



# **The Price of Freedom: Slavery and Manumission in Baltimore and Early National Maryland**

*T. Whitman*

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A stereotypical image of manumission is that of a benign plantation owner freeing his slaves on his deathbed. But as Stephen Whitman demonstrates, the truth was far more complex, especially in border states where manumission was much more common.

Whitman analyzes the economic and social history of Baltimore to show how the vigorous growth of the city required the exploitation of rural slaves. To prevent them from escaping and to spur higher production, owners entered into arrangements with their slaves, promising eventual freedom in return for many years' hard work. *The Price of Freedom* reveals how blacks played a critical role in freeing themselves from slavery. Yet it was an imperfect victory. Once Baltimore's economic growth began to slow, freed blacks were virtually excluded from craft apprenticeships, and European immigrants supplanted them as a trained labor force.

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