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Scarlet and Black

Slavery and Dispossession in Rutgers History

EDITED BY MARISA J. FUENTES AND DEBORAH GRAY WHITE

The 250th anniversary of the founding of Rutgers University is a perfect moment for the Rutgers community to reconcile its past, and acknowledge its role in the enslavement and debasement of African Americans and the disfranchisement and elimination of Native American people and culture.

Scarlet and Black documents the history of Rutgers's connection to slavery, which was neither casual nor accidental—nor unusual. Like most early American colleges, Rutgers depended on slaves to build its campuses and serve its students and faculty; it depended on the sale of black people to fund its very existence. Men like John Henry Livingston, (Rutgers president from 1810–1824), the Reverend Philip Milledoler, (president of Rutgers from 1824–1840), Henry Rutgers, (trustee after whom the college is named), and Theodore Frelinghuysen, (Rutgers's seventh president), were among the most ardent anti-abolitionists in the mid-Atlantic.

Scarlet and black are the colors Rutgers University uses to represent itself to the nation and world. They are the colors the athletes compete in, the graduates and administrators wear on celebratory occasions, and the colors that distinguish Rutgers from every other university in the United States. This book, however, uses these colors to signify something else: the blood that was spilled on the banks of the Raritan River by those dispossessed of their land and the bodies that labored unpaid and in bondage so that Rutgers could be built and sustained. The contributors to this volume offer this history as a usable one—not to tear down or weaken this very renowned, robust, and growing institution—but to strengthen it and help direct its course for the future.

The work of the Committee on Enslaved and Disenfranchised Population in Rutgers History.

MARISA J. FUENTES is an associate professor in women's and gender studies and history at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey. She is the author of *Dispossessed Lives*.

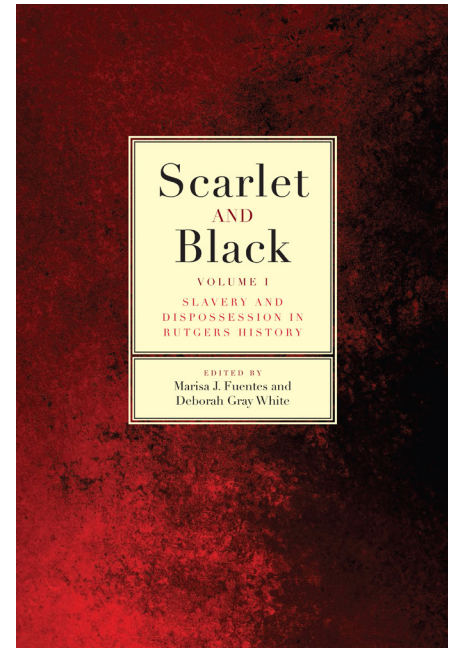
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