

Swing the Sickle for the Harvest Is Ripe: Gender and Slavery in Antebellum Georgia

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Swing the Sickle for the Harvest Is Ripe compares the work, family, and economic experiences of enslaved women and men in upcountry and lowcountry Georgia during the nineteenth century. Mining planters' daybooks, plantation records, and a wealth of other sources, Daina Ramey Berry shows how slaves' experiences on large plantations, which were essentially self-contained, closed communities, contrasted with those on small plantations, where planters' interests in sharing their workforces allowed slaves more open, fluid communications. By inviting readers into slaves' internal lives through her detailed examination of domestic violence, separation and sale, and forced breeding, Berry also reveals important new ways of understanding what it meant to be a female or male slave, as well as how public and private aspects of slave life influenced each other on the plantation.