Slave Law In The American South: State V. Mann In History And Literature

Mark V. Tushnet

They contended that southern law forced all men, even upright ones such as Ruffin, to swallow their pride and support slavery despite their awareness of its malignance. In the most successful part of his work, Tushnet expertly explains Ruffin's decision and demonstrates how contemporaries and historians have misunderstood his position. When Ruffin wrote of the conflict between the man and the magistrate, he was not experiencing a moral dilemma regarding slavery. Owning thirty-two slaves himself, Ruffin did not question the presence of slavery in southern society; rather he questioned slav...Â Review of Tushnet, Mark V., Slave Law in the American South: State v. Mann in History and Literature. H-South, H-Net Reviews. June, 2004.