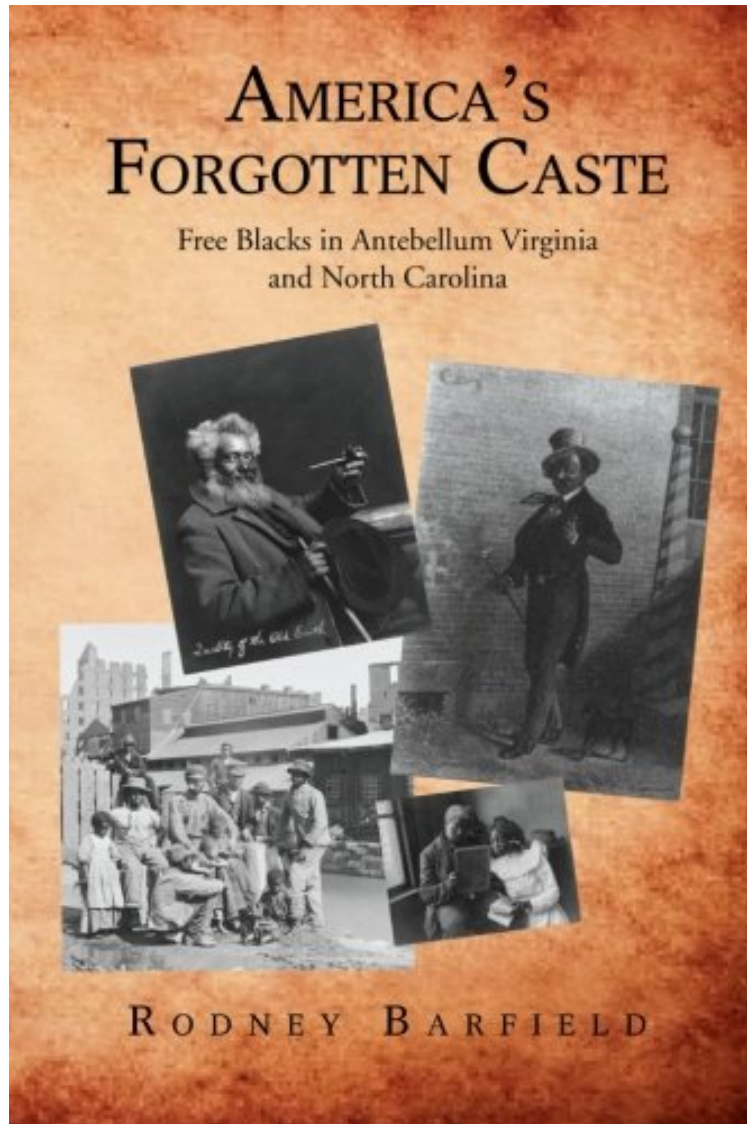


[Download] America's Forgotten Caste: Free Blacks in Antebellum Virginia and North Carolina

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Rodney Barfield

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#2514821 in Books Rodney Barfield 2013-05-14 2013-05-14 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x .57 x 6.00l, .74 #File Name: 1483619648224 pages America s Forgotten Caste | File size: 51.Mb

Rodney Barfield : America's Forgotten Caste: Free Blacks in Antebellum Virginia and North Carolina before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised America's Forgotten Caste: Free Blacks in Antebellum Virginia and North Carolina:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. It's not the black history that your grandmother studied!By Sara BarfieldThis isn't just history...it's revolutionary history that will change forever the way you look at the black struggle

to be respected for the color of their skin, not to try to overcome the color of their skin. Every black person in America reading this book will find in it redemption and truth and pride in their forefathers who came along in the same boats as the white folks came to America in the mid-1600's. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Historian's Assessment By Rodney Barfield The following review was written by Dr. James P. Elder II, formerly of Elon University Folger-Shakespeare Library. "My background in this area of history owes largely to growing up in the South. I knew some of the history but much of it was new to me. The book is therefore altogether riveting and in many ways novel to me. It provides a historical framework to understand a murky chapter in our racial history. I was greatly impressed by the author's efforts and by his conclusions and am fully persuaded by them. A superbly written book, highly recommended!" 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great Read. By Sharon Penny America's Forgotten Caste is an interesting read for anyone curious about the ill-defined world that existed between slavery and freedom in America. Free blacks, who were neither free nor necessarily black, lived in such a world where they fought off relentless efforts by whites to push them into the well-defined parameters of the enslaved. Despite a designation of "free," the small population of free blacks lived under onerous restrictive laws that limited their mobility and their civil rights. Colonial and state laws forbade literacy, religious freedom, and labor competition with whites. Free blacks were constricted in where they could live, who they could marry, legal protection by the courts, and interracial mingling of any nature. They formed America's social caste, denied citizenship and entry into white society, the precursor of the nation's 20th century segregation laws. Numerous free blacks pushed back against the inequitable caste system, and we meet many of the successful ones in this book. John Day became a noted missionary and supreme court justice in Liberia; his brother Thomas became one of the largest furniture makers in North Carolina. Other free blacks were successful as artisans, planters, ship owners and operators, and entrepreneurs of every description. Some of these stories and mini-biographies read like a Horatio Alger novel. America's Forgotten Caste, while footnoted for the student, is an intriguing and easy read for anyone interested in a dynamic chapter of the nation's history and the origins of America's racial divide.

Free blacks in antebellum America lived in a twilight world of oppressive laws and customs designed to suppress their mobility and their integration into civil society. Free blacks were free only to the extent of white tolerance in their community or town. They were at the mercy of the lowest members of the dominant race who could punish them on a whim. They were, in the words of a 19th century European traveler to America, "masterless slaves" Nonetheless, many successful and even prominent blacks emerged from the mire of oppressive laws and general public disdain to realize major achievements. Though excluded from the political process, from education, and from most professions they became preachers, teachers, missionaries, contractors, artisans, boat captains, and wealthy entrepreneurs. Members of this twilight social and legal class, which numbered nearly a half million by 1860, made great accomplishments against strong opposition in the first half of the 19th century. The history of America and of American slavery is woefully incomplete without their story.

About the Author RODNEY BARFIELD is a historian, author, and former history museum curator who has worked in regional history for the past forty years. His long-standing interest in Thomas Day, an antebellum free-black cabinetmaker, dates to an exhibit he curated for the North Carolina Museum of History in 1978. His book *Seasoned by Salt: A Historical Album of the Outer Banks* (University of North Carolina Press) pays tribute to the traditional ways of the ocean-oriented communities along the North Carolina barrier islands. He lives in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, where he continues to research and write regional history.