990) *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650–1838* (Kingston: Heinemann Publishers Caribbean Division); Hilary Beckles (1989) *Natural Rebels: A Social History of Enslaved Black Women in Barbados* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press); and Hilary Beckles (1999) *Centering Woman: Gender Discourses in Caribbean Slave Society* (Kingston: Ian Randle).
- ⁶ See Elsa V. Goveia (1965) *Slave Society in the British Leeward Islands at the End of the Eighteenth Century* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press); B.W. Higman (1973) Household structure and fertility on Jamaican slave plantations: a nineteenth century example, *Population Studies*, 27, pp. 527–550; B.W. Higman (1975) The slave family and household in the British West Indies, 1800–1834, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 6, pp. 261–287; and B.W. Higman (1978) African and Creole slave family patterns in Trinidad, *Journal of Family History*, 3, pp. 163–180. See also Michael Craton (1979) Changing patterns of slave families in the British West Indies, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 10, pp. 1–35; Humphrey E. Lamur (1993) The slave family in colonial 19th-century Suriname, *Journal of Black Studies*, 23, pp. 371–381; Pedro Welch (1995) The slave family in the urban context: views from Bridgetown, Barbados, 1789–1816, *Journal of Caribbean History*, 29, pp. 11–24; and David M. Stark (1996) Discovering the invisible Puerto Rican slave family: demographic evidence from the eighteenth century, *Journal of Family History*, 21, pp. 395–418. There is a large historiography on slave family in the United States, but it is far too extensive to list here. First, see the classic works of E. Franklin Frazier (1966) *The Negro Family in the United States* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press) and Herbert G. Gutman (1976) *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750–1925* (New York: Pantheon Books). See also, Leslie Schwalm (1997) *A Hard Fight for We: Women’s Transition from Slavery to Freedom in South Carolina* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press); Wilma King (note 5); Marie Jenkins Schwartz (note 5); Wilma Dunaway (2003) *The African-American Family in Slavery and Emancipation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); and Nancy Bereaw (2003) *Gendered Freedoms: Race, Rights, and the Politics of Household in the Delta, 1861–1875* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press).
- ⁷ See, W.L. Burn (1937) *Emancipation and Apprenticeship in the British West Indies* (London: J. Cape); Department of Extra-Mural Studies (1970) *Apprenticeship and Emancipation* (Mona: University of the West Indies); William A. Green (1976) *British Slave Emancipation: The Sugar Colonies and the Great Experiment, 1830–1865* (Oxford: Clarendon Press); Demetrius Eudell (2002) *The Political Languages of Emancipation in the British Caribbean and the U.S. South* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press).
- ⁸ See Frederick Cooper, Thomas C. Holt and Rebecca Scott (2000) *Beyond Slavery: Explorations of Race, Labor, and Citizenship in Postemancipation Societies* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press); and Verene A. Shepherd (ed.) (2002) *Working Slavery, Pricing Freedom: Perspectives from the Caribbean, Africa and the African Diaspora* (New York: Palgrave). For Latin American studies, see Rebecca Scott (1994) Defining the boundaries of freedom in the world of cane: Cuba, Brazil, and Louisiana after emancipation, *American Historical Review*, 99, pp. 70–102; Rebecca Scott (1988) Exploring the meaning of freedom: postemancipation societies in comparative perspective, *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 68, pp. 407–428; and Rebecca Scott (1986) *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860–1899* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press).
- ⁹ My Americanist colleagues are well into their discussion of how the transition from slavery to freedom specifically affected family life and childhood. See Rebecca Scott (1978) The battle over the child: child apprenticeship and the freedmen’s bureau in North Carolina, *Prologue*, 10, pp. 101–113; Richard Paul Fuke (1988) Planters, apprenticeship, and forced labor: the black family under pressure in post-emancipation Maryland, *Agricultural History*, 62, pp. 57–74; Karin L. Zipf (2000) Reconstructing ‘free woman’: African-American women, apprenticeship, and custody rights during Reconstruction, *Journal of Women’s History*, 12, pp. 8–31; and Karin L. Zipf (2005) *Labor of Innocents: Forced Apprenticeship in North Carolina, 1715–1919* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana University Press). For Latin America, see John V. Lombardi (1969) Manumission, manumisos, and aprendizaje in Republican Venezuela, *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 49, pp. 657–678.
- ¹⁰ For apprenticeship and emancipation in Jamaica, see; Philip J. McLewin (1987) *Power and Economic Change: The Response to Emancipation in Jamaica and British Guiana, 1840–1865* (New York: Garland); Swithin R. Wilmot (ed.) (1994) *Adjustments to Emancipation in Jamaica* (Mona:

Department of History, University of the West Indies); Kathleen Mary Butler (1995) *The Economics of Emancipation: Jamaica & Barbados, 1823–1843* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press); and Michael Craton (1997) *Empire, Enslavement, and Freedom in the Caribbean* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers).

- ¹¹ See Verene Shepherd, Bridget Brereton and Barbara Bailey (eds) (1995) *Engendering History: Caribbean Women in Historical Perspective* (Kingston: Ian Randle); Lucille Mathurin Mair (note 5); Marietta Morrissey (note 5); Barbara Bush (note 5); and the multiple works of Hilary Beckles. For the United States, see Jennifer Morgan (2004) *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press).
- ¹² This was definitely the case in the top sugar producing islands of Jamaica and Barbados. See Colleen A. Vasconcellos (2004) *And a child shall lead them?: slavery, childhood, and African cultural identity, 1750–1838* (PhD Dissertation, Florida International University); and the numerous works of Hilary Beckles (note 5). According to Gail D. Saunders, the unsuccessful attempts at growing cotton in the Bahamas, however, led to a combination of task labor and liberal provision grounds that allowed for healthier slaves and the development of a more independent peasantry after emancipation. See Gail D. Saunders (1990) *Slave life, slave society and cotton production in the Bahamas, Slavery & Abolition*, 11, pp. 332–350.
- ¹³ Beginning in 1788, National Assemblies and planters throughout the British Caribbean implemented numerous incentives and reward programs all with the aim of boosting natural increase. Slave owners received tax deductions for any natural increase on their estates, and slave women were rewarded as well. See Magnus Mörner (1980) ‘Buy or breed?’ Alternative sources of slave supply in the plantation societies of the New World (Unpublished paper, Stockholm Institute of Latin American Studies), Hilary Beckles, *Natural Rebels* (note 5). For a discussion on how these programs specifically improved the lives of slave children, see Colleen A. Vasconcellos (note 12).
- ¹⁴ Laws of Jamaica (4 William IV, c. 33).
- ¹⁵ Votes of the Assembly (1836), f. 29. It is important to note here that the six-year apprenticeship period in Jamaica ended two years early in 1838. Douglas Hall has an excellent article outlining the process of apprenticeship and the changes that were made in Jamaica. See Douglas Hall (1987) *The apprenticeship system in Jamaica, 1834–1838*, in: *Apprenticeship and Emancipation* (note 7). This collection also examines how the system affected other islands in the British Caribbean, giving a well-rounded discussion of the changes throughout the region.
- ¹⁶ Laws of Jamaica (4 William IV, c. 33). Designed by an Englishman named Samuel Cubitt in 1818, the treadmill was a hollow cylinder of wood carved into a series of steps that sat on an iron frame. Wardens affixed a bar above the treadmill to which the apprentices’ wrists were strapped. Once attached to the bar, the apprentices were forced to turn the wheel themselves by walking the steps for a set period of time. See Thomas C. Holt (1992) *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832–1938* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press), p. 106. For treadmills, see David H. Shayt (1989) *Stairway to redemption: America’s encounter with the British prison treadmill, Technology and Culture*, 30, pp. 908–938; Diana Paton (1996) *Decency, dependence and the lash: gender and the British debate over slave emancipation, 1830–34, Slavery and Abolition*, 17, pp. 163–184; Mary Turner (1999) *The 11 o’clock flog: women, work and labour law in the British Caribbean, Slavery and Abolition*, 20, pp. 38–58; and Diana Paton (1999) *No bond but the law: punishment and justice in Jamaica’s age of emancipation, 1780–1870* (PhD dissertation, Yale University).
- ¹⁷ Kathleen Mary Butler (note 10). Nearly one-third of the slave compensation fund was appropriated to Jamaican planters. See Sylvester Hovey (1838) *Letters from the West Indies* (New York: Gould and Newman), pp. 121–122.
- ¹⁸ Anonymous (1833) *A Safe and Practical Course in the West India Question* (London: Maurice and Co.), p. 7.
- ¹⁹ T. Bunn (1833) *An Essay on the Abolition of Slavery Throughout the British Dominions, Without Injury to the Master or His Property, With the Least Possible Injury to the Slave, Without Revolution, and Without Loss to the Revenue* (Frome: W.P. Penny), p. 15.
- ²⁰ Affidavits of Aggrieved Apprentices in Jamaica, The Beldam Papers, National Library of Jamaica, MS 321a, no. 3.
- ²¹ Records of Visitations, Adjudications, &c. by Special Justice Carnaby in St. James, January–June 1836, Jamaican Archives, 1B/11/23/9. For other cases see Votes of the Assembly (1837–1838) no. 1, f. 59; and Thomas A. Thome and Horace Kimball op. cit., p. 107.

- ²² Votes of the Assembly (1837–1838) no. 1, f. 58. To date, there is no examination of the plantation medical system under apprenticeship in the British Caribbean. For medicine under slavery, see Richard Sheridan (note 5).
- ²³ Anonymous (1837) *A Statement of Facts Illustrating the Administration of the Abolition Law, and the Sufferings of the Negro Apprentices in the Island of Jamaica* (London: John Haddon), p. 7.
- ²⁴ R. Cocking to W.G. Nunes (29 June 1835) Votes of the Assembly (1835) no. 2, f. 179.
- ²⁵ Henry Sterne (1969) *A Statement of Facts, Submitted to the Right Honorable Lord Glenelg* (New York: Negro Universities Press), p. 254. Verene Shepherd has examined the transition to freedom as it unfolded on the livestock pens of Jamaica that is quite valuable to this discussion. See Verene Shepherd (1993) Alternative husbandry: slaves and free labourers on livestock farms in Jamaica in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, *Slavery & Abolition*, 14, pp. 41–66.
- ²⁶ Governor Sligo to T.S. Rice (24 Aug. 1834) Sligo Letterbook, 1834–1836, National Library of Jamaica, MS 281.
- ²⁷ Benjamin M’Mahon (1839) *Jamaica Plantership* (London: Effingham Wilson), p. 357.
- ²⁸ Votes of the Assembly (1837–1838) no. 1, f. 58.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.* no. 1, Appendix 57, f. 687.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.* no. 3, f. 63.
- ³¹ Votes of the Assembly (1834) no. 3, f. 670. See also the testimony planter George Marrett in *Ibid.* f. 621.
- ³² *Ibid.*
- ³³ *Ibid.* f. 63, 680.
- ³⁴ While this article is the first to examine how apprentices fought for a negotiated freedom for their children as well as the integrity of the Afro-Jamaican family, my Americanist colleagues have already discovered this struggle happening in the American South. See Nancy Bercau (note 6); Karin Zipf (note 9); and Leslie Schwalm (note 6).
- ³⁵ Douglas Hall (notes 7 and 15), p. 12. Three of those children found themselves bound to Pedro Estate in Hanover. According to a circular commissioned by the King’s House in Spanishtown, St Catherine, in July of 1838, five-and-a-half-year-old Isabella Malcolm, five-year-old John Malcolm and their two-year-old sister Molly became the apprentices of Pedro Estate owner Margaret Gilzean in Sept. of 1836. Although archival sources give no indication of the motive behind their apprenticeship, it is possible that their mother was unable to support them herself and felt it to be in their best interest to be bound to the estate. Since two-year-old Molly was far too young to begin working on the estate, her status as an apprentice gave her the support she needed without putting her in the fields. Although Isabella and Malcolm were not yet working on the estate, they would join the children’s gang sometime in 1837. Their mother may have preferred their apprenticeship to the extra work she would have to perform on the estate for their support. Alternatively, knowing that they would be free before joining the second gang, perhaps their mother felt that being supported by the estate was worth three years of minimal work in the children’s gang. Whatever the motive, Isabella and Malcolm worked for only one year before gaining their freedom in 1838. Dr John Rhodes Hulme, Circular 639, Jamaica Special Magistracy Papers, University of the West Indies West India Collection, MR 420. This circular makes clear that these children became apprentices, not indentured laborers. Therefore, Margaret Gilzean received approval from the children’s mother.
- ³⁶ Votes of the Assembly (1836) ff. 25–26.
- ³⁷ Votes of the Assembly (1834) no. 3, f. 63.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*
- ³⁹ Votes of the Assembly (1835) no. 2, f. 62.
- ⁴⁰ Mortgage Ledger (1835–1870) Jamaican Archives, 7/257/1.
- ⁴¹ Laws of Jamaica (4 William IV, c. 33); and Henry Sterne (note 25), p. 264.
- ⁴² Reverend Hope Masterton Waddell (1863) *Twenty-nine Years in the West Indies and Central Africa, 1829–1858* (London: Nelson), p. 118.
- ⁴³ Laws of Jamaica (4 William IV, c. 33); and Verene A. Shepherd (1989) The apprenticeship experience on Jamaican livestock pens, 1834–1838, *Jamaica Journal*, 22, p. 49. It is unknown whether this ever happened in Jamaica. Strangely, planters never tried to force the issue with their laborers. Instead, they tried to convince their laborers to consent to the apprenticeship of free children on the island.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.* f. 107. There is no study to date that examines the importation of free whites to the British Caribbean as a replacement for slaves. After emancipation, the British Caribbean also experimented

with Asian, East Indian and African indentured labor. See Monica Schuler (1980) *“Alas, Alas, Kongo”*: A Social History of Indentured African Immigration into Jamaica, 1841–1865 (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press); Walton Look Lai (1993) *Indentured Labor, Caribbean Sugar: Chinese and Indian Migrants to the British West Indies, 1838–1918* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press); and Madhavi Kale (1998) *Fragments of Empire: Capital, Slavery and Indian Indentured Labor in the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press).

⁴⁵ Votes of the Assembly (1836–1837) no. 1, f. 279.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* Of the 44 from Liverpool, 24 were 15 years old and younger.

⁴⁷ John Salmon to J.G. Crabbe (16 Sept. 1836) The Bouchier Correspondence, National Library of Jamaica, MS 377.

⁴⁸ Report of John Cooper on Burrowfield Pen (18 April 1835) John W. Cooper’s Reports on the Properties of Simon Taylor, 1835, Jamaican Archives, 7/177/1.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ House of Commons (1837) *Negro Apprenticeship in the Colonies: A Review of the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, Appointed to Inquire Into The Working of the Apprenticeship System in the Colonies, the Condition of the Apprentices, and the Laws and Regulations Affecting Them Which Have Been Passed* (London: John Hatchard and Son), p. 33.

⁵¹ Thomas A. Thome and Horace Kimball (1838) *Emancipation in the West Indies* (New York: American Anti-Slavery Society), p. 102.

⁵² Laws of Jamaica (4 William IV, c. 33); and Votes of the Assembly (1836) f. 209. Not only was the number of hours per week reduced, but the terms of apprenticeship stipulated that Jamaica’s apprentices only work 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ days per week, with the remaining time spent at the discretion of the apprentices. However, apprentices could choose to work extra hours for extra wages.

⁵³ Report of John Cooper on Lysson’s Estate (18 April 1835), John W. Cooper’s Reports on the Properties of Simon Taylor (note 48).

⁵⁴ Votes of the Assembly (1834) no. 3, f. 637, 650. McCornack and Gordon do not state whether children between the ages of six and 15 performed extra work.

⁵⁵ Votes of the Assembly (1836–1837) no. 1, f. 880.

⁵⁶ Report of John Cooper on Llanrumney Estate (18 April 1835), John W. Cooper’s Reports on the Properties of Simon Taylor (note 48).

⁵⁷ Affidavits of Aggrieved Apprentices in Jamaica (note 20).

⁵⁸ JA, Votes of the Assembly, 1834, no. 1, f. 68.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* In an angry letter to Eliza’s owner, Robert McDaniel, Special Magistrate William Oldrey wrote: “you have worked the woman to the last moment, and after giving birth to a seven month’s child, to turn her out in less than a fortnight to work, proves the cruelty of her case”. Although Eliza’s complaint sparked an inspection of the property as well as the condition of the apprentices, Oldrey does not indicate whether McDaniel received a fine.

⁶⁰ *A Statement of Facts Illustrating the Administration of the Abolition Law* (note 23), pp. 11–12. The exact parish of the estate and workhouse is unknown. In order to fully understand the punishment of women under apprenticeship, despite the prohibition of female floggings, see the works of Diana Paton (note 16).

⁶¹ Governor Sligo to Thomas Spring Rice (13 Aug. 1834) Votes of the Assembly (1835) no. 2, f. 33.

⁶² James Williams (1837) *A Narrative of Events Since the First of August, 1834* (London: J. Rider), p. 15.

⁶³ Votes of the Assembly (1836–1837) no 1, Appendix 4, f. 426

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* See also, *Ibid.* Appendix 47, f. 829.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* Appendix 47, f. 886.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* Appendix 4, f. 426.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* f. 156.

⁶⁸ Votes of the Assembly (1836–1837) no. 1, ff. 144–145.

⁶⁹ Hannaford was not alone in his beliefs or his approach, and changing ideas of race, gender and childhood began to permeate the reform movement taking place in England during this time. See James Patterson Smith (1994) *The Liberals, race, and political reform in the British West Indies, 1866–1874*, *Journal of Negro History*, 79, pp. 131–146; Brenda McKay (2003) *George Eliot and Victorian Attitudes to Racial Diversity, Colonialism, Darwinism, Class, Gender, and Jewish Culture and Prophecy* (Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen); and Anna Clark (2003) *Changing concepts of citizenship:*

- gender, empire, and class, *Journal of British Studies*, 42, pp. 263–270. In the post-emancipation United States, this was an issue as well. See Heather Cox Richardson (2001) *The Death of Reconstruction: Race, Labor, and Politics in the Post-Civil War North, 1865–1901* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press); and Panos D. Bardis (1963) Changes in the colonial and modern American family systems, *Social Science*, 38, pp. 103–114.
- ⁷⁰ Reverend Hope Masterson Waddell (note 42), p. 119.
- ⁷¹ Votes of the Assembly (1835) no. 2, f. 169.
- ⁷² For the Christianization and education of slaves in Jamaica, see C. Campbell (1970) Social and economic obstacles to the development of popular education in post-emancipation Jamaica, 1834–1865, *Journal of Caribbean History*, 1, pp. 57–88; Patricia T. Rooke (1981) A scramble for souls: the impact of the Negro Education Grant on evangelical missionaries in the British West Indies, *History of Education Quarterly*, 21, pp. 429–447; Ruby Hope King (1987) *Education in the Caribbean: Historical Perspectives* (Mona: Faculty of Education, University of the West Indies); Robert J. Stewart (1992) *Religion and Society in Post-Emancipation Jamaica* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press); Shirley C. Gordon (1996) *God Almighty, Make Me Free: Christianity in Pre-Emancipation Jamaica* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press); Mary Turner (1998) *Slaves and Missionaries: The Disintegration of Jamaican Slave Society, 1787–1834* (Mona: University of the West Indies Press); and Shirley C. Gordon (1998) *Our Cause for His Glory: Christianisation and Emancipation in Jamaica* (Mona: University of the West Indies Press).
- ⁷³ T.S. Winn (1824) *Emancipation; or Practical Advice to British Slave-Holders: With Suggestions for the General Improvement of West India Affairs* (London: J. Cowell), pp. 34–35.
- ⁷⁴ Extract from the Speech of the Marquis of Sligo to the Legislature of Jamaica (1836) Working of the Apprenticeship System in the British Colonies, National Library of Jamaica, MS 1887; and The Royal Gazette (1835) [Kingston] 4–11 April.
- ⁷⁵ Votes of the Assembly (1836) f. 79.
- ⁷⁶ Votes of the Assembly (1836–1837) no. 1, f. 97.
- ⁷⁷ *Negro Apprenticeship in the Colonies*, op. cit., p. 34; and Extract from the Speech of the Marquis of Sligo to the Legislature of Jamaica (note 74). The emphasis is Sligo's.
- ⁷⁸ Votes of the Assembly (1836) f. 79.
- ⁷⁹ Joseph Sturge and Thomas Harvey (note 1), 260. The exact parish of these two estates is unknown.
- ⁸⁰ Votes of the Assembly (1834) no. 3, f. 528.
- ⁸¹ John Salmon to J.G. Crabbe (15 Aug. 1836) The Bouchier Correspondence (note 47).
- ⁸² C.J. Latrobe (1838) *Copy of a Report from C.J. Latrobe, Esq., on Negro Education in Jamaica, with Correspondence Relating Thereto* (London: Printed for the House of Commons), pp. 5–11.
- ⁸³ Robert Montgomery Martin (1839) *Statistics of the Colonies of the British Empire in the West Indies, South America, North America, Asia, Austral-Asia, Africa, and Europe* (London: William H. Allen), p. 10.
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 8, 10.
- ⁸⁵ For West African cultural beliefs and traditions in Jamaica, see Martha Warren Beckwith (1928) *Jamaica Folk-lore* (New York: American Folk-lore Society); Orlando Patterson (1969) *The Sociology of Slavery: An Analysis of the Origins, Development, and Structure of Negro Slave Society in Jamaica* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickenson University); Martha Warren Beckwith (1969) *Black Roadways: A Study of Jamaican Folk Life* (New York: Negro Universities Press); Edward Braithwaite (1970) *The Folk Culture of the Slaves in Jamaica* (London: New Beacon Books); Edward Braithwaite (1971) *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica* (Oxford: Clarendon Press); Leonard E. Barrett (1976) *The Sun and the Drum: African Roots in Jamaican Folk Tradition* (Kingston: Sangster's Book Stores); and Mervyn Alleyne (1989) *Roots of Jamaican Culture* (London: Pluto Press). For the Caribbean, see Margaret E. Crahan and Franklin W. Knight (eds), (1979) *Africa and the Caribbean: The Legacies of a Link* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press); Sidney W. Mintz and Richard Price (1992) *The Birth of African-American Culture: An Anthropological Perspective* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press); Colin A. Palmer (1996) *Africa in the Making of the Caribbean: The Formative Years* (Mona: Department of History, University of the West Indies); Richard D.E. Burton (1997) *Afro-Creole: Power, Opposition, and Play in the Caribbean* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press); and Maureen Warner-Lewis (2003) *Central Africa in the Caribbean: Transcending Time, Transforming Cultures* (Mona: University of West Indies Press).

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