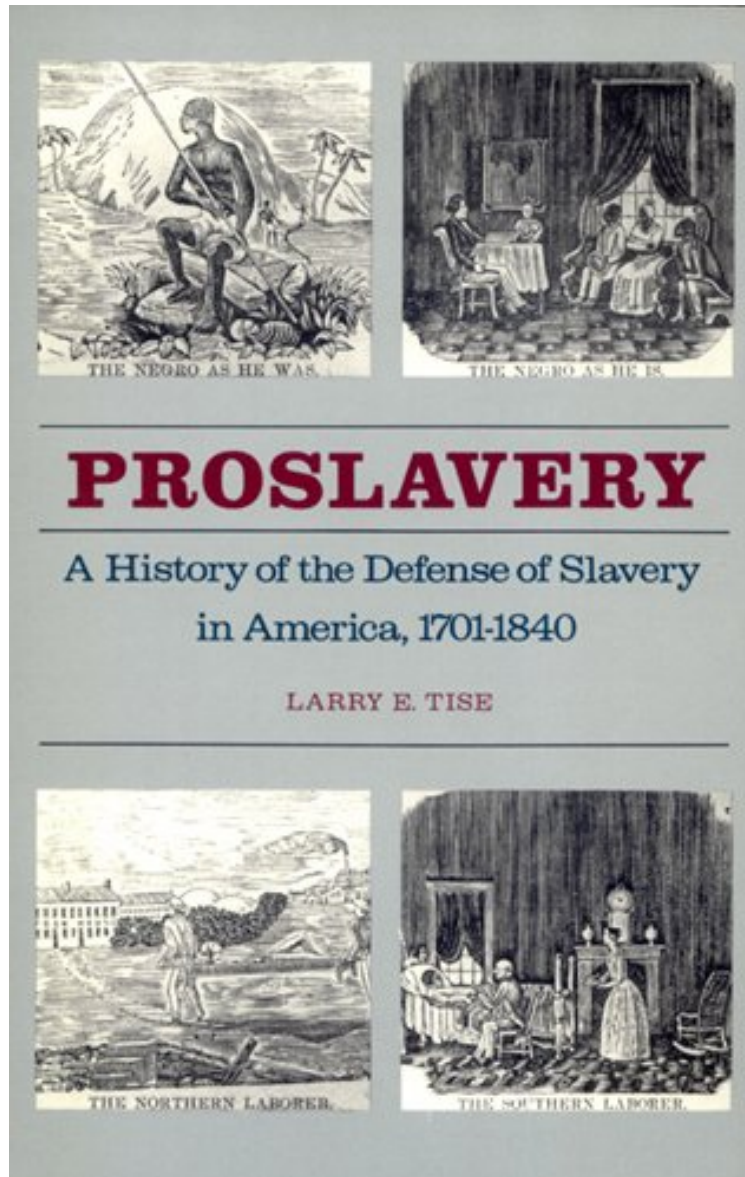


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Proslavery: A History of the Defense of Slavery in America, 1701–1840

Larry Tise

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preachers ...By Thomas K. CarberryDid you know Dartmouth and Princeton pumped out pro-slavery preachers? Did you know many of the justifications for slavery came from the Bible? Did you know that much of the debate of slavery came not over its morality, but over its cost benefit analysis and bottom line profit margin?Or that President Woodrow Wilson's father made his name preaching in favor of slavery?Slavery remains with us to this day in the 13th Amendment and all Americans should read about our evil past, I think.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. ProslaveryBy Frederick TresslerA useful book for students of early American history. The author challenges popularly held beliefs as to origins of support for the intuition of slavery. Tise does an excellent job making his case.3 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Food for ThoughtBy M. ChessonI read Larry Tise's Proslavery not long after it was published, because I was asked to review it. I found it well written, but somewhat dense, yet very rewarding. Some antebellum wit said of the region, "alas for the South, her books have grown fewer, she never was much for literature."While some can think of exceptions to that statement, it was generally true. White Southerners were not a bookish people, and did not produce, or read, volumes by the carload. If you subtract titles in law, political philosophy, and theology, the list is even shorter. What Tise does is trace the origins of the pro-slavery defense or "positive good" argument back to its origins among New England clergy and other northern thinkers and writers. His volume, at just over five hundred pages, is not easy reading, but he deals with an important subject, has an original thesis, and proves many of his points.Michael B. ChessonFounding Professor and DeanThe American College of History Legal Studies

Probing at the very core of the American political consciousness from the colonial period through the early republic, this thorough and unprecedented study by Larry E. Tise suggests that American proslavery thought, far from being an invention of the slave-holding South, had its origins in the crucible of conservative New England.Proslavery rhetoric, Tise shows, came late to the South, where the heritage of Jefferson's ideals was strongest and where, as late as the 1830s, most slaveowners would have agreed that slavery was an evil to be removed as soon as possible. When the rhetoric did come, it was often in the portmanteau of ministers who moved south from New England, and it arrived as part of a full-blown ideology. When the South finally did embrace proslavery, the region was placed not at the periphery of American thought but in its mainstream.

From Publishers WeeklyTise here studies the "proslavery ideology," "a mode of thinking . . . and a system of symbols that expressed the social, cultural and moral values of a large portion of the American population" in the first half of the 19th century. In a sweeping examination of the point at which America's "Revolutionary ideology" was finally supplanted by an ascendant counterrevolutionary response to a rising tide of abolitionism, he documents his conviction that the defense of slaveryespecially after the so-called Missouri compromise and the public arguments against slavery by such voices as that of William Lloyd Garrison in *Liberator*was neither a sectional, nor a Southern, but a national phenomenon. Tise chronicles a constant stream of books, articles, pamphlets and sermonshis chapter on the growth of proslavery arguments by clergy, usually derived from narrow interpretations of Scripture, is illuminatingand builds to a remarkable and probably controversial exploration of the "proslavery Republicanism," which he sees as the full flowering of the conservative Federalist viewpoint that had only temporarily been defeated by America's founding fathers when they framed our Constitution. Tise is director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Illustrations. Copyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc. Historians generally associate proslavery thought and rhetoric with the Old South, seeing it as the response of self-interested planters to the threats of abolitionism . . . Through extensive research, Tise makes a compelling case that the proslavery arguments of the Old South were neither unique nor stated with greater conviction than in other parts of the nation. He finds the roots of proslavery thought among New England's Federalists and conservative ministers, men who feared slave rebellion and doubted the wisdom of the libertarian ideology of the American Revolution . . . A clearly written, closely argued thesis built on thorough use of primary sources. (Choice)Tise here studies the 'proslavery ideology, a mode of thinking . . . and a system of symbols that expressed the social, cultural and moral values of a large portion of the American population' in the first half of the 19th century . . . Tise chronicles a constant stream of books, articles, pamphlets and sermons?his chapter on the growth of proslavery arguments by clergy, usually derived from narrow interpretations of Scripture, is illuminating?and builds to a remarkable and probably controversial exploration of the 'proslavery Republicanism,' which he sees as the full flowering of the conservative Federalist viewpoint that had only temporarily been defeated by America's founding fathers when they framed our Constitution. (Publishers Weekly)Tise challenges everything that has long been held sacred by historians of the proslavery movement. Moreover, he offers us not simply a revisionist but a revolutionary thesis. He has severed proslavery from slavery and found its home in the very place where others had detected the origins of abolitionism. Most significantly, Tise has redefined proslavery thought (Kenneth S. Greenberg *American Historical*)About the AuthorLarry E. Tise, author or editor of several books on southern history, is director of the Benjamin Franklin Institute in Philadelphia.