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Exposing Slavery: Photography, Human Bondage, and the Birth of Modern Visual Politics in America is a deeply researched book, focused on how the new medium of photography was shaped and, in turn, altered by the country's struggle over human bondage.

As a historian, Fox-Amato approaches photographs as historical evidence instead of illustrations intended to visually enhance the traditional written text. He draws upon art historical methodologies to examine image-making production, to study the formal qualities of images, and to interpret the visual content within. Photographic archives comprise the focal point of this study, encompassing research in over thirty institutions across the United States, as well as in private collections.

Four thematic chapters chronologically document the rise of the daguerreotype in the 1840s -1850s, through to what Fox-Amato calls late slavery image-making during the Civil War and Emancipation. Chapter 1 explores how slaveholders manipulated photographic images to create a false visual record of human bondage as a benign institution. Chapter 2 examines the ramifications of enslaved people and free blacks purchasing and using photographs in the South. Chapter 3 is situated in the antebellum North, where the author pictures how former slaves and activists worked within the limitations of photography to create imagery that supported the abolitionist movement. Finally, Chapter 4 tackles how photography changed during a time when blacks experienced a transitional geographical space in the South, physically and psychologically squeezed between bondage and freedom. As there is much richness of detail to explore, I focus on a few highlights that illustrate the author's thorough investigation of photographic representations of blacks in the antebellum south and in the period following the Civil War.

At the core of Fox-Amato's discussion about how Southerners sought to counter abolitionists' exposure of the cruelties inflicted upon black bodies are the photographs of female slaves working in the slaveholder's household. Such paternalistic, sentimental pictures are the most common types of photographs hidden in the records of slaveholding families. The author's analysis of these images targets the 'presentation' of black women as enslaved nursemaids to the white families' children. The author's innovative analysis examines the formal qualities of the pictures, linking them to traditions of Madonna portraiture and Christian iconography in European painting. This visual formula is successfully illustrated by placing the late 1480s painting, *Madonna and Child*, by Italian Renaissance artist Giovanni Bellini (c.1430-1516) next to the tintype, *Martha Ann "Patty" Atavis with Anna Whitridge*. The author demonstrates how stylistic elements such as the cropped window framing format of 'The Virgin's' upper body, her direct gaze, and presentation of the 'Child,' as well as the prominence of hands and touching, influenced 19th century photographers. Fox-Amato classifies such images as 'chattel Madonnas'.

Groundbreaking scholarship raises new questions and ways of thinking about a topic. The author's discussion about photographs of adult black women stereotyped as 'mammies' directs us towards equally problematic concerns when black female adolescents are placed in the 'natural' role of surrogate motherhood or companions to white slaveholding women's children, specifically white girls. While young black males are sometimes pictured in confinement, normally, enslaved girls were assigned subservient-supportive roles to their gender counterparts. It is a precarious situation for black female youth. Did white southerners not think of black and enslaved girls as having the innocence and purity associated with their daughters? Do photographs that display white and black female children together document the absence of such sentiments for enslaved youth?

In Chapter 2, the photograph of an enslaved grandmother and her granddaughter presents an alternative image. This photograph appears on the cover of *Slavery and Freedom in Savannah*, edited by historians, Leslie M. Harris and Daina Ramsey Berry. The grandmother, "Juddy" Telfair Jackson, worked as the cook and maid for Mary Telfair, a prominent slaveholder in Savannah, Georgia. In 1849 the black family posed for a picture together. It is uncertain whether slave or slaveowner commissioned the portrait. Still, it is a rare image of

two generations of black women from one enslaved family. Evidence even of the parent that is not present, the image communicates something of the endurance of the black family within slavery. The photograph documents the grandmother's presence in her granddaughter's life, raising Lavinia to young adulthood.

Exposing Slavery establishes the extent to which the study of historic photographs is dependent on interdisciplinary research, including, specifically, written documents. The wide range of written documents used in the book include: manuscript collections of slaveholders; diaries, letters, wills and family records; collections of abolitionists; anti-slavery publications; Northern and Southern newspapers; slave narratives; Civil War memoirs; records of antebellum photographers; and photographic trade journals.

Chapter 3 relies heavily upon this material to examine how abolitionists used photography to support their cause. For example, the abolitionist movement drew extensively upon the expanding print culture of the 19th century. The author methodically surveys the content abolitionists chose to represent and why. Before the new technology, printed materials emphasized the subservience of blacks and the physical brutality of slavery. Abolitionists drew upon late 18th-century visual formulas used by engravers and illustrators to picture a violent southern world of suffering slaves and cruel masters and overseers. The author links the imaginings to the historic contacts between Africans and Europeans involved in the Atlantic slave trade.

One of the most prolific illustrators shackled to such imagery was the Scottish painter known best for his social and political caricatures, Isaac Cruikshank. The artist borrowed from this visual formula to create one of his most widely circulated prints illustrating the subject, "*The abolition of the slave trade Or the inhumanity of dealers in human flesh exemplified in Captn. Kimber's treatment of a young Negro girl of 15 for her virjen (sic) modest.*," published in 1792. While Fox-Amato reproduces the print, a closer analysis of the imaging of the plight of African women forced into the slave trade would have provided a vivid contrast, supporting the author's argument about the illustrations abolitionists began to select to strengthen their cause.

The print shows all white men, well-dressed sailors and Captain John Kimber, on a slave ship, participating in the punishment of a young female. Three adult female slaves, absent any clothing, sit on bales in the background, forced to watch. A group of sailors walk away from the scene, not in horror, but with indifference. They are in conversation with each other and do not even look back, emphasizing the banality of the evil they choose not to witness. Captain John Kimber stands over the girl, grasping a whip in his hand. Looking down at her, Captain Kimber grins with pleasure, as the sailor in a red jacket and black tie and hat lifts the girl up into the air by the rope tied around her ankle, which he pulls over a pulley. The voyeuristic and sexualized nature of an oppressive system dependent on the mutilation of black female bodies is uncomfortably caricatured.

The picture originated as a visual record of a well-documented episode in the British campaign against the slave trade. John Kimber was the captain of the slave ship *Recovery*. It was owned by merchants from Bristol. In 1791, the ship left New Calabar (Nigeria), headed for the West Indies. During the passage, an incident occurred which aroused a furor among abolitionists.

The young girl, when ordered to dance naked for the men on the deck of the ship, refused. Captain Kimber ordered her punishment, which was to be flogged. She died from her injuries. William Wilberforce, in his 1792 speech to the House of Commons, put forth that Captain Kimber was responsible for the death of the young African girl. Kimber was thereafter arrested and tried before the High Court of the Admiralty, in June 1792. Kimber was also accused of murdering another girl on his ship. He was, however, immediately acquitted of all charges. The all-male jury concluded that both girls' deaths were caused by disease, not abusive, cruel treatment.

Images like Cruikshank's *The Abolition of the Slave Trade* were problematic pictures in abolitionist image-making. To look at this image reveals the realities of rape and physical abuse that African women suffered. Fox-Amato describes this 18th-century image as a precursor to the flogging scenes that came to populate abolitionist print materials. They were intended to evoke strong emotions of anger and sympathy for slaves in the American south. American activists like Angelina Grimke were deeply affected by images of slaves' sufferings. But were violent depictions of black women's demoralizing treatment at the hands of slave traders, sailors, and slave-owners too graphic for public consumption? Was the sexualized suffering of female slaves too hard to look at? Was this experience of black women unsuitable for viewing, especially when it came to the sensibilities of white Christian women in the North who took up the cause?

Fox-Amato argues that the image of the kneeling slave (also borrowed from the British fight against the slave trade), functioned best in the abolitionist culture that evolved in the United States. Male and female slaves praying for deliverance appealed to the Christian sentiments of activists in the North. As a result, printed imagery utilized by abolitionists seldom depicted the scars of slavery. Abolitionist photography in America followed the visual perimeters popularized in the 'mother country.' The photographic images most associated with the abolitionists were the group and individual portraits of activists. White abolitionists circulated such photographs to solidify their identity as members of this radical network. Fox-Amato argues that black abolitionists like Frederick Douglass opted for representation that portrayed their personhood and humanity, as opposed to their victimization.

Photography's use in this manner was a bit of a conundrum. While fugitive slaves understandably sought to remain hidden, the subversive activities of white and black activists could be documented in photographs. For example, about twenty of the Oberlin-Wellington rescuers—a crowd of men who freed an arrested fugitive from Kentucky named John Pike—spent over a year imprisoned at the Cuyahoga County jail in Ohio. Photographer J.M. Green took pictures of the black and white rebels standing in solidarity in the prison courtyard. Such photographs functioned as emblems of what Fox-Amato defines as "interracial martyrdom." In Chapter 4, the author investigates photography's role in envisioning a new racial order. The most extensive practices of photography during the Civil War were situated in Union army camps made up of "slaveholders, enslaved people, and abolitionists." Fox-Amato theorizes that, by the end of the war, the "northern photographic imagination,"—representing what the new racial order without slavery would look like for the nation—dominated. Soldiers adopted a visual framework that portrayed—mostly black—men, kneeling, sitting, and serving. Northern whites adopted the racial hierarchies of the South to present themselves as liberators in control of how blacks would conduct themselves as freed people.

The epilogue reinforces the author's argument that the Civil War left us with a photographic legacy that challenges the democratizing potential Frederick Douglass envisioned for the new medium. Fox-Amato recognizes that "former slaves" continued to engage in image-making following the war. He argues, however, that white Southerners continued to commission dehumanizing images of loyal former slaves that codified freed people as subservient even after emancipation. White artists like J. A. Palmer mass-produced stereographs of stereotypes, which were prolific examples of photographic practices and subjects that helped Southern whites re-establish the old order as "new." White on black violence was not documented during Reconstruction. By the late 19th-century however, grotesque lynching photographs were all too common. I would argue that there are thousands, or possibly even more, archival images representing black southerners as the free people they saw themselves to be, that might effectively counteract the visual domination of imagery generated by white southerners. The private photographic archives of African American life during the 19th-century demand more scholarly attention.

Exposing Slavery is a significant contribution to 19th and 20th -century visual studies examining the relationship between race, representation, and photography. Fox-Amato's book

is meticulous research that is well organized and cohesive, managing to cover a great number of themes. The author combines the disciplines of history and art history to focus on early African American photography. Histories of photography in the United States are currently being written by a variety of scholars across fields of study including art history, visual studies, history, literature, performance, and American studies. As Tanya Sheehan notes in her review essay, "In a New Light: Early African American Photography," scholars involved in the complicated, self-reflective study of photographic histories need to be, more than ever, "fully engaged in multi-directional conversations."