

Early African American Voices: Cries for Freedom

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The very existence of slavery causes the basic desire for freedom. One can not exist without the other. Just as the slaveholder enacts laws, establishes rules, and prohibits learning in order to keep his institution running efficiently, the slave himself enacts practices, establishes codes, and desires learning as means to eventually eliminate that same institution. While the slaveholder has the power and freedom to publicly announce and enforce his will, the slave or freedman must use all his cunning to convey his message. Thus it was in America during the century of the Civil War when African Americans began being successful with their not-so-loud cries for freedom.

The black man's cry for freedom most likely began the moment he was bound and taken away. It is simply natural to somehow protest such an act. If not allowed to speak in his native language, he most certainly resorted to gestures. If not allowed to use gestures, some other form of communication would have occurred until discovered and then another created, and so on, until we have the first writings of such protest occur in America, writings that had to work within an established system of oppression.

The slaveholder had what he considered a possession to protect, and he would do so by any means necessary. These means were constantly changing to adapt to the creative counter-measures developed by the slave and his sympathizers. In order to keep the institution of slavery working, the slaveholder had to first and foremost prohibit slaves from learning. In addition, he must have had to ban access, possessions, communication, and keep his slaves in a state of powerless poverty. If he needed to resort to torture, murder, or theft, it was justified in his world and by his laws.

That said, the initial focus of this unit is to investigate slave narratives gathered at some risk by friends of slaves. Two books published within this century will provide students with background knowledge about the conditions slaves faced. Not only will the students examine the tone and voice of these stories, but they will also examine more in-depth areas, such as dependence, regulated poverty, pressed ignorance, and general methods used to quiet the voice of insurrection on a massive scale.

Slave Narratives

To Be a Slave (1968) is a compilation of slave narratives gathered and published by Julius Lester. He has provided us with genuine stories gathered from slaves and former slaves which will enlighten students with as much of a first-hand account as we can reasonably expect about the true conditions of slavery.

Lester has recorded these stories in the dialect dictated by each slave, therefore, preserving the true "voice" of the teller. In our readings of this book, special focus will be given to discussion questions that deal with tone and voice. When it is found that a slave does not desire to leave the confines of his established world despite the government's declaration of freedom, students will be asked why. The established practices and laws of the slave system will be studied and hopefully students will empathize with the disenfranchised slave's options, which were realistically few.

I first plan to separate each class into groups of three, giving each a transparency of a specific narrative from Lester's book. They will be responsible within their group for reading the story and presenting it to the class as a whole. A chart asking them to record specific textual evidence of voice/tone, situational details, grammatical/dialectical discrepancies, dependence issues, and cultural obstacles of the storytellers will guide them. Classmates listening to each presentation will also record such findings.

The following excerpts from Lester's compilation will be distributed:

A Negro has got no name. My father was a Ransom, and he had an uncle named Hankin. If you belong to Mr. Jones and he sell you to Mr. Johnson, consequently you go by the name of your owner. Now where you get a name? We are wearing the name of our master. I was first a Hale; then my father was sold and then I was named Reed. (Lester 77)

The softest couches in the world are not to be found in the log mansion of the slaves. The one whereon I reclined year after year was a plank twelve inches wide and ten feet long. My pillow was a stick of wood. The bedding was a coarse blanket and not a rag or shred beside. Moss might be used, were it not that it directly breeds a swarm of fleas. The cabin is constructed of logs, without floor or window... (Lester 63)

Major Ellison bought me and carried me to Mississippi. I didn't want to go. They 'zamine you just like they do a horse; they look at your teeth, and pull your eyelids back and look at your eyes, and feel you just like a horse... (Lester 49)

One day I saw a foreman slap a nigger for drinking at the dipper too long. The nigger picked up a shovel and slam him in the head and run. Back in slavery days they didn't do something and run. They run before they did it, 'cause they knew that if they struck a white man, there wasn't going to be a nigger. In them days, they run to keep from doing something. Nowadays they do it and then they run. (Lester 29)

...the man had not taken his food and refuse taking any. Mild means were then used to divert him from his resolution, as well as promises that he should have anything he wished for; but he still refused to eat. They then whipped him with the cat, but this also was ineffectual. He always kept his teeth so fast that it was impossible to get anything down...In this state he was four or five days, when he was brought up as dead to be thrown overboard; but Mr. Wilson, finding life still existing, repeated his endeavors though in vain, and two days afterwards he was brought up again in the same state as before. He then seemed to wish to get up. The crew assisted him and brought him aft to the fireplace, when in feeble voice in his own tongue he asked for water, which was given him. Upon this they began to have hopes of dissuading him from his design, but he again shut his teeth as fast as ever, and resolved to die, and on the ninth day from his first refusal he died. (Lester 26-7)

Discussion questions for this activity will eventually revolve around the ethical question of equality as established by the constitution and the Bible, both governing documents of the time. At first, questions such as these will be discussed: What was the more terrible for a slave, death or losing a family member to auction? Why did slaves remain to stay with their masters despite the declaration of total freedom? How did the established rules and laws during the time of slavery limit the slave's options in a free world? What could have been done to make the transition from slave to free, equal participant in society easier? Then more general issues will be raised, such as: What is equality? Is it possible in society? How do we ensure that it is in the future when society once again deems another race or people inferior?

When the Declaration of Independence asserts that, “All men are created equal with unalienable rights,” and when the Bible teaches, “Do unto one as you would have them do unto you,” how did society skirt these tenets and convince its members that they only applied to some, not all? At the time of slavery, these two ethical mores were prevalent, often quoted and basically dictated the comings and goings of society as a whole. How then were they ignored regarding the slave?

It is often taught that the “whole” of the white race regarded blacks as inferior, incapable of learning and usable as a free work force. What is not so readily recorded is that many southern and northern whites had the where-with-all to be able to know that this was simply not possible. These whites faced a moral and ethical battle not only within themselves but also within the established framework of the time. For a white in the south to be known as a “nigger lover” resulted in social banishment or punishment for some, but in more accepting rural areas some forms of humanism were allowed. White women could cook and deliver food to a black family in need, but not enter the house. In the north, the futility of doing the right thing detracted many whites from speaking out just like it does today in times of seemingly unjustified war.

Early African American Writers

Fortunately, there were a fair number of connected whites and freed blacks sought to end the tyranny of slavery. Among these were the first published negro writers, Jupiter Hammon and Phillis Wheatley, both of whom heavily relied on biblical teachings to convince others that slavery was, indeed, wrong. Both used the biblical idea of treating others as one would like “done to him” as a basis for their cries for freedom. And each, more importantly, was published with the help of whites both here and abroad for the masses to read. It is part of the aim of this unit to introduce students to these writings in the context of the time in which they were written focusing on the means each used within those times, how brilliant the strategies used were, and how they helped stir a growing abolitionist movement based on the ethical principles of freedom and equality.

Hammon is now known as the first African American poet to be published in America. His writings are controversial for many reasons including that they often exhort the black man to blindly follow faith in the bible as a means of salvation. He openly advocates compliance with white rule in his “An Address to the Negroes in the State of New York.” He often quotes scripture to his brethren in an attempt to keep them out of trouble and to teach them the rules within the world of oppression they find themselves in as a means to survive. He has been accused of not wanting to rock the boat (O’Neale, Intro. 3). I do not see how those critics overlooked his powerful statement:

Liberty is a great thing we may know from our own feelings, and we may likewise judge so from the conduct of the white people in the late war. How much money has he spent and how many lives have been lost to defend their liberty! I must say that I have hoped that God would open their eyes, when they were so much engaged for their liberty, to think of the state of the poor blacks and to pity us. (O’Neale 54)

What I see and what I hope for many of my students to see in Hammon’s words is a cry for equality, for freedom from bondage, for the white people to do what is right in their own tenets to end slavery, and for blacks to believe it would happen through God’s redemption. He is insightful in the fact that he knows that this will not happen in his time, but that it eventually will. He exhorts Phillis Wheatley to carry the torch he has lit by being the first black poet to be heard en masse sending this message. He implores her to follow God and his teachings while striving to inspire others. In his “An Address to Miss Phillis Wheatley,” he writes:

Come you, Phillis, now aspire,
And seek the living God,
So step by step thou mayst go higher,
Till perfect in the word.

While thousands mov'd to distant shore,
And others left behind,
The blessed Jesus still adore,
Implant this in thy mind. (O'Neale 76)

O'Neale asserts that Hammon's writing was of an "aesthetic design cleverly marked by scriptural guideposts, rendering it seemingly harmless enough for publication" (O'Neale 2). In order to be heard, Hammon had no other choice but to write as he did. Whites incorrectly surmised that Hammon's message was beneficial to them in that it seemed to call for passivism and faith amongst their slaves, a much-desired commodity. This assumption was, I believe, Hammon's intended subterfuge for his true message of simple freedom as promised to all by God, and, therefore, given to blacks as well. Not like the Calvinists of the time who believed that salvation was for but "the chosen few."

As students read the above-mentioned pieces by Wheatley and Hammon, close reading strategies will be utilized so that students literally pick apart the text. Using the textual evidence derived from this process, students will generate a list of ten questions they would like answered about the era in which the authors wrote. Those questions will be answered in the computer lab using internet searches and then represented in a presentation for the class as a whole.

After examining these writings, we will move on to the abolitionist movement which began to gather strength in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. In order to understand this movement clearly, we will first study its opposition – the proponents of slavery. In response to a petition brought before court by the Pennsylvania Abolition Society in 1790, William Smith from South Carolina expounds on four major beliefs held by many proponents of slavery. First, he surmises that due to conflicts in ideology, blacks and whites would never mix if freedom was granted, and so the slaves are better off in bondage. In fact, freedom would never benefit blacks, but would isolate them into impoverished like groups. Furthermore, the efforts of the abolitionists would only fuel unwanted insurrection amongst the slaves, costing the nation as a whole. Finally, he presents the widely quoted fact that the countries' forebears brought slavery to America so, by right, it should remain an institution (Julius 10-11). Other ideas were used by various southerners and will be examined, but initial focus will remain on the above-mentioned.

Historical events in the United States and elsewhere during the time seemed to substantiate these claims in the minds of many. Shortly after Smith's speech, a successful revolt occurred against the slave system in the French colony of Saint-Dominquez, now present day Haiti. The revolt scared Americans who believed the same could happen to them. In the United States northerners opposed to slavery were convinced that the only way to accomplish their first priority of saving the Union was to compromise with the demands of the slave states. These compromises did nothing less than ensure that the efforts of abolitionists were thwarted for another half century.

The Slave Question

We will study the southern majority in most of the government of the time including extant speeches by the major players from both sides. We will compare the effects of having a clear majority in government then and now. The minority opinion in this case was the morally just one as determined by future morals not those of the time. Is this the case in our government policy

today or at any other point in history? Students will be asked to make these connections in a piece of writing.

In order to fully comprehend the opinions of the nation's leaders during debates about slavery, students will participate in a re-enactment of those debates. Students will be separated into two groups representing the southern and northern government representatives. Each person in the group will receive a handout of a speech and will be given at least four nights to review it for tone and grammar so that it can be presented in class in as close a realistic voice as possible. This voice needs to be reviewed and modeled in class by using one of the various films available depicting the times.

William Lloyd Garrison was a powerful speaker in the anti-slavery ranks. Five excerpts from his 1829 speech in Boston, Massachusetts will be used in the student handouts. The handouts will read as follows:

I stand up here in a solemn court, to obtain the liberation of two million of wretched, degraded beings, who are pining in hopeless bondage, over whose sufferings scarcely an eye weeps or a heart melts or a tongue pleads.

That the slaves of this country, whether we consider their moral, intellectual, or social condition, are preeminently entitled to the prayers and sympathies and charities of the American people.

That as the free states are constitutionally involved in the guilt of slavery by adhering to a national compact that sanctions it, and in danger by liability to be called upon for aid in case of insurrection, they have the right to remonstrate against its continuance and it is their duty to assist in its overthrow. That no justificative plea for the perpetuity of slavery can be found in the condition of its victims, and no barrier against our righteous interference in the laws, which authorize the buying, selling, and possessing of slaves, nor in the hazard of a collision with slaveholders.

That education and freedom will elevate our colored population to a rank with the whites, making them useful, intelligent, and peaceable citizens. (Julius 39-40)

The words of a prominent southern slave holder named Henry Clay will be given out on handouts to group representing the southern opinion. The cards will read as follows:

These African slaves were brought to the colonies under the sanction, and by the authority of British laws.

I believe that the aggregate of the evils which would be engendered in society, upon the supposition of general emancipation, and the liberated slaves, remaining promiscuously among us, would be greater than all the evils of slavery, great as they unquestionably are.

Of all our population the free people of color are by far, as a class, the most corrupt, depraved and abandoned. (Julius 47-50)

In 1830, an important slavery debate, commonly referred to as the Hayne-Webster debate, occurred in Congress. Senator Robert Y. Hayne from Kentucky stood in defense of slavery. The following excerpts will be used:

Sir, when arranged before the bar of public opinion, on this charge of slavery, we can stand up with conscious rectitude, plead not guilty, and put ourselves before God and our country. Sir, there does not exist, on the face of the whole earth, a population so poor, so wretched, so vile, so loathsome, so utterly destitute of all the comforts, conveniences, and decencies of life, as the unfortunate blacks of Philadelphia, and New York and Boston. Liberty has been to them the greatest of calamities, the heaviest of curses.

On this subject as in all others, we ask nothing of our Northern brethren but to “let us alone.” Leave us to the undisturbed management of our domestic concerns, and the direction of our own industry, and we will ask no more. (Julius 56-58)

Massachusetts Senator, Daniel Webster, replied five days later:

I spoke, Sir, of the ordinance of 1787, which prohibits slavery, as a measure of great wisdom and foresight, and one which had been attended with highly beneficial and permanent consequences.

I regard domestic slavery as one of the greatest evils, both moral and political.

And, Sir, if we look at the general nature of the case, could any thing have been more preposterous, than to make a government for the whole Union, and yet leave its powers subject, not to one interpretation, but to thirteen or twenty-four interpretations? (Julius 62-63)

After this mock-up debate, students will be asked to work in groups with access to all the handouts in order to identify the major arguments of each side. They will be then be asked to make a decision about the morality of each at the time and now. These exercises will be documented by students using T-charts as graphic organizers.

The Abolitionist Movement

Any study of the abolition movement needs to include an investigation of its major contributors. Men and women such as Sojourner Truth, William Henry Seward, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and others should not be overlooked. Due to the massive volume of information on these various peoples, I will need to use time efficiently. I will construct a list of abolitionists and have pairs of students research each using guiding questions developed by me and stored in the common drive. The students will then need only to fill the correct information in, save the document, and print a copy for themselves. During the next class, each pair will present using the Smart Board, a technology tool which projects a computer screen to a big screen and allows interactive control by touching the screen.

After these general facts are presented, students will be directed, once again, to examine the words of these abolitionists. Sojourner Truth, while focusing mainly on women’s rights, uttered the following which can and was applied to anti-slavery as well:

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitles them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to such a course. (*A History of the American Suffragist Movement* 1)

In addition to Truth’s worldly words, William Henry Seward declared:

We justly ascribe to its influences the strength, wealth, greatness, intelligence, and freedom, which the whole American people now enjoy. One of the chief elements of the value of human life is freedom in the pursuit of happiness. The slave system is not only intolerable, unjust, and inhuman, towards the laborer, whom, only because he is a laborer, it loads down with chains and converts into merchandise, but is scarcely less severe upon the freeman, to whom, only because he is a laborer from necessity, it denies facilities for employment, and whom it expels from the community because it cannot enslave and convert him into merchandise also. It is necessarily improvident and ruinous, because, as a general truth, communities prosper and flourish or droop and decline in just the degree that they practice or neglect to practice the primary duties of justice and humanity. The

free-labor system conforms to the divine law of equality, which is written in the hearts and consciences of man, and therefore is always and everywhere beneficent. (*United States History 1*)

Once these various writings and speeches have been examined, the focus of the unit will need to shift to how can students use the knowledge and insight they have attained in real world situations. We, in America, do not live in a slave society any longer. However, some countries in existence today employ policies which either outright sanction slavery or impose a sort of unwritten acceptance of it. We hear stories of forced sexual slavery of boys and girls from regions where it is often an economic necessary to sell one of the children into prostitution. Even though this may be a touchy topic in the middle school, I feel that it is necessary to discuss, but instead of going into details, I will simply ask students if they think this is right, what conditions lead up to its existence, and what can be done about it.

The culminating activity for this unit needs to be a student product in order for them to show that they have internalized their learning. I will ask my students to put their observations into words, using the same powerful voice as the writings studied. They will need to analyze four components of the struggle for emancipation. Student writing needs to reflect understanding of social and political opinions during slavery. They will need to discuss how the leaders of a group influence it and how group mentality forms. The writing should also have clear evidence of factual information gathered during the unit. Names, places, and events need to be specified. Some sort of transference of information into present day life needs to be evident. Finally, students need to declare which side of the argument they would have picked at the time of slavery and explain this position.

It is my fervent hope that this unit will not only inform students but also compel them to think for themselves and to examine all sides of an argument or declaration before going along with the flow. I truly believe that in many historical atrocities, such as slavery, the Holocaust, the Chinese Cultural Revolution, ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, and many more, the people in leadership were not entirely acting on the best wishes of their constituents. In fact, I believe that anything that is essentially inhumane is secretly accepted, but not believed in, by the majority of the population involved. The moral majority needs to be empowered to speak up despite threats, laws, and rhetoric.

In order for this unit to be successful, any teacher wishing to use it should be flexible in using questioning strategies. It is my belief that students learn best when they are required to think for themselves, to delve into the existing history, and to find answers to their own questions. At first, many students will tend to create simplistic questions. By praising those students who do come up with in-depth questions and pointing out why the particular question is effective, the teacher will motivate other students to do the same. The level of depth in student questions can also be graded. However, I find that harsh grading of questions will generate the undesired result of further lack of thought. The questions in the following lesson plans are simply a guide.

LESSON PLANS

Lesson 1 - Slave Narratives (From Julius Lester's *To Be a Slave*)

Objectives

1. Students will examine the voice and tone used by former slaves in order to explain the conditions of their servitude.
2. Students will examine how a person's circumstances could affect their ability to communicate effectively.
3. Students will be asked to form ethical judgments based on their knowledge.

Pre-Lesson Questioning

1. What was worse for a slave: losing a family member or death?
2. Why would a slave choose to remain a slave?
3. How did the policies and practices in the slave-holding south affect a slave's options in a free country?
4. How was a slave's voice quieted? Why?

(These responses should be scribed upon some kind of visually accessible teacher resource such as: a Smartboard, flip chart, overhead, or chalkboard. Students should be encouraged to copy notes as well in order to refer to the responses during the unit. The teacher should interject as many relevant facts of the time as possible during this interchange.)

Activity 1

1. Place students in groups of three with the cards containing excerpts from Lester's book face down in the middle of their desks.
2. Ask students to rotate the reading aloud of each card.
3. Have students record any support for/difference from their initial responses to the pre-lesson questioning.
4. Have students use five adjectives to describe the voice of each card. Adjectives may be repeated from card to card.

Activity 2

1. Have students work individually to fill out the "Ethical Reasoning Chart." (See below.)
2. Assign students to make a judgment about whether or not they consider the treatment of slaves ethical in today's world. Ask them to explain in writing why they feel the way they do.

Post-Activity Questioning

1. How did your opinion of the conditions slaves faced change?
2. Why was there slavery?
3. Can slavery exist today?

(This should be done in a journal format or any other manner which allows students to write their thoughts freely without fear of judgment.)

The softest couches in the world are not to be found in the log mansion of the slaves. The one whereon I reclined year after year was a plank twelve inches wide and ten feet long. My pillow was a stick of wood. The bedding was a coarse blanket and not a rag or shred beside. Moss might be used, were it not that it directly breeds a swarm of fleas. The cabin is constructed of logs, without floor or window...

A Negro has got no name. My father was a Ransom, and he had an uncle named Hankin. If you belong to Mr. Jones and he sell you to Mr. Johnson, consequently you go by the name of your owner. Now where you get a name? We are wearing the name of our master. I was first a Hale; then my father was sold and then I was named Reed.

Major Ellison bought me and carried me to Mississippi. I didn't want to go. They 'zamine you just like they do a horse; they look at your teeth, and pull your eyelids back and look at your eyes, and feel you just like a horse...

One day I saw a foreman slap a nigger for drinking at the dipper too long. The nigger picked up a shovel and slam him in the head and run. Back in slavery days they didn't do something and run. They run before they did it, 'cause they knew that if they struck a white man, there wasn't going to be a nigger. In them days, they run to keep from doing something. Nowadays they do it and then they run.

...the man had not taken his food and refuse taking any. Mild means were then used to divert him from his resolution, as well as promises that he should have anything he wished for; but he still refused to eat. They then whipped him with the cat, but this also was ineffectual. He always kept his teeth so fast that it was impossible to get anything down...In this state he was four or five days, when he was brought up as dead to be thrown overboard; but Mr. Wilson, finding life still existing, repeated his endeavors though in vain, and two days afterwards he was brought up again in the same state as before. He then seemed to wish to get up. The crew assisted him and brought him aft to the fireplace, when in feeble voice in his own tongue he asked for water, which was given him. Upon this they began to have hopes of dissuading him from his design, but he again shut his teeth as fast as ever, and resolved to die, and on the ninth day from his first refusal he died.

Ethical Reasoning Chart

Directions to Students

Pick at least five situations from the narratives that you found intriguing. List them in the "Observed Situation" column. Next, list what you think opposing sides of the ethical argument for both then and now might be. Your own opinion will fall into one of the "Ethical Now" options. You should circle your own opinion.

Observed Situation	Ethical then?	Ethical now?
Slaves had no name of their own.	Yes...it made keeping the books easier.	Yes- a number is good enough.
	No...everyone deserves a name.	No...names define families.

Lesson 2 - Early Voices: Phillis Wheatley and Jupiter Hammon

Objectives

1. Students will examine the writings of the above mentioned using close reading strategies.
2. Students will understand the author's use of multiple meanings for different audiences.
3. Students will understand how needs and circumstance affect tone and audience interpretation.

Pre-Lesson Preparation

Students should be distributed copies of “An Address to the Negroes in the State of New York” and “An Address to Miss Phillis Wheatley.” Students should be assigned one week to read and notate these pieces.

Activity 1

In class, students generate a list of ten questions about the times and circumstances of the author. They should be instructed that these questions will be shared with the class at a later time.

Activity 2

Obtain at least 2 hours of computer time with one computer per student. Have students use the internet to obtain answers to their questions.

Activity 3

Students should prepare a short presentation of their answers. This can be done using additional lab time and PowerPoint or more traditional methods such as simply reading their answers and allowing questioning time from the audience.

Post-Activity Questions:

1. Why did it seem that Hammon was so religious?
2. Do you think that Hammon was a clever man? Why?
3. How do authors conceal hidden messages so that only those who need to know their meanings do?

Lesson 3 - The Slavery Debates

Objectives

1. Students will learn the names of some of the major players in the governmental debates on slavery.
2. Students will examine both sides of the debate.
3. Students will be asked to make judgments based on their knowledge.
4. Students will be asked to connect then to the present.

Pre-Lesson Questioning:

1. What does it mean to have a majority in both the Senate and the House?
2. How does this affect the majority’s ability to set its agenda and get their ideas passed into law?
3. Is the majority always right?

Activity 1

1. Split the class into two equal groups.
2. Pass out the cards and have each student prepare to read one aloud. Encourage students to use appropriate voice during their reading.
3. Ask one member from each group to read aloud. Then, based on what they have said, ask an opposing group member to use his/her card to refute the argument. If this can’t happen, ask the other team to start again.

Activity 2

Ask students to use a T-chart to record the major arguments of each side of the slavery debate.

Activity 3

Assign students to write in response to the following: Why did so many people think slavery allowable or even necessary during the time of these debates? Why is slavery not acceptable to the majority today? Is slavery acceptable anywhere?

Cards

William Lloyd Garrison - Anti-Slavery

That education and freedom will elevate our colored population to a rank with the whites, making them useful, intelligent, and peaceable citizens.

William Lloyd Garrison - Anti-slavery

I stand up here in a solemn court, to obtain the liberation of 2 million of wretched, degraded beings, who are pining in hopeless bondage, over whose sufferings scarcely an eye weeps or a heart melts or a tongue pleads.

William Lloyd Garrison - Anti-Slavery

That as the free states are constitutionally involved in the guilt of slavery by adhering to a national compact that sanctions it, and in danger by liability to be called upon for aid in case of insurrection, they have the right to remonstrate against its continuance and it is their duty to assist in its overthrow.

William Lloyd Garrison - Anti-Slavery

That no justificative plea for the perpetuity of slavery can be found in the condition of its victims, and no barrier against our righteous interference in the laws which authorize the buying, selling, and possessing of slaves, nor in the hazard of a collision with slaveholders.

Henry Clay - Pro-Slavery

These African slaves were brought to the colonies under the sanction, and by the authority of British laws.

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Supplemental Resources

- Bland, Sterling L. *African American Slave Narratives*. Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001. The story of Henry Box Brown and others. The conditions of slavery will be derived from these accounts.
- Feldstein, Stanley. *Once a Slave*. New York: William Morrow and Co., 1971. Life on the plantation and the systematic dehumanization of slaves is discussed at length in this source.
- Jeffrey, Julie R. *The Great Silent Army of Abolitionism: Ordinary Women in the Antislavery Movement*. North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998. Excerpts on the cost of being an abolitionist, both social and legal, will be utilized.
- Legal and Moral Aspects of Slavery*. New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969.
- Speicher, Anna M. *The Religious World of Antislavery Women: Spirituality in the Lives of Five Abolitionist Women*. New York: Syracuse University Press, 2000. Using the tenets of the Bible to incite others to join the cause.
- Waters, Carver W. *Voice in the Slave Narratives of Olaudah Equino, Frederick Douglas, and Soloman Northrup*. New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002. Observations about the process of recording narratives will be used.