

Word by Word

*Emancipation and the Act
of Writing*

CHRISTOPHER HAGER

Word By Word Emancipation And The Act Of Writing

Bryan Sinche



Word By Word Emancipation And The Act Of Writing:

Word by Word Christopher Hager, 2013-02-11 One of the cruelest abuses of slavery in America was that slaves were forbidden to read and write. Consigned to illiteracy, they left no records of their thoughts and feelings apart from the few exceptional narratives of Frederick Douglass and others who escaped to the North or so we have long believed. But as Christopher Hager reveals, a few enslaved African Americans managed to become literate in spite of all prohibitions and during the halting years of emancipation thousands more seized the chance to learn. The letters and diaries of these novice writers, unpolished and hesitant yet rich with voice, show ordinary black men and women across the South using pen and paper to make sense of their experiences. Through an unprecedented gathering of these forgotten writings—from letters by individuals sold away from their families to petitions from freedmen in the army to their new leaders to a New Orleans man's transcription of the Constitution—*Word by Word* rewrites the history of emancipation. The idiosyncrasies of these untutored authors, Hager argues, reveal the enormous difficulty of straddling the border between slave and free. These unusual texts, composed by people with a unique perspective on the written word, force us to rethink the relationship between literacy and freedom. For African Americans at the end of slavery, learning to write could be liberating and empowering, but putting their hard-won skill to use often proved arduous and daunting, a portent of the tenuousness of the freedom to come.

Word by Word Christopher Hager, 2013-02-11 Consigned to illiteracy, American slaves left little record of their thoughts and feelings or so we have believed. But a few learned to use pen and paper to make sense of their experiences despite prohibitions. These authors' perspectives rewrite the history of emancipation and force us to rethink the relationship between literacy and freedom.

Toni Morrison and the Writing of Place Alice Sundman, 2022-03-28 How does Toni Morrison create and form her literary places? As one of the first studies exploring Morrison's archived drafts, notes, and manuscripts together with her published novels, this book offers fresh insights into her creative processes. It analyses the author's textual choices, her writerly strategies, and her process of writing, all combining in shaping her literary places. In a methodology combining close reading and genetic criticism, the book examines Morrison's writing, her drafting and crafting of her fictional places. Focusing primarily on the novels *Beloved* (1987), *Paradise* (1997), and *A Mercy* (2008), it analyses particular instances of written places, illuminating the manifold ways in which they are formed as text and showing the centrality of the ideas of joining, transformation, and articulation. Toni Morrison is a major literary figure in contemporary literature and is commonly considered one of the most influential American writers of the post-1960s era. Investigating the conjunction of her texts and manuscripts, this book continues, extends, and supplements the rich body of Morrison scholarship by illuminating how the genesis and formation of her multifaceted literary places constitute vital parts of her fictional writing.

Edinburgh Companion to Nineteenth-Century American Letters and Letter-Writing Celeste-Marie Bernier, 2016-02-15 Provides a wide-ranging entry point and intervention into scholarship on nineteenth-century American letter writing. This

comprehensive study by leading scholars in an important new field the history of letters and letter writing is essential reading for anyone interested in nineteenth century American politics history or literature Because of its mass literacy population mobility and extensive postal system nineteenth century America is a crucial site for the exploration of letters and their meanings whether they be written by presidents and statesmen scientists and philosophers novelists and poets feminists and reformers immigrants Native Americans or African Americans This book breaks new ground by mapping the voluminous correspondence of these figures and other important American writers and thinkers Rather than treating the letter as a spontaneous private document the contributors understand it as a self conscious artefact circulating between friends and strangers and across multiple genres in ways that both make and break social ties

Key Features Draws together different emphases on the intellectual literary and social uses of letter writing Provides students and researchers with a means to situate letters in their wider theoretical and historical contexts Methodologically expansive intellectually interrogative chapters based on original research by leading academics Offers new insights into the lives and careers of Louisa May Alcott Charles Brockden Brown Emily Dickinson Frederick Douglass Margaret Fuller Henry James Thomas Jefferson Abraham Lincoln Herman Melville Harriet Beecher Stowe and Edgar Allan Poe among many others

The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of the American Renaissance Christopher N. Phillips, 2018-03-07 The American Renaissance has been a foundational concept in American literary history for nearly a century The phrase connotes a period as well as an event an iconic turning point in the growth of a national literature and a canon of texts that would shape American fiction poetry and oratory for generations F O Matthiessen coined the term in 1941 to describe the years 1850 1855 which saw the publications of major writings by Hawthorne Melville Emerson Thoreau and Whitman This Companion takes up the concept of the American Renaissance and explores its origins meaning and longevity Essays by distinguished scholars move chronologically from the formative reading of American Renaissance authors to the careers of major figures ignored by Matthiessen including Stowe Douglass Harper and Longfellow The volume uses the best of current literary studies from digital humanities to psychoanalytic theory to illuminate an era that reaches far beyond the Civil War and continues to shape our understanding of American literature

Transformable Race Katy L. Chiles, 2014-02 Focusing on writers such as Phillis Wheatley Benjamin Franklin Samson Occum Charles Brockden Brown and others Transformable Race tells the story of how early Americans imagined contributed to and challenged the ways that one's racial identity could be formed in the time of the nation's founding

The Fugitive Blacksmith and Other Essential Writings by James W. C. Pennington Jan Stievermann, 2025-11-25 This volume recovers the unjustly forgotten African American abolitionist and minister James W C Pennington During the antebellum period Pennington was an internationally recognized intellectual an exemplary African American figure He was Yale Divinity School's first unofficial African American student and his intellectual achievement took him to Europe where he published a bestselling slave narrative and received an honorary Doctorate from

Germany's oldest university His writings lectures activism and direct resistance make him one of the forgotten architects of the American antislavery movement This volume is the first modern edition of any of Pennington's works including his slave narrative and his monumental treatise on Black history with a variety of his most impactful sermons activist writings and correspondence

Published by the Author Bryan Sinche, 2024-04-10 Publication is an act of power It brings a piece of writing to the public and identifies its author as a person with an intellect and a voice that matters Because nineteenth century Black Americans knew that publication could empower them and because they faced numerous challenges getting their writing into print or the literary market many published their own books and pamphlets in order to garner social political or economic rewards In doing so these authors nurtured a tradition of creativity and critique that has remained largely hidden from view Bryan Sinche surveys the hidden history of African American self publication and offers new ways to understand the significance of publication as a creative reformist and remunerative project Full of surprising turns Sinche's study is not simply a look at genre or a movement it is a fundamental reassessment of how print culture allowed Black ideas and stories to be disseminated to a wider reading public and enabled authors to retain financial and editorial control over their own narratives

The Black Newspaper and the Chosen Nation Benjamin Fagan, 2016 Benjamin Fagan shows how the early black press helped shape the relationship between black chosenness and the struggles for black freedom and equality in America in the process transforming the very notion of a chosen American nation

The Fateful Lightning Kathleen Diffley, 2021-11 The Fateful Lightning is the second volume of Kathleen Diffley's trilogy on Civil War magazine fiction While her first book of the trilogy *Where My Heart Is Turning Ever* charted the role of magazine fiction from the Northeast in grounding the rites of citizenship following the end of the Civil War The Fateful Lightning traces the sectional conflicts in a postwar nation and how region shaped the political agendas of these postwar editorials Diffley argues that the journals she examines present stories that give unpredictable results of sectional conflict and commemorate the Civil War differently from the northeastern publishing establishments She weaves this argument through her analysis of four literary journals Baltimore's *Southern Magazine* Charlotte's *The Land We Love* Chicago's *Lakeside Monthly* and San Francisco's *Overland Monthly* Diffley uses a method of literary analysis that looks at what is not only present in the text but also present throughout its historically informed context gleaning cultural meanings from what the stories also filter out Coupling this literary analysis with city studies Diffley's innovative approach demonstrates how these editorials offer varying gauges of continued political unrest rising social opportunity and conflicting commemorative investments as Reconstruction began to unfold

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