

EARLY AMERICAN WOMEN

A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY:
1600-1900

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SARAH FITZPATRICK

- Age: Ninety
- b. 1847, Alabama
- Enslaved: Alabama
- House servant

Interviewed, 1938, Alabama, by Thomas Campbell

When I seed you drove up dere in dat big car I got kind 'o scaid. Yo' see I'm here by ma'self, an' I won't sho' at fust whudder you wuzza white man er "Nigger." I wuz born back dere in de dark days. Ma' mama wuz brought to dis here country f'om Virginya widda fam'ly ob white fo'ks name Howards. She wuz de property ob her young Mistus. Ma had a husband named Henry Haggin owned by a white man whut lived on de jining plan'ation. Dey had 3 boys an' 3 gals. Ma' mama's Mistus got mar'ied to a white man in Alabama named Fitzpatrick an' when she come down here she brung all o' her "Nigger" property wid her. Dat wuz ma' mama an' her six chillun. Dey tried to buy her husban' f'om de white man whut owned'im, but he wouldn't sell so she had to come on widdout'im. When ma' mama got down here she had to change her name. All de chilluns names den b'come Fitzpatrick. Den she mar'ied a man on de Fitzpatrick plan'ation name "Cuff" Fitzpatrick. Dey had big wed'in's in dem days too. De way dey mar'ied in dem days de Niggers dey 'cided to git mar'ied an' den dey axed dair mama an' papa, an' den dey axed de white fo'ks who dey b'long to, an' ef it wuz al'rite wid dem dey got mar'ied. Some ob'em got mar'ied at de "Big House." Uh white preacher mar'ied dem. De white preacher he read de scripture, put yo' together an' tell'ya to min'ya Mistus an' Marster an' be good "Niggers." I'se one ob 3 gals f'om de seck'on mar'iage. I'm de ollest. De Fitzpatricks lived in de town 'o Tuskegee an' owned a plan'ation in dis county knowed as de ole "Skipper Place" but de ove'seers wuz de mean fo'ks. I'member one time de ove'seer wuz beetin' ma' brudder Mose an' mama axed'im not to kill'im, Mama wuz in de bed sick an' de white man se'd to her, "You wait till you git oudda dat bed, an' I'll double de po'tion on you." But mama never did git well, she died in chile birth.

When ma' mama died, I wuz small an' de white fo'ks tuk me in de "Big house," kep'mi dere 'tel 'mancipation. So, me, ma'self, ah hadda good time. Ma' daddy, he wuked down on de plan'ation. He use ta come to town ever 'Saddy an' come to de "Big House" to see'mi. . . .

Ma' daddy wuz'za "Nigger driver." He didn't haf'ta do no hard wurk lack de 'tothers. He ca'ied his strop jes' lack de white ove'seers, an' had po'er to whup "Niggers" jes' lack dey did. Co'se he al'ays tried to make it easy fer'um so he wouldn't haf'ta beat'em an' ma' white fo'ks didn't lack'ta have mean ove'seers needda. When dey got holt uf one, he didn't stay on de plan'ation long. De po' white fo'ks didn't own no "Niggers" an' rich white fo'ks hi'ed'im

Sarah Fitzpatrick's Story

Tuskegee Interview, 1938

John Blassingame, Slave Testimony: Two Centuries of Letters, Speeches, Interviews, and Autobiographies (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), pp. 639–655.

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In the 1930s, when the Federal Writers' Project interviewed former slaves, so did scholars at black institutions. Ninety-year-old Sarah Fitzpatrick of Tuskegee, Alabama, who told her story in 1938 to a researcher from Tuskegee Institute, was delighted to have a black interviewer and proved a most forthcoming, if not irrepressible, subject.

Sarah Fitzpatrick was only a teenager when the Civil War ended, but she had much to tell about "de dark days." Besides relating her family history and describing her childhood role as a house servant, she provided her recollections of courtship, religion, recreation, folklore, emancipation, and more. She also discussed her experience in the postwar South. Finally, she voiced her current opinions on such topics as color prejudice, race relations, white people, Tuskegee Institute, and its founder, Booker T. Washington. The excerpts that follow are primarily those that concern slavery. However, Sarah Fitzpatrick moved rapidly back and forth between past and present, and her comparisons are as interesting as her memories. The complete interview, located in the Thomas Monroe Campbell Papers at Tuskegee Institute, is available in John Blassingame's *Slave Testimony*.

to manage dair "Niggers" an' dey didn't lack'em, an' dats whut made it so hard fer us in dem days. When de Yankees come an' seed ma' daddy wid'er big strap on his belt, drivin' "Niggers" jes' lack white fo'ks, dey made'im "hit de grit," and den dey caught'im an' tuk'im wid de Union Army. He wuz wid'em fer 4 or 5 years too. He traveled al'round de country an' ad' der de war wuz over he come back home. De white ove'seers tuk to de woods too when de Yanks come an' de Yanks went an' opuned de jail, tol' de "Niggers" to come on out, dey wuz free. Dey hadda "Nigger" man in dere who wuz to be hung an' dey turned'im loose. Dey se'd, "all uf'ya is free, come on out."

I 'member fo' de war, us chillun use'ta go out in de even'in an' watch de white fo'ks drill. Dey thought "Niggers" didn't un'erstand whut wuz gwin' on, but dey knowed whut it meant, dey wuz jes' scaid to say anythin' 'bout it.

When de Yanks come to Tuskegee de white fo'ks hist de white flag. Ma' ol' Marster hadda heeppa gold 'n silver an' wuz scaid ah tell wha' it wuz buried, he wouldn't talk to me but he made some ob de "Niggers" help'im move it an' bury it again an' he had de "Niggers" hide de mules at night in de swamp, but de Yankees found de mules an' tuk all de good'uns an' left deir ol' wore out mules fer de white fo'ks to plow.

Ever since I wuzza little bit'ah gal I stayed rite in de house wid ma' Mistus, played wid de white chillun, slep' in deir beds an' et' rite at deir table. In ma' case, I had jus'ta good'ah time 'fore de Yanks come as I did a'ter de war. I waited on de white chillun, set de table an' toted de food f'om de kitchen to de dinin' room. Ma' a'nt done de cookin' an' she wuz de mammy. She nu'sed de white babies f'om her own breas'. We use'ta fight a whole lot too, wid de white chillun when dey wuz comin' f'om school. We all played together an' we use'ta have rock battles. Dey'd say, "Gimme leave" an' we'd say "Take it f'om de trees," den de battle would start. 'Member one day I tho'ed a rock at a white boy, knocked'im out too. All de ud' der chillun run off an' lef' mi told' mi I dun kill dat boy. But he come too an' he didn't bodder me no mo' needda. . . .

I wuz sixteen years ol' when surrender come, but I didn't 'ceive no comp'ny tell way a'ter de war. I didn't court none tell a'ter ma daddy come back f'om de war, den de boys commence comin' to see me. Dey had'ta come up to de white fo'ks house an' dey had'ta sho' a pass. White fo'ks would ask de boys ef dey hadda pass an' ef dey had one it wuz al'rite, ef not dey had'ta go back home an' git one or stay 'way. Ya'see dis wuz always bes' coze ef de "Pattero's" come up an' axed fer er pass an' de boy didn't have it dey made'im drap his britches right dere in front ob de gals an' take a beatin'. De gals would git shame an' go in de house. De white fo'ks rudder have de boys an' gals on de same plan'ation go together cause ef dey got mar'ied it wuz al'ays inconvenient wid de wif' livin' in one place an' de husban' livin' in 'nother an' when dey couldn't buy de husban' or de wif' dey jes' had'ta stay sep'rate, de man had'ta git a pass to go see his wif'. Sho' wuz a whole lot ob trouble.

In dem times "Niggers" had'ta hav'va pass to go to church too. White fo'ks axed you whut church ya' wan'na go to an' dey issue ya a pass, write on dere

de name ob de church an' de name ob de pu'son an' de time to git back home. Co'se when "Niggers" went to church wid deir white fo'ks dey didn't haf'ta have no pass. Ya'see, us "Niggers" had our meetin' in de white fo'ks Baptist Church in de town o' Tuskegee. Dere's a place up in de loft dere now dat dey built fer de "Nigger" slaves to 'tend church wid de white fo'ks. White preacher he preach to de white fo'ks an' when he git thu' wid dem he preach some to de "Niggers." Tell'em to mind deir Marster an' b'have deyself an' dey'll go to Hebben when dey die. Dey come 'round an' tell us to pray, git 'ligion, dat wuz on Sun'dy, but dey'ed beat de life out'cha de next day ef ya didn't walk de chalk line. Our white fo'ks made us go to church an' Sun'dy School too. Dey made us read de Catechism. G'ess de re'son fo' dat wuz, dey tho't it made us min' dem bedder. "Niggers" commence'ta wanna go to church by de'selves, even ef dey had'ta meet in de white church. So white fo'ks have deir service in de mornin' an' "Niggers" have deirs in de evenin', a'ter dey clean up, wash de dishes, an' look a'ter ever'thing. Den de white fo'ks come back at night an' have deir Church Service. Ya'see "Niggers" lack'ta shout a whole lot an' wid de white fo'ks al'round'em, dey couldn't shout jes' lack dey want to. . . .

Talkin' 'bout courtin', we use'ta court by tell'in riddles. Boy set an' look at'cha an' laff an' den he'd say, "Ef ah had two strings cross de sea, one black an' one white, which one would you choose?" Co'se ya know ef de boy wuz black, de gal would say ah choose de black'un. Ef her comp'ny wuz yaller she'd say I choose de yaller'un. White fo'ks ax us, "What do yo'al say when ya court?" We tell 'em we jes' laff an talk. Dey ax' us ef de boys ever ax us to kiss 'em an' marry dem. We sey, "No Ma'am." Dey say "Yo'al don't know how to court," den dey tell us how to court. My Mistus use'ta look at my dress an' tell me when hit wuz right. Sometime she make me go back an' put on 'nother one, tell us what to wear, tell us to go back an' com' our heads. Young "Niggers" f'om sev'ral plan'ations used to git toget'er at one'er der white fo'ks houses an' have a big time. White fo'ks lact to git 'round an' watch 'em, make 'em ring up an' play games an' things lack dat. You see de "Niggers" couldn't write in dem days an' ef a boy wanted to court a gal he had to git his Marster to write a letter fer him an' den de gal's Mistus had to read de letter to her an' write de boy back. Co'se white fo'ks had'ta no' anyway whut wuz in de letter, anytime you writ a note, white fo'ks had'ta no' whut it sed. Dat meant dey had'ta read all yer love letters. Co'se dere wuz some "Niggers" whut could read, but dey kep' dat up deir sleeve, dey played dumb lack dey couldn't read a bit tell a'ter surrender. My cousins Jim an' Jessie Fitzpatrick could read an' write too, but dey wouldn't let de white fo'ks no' it. Ma' white fo'ks didn't mine de white chillun teachin' us to read but I tell'um I didn't wanna learn how to read, too much trouble. When I commence courtin' I had plenty fellers. Co'se I didn't care nothin' 'bout 'um much, all I cared fer wuz frolicin', dancin', gwin' to big candy pullin's, an' plenty music. . . .

Now I didn't marry tell long time a'ter 'Mancipation. Ya'see a'ter de war closed all de "Niggers" wuz lookin' round fer deir own fo'ks. Husbands lookin'

fer dey wives, an' wives lookin' fer dey husbands, chillun lookin' fer pa'ents, pa'ents lookin' fer chillun, ever'thing sho' wuz scrambled up in dem days. I axed my Mistus ef I could go to my gram'ma, she sed "Yes, you kin go. Go an' what you wanna, you no' you is free now. Live wid us ef you wanna. You know we always got long here toget'er." I toll her yas'sum, but I wanted to go live wid ma' gram'ma. Den lat'er on my papa come back f'om de war an' begin lookin' 'round fer me an' here'd I wuz wit ma' gram'ma, so he sont fer me to com an' live wid him an' his wife—ma' step'ma. I stayed wid dem 'till I wuz good'in grown. Den I commence gwin wid a man name Willis Jackson an' got married to 'im. See, a'ter surrender we got "Nigger" preachers to marry'us. White preachers married us ef we wanted dem to but we ruther a "Nigger preacher" marry'us. Jackson wuz 'bout 23 ye'rs old, leas' he said he wuz. Co'se I b'lieve he wuz older dan me. I wuz 'bout 23 or 28 ye'rs old. In dem times it wuz hard to keep up wid "Niggers" age 'cept what de white fo'ks told 'em. Me an' ma' husband didn't make out so good. Willis wont no good a'tall. He jes' wouldn't do nothin' but hunt an' fish. I told him I mar'ied him to take care 'o me, not me to take care o' him. He wuzn't mean, an' didn't run a'ter wimmen, nothin' lack dat, he wuz a Christ'un but he'd jes' do anythin' to keep f'om workin'. Tried to whup me once, but I beat'im to it. He come in one night jes' as hot as he could be; got some switches to whup me, but I cot'im, tuk his switches 'way f'om 'im an' th'owed 'im down, an' choked'im, 'tel he hollered fer ma' sister to come an' take me up off'im. I told'im, "Willie you can't whup me, you whup chillun, you don't whup grown f'oks. I'm grown." You see in dem days I wuz much uv'a 'oman, an' hit tuk a good'un to manhan'le me. Me an' Jackson jes' couldn't make it so he left home. He went way down in "Loos'ana" somewha', den he come back an' tried to git me to go wid'im, but I told'im I aint lost nothin' in "Loos'ana," den he went on back down dere somewhar an' I never did he'r f'om'im but once a'ter dat. I 'spec' he's livin' now, I never did he'r dat he wuz dead. We didn't stay together but one year.

A'ter I sep'rated f'om my husband I had a chile by a man named Jesse Ford. Dis wuz a boy an' his name wuz Jesse too. Den Jesse Ford died an' I tuk ma' chile an' moved on Lige Johnson's place to work fer him; he was a big "Nigger" landowner, run a big plan'ation, jes' lack white fo'ks, had a sto'e an' ever'thing.

Lige's wif' died a few years a'ter I went to live wid 'em, den I went to havin' chillun by him. He kept on promis'in to marry me, but he nuver did git 'round to hit, he jes' kep' puttin' off, an' puttin' off, 'tel fin'ly he married 'nother 'oman. He wuz kind'a good to de chillun dough. . . .

I had twelve chillun by Lige, an' I stayed dere 'tel ma' ol'les son, Jesse, got to be nineteen. . . .

In dem days dey didn't have no horse'pitals fer white fo'ks, much les' fer de "Niggers." When a chile wuz born de doctor brought hit in de worl' at de house. You know I nuver did he'r ob no midwif' 'tel a'ter Surrender. Dere mit'ta ben some but I didn't know nothin' 'bout 'um. Co'se a'ter dat de white

doctors com'ence trainin' de "Niggers" to wait on dem an' found dat dey would do it so good dat dey giv' dem li'sens to practice as midwif's. When I git sick an' doos all I kin I b'lieve in git'in' a doctor. Back in dem days we al'ays had white doctors, I didn't have a "Nigger" doctor put his han's on me 'tel 'bout seb'en years back. I jes' thot a white doctor un'erstood ma' con's-tution better dan' a "Nigger" doctor. I got a daughter livin' up in Cleveland, Ohio an' she sent fer me to come up dere an' spen' some time wid her. W'ile I wuz up dere I got sick an' dey sent fer a doctor to come in an' when I found out he wuz a "Nigger" I sho' did feel funny wid dat "Nigger" doctor waitin' on me. Den when I come back home I had a "Nigger" doctor agin so now I feel safe wid'um. . . .

When we sta'ed at de white fo'ks house dey wouldn't let us wash in deir bath tubs, dey had sep'rate tubs fer us. Dey'd make us wash all over some nights an' odder nights dey'd make us wash our feet an' legs, den we went to bed. Sho', we had to keep clean, but we didn't have no night shirts, we slep' in our under clo'es an' ever'body bathe on Sad'dy night. At de "Big House" in town de white fo'ks had toilets fer de white fo'ks an' sep'rate toilets fer de "Niggers." "Niggers" wont 'lowed to go in dey toilets a'tall. "Niggers" didn't drink out ob de white fo'ks buckets an' dippers needda. All de "Niggers" had deir own cups an' glasses to drink out uv. When a "Nigger" got a chance to live in de "Big House" wid de white fo'ks he thot he wuz somebody. Wha' I lived, we all et right at de same table wha' de white fo'ks et. When dey git thru dey'd tell us whut things to put up an' den de res' wuz lef' on de table an' we'd set right down an' eat jes' lack dey did. No sah, dey didn't fix no plates fer us an' han'em out de windows. . . .

Yo' mother an' my mother had a hard time in de ole days. You see we all b'longed to our Mistus an' Marster. Whatever dey done whuther it wuz right 'er wrong, us couldn't help ou'selves. When I got 'ligion, I tole de Lord I knowed I had dun wrong an' lived all kinds 'er lif' an' I wanted him to have 'mussy on'me, jes' so I could bring up ma' chillun in de feah ob de Lord. W'ile ma' chilluns wuz com'in' I had'ta do so much hard work in de fiel', now, I com'ence to git sick an' de Lord is de only pur'son I can look to fer he'p. I dun' so much hard work fer white fo'ks dat ef dey had paid me I could'er been rich, at leas' I'd hav'va 'nuf to take care'er me in ma' ole age.

Now, 'bout'er good 'oman an' a bad'un. You kin nuver tel 'bout'em 'tel'ya had dealin's wid'um. Ever'thing dat looks lack gold ain't gold. Er white 'oman an' cot'in is deaf' to'er darkie. Ef "Nigger" men git mixed up wid'um, white men will kill'um sho'. Tell dese "Nigger" boys, "Better let'um 'lone." Co'se up Nor'f maybe dey kin go wid'um, but dem is jes' de low clas'. Back in ma' er'ly days, white wimmin didn't pay much 'tention to "Nigger" men, so we didn't have many lyn'chins den. But since we got free an' "Niggers" got some ed'ucation an' all dressed up, an' look so nice, white gals lacks'um. But I tell'um dey should not pay no 'tention to dat. In dis day an' time when a "Nigger" 'oman whut takes up time wid a white man she is des'a fool, coze ef her

brudder jes' looks at'er white 'oman a white man will kill'im. Cotton is whut keeps "Niggers" so po', dey wurks hard all year an' make de cotton an' white fo'ks git it all.

Yaller "Niggers" thinks dey'self better dan'er black "Niggers." I tell'em, "You may be yaller but'cha gotta take'er "Nigger" stoops jes' lack me." Dere's yaller "Niggers" right here whut thinks dey is bedder dan any blacks. Sally J—wuz'er yaller "Nigger," she dead now, her mamma had'er back in slavery time, on de plan'ation by a white ove'seer. She had seb'en chillun, all ob'em by a white man 'cept one. She put one'er her daughters in school at Tuskegee an' let'er stay dere a w'ile, den she come an' tuk'er out an' ca'ied her back down on de plan'ation an' "sold her" to a white man. Sally said she didn't want none ob her chillun to marry'er black "Nigger." De reason our race is mixed up so, is by fool'in wid 'dese white men. Co'se back in de days when I come 'long us wimmin couldn't hep'it ef a white man wanted to take up time wid us.

De "Lamp Black Nigger" is de mos' 'pendable co'se he is "honest got." But, some white fo'ks say, dat when a "Nigger" is so black he jes' natu'ly mean. I tell'em he may be so black 'tel he's slick an' shines, but he kin be honest. Sometimes "Jet Black Niggers" is 'shamed ob dey'self, 'specially when dey gits wid white fo'ks an' yaller "Niggers." Dat ain't no use co'se he's jes' as good as any o' de res' ob'em. All o' ma' chilluns is black "Niggers," ain't no mix'ures in dem. Co'se de "Niggers" gittin brighter, but dere ain't so many rail white'uns now, is dere use'ta be. Ya'see dats 'cause de white wimmin got b'hind "Nigger" wimmin an' white men an' dey jes' breakin' it up.

Love is a won'erful thing. A mother al'ays loves her chillun. Don't care whut dey do. Dey may do 'rong but it's stil' her chile. Den dere is de love uv'va 'oman fer her man, but it ain't nut'in lack a mother's love fer her chillun. I loves a man when he treats me right but I ain't never had no graveyard love fer no man. . . .

"Niggers" didn't kill one'nudder much in dem days. Dere's mo' killin' 'mong "Niggers" now dan I ever he' red of. Back dere "Niggers" jes' had fights 'mong de'selves, ef dey got too bad white fo'ks whup'em. Co'se when white fo'ks kill darkies nothin' wuz dun 'bout it. When a "Nigger" kilt anudder "Nigger" an' run 'way, de white fo'ks sont an' got'im an' brung'im back an' beat'im an' make'im wurk dat much harder. I hadda cousin dat kilt a "Nigger" man once 'bout some corn. Dey wuz runnin' a farm toget'er, he went in dere an' pulled mo' dan his share of ro'sin-ears, so dey hadda fight 'bout it. Ma cousin cut'im to deaf' wid a gret' big, long dirk, a'ter he kilt'im, he come to our house wid a big bloody dirk. Lack'ta scaid me to deaf' when he tol' ma papa whut he'd dun, den he left dere an' run 'way, went down b'lo Montgom'ry som'wha an' changed his name an' de white fo'ks didn't niver ketch'im. We ain't niver he'erd f'om'im since. Lotta "Niggers" whut had trouble wid white fo'ks run 'way to udder states and changed dey names, som'time dey got caught, but heap o' times dey niver could find'em. Dat wuz mos'ly a'ter surrender.

Mos' all de "Niggers" use'ta steal in Slav'ry time, co'se 'bout all dey stole f'om dey Marster 'n Mistrus wuz sum'in t'eat, steal hogs 'n kill'um an' clean'um at night den dey dig a pit an' put'um 'way in de woods, den dey go back dere an' git some uv'it when dey want it, an' cook it. Som'times de white fo'ks ketch'em wid it an' beat'em. Didn't have no cook stove in dem times. Som' uv'em cook out doors, some uv'em in fi'place. Any "Nigger" would steal when he didn't git 'nuff t'eat. Ya'fam'ly didn't git but three an' haf' pounds uv meat, one an' er haf' pecks uv meal a week, dat wont e'nuff, so "Niggers" jes' had'ta steal. He didn't steal nothin' but sump'in t'eat dough. Co'se ma' white fo'ks wuz high class, deir house gals didn't have no right to steal 'cause ma' mistrus tel' us anythin' we want, don't take it, but ax' fer it. Ef we wanna wear piece of her jewry' we ax' her fer it an' she let us wear it, to church som'time. She leave money 'roun an' udder val'able things an' we didn't bodder it. Dey taught us not to take things. I knowed whar ma' marster kep' his money box; he kep'it right out in de sec'e'tary. He niver did bodder 'bout lockin' it up fo'm us. We jes' didn't bodder his money. Durin' de war de white fo'ks sunt all de cot'on dey could git to de war to make gun ward'in. "Niggers" didn't think dat stealin' wuz so bad in dem times. Fak' is dey didn't call it stealin', dey called it takin'. Dey say, "I ain't takin' fo'm nobody but ma' mistrus an' Marster, an' I'm doin' dat 'cause I'se hongry." "Niggers" use'ta steal cot'on an' anything dey could sell to 'nudder white man. Co'se dats whut de whites taught'em. . . .

I've lived all ma' life he'er in de South but ef I could'da gone north when I wuz young, I'd lacked it bedder, see deres mo' to be seen up dere. People is kinder up dere, dey call dat God's Country. Ain't no Mistrus's an' Marsters up dere, say yes an' no up dere. When I wuz up dere wid ma' fo'ks, dey say, "Now mama, a'ter ya cross de Mason-Dixie Line, all de pe'ple is de same up he'er." No gwin in de back door. White fo'ks an' "Niggers" go in an' out de same door up dere. Co'se ef I had'ta work out in de cold up North, I guess I'd like down here bedder but de white fo'ks up dere wuz so kind to me, I didn't know how to take it. It wuz jes' hard fer me to git use to it at fust. Den when I got all settle down, I said, "Dis sho'ly must be God's Country." Ma' daughter lived in de same buildin' wha' de white fo'ks live'. De whites lived up stairs an' ma' daughter down stairs. Ya'know it makes a heep'o dif'ense when er "Nigger" is in a country wha' he's not al'ays scaid dat sump'in gonna hap'en all de time; scaid he gwin butt into some white fo'ks an' have trouble, al'ays scaid ya' gwin do sump'in 'rong an' have de white fo'ks beat'cha up. See de "Nigger" ain't got no law, no flag, no nothin'. He lives under de white man's law, dat's whut keeps him dis'sad'isfied, an' niverous all de time. De white man don't want de "Nigger" to have nothin' to do wid rulin'. Ya' know when white fo'ks treat "Niggers" mean hit ain't 'cause dey think it's right, dey jes' think dat de "Nigger" is nothin' mo' dan a brute. Dey don't want'cha to say yas an' naw to dem needda. Ef ya do, dey think ya crazy. Co'se up North, ef ya say yes an' naw to dem, dey think nothin' 'bout it. But down he'er hits

