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in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Lois Brown. *Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins: Black Daughter of the Revolution.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008. xiv + 690 pp. $45.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8078-3166-3.

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Published on H-SAWH (January, 2010)
Commissioned by Antoinette G. van Zelm

Pauline Hopkins's Inheritance: A Legacy of Race Consciousness and Activism

Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins: Black Daughter of the Revolution is much more than a literary analysis of one of the most prolific black writers of the early twentieth century. Lois Brown produces a painstaking biography in which she argues that Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins is the intellectual and political heir of a prominent, activist black New England family. In clear, crisp prose, Brown shows that Hopkins inherited a "tradition of fostering political activism, race pride and collective resistance within black Boston" (p. 162). Hopkins's family history, which Brown chronicles from the colonial era through the end of her life in 1930, also influenced the sense of historical consciousness so evident in her performance career, works of fiction, and job as editor of the *Colored American Magazine*. In presenting the family that influenced Hopkins's development as a public intellectual and race woman, Brown makes a substantial contribution to the social and cultural history of black Boston.

A sizeable twenty chapters, this biography is divided into four distinct sections. The first section focuses on Hopkins's lineage and places her maternal and paternal family lines within the antislavery movement among free blacks in New England, specifically Providence and Boston, during the colonial and early American periods. Brown does an excellent job of separating fact from fiction surrounding Hopkins's true parentage. Although Hopkins was born Pauline Northup in 1859 in Portland, Maine, her parents divorced and her mother used her remarriage to William Hopkins as an opportunity to create a new paternity for Pauline, more than likely as a response to the class-based issue of legitimacy and respectability. Brown's meticulous research also establishes definitively Hopkins's descent from the respected, elite abolitionist Paul family of Boston on her mother's side, as well as the well-known Northup family of Providence. Further, this section demonstrates the ongoing commitment of both sides of Hopkins's family to black freedom, cultural arts, and social justice. Brown's work builds on other studies of free blacks in New England, such as the pathbreaking scholarship of Lorenzo Greene and James and Lois Horton.[1]

The second section of Brown's narrative explores Hopkins's creative work in theater and music. It shows Hopkins's development as an artist and performer and places her within the changing world of late nineteenth-century black public performance culture. Hopkins and other black actors and musicians were determined to produce and exhibit artistic works that stressed the agency of authentic black characters. In addition to creating an opportunity for black artists, their troupe also used performance as a medium to explore and critique racist elements of American popular culture during the period, especially blackface minstrelsy. Through historical plays based on African American experiences in slavery and freedom, Hopkins challenged a rapidly developing collective memory that sought to expunge the Civil War's legacy of black freedom and racial equality, as well as the story of African American agency in institution and community building during Reconstruction. Hopkins joined the myriad voices of northern blacks, such as W. E. B. DuBois, Ida B. Wells, William Monroe Trotter, and others who protested the increase in lynching, disfranchisement, and racial violence against blacks in the South at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Brown introduces Hopkins's foray into writing in the third section of the book. Hopkins's success as a novelist and her historic tenure as editor of the *Colored American Magazine*, the nation's first black literary magazine, brought her into the company of national figures who were increasingly conscious of the need to address the tenuous position of black citizens in Progressive-Era America. Hopkins's efforts to forge an identity as a race writer joined with her skills in "literary advocacy" proved to be a brilliant strategy for the new magazine. In ad-

dition to providing a venue for literary and intellectual writers, the *Colored American Magazine* grappled with the social and political issues that blacks faced in early twentieth-century America. This placed Hopkins among a growing genre of race writers during this period and brought her and her colleagues into direct confrontation with one of the most powerful black leaders of the twentieth century: Booker T. Washington. Further, Brown's skillful writing reveals the depth of a growing struggle over racial representation and cultural authority. Instead of simply depicting Hopkins's involvement with several prominent black publications as part of the well-worn ideological feud between DuBois and Washington, Brown presents a complex story of a national struggle for race leadership. She does an excellent job of presenting the complicated spectrum of African American opinions concerning civil rights during this period.

Hopkins's proximity to the black clubwomen's movement, especially her connections with Boston clubwomen Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin and Florida Ruffin Ridley, as well as the inspiration of clubwoman Victoria Earle Matthews, are featured in section 4 of the book. Although most historians of the black women's club movement focus on women of the South and Midwest, Brown gives us a glimpse into Hopkins's experience with issues of class and race in the emerging club movement in the Northeast. In addition, by examining Hopkins's columns on African American history in the *Colored American Magazine* and the *New Era Magazine*, Brown shows the influence of clubwomen, such as Matthews and Anna Julia Cooper, on a burgeoning historical consciousness among African Americans. Using the term "public history," Brown notes that Hopkins worked to disseminate African American history and to engage in historical recovery (pp. 286, 513). Hopkins's historical consciousness is aptly placed within a general growth in African American historiography, which was dominated primarily by male lay historians during this time. (While Hopkins served at the *Colored American Magazine*, only DuBois had professional credentials in history, and by the time Carter G. Woodson became the second African American history Ph.D. [1912], Hopkins was the editor of *New Era Magazine*.) Brown sufficiently explores Hopkins's use of history for race vindication and identity construction and adds to an impressive body of literature in this regard.[2]

Meticulously documented and well researched, this work employs an array of primary sources, such as census records, manuscript sources, rare books, and ephemeral collections, to reconstruct the history of Hopkins's life and family, as well as the societies in which she lived in Maine and Boston. The book is also well written and an easy read, which is important, since there are 536 pages of written text. It could have easily been two volumes: one focusing on Hopkins's life and a second offering a critical analysis of her works. Overall, this magisterial biography is a first-rate contribution that will appeal to scholars in New England studies, cultural studies, women's history, and African American studies.

Notes

[1]. For more information on blacks in New England, see Lorenzo Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England, 1620-1776* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942); William Piersen, *Black Yankees: The Development of an African-American Sub-Culture in Eighteenth-Century New England* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988); James Oliver Horton and Lois Horton, *Black Bostonians: Family Life and Community Struggle in the Antebellum North* (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1979); James Oliver Horton and Lois Horton, *In Hope of Liberty: Culture, Community, and Protest among Northern Free Blacks, 1700-1860* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); and James Oliver Horton and Lois Horton, *Free People of Color: Inside the African American Community* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993).

[2]. For more information on race vindication, see V. P. Franklin, *Living Our Stories, Telling Our Truths: Autobiography and the Making of African American Intellectual Tradition* (New York: Scribner, 1995); and V. P Franklin and Bettye Collier-Thomas, "Biography, Race Vindication and African American Intellectuals," *Journal of African American History* 87 (Winter 2002): 160-174. For information on history's role in identity construction among African Americans, see Genevieve Fabre and Robert O'Meally, eds., *History and Memory in African-American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Fath Davis Ruffins, "Mythos, Memory and History: African-American Preservation Efforts, 1820-1990," in *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, ed. Ivan Karp, Christine Mullen Kreamer, and Steven D. Lavine (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992); and Joan Marie Johnson, "'Drilling into Us the Rebel Tradition': The Contest over Southern Identity in Black and White Women's Clubs, South Carolina, 1898-1930," *Journal of Southern History* 66 (August 2000): 525-562.

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Citation: Tara White. Review of Brown, Lois, *Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins: Black Daughter of the Revolution.* H-SAWH, H-Net Reviews. January, 2010.
URL: http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=23738

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