Columbia's Civil War Presidents: How Charles King and Frederick A.P. Barnard's Views On Slavery Shaped Columbia

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The path is not always plain and clear of difficulties; for here, as elsewhere, the frailties of our imperfect humanity play their part, just as well with teachers as with learners. -Charles King at the Inauguration of Frederick A.P Barnard, Columbia College, June 29, 1864

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In March 1864, after fifteen years of service, Columbia College President Charles King tendered his letter of resignation to the Board of Trustees. Two months later, the Board announced that Frederick A.P. Barnard would succeed him. Thus, in 1864, during the height of the Civil War, Columbia College replaced as president a prominent anti- slavery figure and member of the Loyal Publication Society with the immediate past president of the University of Mississippi, a former slaveholder, and defender of the South's constitutional right to maintain slavery before the war. Although both ardent Unionists, King and Barnard maintained distinctly opposing positions on slavery before the war's outbreak, and while King quickly mobilized in favor of emancipation and began to consider the rights of freed people, Barnard never lost his affinity for and connection to the South. Out of the necessity of finding employment in the Union, Barnard's views on slavery evolved, although he rarely chose to mention the issue once living in the North.

Charles King put Columbia College on an anti-slavery path before and during the Civil War. Once arriving at Columbia, Barnard understood the maintenance of King's anti-slavery legacy to be obligatory. He consequently remained silent on emancipation and the question of future rights for freed people. In the 1870s and 1880s, as Barnard became an advocate at Columbia for the inclusion of religious minority and female students, his vision never expanded to embrace African Americans. Both presidents' personal backgrounds and beliefs on slavery are reflected in Columbia's atmosphere during the Civil War Era and its response to contemporary issues.

Born into an illustrious New York merchant family in 1789, Charles King was the second son of Rufus King, a signer of the U.S. Constitution, George Washington's minster to Great Britain, a presidential candidate, a trustee of Columbia College, and a prominent early

anti-slavery figure. Educated in England while his father was engaged in diplomatic service, young Charles shared a classroom with Lord Byron and Sir Robert Peel, who later supported the abolition of slavery in Great Britain.[1] Moreover, with his father the architect of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 forbidding slavery in territories north of the Ohio River, and a strong opponent of the Missouri Compromise of 1820 that admitted Missouri as a slave state while prohibiting slavery's expansion north of the 36°30' parallel, Charles King understood from an early age that slavery was, as his father stated during the Senate debates on the Compromise, "evil."[2]

After graduating from Harvard College and serving a brief stint in the New York state legislature, Charles King became a journalist at *The New York American* under the tutelage of its publisher Johnson Verplanck. When Verplanck died in 1829, King assumed the position of editor, publishing articles condemning the mistreatment of slaves, the institution of slavery, and the negative influence of slavery on national politics. Throughout his journalistic career, King printed articles and editorials in support of anti-slavery positions including the right of abolitionists to circulate their materials through the post, the abolition of slavery by England and France, and the anti-slavery position of politicians such as John Quincy Adams.[3] Additionally, during his tenure at the *New York American,* King did not hesitate to express his personal anti-slavery views. A speaker at a meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1863 recalled that in 1834 King commented on the violent New York City anti-abolition riots that razed the house of abolitionist Lewis Tappan, "Fire cannot

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[1] "The Late Dr. Charles King," *Frank Leslie's Weekly,* October 19, 1867. Accessible Archives.
[2] Rufus King, "Speeches Delivered in the Senate on the Missouri Bill," 1819. Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. http://www.nbclearn.com/portal/site/k-12/flatview?cuecard=33114
[3] Various newspaper articles found on Accessible Archives.

burn the convictions out of these men."[4] King thus praised the strong anti-slavery principles of the early abolitionists. Throughout the 1830s and 1840s, King established a record of support for anti-slavery.

For almost two decades King led the *New York American* to success and critical acclaim. After the *New York American* merged with the *Courier and Enquirer* in 1845, King moved to the *Courier and Enquirer* where he remained an editor, continuing to publish anti-slavery articles despite the more moderate anti-slavery views of his new editor, James Watson Webb who promoted colonization. King left the newspaper when the Columbia Board of Trustees tapped him to become the ninth president of Columbia College. King was inaugurated on November 28, 1849.

As President of Columbia College in the 1850s, King persisted in his anti-slavery activities. For example, in August 1854, King was elected president of the Kansas Emigration League of New York, which had as its goal Kansas' entrance into the Union as a free state and the promotion of anti-slavery emigrants to the territory.[5] In 1856, the brutal caning of Massachusetts Senator Charles Sumner on the floor of the U.S. Senate by the unapologetic Congressman Preston Brooks of South Carolina became a turning point for King on the issue of slavery. Like many other Northerners, King was enraged at the suppression of free speech and the seemingly interminable control of the South over the national government. King spoke with great emotion at "the great Sumner Indignation Meeting" at the Tabernacle in New York City on June 20, 1856. In his speech, he decried not only the suppression of free speech but "especially the ignoble cause of all, slavery."[6] King

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[4] "The Anti-Slavery Anniversary at Philadelphia," *The Liberator,* December 18, 1863. Accessible Archives.
[5] *The Weekly Portage Sentinel.* (Ravenna, Ohio), Aug. 24 1854. Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Lib. of Congress.
[6] "Speech of Charles King, Esq.," *The Liberator,* June 20, 1856. Accessible Archives.

continued, "I am here, pledged to whatever may be the necessary consequences of this meeting, come they when they may. The time has come when we must talk just so, and when we must act up to our talk." Thus, King went beyond mere denunciation of the caning of Sumner, but firstly condemned slavery and then announced his support for further action beyond political speeches. Although he failed to specify what such action might entail, he seems to imply violent retribution in the name of Sumner. The caning of Sumner, a deeply political event, ignited in King a strong passion and a need to broadcast publically his fervent disapproval of slavery and the power of Southern politicians in Washington, or, as he named the capital in his speech, "the camp of the enemy."[7]

In this period prior to secession and civil war, Columbia College maintained no official position on slavery despite King's clear opposition and anti-slavery political activity. Nonetheless, the college's stance on slavery was discussed in at least one New York publication. *Frank Leslie's Weekly* reported on Columbia's Commencement in 1859, presided over by Dr. King: "The national crime was alluded to by several of the orators, which showed that the atmosphere of the College is favorable to freedom." [8] It continued that the speeches carryied titles such as "The Battle of Great Principles" and "In Our Defense."[9] King had fostered an atmosphere favorable to anti- slavery expression by the close of the 1850s. Thus, on the eve of the Civil War, King had a proven record of opposition to slavery (if not abolition) and, while not as obvious, had led Columbia College in that direction.

The pre-Civil War record of Frederick A.P. Barnard could not be more different. Born in Massachusetts on May 5, 1809, Barnard attended boarding school at the Stockbridge

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[7] Ibid.
[8] "Report on the 1859 Columbia Commencement," *Frank Leslie's Weekly,"* July 9, 1859, Accessible Archives.
[9] Ibid.

Academy and then matriculated at Yale College. An exemplary student of the sciences at Yale, upon graduation in 1828, Barnard decided to pursue a career in education. He became a teacher at the Hartford Grammar School, where he met Harriet Beecher Stowe, future author of the great anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* who, at the time, worked for her sister Catherine, the headmaster at a seminary school for girls near the Hartford Grammar School.[10] According to Barnard's contemporary biographer John Fulton, who collaborated with Mrs. Barnard upon her husband's death to compile Barnard's papers and write a memoir, the young Barnard showed far more interest in attending the soirees at Catherine Beecher's school than discussing the question of slavery. Nonetheless, in 1829, Barnard was selected as an orator, his first public speech, at the Fourth of July celebration in Sheffield, Massachusetts.

Barnard decided to remark upon the question of slavery, a topic that had already begun to tug at the conscience of New England. Interestingly, in his prepared speech he endorsed the idea of colonization, the deportation of freed blacks from the U.S. to Africa, as set forth by the American Colonization Society, founded in 1816.[11] While Barnard saw colonization as a compromise measure, he recognized that his Massachusetts audience might favor a more radical anti-slavery position. Consequently, he submitted his remarks to a group of town elders for judgment. Their reaction to his speech suggested that colonization would not be considered an acceptable response to the question of slavery, and therefore Barnard should not give those remarks.[12] Accordingly, Barnard delivered a completely new speech with no endorsement of colonization. Thus concluded Barnard's first public oration and his

[10] John Fulton, *Memoirs of Frederick A.P Barnard* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1896), 47-48.
[11] Ibid, 53.
[12] Fulton, *Memoirs of Frederick A.P Barnard,* 53.

first venture into the public debate on slavery. His initial reaction to slavery was to adopt a more conservative stance than many of his Northern compatriots.

Another minor occurrence, about a year after he had drafted the speech on colonization, again showed Barnard at odds with other New Englanders. Barnard had left his position at the Hartford Grammar School to accept a tutorship at Yale, when a prominent student from South Carolina was publically insulted by a classmate and subsequently avenged the insult by "administering an ignominious flogging to his assailant in the open street."[13] Barnard found disfavor with the rest of the Yale faculty when he sympathized with the student, and the Southern conception of honor. Barnard indicated that he understood the student's belief that he could not show his face again in his native Charleston if he let the affront pass unpunished. In a faculty meeting regarding the incident, one Professor Goodrich rebuked Barnard stating, "whatever other communities may do, a Christian people like that of New England, and a Christian institution like Yale College, must not fail to stamp with its most indignant and uncompromising condemnation the spirit of vindictiveness which, in South Carolina, is dignified with the name of honor."[14] Accordingly, Barnard revealed an early sympathy for the Southern way of life that put him in conflict with fellow Northerners.

After only a short time at Yale, Barnard resigned his position to accept jobs first at the American Institute for the Deaf and Dumb in Hartford and then at the New York Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb in New York City. In 1837, while in New York, Barnard met Dr. Basil Manly, the newly elected President of the University of Alabama founded six years earlier. He offered Barnard the position of Professor of

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[13] Ibid, 68.
[14] Ibid, 69.

Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, which Barnard accepted and held until 1848.[15]Barnard's Southern career had begun.

Once in Alabama, in addition to his duties at the university, Barnard began to unofficially edit *The Monitor,* a prominent Whig Party newspaper, as well as the literary magazine the Southron.[16] A prolific contributor, Barnard dabbled in many types of writing including political commentary, poetry, and humorous sketches. In one sketch, "Pettiboneville, Poetry and Posterity," he chose to caricature country folk of his native New England and commented on the unpopularity of Yankees. He wrote, "I am a yankee: that is—good heavens! What am I saying?—I am *not* a yankee, not I; don't know a wooden clock from a wooden nutmeg—I am a Southron now; always give out that I was born at Juniper's Landing, mouth of Coochechubbeee Creek, Alabama River. It is very unpopular to be a yankee in Alabama."[17] As the unpopularity of Yankees may easily be associated with anti-slavery sentiments and activities, Barnard's decision to satirize his Northern upbringing, and state that he was "a Southron now" suggests that Barnard had come to accept the Southern way of life, including the institution of slavery. In another essay, "Transcendentalism, a Colloquy between Physicus and Metaphysicus," Barnard mocked the Northern philosophy of transcendentalism: "an affirmation, first of the *nothingness of something* and second of the *somethingness of nothing*."[18] This comment suggests another intellectual rift between Barnard and the North.

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[15] Fulton, *Memoirs of Frederick A.P Barnard,* 84-85.
[16] George Frederick Mellen, "New England Editors in the South," *The New England Magazine* 27 (1903): 690.
[17] Rhoda Coleman Ellison, *Early Alabama Publications: A Study in Literary Interests* (University of Alabama Press, 1947), 123.
[18] Ellison, *Early Alabama Publications,\27.*

In addition to publishing, in the 1840s and early 1850s Barnard began a secondary career of public speaking in Alabama. In these orations, Barnard consistently supported the Union and spoke of the South's need to industrialize in a vision of a New South. In an 1851 Fourth of July address, Barnard blamed Southern discontent on differing Northern and Southern economies and identified the feeling among Southerners that they had been made tributaries to the North, that the benefits of the Constitution had been unfairly distributed.[19] In this same speech, he declared that the North had capitulated in the Compromise of 1850 on the issue of slavery, "In a fair trial of strength, during the last Congress, political abolitionism has been substantially defeated, and State after State has withdrawn the legislation which has justly given offence to the South." Therefore, Barnard argued, the South should feel comfortable in its position within the Union. Barnard defended the Union on the grounds that the strict Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, opposed by many Northerners, had been enacted by Congress: "At this moment the entire Federal Government are put in action to secure the faithful execution of the law which has been regarded as a test of its sincerity of purpose, and the local authorities, wherever called upon, as recently in Boston, have earnestly cooperated to the same end." Sounding more like a plantation owner than a man born and raised in the North, Barnard continued, "The soreness of feeling produced in the Southern mind by the infringement of undeniable rights and with strictly private affairs has been seized upon by agitators as the most available means of accomplishing their designs." Here, Barnard referred to slavery as an "undeniable right" and "strictly private affair" echoing the language of slavery's defenders. Additionally, Barnard indicated that his vision

[19] Frederick A.P. Barnard, "No Cause For A Dissolution of the Union In Anything Which Has Hitherto Happened; But the Union the Only Security for the States" Published by Request of Mayor and Alderman of the City (Tuscaloosa, AL). July 4, 1851. Hathi Digital Trust. http://hdl.handle.net/2027/loc.ark:/13960/t0ft8p49j

for an industrialized New South included slavery, "I am aware that there are great difficulties in the way of so radical a change. We have at our disposal an immense amount of involuntary labor. Could that, or any considerable part of it, be turned with facility from agriculture to manufactures, the problem would admit of an easy solution." Barnard could not fathom a South without slavery; it was entrenched. Therefore, Barnard proposed that slavery should be adjusted, not abolished. Finally, Barnard reasoned that the U.S. Constitution, which protected slavery, was the last bulwark in the face of international trends towards abolitionism and the intensifying feelings around the world that Christian doctrine made slavery immoral: “For what should we decree our separation? That the broad barrier of the Constitution, our impregnable rampart against the rabid abolitionism of England, may be broken down, and leave us exposed to formidable assaults and vexatious annoyances in our intercourse with the world? That the combined fanaticism of Christendom may plot without restraint against our peace, may harass our borders with marauding incursions, and instigate servile war in the very heart of our quiet land?”

This speech, like many others Barnard gave during his time in Alabama, won him fame and respect throughout the South. Barnard not only emphasized the importance of maintaining the Union but also presented a vision for a better South, a vision that included slavery. Moreover, Barnard had fully adopted the language of the South; he defended slavery—including its enforcement by the federal government through the Fugitive Slave Law.

In 1854, Barnard accepted an offer to become Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy at the University of Mississippi where, after two years, he was

appointed Chancellor. His career in the South, however, hit a bump in the road when, in 1859, he was accused of being an untrustworthy citizen of the South—that is, dubious in his loyalty to slavery. These accusations stemmed from an incident regarding a break-in at Barnard's home and assault on one of his female slaves while he and his wife were out- of-town. The only witness to the event was another male slave who identified a white student as the perpetrator. Barnard felt assured from the testimony of his slave that this white student was at fault and accordingly charged him with the offence and asked him to withdraw. The student refused to leave without a trial before the faculty. John Fulton, Barnard's contemporary biographer, explains the difficulty of the case, "A majority of the Faculty felt that they were not at liberty to convict a student on evidence which the State did not admit in courts of justice, that is to say, on 'negro evidence.'"[20] The faculty defied Chancellor Barnard, arguing that the testimony of a slave was not enough to convict the white student, although they did approve a motion stating that they were morally convinced of the student's guilt.

The incident did not end with the faculty's verdict. Word began to circulate that Chancellor Barnard had tried to convict a white pupil based on 'negro evidence,' and that Barnard was thereby adverse to Southern institutions. In response to the allegations, Barnard requested that the University of Mississippi's Board of Trustees investigate the matter. At the meeting, the Board members handed Barnard a laundry list of accusations including being "unsound on the slavery question," "advocating the taking of negro testimony against a student," and that "on the question of the expulsion of the student, Barnard and two other Northern men voted in the affirmative, while all the Southern men

[20] Fulton, *Memoirs of Frederick A.P Barnard,* 248.

voted in the negative."[21] After hearing the allegations, Barnard felt confident that his record would exonerate him from the charge that he was "unsound on the slavery question." He stated, "I invite further, an examination into the tenor of my past life, not only for the period of twenty-two years that I have spent in unwearied devotion to the cause of Southern education, but for the earlier period of youth when I had not yet expected ever to be a resident of a Southern State."[22] Barnard indicated that even before coming to the South, while he lived in the North, his record reflected sympathy to Southern institutions. He continued, "If your investigation shall discover that I have ever entertained sentiments which shall justify any man, however captious in pronouncing me 'unsound on the slavery question,' then, gentlemen, do your duty and remove me from a position for which I am morally disqualified." Barnard felt strongly there would be no question of his loyalty to the South and slavery. He went on to apologize for his Northern roots and declare his loyalty to Southern institutions. In Barnard's own words, "As to my sentiments on the subject of slavery, my record is clear for my whole life.. .I was born at the North. That I cannot help. I was not consulted in the matter. I am a slaveholder, and, if I know myself, I am 'sound on the slavery question.'"[23] The investigation by the Board of Trustees exonerated Barnard from all charges. The Board agreed that Barnard was sound on slavery; they would not hold his place of birth against him.

Barnard's behavior during the incident attracted the praise of prominent persons in the South including then-Secretary of the Interior and later a Lieutenant Colonel in the

[21] Fulton, *Memoirs of Frederick A.P Barnard,* 248.
[22] Ibid, 253.
[23] Ibid.!

Confederate Army, Jacob Thompson. On Feb. 19, 1860 in a letter to Barnard, Thompson wrote:

> I am wholly at a loss to understand your accusers. Your fault is that you received information from your servant girl, which implicated a student, and you acted on this information to reach the truth; and this is set down as showing your free-soil proclivities. If this be so, I am the worst free-soiler in the State; I am a downright abolitionist. No man strikes my negro that I do not hear his story. I will listen to my negroes' grievances. Before God and man I believe this to be my duty. No man has a right to touch him or her without my consent, and he who would not do the same would be despised by every man in Oxford.[24]

According to Thompson, Barnard acted as any proper paternalistic slave owner ought. Barnard, as a slave owner, was exemplary.

In strong contrast to Charles King, Barnard adopted a Southern outlook on slavery. He did not believe slavery unjust or immoral. As late as the Census of 1860, Barnard reported two slaves as his personal property.[25] That same year, an advertisement sponsored by Barnard in the *Semi-Weekly Mississippian* seeking students for the University of Mississippi, endorsed the Southern way of life, including its views on honor and morality rooted in slavery. The ad affirmed, "Every effort is made to cultivate a manly tone of feeling among the students and an elevated tone of morality; it is moreover surrounded by a population whose practical regard for religion and morality is well-known and is not surpassed anywhere."[26] Unlike Charles King who believed that slavery was not only economically infeasible in a modern economy but also fundamentally immoral, Barnard could promote the superiority of Southern morality while ignoring the immorality of the slave system and owning slaves himself.

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[24] Fulton, *Memoirs of Frederick A.P Barnard,* 259.
[25] U.S. Census of 1860, Lafayette County, Mississippi under the name "F.AP. Barnard." Ancestry Library.
[26] *Semi-weekly Mississippian* (Jackson, Mississippi), Friday, October 12, 1860; Issue 26. Nineteenth Century U.S. Newspapers.

On the eve of the Civil War, Barnard had established a consistent public record of loyalty to the Union and opposition to secession, but he had also confirmed his 'soundness' on slavery. As Fulton writes, "To the last moment of his residence at the South, more than a year after the outbreak of the war, he was not even suspected of disaffection to the cause of the South."[27] Moreover, Barnard had proven that even while he was in the North, he had been moderate on slavery, favoring voluntary emancipation and colonization to Africa. In the South, Barnard had become even more conservative—or at least adapted his view to fall in line with the status quo. As tensions between North and South began to boil over, Barnard and King maintained opposite positions on the question of slavery.

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When the Civil War began in April 1861, Charles King quickly assumed the Union cause alongside other prominent Columbians. In August 1861, *Frank Leslie's Weekly* reported that President King, with Columbia College alumni Gulian C. Verplanck and Maunsell B. Field, and trustee Hamilton Fish,[28] had formed a committee to find a new American hymn equal to "The Star Spangled Banner" and "Hail Columbia" that would "take such a hold on the hearts of the people."[29] The committee, according to *Frank Leslie's Weekly,* never found a worthy hymn. King, however, soon moved beyond the sponsorship of patriotic songs and turned his focus to the question of slavery in the Civil War.

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[27] Fulton, *Memoirs of Frederick A.P Barnard,* 251.
[28] Hamilton Fish also served as chairman of the Union Defense Committee and the Commission to Visit Union Soldiers in Confederate Prisons. Robert, McCaughey, *Stand Columbia: A History of Columbia University in the City of New York 1754-2004* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 142.
[29] "Death of General Lyon, Battle at Wilson's Creek, Near Springfield," *Frank Leslie's Weekly,* August 24, 1861. Accessible Archives.

By 1862, as President Lincoln continued to wrestle with the question of emancipation, Charles King, along with Columbia Professor Francis Lieber, attended meetings in favor of swaying the Republican Party to support emancipation without the caveat of colonization.[30] On March 14, 1862 the abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator* reported that King attended an anti-slavery rally designated a "Mass Meeting in Cooper Institute New York for a Free Republic."[31] The demonstration intended to show "the popular sentiment in favor of emancipation, as a war measure to secure an early peace, and, through Freedom once secured, to perpetuate our institutions free from internal convulsion in the future."[32] In July 1862, King actively spoke out in favor of emancipation as tool of war. At a gathering sponsored by the Loyal Publication Society, a pro-Union organization of which King was an active member, he addressed a crowd of 30,000 people and expressed his support for the war effort, the moral superiority of the North, and the need for emancipation. He stated, "Our antagonists claim that they are the *master race,* and as such entitled to rule the land and give law to the baser sort, whom, as by one general term, they stigmatize a Yankee."[33] King denounced not only white Southerners' presumption of superiority over the North but their assumption that they were entitled to rule the African race. King continued, "He [the Northern soldier] may take the life—none deny that—of the enemy. Shall he then hesitate about taking property whenever and wherever it can be useful to his own force?"[34] King thereby revealed his support for emancipation as a war measure—that is, freeing the slaves as a way to hasten the

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[30] Faculty of Political Science of Columbia University, *Studies in History, Economics and Public Law Volume 39* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1911), 205-206.
[31] "Mass Meeting in Cooper Institute New York for a Free Republic," *The Liberator,* March 14, 1862. Accessible Archives.
[32] Ibid.
[33] "The Loyal Meeting: Thirty Thousand Unionists in Council. Union Square Packed With Patriotic Enthusiasts," *The New York Times,* July 16, 1862. Proquest Historical Newspapers.
[34] Ibid.

end of the war. Similarly, on November 4, 1862, *The Semi Weekly Standard* of Raleigh, North Carolina, reported that King had declared his opinion that the war should be made for the abolition of slavery and that slaves should be armed in the South.[35] Even before President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, King had already become a proponent of emancipation and identified abolition as one of the important outcomes of the war.

Columbia marked the beginning of the Civil War in April 1861with a flag-raising ceremony. As Professor John H. Van Amringe, who taught during the Civil War, recalled in 1904, "There was a large gathering of officers, students, and their friends. Major Robert Anderson of the United States Army, who had recently returned from participation in the first act of the War at Fort Sumter, South Carolina, raised the flat to the top of the staff and, as it went aloft, exclaimed a tone that thrilled all who heard him, 'God bless that flag!'"[36] Soon after this patriotic celebration led by President King, the Board of Trustees rejected a May 1861 petition signed by a large majority of the student body "requesting the establishment of an Armory and Drill room, with a competent Drill Master for the purpose of forming a voluntary military organization to be permanently attached to the College."[37] This denial, however, should not imply Columbia's lack of support for the war effort or Republican principles but rather the sentiment that Columbia should not transform itself into a military college. On May 20, 1861, the Board bestowed an honorary degree upon President Lincoln.[38]

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[35] *The Semi Weekly Standard* (Raleigh N.C.), Nov. 4, 1864. Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Lib. of Congress.
[36] Van Amringe, John Howard, *A History of Columbia University 1754-1904* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1904), 137-8.
[37] Columbia College Trustee Minutes, May 6, 1861. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.
[38] Columbia College Trustee Minutes, May 20, 1861. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.

Additionally, at the end of the 1861 school year, President King reported that six members of the thirty-six-person graduating class joined the Union army.[39] That represented just over 15% of the seniors. One junior was drafted and one sophomore voluntarily joined. Out of 198 students enrolled at Columbia College in the first year of the Civil War, eight joined the Union army and none left for the Confederacy. In 1862, four graduating seniors, out of a total of forty-three, joined the Union army, along with one junior.[40] Similar numbers of students left to join the army in the subsequent years of the war, causing the Board of Trustees to announce a formal policy regarding student army enlistment. On June 2, 1862 the Board resolved, "Those students who have gone into the army under the expectation of being allowed to proceed with their classes, be, under the circumstances approved; but that the students be informed that here-after, no such indulgences will be allowed to those withdrawing themselves from the College."[41] Meanwhile, the college lost a single professor to the Southern cause. Chemistry Professor Robert McColloh was expelled from the college for his Southern loyalties.[4243]

The year 1863 was dismal. A series of Union losses and the violent anti-black and anti-Republican New York City Draft Riots in July left many New Yorkers, including Columbians, disheartened. After the Conscription Act of 1863 took effect on July 11, 1863, poor whites in New York City began to riot, as rich citizens could buy their way out of obligatory military service, and the law exempted free blacks. Rioters burned government and military buildings and then began to target the city's black population, including the children of the Colored Orphan Asylum. More than 100 people were killed in the five-day-

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[39] Columbia College Trustee Minutes, December 16, 1861. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.
[40] Columbia College Trustee Minutes, June 2, 1862. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.
[41] Columbia College Trustee Minutes, December 18, 1862. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.

long riots.[42] In the early hours of the violence, the incensed rioters knocked on the door of President King's house, asking if a Republican lived inside.[43] The timely intervention of a Catholic priest spared King and his home.[44] After this event, two fire companies voluntarily patrolled the streets of the college's neighborhood to ensure that no harm came to the college or its students. A few months later the Board of Trustees recognized their efforts with a financial contribution for the erection of a new firehouse.[45] While the college emerged unscathed by the worst of the Draft Riot violence, the events of the year affected faculty and students alike. As Professor Van Amringe recalled, "In times of victory there were thanksgiving and in periods of defeat there were days of humiliation.. .It is difficult at this time for any one, impossible for one who did not then experience it, to realize the intensity of personal interest and feeling that attached to every event of the war."[46]

In 1864, President King publically condemned the rioters in announcing his support for black troops in the Union Army and their rights after the war. On March 12, King gave an impassioned speech at the Union League's send-off of the Twentieth Regiment of Colored Troops at Union Square to a crowd of "citizens of every shade of color."[47] King began by assuring the black troops that their families would be protected, in the way that they were not during the draft riots, "go forth in the assured conviction that you leave behind you ever-watchful, ever-kind, and ever-active friends, who, taking so prominent a part in equipping you for war will in nowise falter in their efforts for the welfare

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[42] "New York City Draft Riots 1863," *Mapping the African Past,* Columbia University Center for New Media Teaching and Learning.
[43] Iver Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots: Their Significance for American Society and Politics in the Age of the Civil War,* (Oxford University Press, 1990), 32.
[44] Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots,* 32.
[45] Columbia College Trustee Minutes, November 11, 1862. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.
[46] Van Amringe, *A History of Columbia University,* 138.
[47] "Twentieth U.S. Colored Regiment," *The Liberator,* March 18, 1864. Accessible Archives.

of the families you leave behind."[48] King again addressed the draft riots stating, "my friends—and I use the expression all the more emphatically that the same expression was, in the fatal month of July, employed by a very high functionary on a very different occasion, and to a very different body of men—in address you by this name, I address soldiers of order, liberty and law."[49] King referred to a speech given by New York Governor Horatio Seymour, who came to the city to try to get the rioters to disperse, in which he addressed the rioters as "my friends." King flipped the reference, choosing instead to call the black troops his "friends" and highlight their respect for "order, liberty and law" in contrast to poor whites, predominantly Irish, during the draft riots. According to King, behavior rather than race determined good character and morality.

In this same speech, King continued by discussing the agency of black troops in determining their fate and their future, and that of their race, by serving in the army. He stated that these troops were "emancipators of [their] own race, while acting as the defenders and champions of another."[50] King declared black military service not only an act of emancipation but future equality: "When you put on the uniform and swear allegiance to the standard of the Union, you stand emancipated, regenerated and disenthralled; the peer of the proudest soldier in the land; and withered be the hand and palsied be the tongue that shall ever give consent to your being subject to other treatment at the hands of the enemy than such as is measured out to other Soldiers of the Republic."[51] Thus King declared black troops equal to white troops—a reference to their future condition and status after the war.[52] King

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[48] "Twentieth U.S. Colored Regiment," *The Liberator,* March 18, 1864. Accessible Archives.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] "Twentieth U.S. Colored Regiment," *The Liberator,* March 18, 1864. Accessible Archives.
[52] King also referenced the fear of black troops of being sold back into slavery if captured by the Confederate Army. He attempted to reassure them that the Union Army and federal government would assure them equal treatment as that of captured white soldiers. King was perhaps, presumptuous in this assurance, given that the Confederate government had

continued his speech with a clear articulation of the rights of black troops when they returned home from service: "you will, you must, in contributing to the rescue of your country and its Constitution work out your own complete redemption."[53] In this context, "redemption" referred to the future of freed blacks after the war. King did not indicate exactly what he meant by "redemption" or black rights after the war, but his earlier remarks suggest at least some measure of racial equality—an advanced position in 1864, even among Northerners.

King closed his speech by bestowing upon the Twentieth Regiment a special flag sewn by women of the New York Union League Club.[54] He used the occasion to link the cause of black soldiers and emancipation to the longer historical narrative of American history:

> The flag, which I hold in my hands, to be placed in yours, tells its own story. The conquering eagle and the broken yoke and armed figure of Liberty speak as plainly as symbols can of the might and freedom, and the overthrow of slavery— and flying, as will this standard-sheet, beside the Stars and Stripes of the Republic, they will form a spell of such power as to bind up every generous heart with one firm, fierce resolve that these flags shall not be separated—shall not be surrendered—but shall be marching on, and marching on, and still marching on to triumph and final victory![55]

Here, King proposed that the restoration of the Union and defeat of the Confederacy paralleled the original cause of American emancipation from Great Britain during the American Revolution. Just as Americans had to fight for their freedom and equality, so must freed blacks. By March 1864, just a few weeks before he delivered his resignation to the

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announced its intention to punish severely officers of black troops and to enslave black soldiers, even if they had been born free. President Lincoln did issue General Order 233 threatening reprisal of captured Confederate soldiers, but it offered only minimal help for the treatment on black prisoners of war. Freeman, Elsie, Wynell Burroughs Schamel, and Jean West. "The Fight for Equal Rights: A Recruiting Poster for Black Soldiers in the Civil War." Social Education 56, 2 (February 1992): 118-120.

[53] "Twentieth U.S. Colored Regiment," *The Liberator,* March 18, 1864. Accessible Archives.

[54] The women of the New York Union League included several with Columbia connections. Mrs. J.J, Astor, Mrs. Charles King, Mrs. W.E. Dodge, Mrs. W.A. Butler, Mrs. Hamilton Fish were all wives of Trustees.

[55] "Twentieth U.S. Colored Regiment," *The Liberator,* March 18, 1864. Accessible Archives.

Board of Trustees, King had entered into active, public discussion of racial equality and the rights of freed blacks after the war.

Meanwhile in Mississippi, as the Southern states seceded and shots were fired at Fort Sumter, Frederick A.P Barnard stayed put, notwithstanding the overwhelming numbers of University of Mississippi students enlisting in the Confederate army and leaving classes disrupted. By July 1861, after the First Battle of Bull Run, Barnard realized he had an insufficient number of students to hold classes for the upcoming school year. He consequently sought a Confederate passport necessary for travel back to the North where he hoped to find employment.[56] To secure a passport, he agreed to visit the military schools of South Carolina and Virginia and report on their organization and instruction. On this tour of the military schools, Barnard caught the attention of Confederate President Jefferson Davis who offered him a position in the Confederate government to head the Scientific Bureau's investigation of its natural resources.[57] He refused the position despite having maintained close friendships with high-ranking Confederate officials.[58] While Barnard was in Norfolk, Virginia, inspecting the military college located there, the Union Army captured the town, rendering him back in the Union in May 1862.

By 1863, Barnard had yet to find a position at a Northern college. On January 21, 1863, Barnard published an open letter to President Lincoln in *The New York Tribune,* denouncing secession and condemning slavery while maintaining that the majority of Southerners remain loyal to the Union. [59] Barnard explained that Southerners had been tricked by a handful of radical secessionists who abused "the people's reverence for their political constitution." He

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[56] Fulton, *Memoirs of Frederick A.P Barnard,* 284-5.
[57] Ibid, 287.
[58] Ibid, 289.
[59] F.A.P Barnard, *Letter to the President of the United States* (New York: C.S. Westcott, 1863), accessed May 1, 2015. http://hdl.handle.net/2027/loc.ark:/13960/t4xg9q964.

declared that the South was merely "behind the time." He linked the retrograde tradition of slavery to Presidents Washington and Jefferson: "[the South's] bizarre and mischievous notions are only the notions of Washington and his contemporary patriots, whose reading of the Bible was probably limited, and whose acquaintance with the true principles of political and social science was obscure and imperfect to the last degree; that she is under the delusion which seems to have guided the pen of Jefferson." Thus, even though Barnard went on to declare slavery a "relic of primeval barbarism," he also pleaded with the North to reserve its judgment for Southerners. Therefore, while Charles King linked black troops to American emancipation during the American Revolution, Barnard spun a counter-narrative that tied the history of slavery to the United States' founding fathers.

Although Barnard condemned slavery in his "Letter to the President of the United States, by a Refugee," he did not seem to grapple with slavery's immorality. Even after Barnard had departed for the North, the Board of Trustees for the University of Mississippi reported to the legislature that Barnard remained loyal to the institution of slavery, "It is known that, since the bitter agitation over the slavery question at the North, [Barnard's] pen has been wielded with effect in support of the institutions of the South."[60] Therefore, while Barnard, like a political chameleon, adapted to his new reality of living in the North, he likely did not have a radical change-of-heart about slavery. Rather, as John Fulton suggested, he needed to publically denounce slavery in order to gain employment.[61] After this open letter, Barnard did not again publically write or speak of slavery.[62]

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[60] Fulton, *Memoirs of Frederick A.P Barnard,* 258.
[61] Ibid, 289.
[62] Based on available resources. Barnard does, however, affix his name to a public denunciation of slavery by the Columbia Board of Trustees on the occasion of President Lincoln's assassination; however, Professor Francis Lieber, not Barnard, wrote this emotional eulogy to Lincoln and emancipation. Miner, Dwight Carroll, *DwightMiner Papers,* Box 10. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.

Less than a year after Barnard's open letter, the Columbia Board of Trustees considered and rejected his candidacy to fill the vacant professorship left by Professor McCulloh.[63] Nonetheless, after King's resignation, Barnard's name resurfaced, and the Board selected him to succeed President King. Accordingly, in the summer of 1864, Frederick A.P. Barnard became the tenth president of Columbia.

The inauguration of Barnard, on June 29, 1864, proceeded with the usual remarks and congratulations. Consequently, the address by Hamilton Fish, speaking for the Board of Trustees, stands out as incongruous. Fish, Chairman of the Union Defense Committee and the Commission to Visit Union Soldiers in Confederate Prisons,[64] implored Columbia to send forth its sons to "implant more firmly the principles of heaven-born justice, and to place upon a loftier eminence, and upon a broader and stronger foundation, the standard of love to God and good-will among men, of God's universal supremacy and man's universal freedom and political equality."[65] Fish seemed to pointedly remind the incoming president that Columbia was a Northern college with Republican principles of "universal freedom and political equality." Furthermore, his specific language of "heaven born justice," "loftier eminence," and "God's universal supremacy," echoed the language of abolitionists who argued that divine law, a higher authority than the U.S. Constitution, made slavery illegal and immoral. Thus, Fish made clear to Barnard that Columbia College would not tolerate any political thought contrary to Republican principles, including the abolition of slavery.

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[63] Columbia College Trustee Minutes, December 21, 1863. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.
[64] McCaughey, *Stand Columbia,* 142.
[65] "Proceedings at the Inauguration of Frederick A.P. Barnard Published by the Columbia College Board of Trustees," October 3, 1864. Hathi Trust Digital Library. http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.hn58si;view=1up;seq=11

By the time Barnard arrived at Columbia, King had assured his anti-slavery legacy at the College. Still, Columbia's policies in the years after the Civil War reflect Barnard's personal history with slavery and warm relationship with the South. In 1865, Columbia College conferred an honorary degree upon U.S. President Andrew Johnson,[66]a Southerner who actively combatted the inclusion of freed slaves into ordinary white society, most notably through his support of the post-war Southern governments consisting of ex-Confederates.[67] Most significantly, however, Columbia lagged far behind peer institutions in its inclusion of black students.

In the immediate years after the war Harvard and Yale began admitting and graduating black students. Harvard admitted its first black student in 1847, had black students throughout the 1860s, and gave its first degree to a black student as early as 1870.[7071] Yale graduated its first African American student in 1857 and its second in 1874.[68] Meanwhile, Columbia had only a single black undergraduate student in the 1870s, in the School of Mines. This student, James Priest, was not a freed slave or even African American but a native of Africa.[69]

Even Columbia's graduate schools lagged behind peer institutions on racial inclusion. An 1877 article in *Cap and Gown,* a magazine of medical schools, reported that the faculty of Columbia's College of Physicians and Surgeons had decided not to admit black students,[70]

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[66] Columbia College Trustee Minutes, June 5, 1865. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.
[67] Eric Foner, "Why Reconstruction Matters," *The New York Times,* Sunday Review, March 28, 2015.
[68] Carol Bass and Mark Branch, "Yale College's First Black Grad: It's Not Who You Think," *Yale Alumni Magazine,* Feb. 28, 2014. https://www.yalealumnimagazine.com/blog_posts/1719
[69] "General and Personal," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat,* June 22, 1877; pg. 2; Issue 33. Nineteenth Century U.S. Newspapers.
[70] Miner, Dwight Carroll, *Dwight Miner Papers,* Box 7, Folder: Alumni-Blacks. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.

and in the early 1880s there was a single black law student at Columbia.[71] An 1885 article in *The New York Freeman,* entitled "Progress of the Race," confirmed the dearth of black students at Columbia. The article discussed eight prominent black citizens—doctors, lawyers, editors, and artists—none of whom had graduated from Columbia. Harvard, Yale, and the University of Pennsylvania made up the majority of alma maters.

In the early 1870s, Columbia's Board of Trustees began to consider the inclusion of women and religious minorities, which merely highlights the absence of conversation regarding black students. In 1873, after suffragist and reformer Lillie Devereux Blake proposed the admission of female students, the Board met twice to discuss the matter, albeit eventually rejecting the petition.[72] By 1880, Barnard had begun to press the Board for the addition of female students, known as "special students," to Columbia College.[73]Although the Board rejected co-education for Columbia College, it did permit the opening of an affiliated women's college in 1889, named after Barnard to honor his efforts. Thus, while Barnard developed a vision for Columbia University to include religious minority and female students, he never expanded it to black students. Both Barnard and the Board of Trustees simply remained silent on the issue black students. Columbia did not enroll significant numbers of black students until the late 1960s.[74]

Throughout his career at Columbia, Barnard preserved his close ties with the South, affirmed by a letter excerpted in *The New York Times* in 1878. Barnard wrote, "It is indeed a marvelous thing how, after her trials, the South still continues to maintain her noble

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[71] "Lamenting the Hero," *The New York* Freeman, August 22, 1885; Issue 40. Nineteenth Century U.S. Newspapers.
[72] Columbia College Trustee Minutes, November 3, 1863. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.
[73] Columbia College Trustee Minutes, December 1, 1879. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.
[74] Albeit perhaps an unreliable source, a 1967 *Columbia Spectator* article reported that until 1966 there were never more than 20 black undergraduates students at once. Peter Greene, "Number of Black Students Increased Slowly Since 1877," *The Columbia Daily Spectator,* April 26, 1967.

preeminence in statesmanship and in moral dignity."[75]Barnard's affirmation of the South's continuing "moral dignity" suggests that he never developed a full sense of slavery's immorality. John Fulton conceded that Barnard exhibited apparent indifference regarding slavery: "There is nothing to show that he ever entertained any strong feelings on that subject."[76] Moreover, unlike King, Barnard never seemed to consider the rights of African Americans after emancipation. During Reconstruction, he preferred to focus on the expansion of Columbia as a university, rather than any political activity. Therefore, while many factors may have contributed to Columbia's lack of racial inclusion after the Civil War, Barnard's association with slavery before the war, warm feelings toward the South after the war, and post-war silence on the question of black rights, suggest a connection.

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By the time the Confederacy entered into civil war with the Union, King's anti-slavery beliefs and political activity had put Columbia on a clear pro-Union and anti- slavery path. Like King, many of Columbia's students and faculty rallied to the Union cause. King not only supported emancipation but, by the year of his resignation, had begun to consider the rights of freed blacks. King died only three years after stepping down from his position at Columbia, so it is impossible to know exactly how his belief in emancipation might have translated to racial equality either within or outside of Columbia's gates. Still, his speech to the departing Twentieth Regiment of Colored Troops and views on emancipation that tended to align with more radical Republicanism, suggest that King would have favored political equality for blacks, and probably educational opportunities at Columbia. Barnard's endorsement of slavery while in the South, and virtual silence on emancipation and black

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[75] Grace Greenwood, "The Southern Supremacy," *The New York Times,* March 2, 1878.
[76] Fulton, *Memoirs of Frederick A.P Barnard,* 251.

rights once back in the North, are mirrored in Columbia's lack of racial inclusion during his tenure.

This paper does not seek to write an alternative history; yet, King's attitude on slavery stands as so distinct from that of Barnard that it raises the question, how different might Columbia have been on the question of racial inclusion, rather than lagging behind its peers, if Charles King had lived or Frederick A.P. Barnard had not replaced him?

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