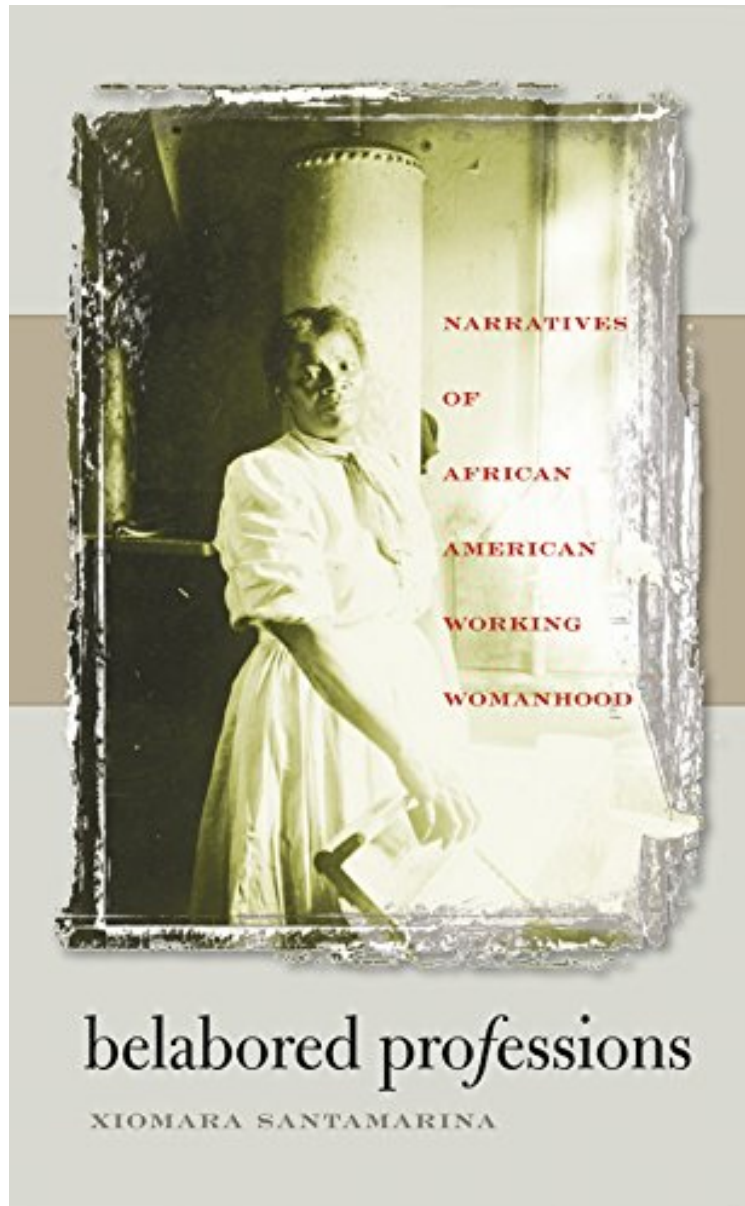


(Mobile book) Belabored Professions: Narratives of African American Working Womanhood

Belabored Professions: Narratives of African American Working Womanhood

Xiomara Santamarina

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Xiomara Santamarina : Belabored Professions: Narratives of African American Working Womanhood before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Belabored Professions:

Narratives of African American Working Womanhood:

According to nineteenth-century racial uplift ideology, African American women served their race best as reformers and activists, or as "doers of the word." In *Belabored Professions*, Xiomara Santamarina examines the autobiographies of four women who diverged from that ideal and defended the legitimacy of their self-supporting wage labor. Santamarina focuses on *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth*, Eliza Potter's *A Hairdresser's Experience in High Life*, Harriet Wilson's *Our Nig*, and Elizabeth Keckley's *Behind the Scenes*. She argues that beyond black reformers' calls for abolitionist work, these former slaves and freeborn black women wrote about their own overlooked or disparaged work as socially and culturally valuable to the nation. They promoted the status of wage labor as a mark of self-reliance and civic virtue when many viewed African American working women as "drudges." As Santamarina demonstrates, these texts offer modern readers new perspectives on the emergence of the vital African American autobiographical tradition, dramatizing the degree to which black working women participated in and shaped American rhetorics of labor, race, and femininity.

"Offers the promising approach of using labor as a means to parse the interlocking identities of race, class, and gender." -- "American Historical"
"Widens the frame of analysis for reading the lives and texts of nineteenth-century Black women. . . . A must read for scholars, teachers, and students of gender, race, and class studies as well as literary studies." -- "Legacy"
"Providing an erudite analysis of an under-appreciated text, Santamarina deepens our understanding of nineteenth-century black working women's commitment to making and disseminating knowledge about themselves, their community, and the wider world. Such insight makes "Belabored Professions" an invaluable contribution to the fields of literary criticism, American history, and African American studies." -- "North Carolina Historical"
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If the only accomplishment of this book were to provide new information about the four women and their texts, it would be a welcome contribution to the field. That it accomplishes so much more makes it an awesome addition. Xiomara Santamarina takes texts that have refused to fit comfortably into existing paradigms and shows us how to reshape our paradigms to fit the rediscovered texts. She appropriately blends labor history and literary analysis, cultural studies and feminist theory into a proper consistency with which to work the materials of nineteenth-century African American women's lives. Without sacrificing interest or accessibility, *Belabored Professions* becomes a model for others who labor in the research profession itself.--Frances Smith Foster, Emory University