

2017

A Woman Lies Bleeding on the Ground: Prostitution and Underground Economy in Nineteenth Century Charleston

Sarah Pillman Amundson
Iowa State University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/etd>



Part of the [History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Amundson, Sarah Pillman, "A Woman Lies Bleeding on the Ground: Prostitution and Underground Economy in Nineteenth Century Charleston" (2017). *Graduate Theses and Dissertations*. 15247.
<https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/etd/15247>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Iowa State University Capstones, Theses and Dissertations at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.

**A woman lies bleeding on the ground:
Prostitution and underground economy in nineteenth century Charleston**

by

Sarah Pillman Amundson

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Major: History

Program of Study Committee:
Kathleen Hilliard, Major Professor
Lawrence McDonnell
Michele Schaal

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2017

Copyright © Sarah Pillman Amundson, 2017. All rights reserved.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT.....	vi
INTRODUCTION: PART I.....	1
PART II	7
CONCLUSION: PART III	27
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	39

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Kathleen Hilliard, for her guidance and support throughout the course of this research. I met Dr. Hilliard in an American history survey my first semester as an undergraduate at Iowa State, and was immediately drawn to her passion for history and teaching. She aided greatly in my transition to graduate school, and has spent countless hours with me unraveling research, editing work, and discussing life both academic and personal. Kathy, you have been the foundation of everything I have accomplished during graduate school. Dr. Lawrence McDonnell has also proven invaluable to both this work and my experience at Iowa State. It was through his suggestion that I first began looking at prostitution in Charleston, and his invaluable expertise on the city shaped this project significantly. Additionally, his encouraging pep talks got me through many struggles throughout the research and writing process. I would also like to thank Dr. Michele Schaal, the outside member of my committee, for her insightful questions during my defense. Her insight on linguistics and theory have already impacted my thoughts on the future of this research project. The support of many other professors in the history department at Iowa State have led up to this thesis, but especially Dr. Amy Rutenberg and Dr. Stacy Cordery. Dr. Rutenberg's knowledge on the history of gender and sexuality pushed this work in the right direction, as well as her unending support. Dr. Cordery's careful attention to detail and talent for writing shaped both the finite details of my writing and larger structural issues of this paper.

Research for this project took me to archives in Columbia and Charleston, South Carolina over the summer of 2016. The archivists at the South Caroliniana Library, South

Carolina Department of Archives and History, South Carolina Historical Society, and in the South Carolina Room at the Charleston Public Library provided excellent help to a first time researcher. Also, thank you to Dr. Constance Schultz for providing me with a place to stay in Columbia that had all the comforts of home, and to the wonderful people of the Balzac Brothers and Company at 11 Fulton Street in Charleston. They welcomed in a brothel-hunting stranger with incredible warmth, and allowed me access to the primary setting of this paper, an incredible dream come true. I could not be more grateful for their hospitality, which truly made my trip.

A special thank you to my friends in the graduate department, who have listened to me drone on about this project during every step of the way. I am fortunate to be surrounded by a wonderful group of master's students, especially Sydney Marshall, Jake Turner, and Nate Smith. We came up through the program together, and have pushed each other to grow both inside the classroom and out. I know we'll be seeing each other at many Southern History Conferences to come. Madison Lee, Raeann Ritland, and Brenna Tanner, three of my best friends, also supported me throughout this process, as they have throughout my life, with kind words, encouragement, and support. I am so grateful for them.

To my father, Gary, my mother, Betty, and my brother, Nate, I owe my eternal gratitude. Everything good and decent that I am is because of you. Dad, thank you for instilling in me your love for learning and your persistence. Mom, your constant encouragement and extreme pride in my work has formed the backbone of my strength. Nate, your enthusiasm for my progress and education, all the way from Tucson, will never be forgotten. Christmas 2016, reading my thesis aloud by Christmas tree light, is a memory I will always hold dear. My grandmother, Geraldine Pillman, is the guiding light of my life.

At ninety-eight, when I informed her that I had dedicated my education to writing about prostitutes, she began to laugh and exclaimed, “Well, you hussy!” Grandma, thank you for your strength, your encouragement, and for always asking about “the madams” when I call. It would be remiss if I did not also mention my in-laws as major pillars of familial support. Rob, Deb, and Nate Amundson have listened to me ramble about this project far too many times over family dinners with interest and good humor. They have accepted a daughter- and sister-in-law whose major source of conversation is nineteenth century prostitution—and not just accepted, but encouraged. Your enthusiasm over an early draft of this thesis pushed me to continue on.

Finally, my husband, Derek, has stood by my side for nearly five years. He knows my research by heart, knows these historical actors by name, and has helped me decipher more than one confusing document. He has held me up throughout graduate school, throughout the process of discovering, researching, writing, and editing this work, along with the other pressures of graduate life. Derek, I cannot imagine accomplishing this without you. You are the best part of my life. Thank you for signing up to join me on this crazy academic journey, and for all the times you’ve given me your strength to carry on. I am so proud to call you my husband, and I’m so grateful that you’ll be with me as this project continues.

ABSTRACT

In November of 1882, Charleston madam Fanny Cochran was slain in her doorway by her longtime lover, Emil Hyman. Although this murder sent shockwaves through the city, the events transpired—and the questions it raised—quickly faded from memory. An examination of Fanny Cochran’s life reveals a web of closely connected men and women within the fourth ward of Charleston, South Carolina. These economic actors, many Charleston madams and sex workers, created a system of networks that supplied political and economic capital that would have been otherwise inaccessible to these supposed “powerless” women and connected them to businessmen of the day. They did so by exploiting loose laws on prostitution that allowed them to earn money through the informal economy and, particularly in Cochran’s case, used that capital in the formal economy, revealing the porous flexibility between the two.

This study focuses on the interconnectivity between sex work and the formal economic sector in the late nineteenth century in Charleston, South Carolina. By examining the ways that money earned in the sex trade could be used in reputable businesses, it reveals both the importance of the study of informal economy in urban environments and explores the possibility of sex workers as capitalists. The window of Fanny Cochran’s life and death explains the complex flow between formal and informal economies, and offers a more nuanced way of approaching sex work in urban environments.

INTRODUCTION: PART I

On the evening of November 20th, 1882, a visitor came to call at 11 Beresford Street, Charleston, South Carolina. It was not an uncommon occurrence—visitors flocked to the residence at all hours, and the occupants of the opulent brick stuccoed building, as well as their neighbors, were undoubtedly used to the sight. In her younger days, Fanny Cochran had probably been sent to many a door to usher gentlemen inside with a smile, but by 1882 she had run her own household for near on a decade, and by then employed women to perform the task for her. She spent her time in other ways, and that November evening perhaps found her relaxing in her lavishly outfitted private parlor, sorting through her wide array of elegant clothing, or instructing a younger woman how best to open the door while she hung back to examine herself in a gilt-framed mirror, patting at her hair or adjusting jewelry. At thirty-eight, she undoubtedly possessed whatever charms she had had in earlier life, and with the passing of years she had acquired a different power than youthful beauty, the sort of respectability—or lack thereof—that came to a woman in the South who owned her own property.

The man who stood outside the door, perhaps swaying a bit on the brick steps, was no average visitor, and whoever opened the door swiftly denied him access, a sudden change of pace. The women of 11 Beresford Street had once called Emil Hyman a constant figure, for reasons of both business and pleasure. For years, he had scandalously cohabitated with Cochran, as her friend, her lover, and her business partner. Charleston society considered him her kept man. For years, she fronted businesses for him, and for years he failed at them, then acquiring a reputation as a man of disreputable character. Their most recent business venture, a saloon at 191 King Street, stood just around the corner from Cochran's home, where Hyman had taken up residence. It proved to be an unwise choice of business, and perhaps the reason for their ultimate

parting—Hyman admitted later, as would others who knew him, that by 1882 he suffered from a case of heavy alcoholism, and had for several years. Perhaps that caused their final fight, a reoccurring event where he stumbled home around the block, smelling of liquor, to crawl into bed. Perhaps he, yet again, mismanaged funds. Perhaps it was both. Whatever the reason, sometime before November 20th, Cochran finally had enough. She ejected Hyman from her home and refused him entrance thereafter.

It infuriated him. On the evening in question, drunk and toting a pet dog, he insisted upon entering the home under the pretense of returning the animal. The woman at the door kept Hyman on the stoop, but her refusal proved only to escalate the incident, his anger intensifying with every passing moment. Intoxicated and furious, he raised his voice at the woman who denied him entrance to a place he considered his own, almost certainly rousing the attention of those within and without the house. Cochran may have hovered inside her bedroom, located just beside the entrance hallway, listening to the heated exchange and debating what to do. Her life up until that point had not been an easy one, but it had steeled her for the anger of drunken men. And, if her relationship with Hyman had proven tumultuous, she may have found the issue of confronting him par for the course. A tangled snarl of emotions must have accompanied her to the front door.

Hyman shot her. Afterwards, he did not try to escape, and his guilt was simply a matter of fact, as there were witnesses to the slaying—Charlotte Kinloch, Gertrude Harrison, and Ada Wadsworth, all listed as residents of 11 Beresford Street—as well as Hyman's own admission of guilt. Instead of fleeing the scene, he allowed his seizure, arrest, and lock up in Charleston's

gunhouse.¹ He also made, as the events unfolded, what his lawyers later called “statements damaging in the extreme,” which confirmed, in the eyes of many, not only his guilt but also his intention of the crime.² For two days Cochran struggled between life and death, lingering in pain from the wound inflicted, before she finally died. Five days after she passed, the city of Charleston charged Hyman with her murder.

Historians have never studied Cochran’s life, and her death remains a mere footnote in history, an event that transpired and then quickly faded away. There are no books or articles written about her, either from her time or ours. Her death was just another statistic in a city well known in the nineteenth century for its indecency and vice. But Cochran herself is extraordinary, not just for the shocking way that she died, but also for the scandalous way that she lived. In the late nineteenth century, she was a powerhouse within Charleston’s formal and informal economy.³ When Cochran died at thirty-eight, she had transformed herself from a Canadian immigrant with little promise of a successful future to a woman of enough social and economic capital to own her own property, and to set her lover up in multiple businesses.⁴ In a time dominated by male power and presence, in a society that saw women as a dependent

¹ “Business Locals,” *Keowee Courier*, November 23, 1882; “South Carolina News,” *Yorkville Enquirer*, November 30, 1882.

² J. Ancrum Simons and John D. Cappelmann, 1883, opening argument: page 4, Records of Simons and Cappelmann 1882-1888, South Carolina Historical Society [hereafter SCHS].

³ Work on global informal economies is vast, interdisciplinary, and growing at a rapid rate. Especially important to this project is the work of economic sociologist Sudhir Venkatesh, whose seminal work, *Off the Books*, and his more recent book, *Floating City*, has explored informal economic networks in Chicago and the New York City sex trade. See: Sudhir Alladi Venkatesh, *Off the Books: The Underground Economy of the Urban Poor* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); Sudhir Alladi Venkatesh, *Floating City: A Rogue Sociologist Lost and Found In New York’s Underground Economy* (New York: Penguin Press, 2013).

⁴ As one of the United States’ premiere port cities, Charleston’s population has extended across national boundaries since its founding. Actors within this study arrived on the shores of Charleston from such places as Canada, the West Indies, Scotland, Prussia, England, and beyond. A more complete version of this article would expand in depth past Charleston’s streets into the greater interconnectivity in the transatlantic world.

extension of men, this kind of independence was rare, almost unheard of. Cochran achieved this status by exploiting Charleston's loose laws on prostitution, as she climbed the ranks of the sex trade, from prostitute to madam. Born during a period of economic and social transformation in the United States, Cochran sold sex before, during, and after the Civil War. Polite Charleston disapproved, but she operated without interference from city officials. Fanny Cochran's life and death call for a more nuanced understanding of the connections created and utilized by the "powerless" women in the socially unacceptable but ubiquitous enterprise of prostitution.

Prostitution created a system of networks that supplied political and economic capital to those engaged in the trade who would have found such economic and social power otherwise inaccessible. Unclear laws on prostitution offered a rare grey area easily exploitable to those willing to sacrifice social standing in polite society to engage in its lucrative business.⁵ This trade, at least socially illicit, worked in tandem with trade in the strictly formal economic sector, tying those who engaged in prostitution to people and businesses in the formal economy.⁶

⁵ In 1848, laws regarding prostitution in Charleston were fuzzy at best. *The Law of Magistrates and Constables in the State of South Carolina* recorded, "A woman cannot be indicted for being a bawd generally, for that the bare solicitation of chastity is not indictable." However, a bawdy house could be indicted as a common nuisance, defined as, "all disorderly inns or ale-houses, bawdy-houses, gaming-houses, play-houses, *unlicensed or improperly conducted*, booths and stages for rope dancers, mountebanks, and the like, are public nuisances, and *may* therefore be indicted." [emphasis added] Thus, as the evidence will show, laws on prostitution were entirely subjective on a case to case basis, aside from those charged with keeping, employment in, or visitation of a bawdy house within ten miles of South Carolina College, all of whom were "liable to be proceeded against as a vagrant." See B.C. Pressley, *The Law of Magistrates and Constables in the State of South Carolina...* (Charleston: Walker & Burke, 1848), 77, 421. For earlier laws on common nuisances from which the 1848 law was drawn, see Benjamin James, *A Digest in the Laws of South Carolina...* (Columbia: The Telescope Press, 1822), 528.

⁶ In *Masters, Slaves, and Exchange*, which has come to shape this work significantly, Kathleen Hilliard marks two important facets of informal economy. She writes, "First, the boundaries of these economies are porous, with economic actors readily slipping between the 'licit' and 'illicit' realms of exchange. And second, this exchange is interwoven and interdependent in the economic, social, political, and cultural life of resource-scarce communities." The necessity of exploring what she terms a "Gordian knot of exchange" within the world of Charleston

Although these connections existed before Cochran embarked upon her career, they become clearer through the window of her death. Cochran's murder made it no longer possible to ignore the uncomfortable truths about the interconnectivity between reputable businesses and the sex trade. Untangling the web of networks created by prostitutes and madams reveals Charleston as a city entirely, and without studying this interconnectivity, historians cannot fully understand any city's economic or social life.

Prostitution proves a popular topic for books of all sorts, from popular to academic presses. Authors are keen to focus on filing sex workers under neat categories as victors over (in the case of Karen Abbotts' stars of *Sin in the Second City*, the Everleigh sisters), or victims of (like Patricia Cline Cohen's slain prostitute and title character in *The Murder of Helen Jewett*) the sex trade. Likewise, case studies of prostitution built around specific locales predominantly view the system of prostitution in their location, such the American West, New Orleans, or New York, as unique, not relatable to those around it. Both of these typical analyses are oversimplifications. This study argues that focusing on the networks of men and women engaged in Charleston sex work in the nineteenth century allows for a greater understanding of American urban centers as a whole, networks which likewise existed in other cities, and must be explored to fully understand that city's history. The scholarship currently available about prostitution networks primarily focuses on the way these supposedly isolated networks of women interacted within the informal economy. However, as this case study will show, such networks involved both men and women, and far from isolated, were broad, porous, and flexible, and included interactions with persons and businesses considered formal and reputable. Cochran's

prostitution, just as within her work on internal economy between masters and slaves of the Old South, "serves only to highlight the deeply embedded, necessary, and adaptive nature of these networks." Kathleen M. Hilliard, *Masters, Slaves, and Exchange: Power's Purchase in the Old South* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 9-10.

murder allows an understanding in the way informal and formal economies in Charleston flowed back and forth between one another, based on the roles of both men and women involved, and as such creates a new understanding of the history of both prostitution and urban environments.⁷

⁷ Scholars have strived to define “underground economy” since its conception as a form of study. Social scientists Louis A. Ferman, Stuart Henry, and Michele Hoyman focused specifically on these definitional difficulties. While stating that “informal economic activities are difficult to be precise about because they are typically defined as an inversion, alternative, or negation of the conventionally accepted administrative categories, institutions, and structure of the wider societal system,” they go on to place seven adjectives used to describe the “upward of thirty different terms for the activity.” They argue that informal economy is “qualitatively different from the wider economic arrangements,” based on social units rather than individuals, and separate and oppositional from the formal, government-regulated economy. Furthermore, concealed from official records and on the periphery of society, the underground economy exists as an inferior system, evidenced by its labels of “illegal” and “nether.” This definitional set provides a base understanding for the term, but fails to explain the nuanced connections between the informal and formal economies. However, in a preface to an issue of *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, the same authors concede that “perhaps it [the underground economy] even penetrated the formal economy or provided its foundation, as was implied by the numerous speculations that some national economies would collapse without it.” See Louis A. Ferman, Stuart Henry, and Michele Hoyman, “Issues and Prospects for the Study of Informal Economies: Concepts, Research Strategies, and Policy,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 493 (1987): 157; Louis A. Ferman, Stuart Henry, and Michele Hoyman, “Preface,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 493 (1987): 10.

PART II

In the nineteenth century, in most cities within the United States, city officials spent much time and devotion either stamping out or controlling the selling of sex that became an increasing issue as city populations in urban environments grew. Even in cities where prostitution was legal, city officials regulated and controlled the business. In New Orleans, a southern city synonymous with vice, anti-prostitution laws came into effect as early as 1857. In her aptly titled book, *The Great Southern Babylon*, historian Alecia P. Long explains the significance of the Lorette Ordinance in New Orleans, which aimed “to regulate rather than suppress prostitution,” and required the removal of prostitutes from the ground floor of buildings, in order to make prostitution less visible to the public. It also created fees for prostitutes and landlords. The subsequent “delineation of four large geographic areas within which prostitution would be tolerated,” caused the unanticipated effect of prostitution to thrive rather than decline in the regulated area.⁸ Regardless of the unintended consequences, the Lorette Ordinance revealed that the city leaders of New Orleans both recognized that prostitution existed within its boundaries, and also tried to regulate it. Later on the mission would turn from regulation to suppression. In the North, city officials decided upon a different tactic. Prostitution in Boston was expressly illegal in the nineteenth century, yet laws intended to suppress the trade were largely ineffectual. Between 1820 and 1850, prostitution flourished in Boston and the number of prostitutes grew, increasing beyond the estimated two thousand prostitutes present in 1820. Unlike New Orleans’s attempts at regulation, Boston tried to stamp out the immorality in a number of ways, from raids in 1823 to grand jury investigations in 1831

⁸ Alecia P. Long, *The Great Southern Babylon* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 3.

to police department raids throughout the early 1840s. But laws against prostitution could not compete with the issue of supply and demand evident in the sex trade, and it continued to prosper despite these measures.⁹

Charleston approached the issue differently altogether. In this world of hazy illegality, Fanny Cochran entered the city as a young Canadian immigrant of thirteen in the year 1857. No records of her early life exist, nor information of the family with whom she may have come to Charleston, but even at thirteen, prostitution may have confronted her with its sense of normalcy within the city. After all, no law existed like in New Orleans that confined prostitution to one area, although houses of ill repute tended to cluster together within Charleston's fourth ward. Regardless, prostitution existed as a normal part of the city's life, a fact that some found intolerable. Outsiders in particular seemed shocked by the city's brazenness. In 1853, F. C. Adams, an Englishman who lived in the South for several years, wrote the book *Manuel Pereira; Or, The Sovereign Rule of South Carolina*. Though primarily an abolitionist text, Adams devoted space to lambasting prostitution, which he believed was "glaring evidence of the demoralization of social life in Charleston." He singled out one woman as the key figure in this depraved behavior, "Mrs. G. Pieseitto," known in formal records as Grace Peixotto, Charleston's most infamous madam.¹⁰

In 1853, even as Adams watched in horror and wrote of her actions, Peixotto was at the top of her game. A Jewish immigrant from the West Indies who came to Charleston as a child, she constructed an establishment at 11 Beresford Street in 1852.¹¹ Officially titled the Big Brick,

⁹ Jane H. Pease and William H. Pease, *Ladies, Women, and Wenches* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 150.

¹⁰ F. C. Adams, *Manuel Pereira* (Washington D.C.: Buell and Blanchard, 1853), 32.

¹¹ In *This Happy Land*, James William Hagy covers the history of Jewish Charleston during the colonial and antebellum period. He draws attention to the city as a destination for Jewish

it served as Peixotto's home for the rest of her life, and also the home of her successful brothel. The main building, three stories tall and featuring a double parlor, served as a place for both Peixotto and her women to entertain, sleep, and make money. And make money Peixotto did. The 1850 slave schedule showed her as the owner of six slaves between the ages of two and forty years old, all female, save for one four-year-old boy. This offers evidence of her ownership of property, albeit in the form of very real human lives, even before her brothel was built.¹² Her lot only increased in time. By the 1860 slave schedule, she owned seven, all female, between six and forty-five.¹³ Clearly in ten years Peixotto purchased new slaves, in the case of the forty-five-year-old woman, as well as sold at least one, the four-year-old boy. She used the money that she earned in the sex trade to engage in the socially acceptable, but no more moral, slave trade.

When Adams composed his anti-slavery diatribe, Peixotto was only thirty years old and had the opportunity to expand greatly in new efforts in either economy. Adams recognized this, but far from seeing it as an accomplishment, decried her progress. He called her, "A notorious woman who has kept the worst kind of a brothel for years, where harlots of all shades and importations break the quietude of night with their polluted songs." The Big Brick, built with

immigrants, where in the early nineteenth century it "ranked above New York and Philadelphia for the number of Jewish residents in the city." Of importance, he also notes the arrival of Jewish immigrants in early Charleston from locations spanning the globe, including an influx of Caribbean-born Jews, such as Peixotto's family. Although Charleston Jews "were never a monolithic group," as "they probably had many languages among themselves as the general population had," some of the actors within this study, including Grace Peixotto and Emil Hyman, shared a Jewish background noted by contemporary sources of their time, suggesting the importance of further work on connections within Jewish Charleston and the informal economy. James William Hagg, *This Happy Land: The Jews of Colonial and Antebellum Charleston* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1993), 15, 18.

¹² Schedule 2 (Slave Inhabitants), Parish of St. Philips and St. Michael, South Carolina, Seventh (1850) Census of the United States: Records of the Bureau of the Census, National Archives (hereafter cited as NA).

¹³ Schedule 2 (Slave Inhabitants), Charleston District, South Carolina, Eighth (1860) Census of the United States: Records of the Bureau of the Census, NA.

money made on such a practice, he considered “a splendid mansion to infamy and shame.” However, the full blame for Peixotto’s success could not be laid at her feet. What of the men of Charleston, who allowed prostitution to flourish? Adams hardly gave them a second thought. While he noted that she offered “very fine fun for the joking propensities of officials and gallants,” he did not condemn them in the least.¹⁴ No, it was Peixotto who “spread ruin and death through the community, and brought the head of many a brilliant young man to the last stage of cast-off misery.” “Leading men,” he noted, only “tolerated” these things. The message could not have been more explicit: women were to blame for what outsiders saw as the corruption of Charleston because of its prevalent sex trade, whereas men, despite their obvious active participation, were innocent, even those who tolerated the trade at best. But in this exchange, it was Peixotto, not Adams, who got the last laugh: Adams took particular insult with Peixotto’s request that the city pave a path to the Big Brick, which he found intolerable, as the only people who would use such a path were those who used her services and, thus, added to Charleston’s corruption.¹⁵ In the end, the city did just that. Not only did Peixotto manage to secure a plot of land, build her own house, and run her own business while engaging in both the formal trade of slavery and informal sex work, but she held enough respect and clout that she could convince the “tolerant” men of Charleston to aid her.

Did Cochran know Peixotto? Probably. If Adams, an outsider in Charleston community life, knew such intimate details of Peixotto’s business practices, it would not be a stretch to think that, after entering the city in 1857, four years after the building of the Big Brick, Cochran at some point came across tales of the notorious woman as well. However, people within Charleston reacted differently to prostitution than visitors to the city did. To native

¹⁴ Adams, *Manuel Pereira*, 32.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 33.

Charlestonians, prostitution was a much more common occurrence, hardly something worth reacting over, as a glance at contemporary Charleston newspapers confirms. Brothels or, as they were known at the time, bawdy houses, were only written about in regards to criminal activity within the space, something the prostitution itself did not fall under. The ease at which newspapers called a bawdy house by its name, or labeled a woman as worker there, would be ill at place in almost every other city in the United States in the nineteenth century. For example, in 1869, the *Charleston Daily* wrote, “Boundsman Sheridan ordered a drunken soldier, who was very disorderly in a bawdy house, to behave himself. The soldier struck the officer, and the women commenced to scratch him.” The soldier would go on to struggle “so desperately that, despite the efforts of the men to keep his clothes on, he kicked them off.”¹⁶ A reader of such a segment might be horrified that the soldier hit the officer, or laugh at the nudity, but the fact that it took place in a bawdy house was thrown out casually, a fact accepted by the populace. More explicitly, brothel workers in an 1865 case were called out as criminals not for their sexual exploits, but for their possible connection to a robbery. “A gentleman from the country” entered a brothel on August 21st, only to be relieved of his gold watch and \$550. Two women were swiftly arrested, and curiously, despite their low ranking in society as sex workers, the *Charleston Daily* did not decry their immediate guilt. Despite their arrest, the writer stated that they were to “undergo examination,” but added more ominously, “Should they be pronounced guilty, we predict that an example will be made that will terrify all the inhabitants of brothels in the city.”¹⁷ This case, reported on no further, offers an especially telling example, as the author identified the brothel as located on Beresford Street. While records show that Peixotto’s brothel was not the only bawdy house to exist on Beresford Street, hers was undoubtedly the most well-

¹⁶ “Fought His Clothes Off,” *Charleston Daily*, September 9, 1869.

¹⁷ “Robbery,” *Charleston Daily*, August 21, 1865.

known, and it very well could have been her establishment and her working women at the center of the crime.

History has lost the fate of those two prostitutes, as well as their guilt or innocence, but if the author of the initial article can be believed, the possibility of their innocence outweighs their guilt—had they been convicted of such a crime, it likely would have been reported upon further. Further uncertainty rests on whether they continued to work at the establishment on Beresford Street, but if necessary, they could have gotten a different job at another of Charleston’s many brothels. It would help that brothels were typically clustered around the same area within Charleston’s fourth ward, and in fact, residents considered the area so infamous as to bestow on it its own crude nickname. In *Braided Relations, Entwined Lives*, Cynthia M. Kennedy explains, “As in most busy urban ports, numerous brothels lined certain Charleston streets and alleys, like Beresford (later Fulton), Archdale, Chalmers, Friend, and Clifford or ‘Mulatto Alley.’”¹⁸

‘Mulatto Alley’ imparted that, before emancipation, enslaved women were historically offered up by their owners for sex, a fact probably true in Peixotto’s case. In 1853, Adams reported, “Harlots of all shades and importations break the quietude of the night with their polluted songs” at the Big Brick, imparting the possibility of miscegenation.¹⁹ Furthermore, the previously mentioned slave schedules offer damning evidence of the fact that Peixotto owned strictly female slaves, save for small children. Did she force these women to have sex with male clients? Madams besides Peixotto who lived within Mulatto Alley also ran houses with only female slaves, such as Margaret Clinton, noted in the 1860 census as the proprietor of a boarding

¹⁸ Cynthia M. Kennedy, *Braided Relations, Entwined Lives* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 120.

¹⁹ Adams, *Manuel Pereira*, 32.

house at 6 West Street.²⁰ The term “boarding house” within the census was often code for a bawdy house—the 1860 census also listed Peixotto’s “Profession, Occupation, or Trade” as a boarding house.²¹ Significance also rests in Clinton’s address. Less than a block from 11 Beresford Street, 6 West Street fell within Mulatto Alley, and would trade hands between madams throughout the nineteenth century, a known hub of female prostitution. Over a decade later, Cochran called it her home as well. Clinton’s female slaves fell between the ages of eight and forty, with the lone male slave listed at half a year old.²² A decade prior, in 1850, another boarding house proprietor, Emily Timbrook, owned six slaves between the ages of fifteen and thirty-four, also all female.²³ The connection between white madams and the ownership of predominantly female slaves paints a dire picture for the women whose bodies were considered the property of their owner. Their names were not considered important enough to document, in contrast to the white women who inhabited the fourth ward of Charleston, who were documented as residents in census records, city directories, and tax records of the day. Unlike them, the nameless enslaved women, all too probably forced into prostitution, prove impossible to track.

On April 12, 1861, the Confederate forces of South Carolina opened fire on Fort Sumter, commencing the start of the Civil War. From her nearby home at 11 Beresford Street, Peixotto could certainly hear the shelling. Did she sip champagne that evening among the company of prominent Charleston gentlemen, cheering on the soldiers attack on the Yankees? Neither she, nor Clinton or Timbrook, could have had any idea of the way that their livelihood would change

²⁰ Schedule 1 (Free Inhabitants), Charleston District, South Carolina, Eighth (1860) Census of the United States: Records of the Bureau of the Census, NA.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Schedule 2 (Slave Inhabitants), Charleston District, South Carolina, Eighth (1860) Census of the United States: Records of the Bureau of the Census, NA.

²³ Schedule 2 (Slave Inhabitants), Parish of St. Philips and St. Michael, South Carolina, Seventh (1850) Census of the United States: Records of the Bureau of the Census, NA.

throughout the course of the war and the Confederate defeat. The chaos of war interrupted the careful record keeping afforded before and after, and for the historian, a frustrating gap appears in the understanding of sex work during these years. A major port city, Charleston proved an important player in the war, and only surrendered in February of 1865. Charleston's occupation by Union soldiers undoubtedly affected every facet of the city, but prostitution was especially impacted. Evidence of the brutality women faced became more available as the war ended, as well as evidence of the closeness between women of the profession. Of one such incidence of brutality, historian Thomas P. Lowry writes:

As the war drew to a close, navy as well as army men left their marks in the records, including three officers from the USS *Squando*. Thomas A. Looby, an acting assistance engineer, was raising hell in Charleston in August 1865. He was a frequent customer at a whorehouse at No. 6 West Street. He was drunk and in a quarrelsome mood during one visit, claiming he was from headquarters, sent to examine prostitutes' licenses. When Millie McGiven did not cooperate, he began to choke her. She jumped out of a window; he jumped out on top of her. He dragged her back in the room and 'used her roughly for about half an hour, violating her person.' When she asked him what he was doing, Looby replied, 'I am trying to kill you, you damned bitch, and if you were dead, I would do what I am doing now.' Delia Morris and Gertrude Charles of the same address confirmed this story. The defendant had been offensive at other locals as well. A house of ill fame on Princess Street had felt his wrath, and at 11 Beresford Street he terrified Grace Peixotto and chased Jeannie Stewart up the stairs and tried to whip her.

The other two officers from the *Squando*, William Finnegan and R. M. Lamphier, were charged with conduct unbecoming an officer, with Delia Morris identifying Lamphier as "very gentlemanly during his visit," but said that he watched through the window as Looby raped her. The navy dismissed Looby in disgrace.²⁴

The women within the profession clearly knew one another. They shared clients and experiences, both the good and the bad, walked along the same streets, and frequented the same

²⁴ Thomas P. Lowry, *Sexual Misbehavior in the Civil War: A Compendium* (Philadelphia: Xlibris, Corp, 2006), 46.

shops. They also shared a common identity as fallen women, and it makes sense to presume that once a woman became a prostitute, she probably stayed within the line of work, which led, according to respectable people, to degradation and eventual death. In *Rereading Sex*, historian of gender and sexuality Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz elaborates on the connection between female sexuality in the nineteenth century and the unfortunate path society considered prostitutes to follow. Unchaste, aroused women could not be trusted, and as such their lust needed to be controlled. The lustful woman, she explains, “looks first a man and, if not protected by marriage, is seduced and abandoned. Pregnant, she has no recourse but the brothel for support and the continued gratification of her desires. The brothels leads her to sexual excess and death.”²⁵ As such, outsiders probably viewed the treatment of sex workers during and after Union occupation, documented as brutal, as normal, even justified.

Cochran first entered the world of prostitution during this period of violence. In 1865, living at 4 Beresford Street, just down the road from Peixotto, she paid a \$25 tax on a liquor license, already signifying the flow between the formal and informal economy, as she paid tax on a reputable business while almost certainly engaging in the untaxed business of prostitution.²⁶ She continued to move around the fourth ward of Charleston, to 120 Market Street in 1867, where she made her debut in the newspapers in 1869 in a way that showed the cavalier attitude of Charlestonians towards prostitution and violence towards its workers.²⁷

During this time, “assaults, robberies, illegal traffic in whiskey, gambling, and prostitution increased” and “fights and stabbings were commonplace in saloons along Market

²⁵ Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Rereading Sex* (New York: Alfred. A. Knoff, 2002), 69.

²⁶ Fannie Cochran tax assessment 1865, District two, South Carolina, U.S. IRS Tax Assessment Lists, 1862-1918, RG 58: Records of the Internal Revenue Service, NA.

²⁷ “Charleston City Directory, 1867-68,” (Charleston: Jno. Orrin Lea & Co., Publishers, 1867-68).

Street from Archdale Street to East Bay.”²⁸ On top of that, Union soldiers, still present from the Civil War, occupied the city. Hence, it was not surprising when, on a Saturday afternoon in April of 1869, after Cochran had lived two years on Market Street, the area lived up to its reputation. In what the *Charleston Daily* described as “a disgraceful array,” three unnamed officers of the United States Army got into an altercation with a local man, George Chapman, in a house of ill repute. As the men tussled, one of the officers fired a pistol twice, and hit a lieutenant in the arm. However, the newspaper made it clear that this was not the pinnacle of the battle. After the gunshot wound, as “the row was growing still more serious . . . Fanny Cochran, one of the intimates of the house” was “struck in the face and badly bruised.”²⁹

What was truly astounding about this incident was not its occurrence, but that it was reported at all. As seen in the previous episode involving a crime in a bawdy house in 1869, also involving a soldier’s misbehavior, the true crime here was not the prostitution itself, so casually mentioned. And the assault on Cochran in itself was not enough to make news, but it, coupled with the crime of the men, was. It begs the question—how many other prostitutes were assaulted in similar circumstances which did not warrant print? After all, the accusations against Looby and Lamphier did not make the newspaper. In a city that accepted prostitution as legal, though still socially illicit, Cochran and other prostitutes like her proved easy targets for violence. Badly bruised and undoubtedly shaken, Cochran’s ordeal was not over. The Charleston police responded to the fight, and arrested all five, “the three officers, Chapman, and the woman.” Her exact role in the incident remains unclear, but difficulty rests in trying to imagine a nineteenth century woman actively provoking a quarrel between the men, or throwing punches of her own.

²⁸ Walton J. Fraser Jr., *Charleston! Charleston! The History of a Southern City* (Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1989), 332.

²⁹ “A Disgraceful Array,” *Charleston Daily*, April 26, 1869.

To police, however, her involvement warranted an arrest. Even more ludicrously, after all five were taken to the guardhouse, one of the officers further assaulted an on-duty police officer at the door, but afterwards, police allowed all three of the officers, “for some reason as yet to be explained,” to depart. Chapman and Cochran, “who, if anything, seem to have been less at fault,” remained in custody. While the *Charleston Daily* promised that the affair would “receive further investigation,” the newspaper never wrote about the incident again.³⁰ The altercation sent a clear message: although the business was not illegal, prostitutes’ status as sex workers nonetheless put them far below the standing of other white women on a social scale, and men could not only abuse them, but the women themselves could end up taking the blame.

A tiny ray of hope existed for prostitutes held in such dire straits, a way out of the unpredictable chaos, abuse, and rape of the trade: making the transition from prostitute to madam, running their own houses, and mastering the flow between formal and informal economies.³¹ That Cochran managed to do so makes her an exception among a large number of Charleston prostitutes. In an underworld where women employed in bawdy houses simply disappeared off the record, Cochran survived with the dangers and assaults of sex work and

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Timothy Gilfoyle offers evidence that this transformation happened in the sex trade of New York as well. He states, “Although most women who prostituted did so only for a short time, some made it a career. Their longevity reflected how prostitution served as an avenue of mobility—a road that, if not paved with gold, provided a modicum of comfort and stability. During the early nineteenth century, some entrepreneurial prostitutes successfully accumulated savings and property. Stereotypical descriptions of a prostitute’s life as five years of dissipation followed by death ignored those prostitutes who eventually became madams, acquired real and personal property, and remained in the profession for decades.” This rare transition from prostitute to madam “thus enabled certain women to acquire a degree of autonomy and lead semi-independent economic lives.” His book further explores informal economy and the sexual subculture of prostitutes and sporting men in New York City. Timothy Gilfoyle, *City of Eros* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1994), 70-74.

saved up enough capital to become a boss in her own right.³² Just as the impossibility of accounting for when she joined the ranks of prostitution, discovering when she made the transition between prostitute to madam proves difficult, but she did leave some clues behind. After the incident at Market Street, she moved the next year, in 1870, to 6 West Street, Margaret Clinton's previous address and the bawdy house involved in the infamous Looby and Lamphier rapes, where Gertrude Charles, a witness to the crimes, still lived and presumably worked. Cochran's name appeared first on the census list that year, but it does not necessarily mean she owned the house at that time, as she could have simply lived and worked there under the ownership of someone else, as presumably the other three women listed did.³³ She still lived there in 1872, and that year the U.S. Directory listed her as Miss Fanny Cochran, her title indicating that, as a single woman, she did not own her own property.³⁴

By the 1880 census Cochran had moved again, but only two doors down, to 8 West Street, a property confirmed as her own.³⁵ The high turnover rate of prostitution becomes clear in these records—Gertrude Charles, along with the other women who lived with Cochran in 1870, disappeared from the list, and new women appeared. Cochran, listed as “keeping house,” was the clear owner of the household, as the other two women, Ada Palmer and Lily Jackson,

³² Paula Petrik's groundbreaking article “Capitalists with Rooms” explores the idea of prostitutes and madams in nineteenth century Helena, Montana as entrepreneurs, economic actors, and capitalists. The business empires in Helena's demimonde, and the women who ran them, prove incredibly similar to the forth ward of Charleston and Cochran's story. Paula Petrik, “Capitalists with Rooms: Prostitution in Helena, Montana, 1865-1900,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 31 (1981).

³³ Schedule 1 (Inhabitants), Charleston Ward 4, South Carolina, Ninth (1870) Census of the United States: Records of the Bureau of the Census, NA..

³⁴ “Directory,” (Charleston: Walker, Evans, & Cogswell, 1872-73).

³⁵ Cochran owned the property at 8 West street in 1882 upon her death, and her will assessed the house and its contents. See Charleston, South Carolina, will no. # 282/25 (1882), Frances Cochran, South Carolina Department of Archives and History [hereafter SCDAH].

were listed as simply “without occupation.”³⁶ The U.S. Directory also changed its understanding of her position: in 1882, rather than Miss Fanny Cochran, they listed her as Madam Fanny Cochran, indicating that she was the owner of her own house.³⁷ The term could also have a double meaning—one man noted, “In the Charleston Directory Madam is title of bagnio-mistress,” bagnio another word for brothel.³⁸

One cannot help but wonder how Cochran felt about the path that her life had taken. From a modern standpoint, a historian can easily imagine her as a benevolent madam, knowing as she did how it felt to be in the shoes of the women who worked for her, women like Ada Palmer and Lily Jackson, women likely to see the kinds of horrors that Cochran knew too well. It would make for a great moral rags-to-riches tale to say that she protected her women from the often-ignored epidemic of rape within brothels, and from the hands of men who got too rough, men with whom she certainly had first-hand experience. But the odds seem to be that, as one of the few prostitutes-turned-madams, Cochran was probably a pragmatist. It would not be practical to get too involved in the lives of the women who worked for her. Cochran proved successful enough at her job to be known to have “accumulated some property,” insinuating that, along with owning 8 West Street, she had her hands other property as well.³⁹ To grow from an immigrant poor enough to need to work as a prostitute, to a successful madam who put that

³⁶Schedule 1 (Inhabitants), Charleston County, South Carolina, Tenth (1880) Census of the United States, RG 29: Records of the Bureau of the Census, NA: The census in question lists Cochran’s age at forty-five, which was certainly untrue—she would die two years later at thirty-eight, making her a full nine years younger than the census recorded in 1880. The reason for this mistake is unknown, but the possibilities—that Cochran lied about her age for whatever reason, someone else misrepresented her age, that the census recorder heard her wrong, etc.—are truly limitless. However, despite the incorrectness of her age, the other data afforded in the census seems reliable.

³⁷ A.E. Sholes and C.F. Weatherby, “Sholes Directory for the City of Charleston,” (Charleston: Sholes & Co. Publishers, 1882).

³⁸ John Bennett, John Bennett papers, 1865-1956, (1176.00), SCHS.

³⁹ *Keowee Courier*, August 8, 1889.

money illicitly earned into not just one but several pieces of her own property, Cochran needed a tough mind for business, and her business involved the selling of other women's bodies.

Although possibly friendly with her workers, it did not translate down into history.

1880 proved a fateful year for the sex trade in Charleston. The underground world of the sex trade in Charleston transformed suddenly when Peixotto, the paramount figure in the fourth ward for thirty years, died. On May 4th, 1880, the executor and devisee, Jacob S. Myers, probated her will. Myers also acquired the sum of Peixotto's personal property, sold for a total of \$1,207.60. Documents examining the legality of the matter, which showed Myers as the rightful heir to Peixotto's property, stated, "It will be seen from the will of Grace Peixotta [sic] that she left everything to Jacob S. Myers, whom we are informed she married on her deathbed."⁴⁰

Who was this mystery man, who swooped in to marry Charleston's most notorious madam in her last moments? What was his relationship with Peixotto? Were they friends, lovers, business partners? The blurring of lines between formal and informal economy, as well as the way that networks of prostitution were not explicitly women's territory, proves especially apparent in Myers' case. Whatever his connection to Peixotto before their sudden marriage, he supported himself before her death through reputable means. Involved in both trade and agriculture, the 1880 census listed him as owning farmland around the Charleston area, while U.S. Directories from 1881 to 1886 stated his occupation as a mariner who specialized in cigars and tobacco.⁴¹ From the time he inherited 11 Beresford Street, Myers engaged in the underground economy by renting the property out to various madams, listed as residents in both

⁴⁰ William F. Maguire to The Charleston Real Estate and Investment Company, Dec. 2nd, 1890, Abstract of Title, private collection at 11 Fulton Street, Charleston, South Carolina.

⁴¹ Schedule 2 (Productions of Agriculture), Charleston County, South Carolina, Tenth (1880) Census of the United States: Records of the Bureau of the Census, NA.

censuses and directories. Myers may have put the rent money he earned from the Big Brick back into his cigar and tobacco business. Perhaps, prior to Peixotto's death, he could not afford to go into business at all—his listing as a mariner in the U.S. Directory only came after his inheritance of all her earthly belongings.

The circumstances of their relationship cannot be truly proven, but the connection between Peixotto, a notorious fallen woman, albeit a very wealthy one, and a businessman at least marginally respected, illustrates interconnectivity between those in and out of the sex trade in Charleston. It also links together Peixotto, the most famous of the Big Brick's madams, to Cochran, with Myers as the bridge between them. While it cannot be definitively proven that Peixotto and Cochran ever met, despite the close proximity of their establishments and identical occupations, 11 Beresford Street and Myers connected their lives. On May 1, 1882, Myers leased the renowned Big Brick to Cochran.⁴² It showed another smart business move on her part—the reputation of the house as one of the finest brothels in the city meant a steady influx of high paying clientele, and the property was highly developed. When the Big Brick passed to Myers, Carter L. Hudgins notes in his book on historic Charleston architecture, “The property at this time contained, in addition to the three story main building, a two-story brick building and a three story brick building arranged around a courtyard and linked by piazzas.”⁴³ At thirty-eight years old, Cochran showed herself as an incredibly astute businesswoman, and the proprietor of two bawdy houses, as she still owned 8 West Street. However, despite her otherwise shrewd sense of business that allowed her to climb the ranks to financial security, exploiting both

⁴² W.G. Easton to Mr. James F. Redding, May. 4th, 1891, Certificate of Judgments, private collection at 11 Fulton Street, Charleston, South Carolina.

⁴³ Carter L. Hudgins, ed, *The Vernacular Architecture of Charleston and the Lowcountry, 1670-1990: A Field Guide* (Charleston: Historic Charleston Foundation, 1994), 125.

economies at once, her weakness would show in her personal life. Her lover, Emil Hyman, became her worst business investment and ultimately her murderer.⁴⁴

When the pair met cannot be established, but there may have been an instant connection. Like Cochran, Hyman was a first-generation immigrant to the United States, arriving from Prussia sometime before 1866, when his first mention appeared in the U.S. Directory.⁴⁵ Also like Cochran, he seems to have spent the majority of his time in Charleston's notorious fourth ward, with addresses scattered around the red light district. But their similarities ended there. While Cochran spent her time in the latter half of the nineteenth century jumping from house to house, she was also working her way up the economic ladder. Hyman owned no property. He moved from residence to residence as well, at one point bedding at 300 King Street, clearly renting only a room at best.⁴⁶ These addresses were probably a mere formality, with, again, the truth coming out after Cochran's death—only days after her murder, the *Keowee Courier* revealed, "Hyman had been living with the woman for years," but they did not identify when that set up took place.⁴⁷ The contrast between the two paths of life could not have been more apparent, or further from the norm of gender roles, a fact further illustrated in the addresses listed in the year of

⁴⁴ Anne M. Butler covers the relationships undertaken by prostitutes in the American West, primarily marriage, in *Daughters of Joy, Sisters of Misery*. While some of her claims, such as "Physical and emotional violence colored more prostitutes' marriage than romance and gentleness," and, "Prostitutes lived off male customers, and husbands leached off prostitutes," oversimplify diverse and varied experiences by thousands of sex workers, they prove true in the case of Cochran and Hyman. Anne M. Butler, *Daughters of Joy, Sisters of Misery* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 33-35.

⁴⁵ Schedule 1 (Inhabitants), Charleston County, South Carolina, Tenth (1880) Census of the United States, RG 29: Records of the Bureau of the Census, NA; Burke & Boines, "Charleston Directory," (New York: M.B. Brown & Co., 1866).

⁴⁶ A. E. Sholes, "Sholes Directory of the City of Charleston," (Charleston: A.E. Sholes, Publisher: November 15, 1879).

⁴⁷ "Business Locals," *Keowee Courier*, November 23, 1882.

Cochran's death, 1882.⁴⁸ Recorded at 8 West Street, Cochran, undoubtedly the madam of her own establishment, lived a life while not the most socially acceptable move for a woman in the nineteenth century, certainly brought her significant power and money. In comparison, Hyman's address, a saloon on 191 King Street, only remained his as the site of his most recent business venture with Cochran, another interesting aspect of their story.⁴⁹

The exact date and time that Cochran and Hyman first went into business together also remains elusive. However, the saloon on King Street was definitively a business she set up for him, and not the first—Cochran placed him in several other businesses over the years, but none of them ever seemed to prosper. In 1866, the first record of Hyman in Charleston, the U.S. Directory listed him as a clerk.⁵⁰ Nine years later, in 1875, the U.S. Directory labeled him a salesman for I. Hyman and Co.⁵¹ And 1880 showed him employed as a merchant, running what was described as a “gent's furnishing store.”⁵²

⁴⁸ Historians have written much on the importance of sex, gender, and the interconnectivity between the two in nineteenth century America. John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman's *Intimate Matters* cite the transformation as the evolution “from the patriarchal model of the ‘little commonwealth’ to what historians have since termed the era of ‘separate sexual spheres.’” The social worlds of nineteenth century men revolved the public sphere, where “white men could earn wages, vote, enter local or national politics, and venture on their own to new regions.” In contrast, women “remained in the private, or domestic, sphere, where they continued to perform their unpaid reproductive and household labors.” Significantly, sexual transgressions grew permissive for men, whereas the importance for sexual purity fell to women. To the accepted standards of the time, Cochran and Hyman's relationship was incredibly out of place. John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 57.

⁴⁹ “Sholes Directory of the City of Charleston,” (Charleston: Sholes & Co., 1882).

⁵⁰ Burke & Boines, “Charleston Directory,” (New York: M.B. Brown & Co., 1866).

⁵¹ T.M. Haddock and J.E. Baker, “Charleston City Directory,” (Charleston: Walker, Evans, & Cogswell, 1875): The store listed Israel Hyman and Bernard Sprinz as its owners. Emil Hyman's relationship to Israel Hyman is unclear, but given their surnames and working relationship, they were almost certainly related.

⁵² Schedule 1 (Inhabitants), Charleston County, South Carolina, Tenth (1880) Census of the United States, RG 29: Records of the Bureau of the Census, NA.

It was the latter business that landed Hyman in the hot water that tarnished his reputation for years to come, for in the same addition of the *Keowee Courier* that noted Hyman and Cochran's shared residences, they also called him "a well known Israelite whose record has not been good."⁵³ In Charleston, where a good reputation meant everything, Hyman lost his in the spring of 1880. On May 15th he was indicted in the Court of General Sessions for "soliciting and obtaining property by fraudulent means or representation with intent to cheat and defraud," which tarnished his character irreversibly.⁵⁴ Despite this, Cochran stuck by him, fronting him in yet another business, the saloon at 191 King Street, only two years later. This, more than anything, illustrated her certain fondness for him.

This fondness seems strangely out of character for Cochran. She spent her life undoubtedly alone—after all, who would want to associate with a known prostitute, a woman who had her name in the paper in relation not only to her inappropriate job, but also as beaten and arrested? A prostitute or madam felt the isolation of living outside polite society, viewed very much as Hyman with his unflattering record. While Cochran may or may not have had family that detached themselves from her because of her occupation, Peixotto served as an example of how her decisions could reflect on the rest of the family. In *Braided Relations, Entwined Lives*, Kennedy explained, "Grace Peixotto was the 'notorious' and 'demoralized' daughter of a former Beth Elohim *hazan*, or a synagogue official. She was not only disobedient or willful but also kept a Charleston brothel 'where harlots of all shades and importations' plied their trade."⁵⁵ Notorious, demoralized, disobedient, willful—women like Peixotto and Cochran

⁵³ "Business Locals," *Keowee Courier* November 23, 1882.

⁵⁴ Warrant of Arrest of Emil Hyman, May 15th, 1880, Indictment File 4548, Charleston Co Indictments, SCDAH.

⁵⁵ Kennedy, *Braided Relations, Entwined Lives*, 104.

were seen as stains upon their name and swiftly pruned from the branches of their family trees.⁵⁶ If Cochran found herself isolated and alone, without family ties or close friends, her openness to a relationship and cohabitation with Hyman, a man who had a reputation just as tarnished as her own, makes sense. Cochran, a businesswoman savvy enough to rise swiftly in the ranks of sex work, who owned and managed several properties, apparently found their connection strong enough to put aside her business ethic and support him as he failed, time and time again, to properly handle the businesses she set up for him.

In a way, by fronting businesses for Hyman, Cochran proved herself more like Peixotto's executor Myers than any other player within the network of Charleston sex work, only in reverse. Myers used the money made through prostitution—including rent gathered on 11 Beresford Street from Cochran herself—to fuel his legitimate business in cigars and tobacco. On the flip side, Cochran used her money, first earned from engaging in prostitution herself and then later in life from running her own establishments as a madam, to accumulate economic power via property and legitimate businesses. By fronting Hyman in businesses, she was able to use money gained on the underground economy to become a part of the formal economy as well. The way which Myers and Cochran flowed back and forth between illicit and licit businesses exemplifies the way in which both economies were inextricably linked.

The imbalanced power dynamic between Cochran and Hyman had to eventually grate on Hyman. In a society where masculinity meant that a man remained responsible for the financial

⁵⁶ Hagy connects Peixotto's notorious occupation with that of her otherwise conventional family in *This Happy Land*. On marriage in Jewish Charleston, he writes, "One of the people who did not marry was Grace Peixotto (b. St. Thomas, 1817), the daughter of Solomon Cohen Peixotto, who served as the *hazan* of Beth Elohim for some time, and Rachel Suares Peixotto," before delving into F.C. Adams' writings on her bad reputation and business practices. However, aside from a brief note on Solomon Cohen Peixotto's run as *hazan* of Beth Elohim until his death in 1835, Hagy does not report further on the Peixotto family or the divergent paths of pious father and notorious daughter. Hagy, *This Happy Land*, 166.

security of his family, and argued that that his woman's body was something meant to be saved for and exclusive to him only, how did it affect their relationship that Cochran held the property and the money, and that she had acquired these things by having sex with other men? Did his frustration, nursed over the years of this unbalanced dynamic, boil over and lead to their argument in November 1882 that finally ejected him from her home permanently? Or did something else prove the undoing of their relationship?

The legal papers of Hyman's lawyers, the firm of Simons and Cappelmann, offer insight into a potential motive for Cochran's murder. Charged twice with Cochran's murder, after the first attempt ended in mistrial, Hyman's lawyers prepared two separate opening arguments. The 1883 case drew heavily upon the argument of 1882. Their version of events remained consistent: yes, Hyman did indeed shoot down Cochran on the night of November 20, 1882, but not, they stated, with "malice aforethought." The attorneys explained that although "the prisoner at the bar held the weapon which was destructive to the life of the deceased," his lack of "sound mind and memory with a deliberate vindictive temper regardless of social duty bent on mischief" meant, to Simons and Cappelmann, the only possible outcome of the trial should be not guilty.⁵⁷

They claimed a twofold reason for this lack of sound mind, the reasons dependent upon one another. First, the cause of what they called the "clouded mass" of Hyman's mind was simple: alcohol. It was no single drunken bout either, they claimed, truly "not brought about by a temporary use," but caused by an ongoing abuse of alcohol, as could only happen through "a continuous imbibing for a long period of time," that left him without the capability to make clear decisions. Secondly, this was through no—or very little—fault of his own, as the lawyers tied this reasoning to original sin. "Man," they argued, "Is prone to err ever since the fall of our first

⁵⁷ Simons and Cappelmann, opening argument 1883: page 4, SCHS.

ancestors from that lovely sphere,” of the Garden of Eden. And truly, “The evil spirits generated from the Satanic Hosts who raised the hand of rebellion against high Heaven have been leading men from the path of virtue unto the lower & degraded walks of life.”⁵⁸ This reasoning smacks of the vernacular of the popular temperance movement of the nineteenth century, linking alcohol to the poor choices of men through Christian language.⁵⁹

Interestingly, Hyman’s lawyers also linked his reliance upon Cochran for financial security as a reason that he would not willingly kill her. They asked the gentlemen of the jury, “Does a man who has been the recipient of many blessings much money and even clothing return thanks for such treatment by thrusting a dagger through the heart of his benefactor?”⁶⁰ How did it affect Hyman, sitting before a panel of his peers, to hear it acknowledged openly that he had needed a woman—and not just any woman, but one of ill repute—to support him financially? Was he horribly embarrassed, his manhood all the more damaged after years of financial failure? Or did his gratitude increase, pleased with another justification for his innocence, atop the reasoning put forth by his lawyers, that “he was not aware of the firing of the shot,” surely proved by his lack of “some effort for escape,” as “most criminals are expected to do” when of sound mind?⁶¹

⁵⁸ Ibid, page 7.

⁵⁹ Historians have written much on the temperance movement which, popular throughout the nineteenth century, culminated in prohibition in the twentieth. Horowitz connected the issues of prostitution and temperance together through *The Magdalen Report* in New York in the 1830’s, which showed how “the Bible, tract, missionary, and temperance societies” influenced moral reformers to combat prostitution. Horowitz, *Rereading Sex*, 148. For more information nineteenth century temperance and religion, see: John W. Frick, *Theatre, Culture, and Temperance Reform in Nineteenth Century America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

⁶⁰ Simons and Cappelmann, opening argument 1883: page 6, SCHS.

⁶¹ Simons and Cappelmann, opening argument 1882: page 7, SCHS.

Records left by the prosecution prove scantier than those of Hyman's lawyers, but a few key pieces of evidence exist. One example clearly showcases the importance of the networks within the fourth ward of Charleston, especially, in this case, those in and around 11 Beresford Street. The witnesses from the mistrial of 1882 are unknown, but those who testified on behalf of the prosecution in 1883, the year of Hyman's conviction, come down through bench warrants. On June 22, 1883, Ada Wadsworth, Gertrude Harrison, and Charlotte Kinloch received summons to appear as witnesses for the prosecution. Probably an employee of Cochran's at the time of Cochran's death, the 1883 U.S. Directory listed Gertrude Harrison as "bedding" at 11 Beresford Street.⁶² However, by November of 1883, Judge Witherspoon would "order that Sheriff procure carriage for the invalid witness Gertrude Harrison."⁶³ Whatever caused her status as an invalid, the prosecution deemed her significant enough of a witness to procure, at the state's expense, her transportation. Likewise, the U.S. Directory had Charlotte Kinloch listed as a domestic at 11 Beresford Street in 1883, although by June of that year she had moved.⁶⁴ On June 29th, 1883, an order came from the solicitor of the court that read, "The Clerk of the Court will please issue pay Certificate in this case to Charlotte Kinloch for attendance at two terms of Court and mileage twice from New York," insinuating that they had called her at least as a witness at both trials.⁶⁵ Ada Wadsworth also "bedded" at 11 Beresford Street in 1883, perhaps, like Harrison, an employee of Cochran's, another puzzle piece in the network of women in the fourth ward.⁶⁶ These women clearly existed within Cochran's household, on her payroll, either as servants or as

⁶² A.E. Sholes, "Sholes' Directory of the City of Charleston 1883," (Charleston: Walker, Evans, & Cogswell, 1883).

⁶³ J.D. Witherspoon, November 9, 1883, Indictment File 4971, Charleston Co Indictments, SCDAH.

⁶⁴ Sholes, "Sholes' Directory 1883."

⁶⁵ Order from Solicitor, June 29, 1883, Indictment File 4971, Charleston Co Indictments, SCDAH.

⁶⁶ Sholes, "Sholes' Directory 1883."

prostitutes whom she managed. They lived alongside her, interacted with her every day, and at least two of them slept within the luxurious bedrooms of 11 Beresford Street. These three women either saw or heard events significant enough on the night of November 20th to cause them to be called upon to testify for the prosecution, even as residents of a notorious bawdy house. Did one of them, perhaps Kinloch, as the domestic servant, answer the door to find Hyman in a rage? Did Wadsworth and Harrison hear the blast of a pistol and come running, to find Cochran bleeding from a gunshot wound “upon the right side of her body,” noted to be “of the depth of six inches”?⁶⁷ Perhaps they carried her from the entryway into her bedroom, just off the entryway, even as the police apprehended Hyman, as he made what his lawyers called “statements damaging in the extreme,” which they felt proved all the further his lack of sound mind.⁶⁸ Frustratingly, they did not repeat these statements in their opening arguments in either 1882 and 1883 and offered only a tantalizing mention of them, no doubt to avoid impressing them, yet again, into the jury’s minds. Of all the women Cochran lived with over the years, Wadsworth, Kinloch, and Harrison proved to be the most vital within her network—their help allowed her murderer’s conviction.

Cochran died on November 22, 1882, two days after the gunshot, in the bedroom she inhabited at 11 Beresford Street, a room that had belonged to Peixotto only two years prior.⁶⁹ A short time later, the city inventoried Cochran’s entire estate in order to form a clear understanding of her worldly possessions, attached to a will written out, tellingly, on November 20, 1882, the date Hyman shot her. She signed the document with a simple x, labeled “her mark.” At thirty-eight years old, Cochran was illiterate. This fact had not stopped her from

⁶⁷ Indictment for Murder, June 26, 1883, Indictment File 4971, Charleston Co Indictments, SCDAH.

⁶⁸ Simons and Cappelmann, opening argument 1883: page 7, SCHS.

⁶⁹ Death Record for Fanny Cochran, South Carolina Death Records, 1875-1899, SCDAH.

running two successful brothels that contained possessions more likely to be found among the cultured elite of Charleston than within the home of a woman who had once sold her body for money. At 11 Beresford Street, in her own bedroom, her rosewood chamber set, ebony rocker, and two wardrobes with glass doors totaled a worth of \$920. Carpets or rugs from Brussels graced each room, including in places as insignificant as hallways. The double parlor contained two pianos and two chandeliers, as well as an ebony parlor set upholstered in velvet. The luxury continued over at 8 West Street. Oil paintings, eighteen in total between the two addresses, and forty-nine pictures decorated the bedrooms and parlors. Despite her illiteracy, Cochran owned sets of forks and spoons, nine total, engraved with her initials, F.C. Her clothing and jewelry, likewise carefully itemized, offer perhaps most telling picture of Cochran as a woman. She preferred satin, silk, and velvet, typically in shades of black and blue, and also owned a large collection of hats. She kept a set of mink furs at both addresses. And the total of her jewelry added up to an incredible \$958. She preferred diamonds, and one ring, a “large round cluster,” valued at \$125. In total, Cochran’s estate valued at \$11,146.00.⁷⁰ Perhaps, had she written her will before the exact date Hyman shot her, her worldly possessions would have gone to her ex-lover. Instead, she left everything to I. M. Greyson Smith, a man who left a disappointingly scanty historical trail.⁷¹

Cochran’s death was sensational. Newspapers jumped quickly upon the case, touting what they considered the most important details as soon as a single day after her death. To

⁷⁰ The Bureau of Labor Statistics uses the Computer Price Index uses urban household consumption to track changes in the prices of all goods and services over the years, beginning in 1913, with data before that considered a historical study. According to the CPI, \$11,146 in 1913 would have the same buying power as \$274, 262.53 in 2017. See “CPI Inflation Calculator,” *Bureau of Labor Statistics*, accessed March 15, 2017, https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm.

⁷¹ Frances Cochran will, SCDAH.

newspapers, Cochran's significance lay within her reputation as "frail and notorious," while, as previously mentioned, Hyman's Judaism and past record defined his character, along with the fact that he "had been living with the woman for years, and had been repeatedly set up in business by her."⁷² Only a week later, on November 30, 1882, the *Yorkville Enquirer* informed its readers, "E. Hyman, the man who shot and killed the notorious Fannie Cochran, in Charleston on Monday of last week, has been formally charged with her murder."⁷³ To the modern historian, the single sentence makes two things clear. One, that Cochran was well known enough even in York, South Carolina, two hundred miles from Charleston, to earn a reference simply as "*the* notorious Fannie Cochran" [emphasis added]. Two, that newspaper editors, probably as well as readers, knew Hyman guilty of the act from the very beginning.

Two brief mentions of the case found their way into the *Yorkville Enquirer* in 1883, the first regarding the case's mistrial in July. The jury split seven to five, conviction over acquittal.⁷⁴ If the defense did indeed call Kinloch as a witness at both trials, it is impossible to imagine the way she must have felt, a woman known at worst as a former prostitute employed by one of Charleston's most notorious madams, or at best a servant in her household, testifying in front of a group of reputable, possibly hostile men. They called her back again in November of the same year, but no longer the sole representative of 11 Beresford Street, with Wadsworth and Harrison then at her side, a reunion of sorts for the last women within Cochran's network. Perhaps the testimony of the three women, then in full force, swayed the jury to the side of conviction. In the Session Court on Friday, November 9, 1883, Hyman "was found guilty of manslaughter and

⁷² "South Carolina News," *Yorkville Enquirer*, November 23, 1882; "Business Locals," *Keowee Courier*, November 23, 1882.

⁷³ "South Carolina News," *Yorkville Enquirer*, November 30, 1882

⁷⁴ "South Carolina News," *Yorkville Enquirer*, July 5, 1883

sentenced by Judge Witherspoon to confinement at hard labor in the penitentiary for the next twenty years.”⁷⁵

The tale should have ended there. As in the case of Peixotto’s death, a new madam took up residence at the lavish 11 Beresford Street, and swooped in to take over 8 West as well. Documents of the case should have faded away once it was settled, with Cochran’s name lost in the annals of history and Hyman’s imprisonment long and hard. But while the red light district continued to thrive after Cochran’s death, forming new networks of men and women connected and profiting through prostitution, Hyman proved to be far from done.

If Harrison, Kinloch, and Wadsworth came together in the murder trial as a representation of the women of the network of prostitution, the men who came out of the woodwork after Hyman’s trial could arguably represent a type of male-dominated network, and the men within this network had connections that far surpassed those of the women. In 1885, Louis Biederman of Columbus Junction, Iowa, wrote to Simons and Cappelmann, Hyman’s lawyers. Identifying himself as a relative of Hyman’s, he stated he was indebted to Hyman for “past favors,” things Hyman had done for him when Biederman “first came to this country” which Biederman had “not forgotten.” Hyman’s character prior to Charleston, he claimed, “was as pure as any man,” and “it must have been this woman Cochran who ruined him.” Furthermore, in order to spring Hyman from his twenty year sentence, he explained bluntly, “I want to state right here that I am willing to spend some money, and I don’t look for any back.” Whatever favors Hyman had previously supplied Biederman, they paid off, for Biederman claimed to be very well connected. “I can receive,” he wrote, “the following names to a petition to the Governor of your state for his release,” and went on to list a handful of well-connected

⁷⁵ “South Carolina News,” *Yorkville Enquirer*, November 15, 1883.

men, important not only in the Midwest, but in the larger world of post-Civil War politics. Among the list were two Iowa senators, James F. Wilson and W. B. Allison; the governor of Iowa, B. R. Sherman; and the mayor of Chicago, Carter Wilson. He also promised “other Prominent Men Democrats as well as Republicans.”⁷⁶

It may have been this letter that lit the fire to begin a campaign for Hyman’s release. Within two months Biederman also wrote to Hyman, and although the letter does not survive, it almost certainly lifted Hyman’s spirits, no doubt dashed by his twenty-year sentence. In a letter to his lawyers, Hyman expressed that Biederman, a cousin of his, prior to the most recent letter, had not contacted him for twenty-two years. He urged Simons and Cappelmann to go visit Biederman, who had promised Hyman to “do all in his power to help” him.⁷⁷ No evidence exists as to Simons and Cappelmann’s response, but Hyman’s next letter, written a full year later, lacked the previous letter’s optimism. He wrote:

After I have waited patiently during all the passed period of my already long confinement to see, whether some of those, who were once my friends would not take the initiative & take some steps to have me restored to freedom & my former place in life, I feel constrained to say, that it not only looks to me, that all & everybody have forgotten me, but that the faint rays of hope, which I saw at time glimmering in the distance, seem to vanish like evaporating clouds more & more and that the belief strongly gains ground in my mind, that I have no more friends & am left completely to myself & my sorrowfull [sic] fate.⁷⁸

In his eyes, the four years served for Cochran’s murder proved “the ends of ‘Justice’ . . . fully satisfied.” Furthermore, following the Columbia Penitentiary’s visit from the Governor of South Carolina, he discovered that “the Governor upon that occasion has uttered his intention &

⁷⁶ Louis Biederman to Simons and Cappelmann, June 23, 1885, Records of Simons and Cappelmann 1882-1888: page 1-2, SCHS.

⁷⁷ Emil Hyman to Simons and Cappelmann, August 4 1885, Records of Simons and Cappelmann 1882-1888, page 1, SCHS.

⁷⁸ Emil Hyman to Simons and Cappelmann, August 8, 1886, Records of Simons and Cappelmann 1882-1888, pages 1-2, SCHS.

intimated of assisting everybody, who can show him any plausible & reasonable grounds for executive clemency.”⁷⁹ Although complaining that he had, “nobody in Charleston” that he “could not ask nor who is capable of starting the matter” of a pardon, he nonetheless went on to state the names of several men he believed could help the lawyers achieve his goal, some who, he claimed, had blatantly offered him their support.⁸⁰ Not once did he mention Cochran’s name, or the crime that had landed him in prison.

The network of men around Hyman proved strong. The records contained Governor Richardson’s pardon file show dozens of men from all over South Carolina signing on to the request for pardon, as well as some from as far away as Georgia. They also reveal telling details of the final, deadly encounter between the two ex-lovers. A document in what appears to be Hyman’s hand outlines their last meeting clearly:

That being greatly under the influenced of liquor he repaired to her house and admittance being denied him some time, which tended to excite him still more, when the door was opened by her to admit him; angry and provoking words passed between them, that while he was laboring under great mental excitement and the belief that a great wrong had been done to him, at the impulse of the moment he fired the fatal shot and that he has regretted it ever since he realized the act.⁸¹

The third person of a formal petition creates, perhaps purposefully, a distance from the crime itself. Another letter in the file, written by a H. L. P. Bolger of Columbia, South Carolina, passed the blame for the crime onto Cochran herself. Bolger claimed, “For years previous to his conviction I knew this man and he was a good citizen.” The cause of Hyman’s issues stemmed from, “business troubles and the woman that he lived with and afterwards shot,” which “made him a drunkard.” Accordingly, “For two years previous to the shooting he had been crazy drunk

⁷⁹ Ibid, pages 2-3.

⁸⁰ Ibid, pages 3-4.

⁸¹ Emil Hyman to Governor Richardson, s525008, Gov. Richardson—pardons Emil Hyman, SCDAH.

never during that time in my opinion drawing a sober breath. Meeting this woman who had done her share to ruin him and being abused by her and under the influence of a continued debauch he was not responsible” for the crime he committed.⁸²

Something within the tactic—perhaps Biederman’s connections, the Governor’s eagerness to free up space in the penitentiary, Bolger’s letter, or, most absurdly of all, the signatures on a petition for pardon of seven of the men who had found Hyman guilty in the first place—eventually worked.⁸³ Governor Richardson’s 1889 pardon book, filled with names, dates, and instances of people pardoned by the South Carolina governor contains a certificate for Hyman’s pardon. But for reasons unknown, perhaps simply a clerical error made by an absent-minded secretary, or maybe something more significant and sinister, the certificate, save for Hyman’s name, was never filled out. In a book with complete information on countless other pardons, Hyman’s remains blank.⁸⁴

But he was pardoned and freed. It caused an unexpected uproar. “The state newspapers are assailing Governor Richardson vigorously for the pardon of Hyman, the Charleston murderer, and they are right,” the *Keowee Courier* proclaimed a month later. They went a step further to argue that the only thing that saved Hyman from the gallows was his defense “that the use of whiskey and drugs had made him irresponsible for his acts.”⁸⁵ A week later, they went further with the statement:

After serving five years the Governor pardons him, so we are told, because he was the only Jew in the penitentiary; because the woman he killed was of bad character; because

⁸² H.L.P Bolger to J.P. Richardson, December 7, 1888, s525008, Gov. Richardson—pardons Emil Hyman, SCDAH.

⁸³ Emil Hyman to Governor Richardson, SCDAH.

⁸⁴ Governor Richardson Pardon Book 1889, s213055, SCDAH.

⁸⁵ *Keowee Courier*, August 8, 1889.

the prisoner's conduct since confinement has been good, and last, but not least, because his Excellency is assured that Hyman will leave the state.⁸⁶

Although predictably affronted by Cochran's occupation, the *Watchman and the Southron* nonetheless found similar outrage with Hyman's release. "The friends of this man," they proclaimed, "Are the enemies to all that is decent, virtuous, and pure."⁸⁷ Later they tore apart each of the governor's reasons for the pardon, explaining:

Race should not enter into the enforcement of the law. It was the more shame for Hyman that he was the only Jew in the penitentiary. The fact that the woman slain was of disreputable character certainly should bare [sic] no weight, as the law does not prescribe that method of getting rid of fallen women. His good behavior while in the penitentiary might possibly be attributed to fear of the punishment permitted and something administered in that institution.⁸⁸

Amongst all the hubbub, from Hyman's initial conviction all the way up to the upset over his pardon, Charleston newspapers remained resolutely silent on the case. Perhaps the editors felt too close to the subject to make a statement.

⁸⁶ "The Pardoning Power," *Keowee Courier*, August 15, 1898

⁸⁷ "The Pardon of Hyman," *Watchman and the Southron*, July 31, 1889.

⁸⁸ "The Pardoning Power," *Watchman and the Southron*, August 21, 1889. The historiography of Jewish Charleston has often portrayed the city as a haven for Jewish citizens and immigrants. The newspaper coverage regarding Hyman's Judaism contradicts that notion, revealing a need for further investigation into the treatment of Jews in the supposedly tolerant city. Further studies in Jewish Charleston must also consider the involvement that Jewish networks played in the underground economy within the city.

CONCLUSION: PART III

The connections within the fourth ward in the nineteenth century proved, at the end of the day, a matter of business. The window of Cochran's life and death offers a look into the ways that the formal and informal existed as an interwoven economy within the city of Charleston, created by networks of men and women broad and porous enough to link the most insignificant prostitute to ranking businessmen. Cochran's growth from a prostitute, called out in the *Charleston Daily* for being struck in the face during an altercation, to a madam of standing exemplifies the way that money earned through illicit acts could be put towards legal businesses. By the time of her death she owned 8 West Street and rented 11 Beresford, the latter under the ownership of Myers, who used its profits to help his reputable cigar and tobacco business grow, a building he had only inherited through a relationship with Peixotto, the Big Brick's builder and original madam. Cochran also put money toward legal business ventures of Hyman's, those, like the saloon at 191 King Street he ran at the time of her death, which added to Charleston's commerce and were taxable by the city. In the cases of Peixotto and Cochran, money illicitly earned through the selling of women's bodies not only helped them profit, but gave increasing revenue to the men in their lives as well as they entered business ventures otherwise closed to them.

Historians of prostitution have often neglected the way in which commercialized sex and networks of informal economy interacted to help create the social and economic center of cities. As only one woman at the center of a network in a single city, the examination of Cochran's life and death provides a fuller picture of the networks formed within the fourth ward of Charleston in the nineteenth century. And that network proves significant in understanding the purchasing of property, the earning of money, the beginnings of businesses, and the lives of some of

Charleston's licit and illicit businessmen and businesswomen. In the world of hazy legality of Charleston prostitution, it took the death of Fanny Cochran to break into the secretive world of the nineteenth century sex trade. Just as her life enriches our understanding, her network, full of men and women yet to be uncovered, shows ties to all walks of Charleston life. The model of understanding networks supplied by studying Cochran's life can and should be applied to other cities, in the nineteenth century and beyond, in order to more fully understand economic and urban life, as well as the history of prostitution.⁸⁹

After his pardon, Hyman disappeared from all records, and Cochran's life was forgotten as the bustling sex trade went on. However, with remarkable foresight, one newspaper writer predicted, shortly after Hyman's pardon, "Governor Richardson's report of pardons and commutations to be presented to the next Legislature will be an interesting and curious document and ought to be filed away for the amusement of future generations."⁹⁰ Certainly not only Hyman's pardon, but the window that Cochran's short life offers to twenty-first century historians, this future generation, indeed enriches the understanding of the economic life in nineteenth century Charleston.

⁸⁹ The networks discussed in this paper—those of sex workers, men petitioning for Hyman's release, and Jews in Charleston—barely begins to scratch the surface of the connections that comprised the men and women of Charleston, and specifically its forth ward. Further research into these networks and others yet to be uncovered, how they relate, and their impact upon the city is necessary to fully understand the informal economy in Charleston.

⁹⁰ *Keowee Courier*, August 8, 1889.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Contemporary Newspapers

Charleston Daily. Charleston, South Carolina.

Keowee Courier. Pickens County Courthouse, South Carolina.

Watchman and the Southron. Sumter, South Carolina.

Yorkville Enquirer. Yorkville, South Carolina.

Manuscripts

Charleston, S.C.

South Carolina Historical Society

Bennet, John. John Bennet Papers, 1865-1956. (1176.00).

Simons, J. Ancrum and John D. Cappelmann, Records of Simons and Cappelmann, 1882-1883 (478.11/07).

Private Collection at 11 Fulton Street

Columbia, S.C.

South Carolina Department of Archives and History

s525008. Gov. Richardson—pardons Emil Hyman.

Cochran, Frances, 1882. Charleston, South Carolina. Will, # 282/25.

Death Record for Fanny Cochran. South Carolina Death Records, 1875-1899.

Governor Richardson Pardon Book 1889. s213055.

Indictment File 4548. Charleston Co Indictments.

Indictment File 4971. Charleston Co Indictments.

Published Primary Sources

Adams, F. C. *Manuel Pereira*. Washington D.C.: Buell and Blanchard, 1853.

Burke and Boines. "Charleston Directory." New York: M.B. Brown & Co., 1866.

"Charleston City Directory, 1867-68." Charleston: Jno. Orrin Lea & Co., Publishers, 1867-68.

"Directory." Charleston: Walker, Evans, & Cogswell, 1872-73.

Haddock, T.M. and J.E. Baker. "Charleston City Directory." Charleston: Walker, Evans, & Cogswell, 1875.

James, Benjamin. *A Digest in the Laws of South Carolina...* Columbia: The Telescope Press, 1822.

Pressley, B.C. *The Law of Magistrates and Constables in the State of South Carolina...* Charleston: Walker & Burke, 1848.

Sholes, A. E. "Sholes Directory of the City of Charleston." Charleston: A.E. Sholes, Publisher: November 15, 1879.

Sholes, A.E. and C.F. Weatherby. "Sholes Directory for the City of Charleston." Charleston: Sholes & Co. Publishers, 1882.

Sholes, A.E. "Sholes' Directory of the City of Charleston 1883." Charleston: Walker, Evans, & Cogswell, 1883.

Government Documents

Fannie Cochran tax assessment 1865. District two, South Carolina. U.S. IRS Tax Assessment Lists, 1862-1918. RG 58: Records of the Internal Revenue Service, NA.

Schedule 1 (Free Inhabitants), Charleston District, South Carolina, Eighth (1860) Census of the United States: Records of the Bureau of the Census, NA.

Schedule 1 (Inhabitants). Charleston Ward 4, South Carolina. Ninth (1870) Census of the United States: Records of the Bureau of the Census, NA.

Schedule 1 (Inhabitants). Charleston County, South Carolina, Tenth (1880) Census of the United States, RG 29: Records of the Bureau of the Census, NA.

Schedule 2 (Slave Inhabitants). Parish of St. Philips and St. Michael, South Carolina. Seventh (1850) Census of the United States: Records of the Bureau of the Census, National Archives (hereafter cited as NA).

Schedule 2 (Slave Inhabitants). Charleston District, South Carolina. Eighth (1860) Census of the United States: Records of the Bureau of the Census, NA.

Schedule 2 (Productions of Agriculture). Charleston County, South Carolina. Tenth (1880) Census of the United States: Records of the Bureau of the Census, NA.

Secondary Sources

Butler, Anne M. *Daughters of Joy, Sisters of Misery*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985.

“CPI Inflation Calculator.” *Bureau of Labor Statistics*. Accessed March 15, 2017.
https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm.

D’Emilio, John and Estelle B. Freedman. *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Ferman, Louis A, Stuart Henry, and Michele Hoyman. “Issues and Prospects for the Study of Informal Economies: Concepts, Research Strategies, and Policy.” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 493 (1987): 154-172.

Ferman, Louis A, Stuart Henry, and Michele Hoyman. “Preface.” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 493 (1987): 10-14.

Fraser, Walton J., Jr. *Charleston! Charleston! The History of a Southern City*. Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1989.

Frick, John W. *Theatre, Culture, and Temperance Reform in Nineteenth Century America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Gilfyle, Timothy. *City of Eros*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1994.

Hagy, James William. *This Happy Land: The Jews of Colonial and Antebellum Charleston*. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1993.

Hilliard, Kathleen M. *Masters, Slaves, and Exchange: Power’s Purchase in the Old South*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Horowitz, Helen Lefkowitz. *Rereading Sex*. New York: Alfred. A. Knoff, 2002.

Hudgins, Carter L, ed. *The Vernacular Architecture of Charleston and the Lowcountry, 1670-1990: A Field Guide*. Charleston: Historic Charleston Foundation, 1994.

Kennedy, Cynthia M. *Braided Relations, Entwined Lives*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005.

Long, Alecia P. *The Great Southern Babylon*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004.

Lowry, Thomas P. *Sexual Misbehavior in the Civil War: A Compendium*. Philadelphia: Xlibris, Corp, 2006.

Pease, Jane H. and William H. Pease. *Ladies, Women, and Wenches*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990.

Petrik, Paula. "Capitalists with Rooms: Prostitution in Helena, Montana, 1865-1900."
Montana: The Magazine of Western History 31 (1981): 28-41.

Venkatesh, Sudhir Alladi. *Off the Books: The Underground Economy of the Urban Poor*.
Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006.

Venkatesh, Sudhir Alladi. *Floating City: A Rogue Sociologist Lost and Found In New York's
Underground Economy*. New York: Penguin Press, 2013.