

COURSE READER

HIST 111: U.S. History to 1877



Liberty vs. Slavery

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Instructor: Julia Fuelle, M.A.

Email: jfuelle@msjc.edu

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Course Reader Introduction: “An Inconsistency Not to Be Excused”

This semester we will approach the history of the United States by analyzing a series of significant moments from 1492 to 1877 in order to emphasize the conflicting relationship between slavery and the principles of the American Founding as articulated in the Declaration of Independence (1776) and enacted in the Constitution (1787)—*liberty, equality, justice, and security*:

- **Liberty**—*freedom from restraint and oppression*
- **Equality**—*all persons possess natural rights*
- **Justice**—*to guarantee fair treatment under law*
- **Security**—*to protect natural rights and to guard against foreign invasions*

When confronted with the nefarious institution of slavery, Americans continually compromised and protected slavery in order to promote national unity. Compromise between liberty and slavery created an inconsistency in American society and eventually caused a civil war—a crucible that forced citizens to fight and reaffirm their dedication to liberty.

Document 1—Liberty vs. Slavery, Abraham Lincoln & John Jay, 1860 & 1786

Abraham Lincoln Fragment, 1860

1 All this [American prosperity] is not the result of accident. It has a philosophical cause. Without the *Constitution* and the *Union*, we could not have attained the result; but even these, are not the primary cause of our great prosperity. There is something back of these, entwining itself more closely about the human heart. That something, is the principle of “Liberty to all”—the principle that clears the *path* for all—gives *hope* to all—and, by consequence, *enterprise*, and *industry* to all.

2 The *expression* of that principle, in our Declaration of Independence, was most happy, and fortunate. *Without* this, as well as *with* it, we could have declared our independence of Great Britain; but *without* it, we could not, I think, have secured our free government, and consequent prosperity. No oppressed, people will *fight*, and *endure*, as our fathers did, without the promise of something better, than a mere change of masters.

3 The assertion of that *principle*, at *that time*, was *the word*, “*fitly spoken*” which has proved an “apple of gold” to us. The *Union*, and the *Constitution*, are the *picture* of *silver*, subsequently framed around it. The picture was made, not to *conceal*, or *destroy* the apple; but to *adorn*, and *preserve* it. The *picture* was made *for* the apple—not the apple for the picture.

4 So let us act, that neither *picture*, or *apple* shall ever be blurred, or bruised or broken. That we may so act, we must study, and understand the points of danger.

Source: *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy P. Basler, volume 4 (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, NJ, 1953), 168-169. <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/fragment-on-the-constitution-and-union/>

Letter from John Jay to R. Lushington, March 15, 1786

5 I have been favoured with your letter of the 22nd ult., and immediately communicated it to the committee of our society for promoting the liberation of slaves, and protecting such as may be manumitted. They are taking proper measures on the occasion, and I flatter myself that our Legislature will interpose to prevent such enormities in future.

6 It is much to be wished that slavery may be abolished. The honour of the States, as well as justice and humanity, in my opinion, loudly call upon them to emancipate these unhappy people. To contend for our own liberty, and to deny that blessing to others, involves an inconsistency not to be excused.

7 Whatever may be the issue of the endeavours of you and others to promote this desirable end, the reflection that they are prompted by the best motives affords good reasons for persevering in them.

**Source: William Jay, *The Life of John Jay with Selections from His Correspondence*. New York: J. & J. Harper, 1833.
Pages 181-82.: <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=2186>**

Document 2—*Masters and Slaves*, Aristotle, 300 BC

1 The first form of association naturally instituted for the satisfaction of daily recurrent needs is thus the family.... A complete household consists of slaves and freemen. But every subject of inquiry should first be examined in its simplest elements; and the primary and simplest elements of the household are the connection of master and slave, that of the husband and wife, and that of parents and children.... Property is part of the household and the art of acquiring property is part of household management, for it is impossible to live well, or indeed at all, unless the necessary conditions are present.... Each article of property is thus an instrument for the purpose of life, property in general is a quantity of such instruments, [and] the slave is an animate article of property, and subordinates, or servants, in general may be described as instruments....

2 The term “article of property” is used in the same way in which the term “part” is also used. A part is not only a part of something other than itself: it also belongs entirely to that other thing. It is the same with an article of property. Accordingly, while the master is merely the master of the slave, and does not belong to him, the slave is not only the slave of his master; he also belongs entirely to him.

3 From these considerations, we can see clearly what is the nature of the slave and what is his capacity: anybody who by nature is not his own man, but another’s, is by his nature a slave; anybody who, being a man, is an article of property is another’s man; an article of property is an instrument intended for the purpose of action and separable from its possessor....

4 We have next to consider whether... there are some people for whom slavery is the better and just condition, or whether the reverse is the case and all slavery is contrary to nature. The issue is not difficult, whether we study it philosophically in the light of reason, or consider it empirically on the basis of actual facts. The relation of ruler and ruled is one of those things which are not only necessary, but also beneficial; and there are species in which a distinction is already marked, immediately at birth, between those of its members who are intended for being ruled and those who are intended to rule....

5 Animate beings are composed, in the first place, of soul and body, with the former naturally ruling and the latter naturally ruled.... It is possible...to observe first in animate beings the presence of a ruling authority, both of the sort exercised by a master over slaves and of the sort exercised by a statesman over fellow citizens. The soul rules the body with

the authority of a master: reason rules the appetite with the authority of a statesman or a monarch. In this sphere it is clearly natural and beneficial to the body that it should be ruled by the soul, and again it is natural and beneficial to the affective part of the soul that it should be ruled by the reason and the rational part; whereas the equality of the two elements, or their reverse relation, is always detrimental. The same principle is true of the relation of man to other animals. Tame animals have a better nature than wild, and it is better for all such animals that they should be ruled by man because they then get the benefit of preservation. Again, the relation of male to female is naturally that of the superior to the inferior, of the ruling to the ruled. This general principle must similarly hold good of all human beings generally.

6 ...Someone is thus a slave by nature if he is capable of becoming the property of another (and for those reasons does actually become another's property)... Other animals do not apprehend reason, but obey their instincts. Even so there is little divergence in the way they are used; both of them (slaves and tame animals) provide bodily assistance in satisfying essential needs.

7 It is nature's intention also to erect a physical difference between the bodies of freemen and those of the slaves, giving the latter strength for the menial duties of life, but making the former upright in carriage and (though useless for physical labour) useful for the various purposes of civic life—a life which tends, as it develops, to be divided into military service and the occupations of peace....

8 It is thus clear that, just as some are by nature free, so others are by nature slaves, and for these latter the condition of slavery is both beneficial and just.... [A] wrong exercise of his rule by a master is a thing which is disadvantageous for both master and slave. The part and the whole, like the body and the soul, have an identical interest; and the slave is a part of the master, in the sense of being a living but separate part of his body. There is thus a community of interest, and a relation of friendship, between master and slave, when both of them naturally merit the position in which they stand. But the reverse is true, when matters are otherwise and slavery rests merely on legal and superior power.

Source: Aristotle, *The Politics*, trans. Ernest Barker; rev. R. F. Stalley (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 8–20.

Document 3.1—The First Charter of Virginia, 1606

1 James, by the grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, etc.: Whereas Our loving and well-disposed subjects... We would vouchsafe unto them Our license, to make habitation, plantation, and to deduce a colony of sundry of Our people into that part of America commonly called Virginia....

2 We, greatly commending, and graciously accepting of, their desires...in propagating of Christian religion to such people as yet live in darkness and miserable ignorance of the true knowledge and worship of God, and may in time bring the infidels and savages living in those parts to human civility and to a settled and quiet government....

3 And do therefore, for Us, Our Heirs, and Successors, grant and agree...that they shall have all the lands, woods, soils, grounds, havens, ports, rivers, mines, minerals, marshes, waters, fishings, commodities, and hereditaments.

4 ... [S]hall and may also build and fortify within any the same for their better safeguard and defense, according to their best discretion....

5 And moreover, We do grant and agree, for Us, Our Heirs, and Successors, that the said several councils...shall and lawfully may...give and take order, to dig, mine, and search for all manner of mines of gold, silver, and copper...and to have and enjoy the gold, silver, and copper, to be gotten thereof, to the use and benefit of the same colonies...yielding therefore to Us, Our Heirs, and Successors, the fifth part only of all the same gold and silver, and the fifteenth part of all the same copper....

6 And that they shall, or lawfully may, establish and cause to be made a coin, to pass...between the people of those several colonies, for the more ease of trade and bargaining between and among them and the natives....

7 Also We do, for Us, Our Heirs, and Successors, declare, by these presents, that all and every of the persons being Our subjects, which shall dwell and inhabit within every or any of the said several colonies and plantations, and every of their children...shall have and enjoy all liberties, franchises, and immunities...as if they had been abiding and born, within this Our Realm of England, or any of Our said dominions.

Source: First Charter of Virginia by King James I, 1606. Reprinted in The Annals of America, Vol. I (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1976), pp. 15–17.

Document 3.2—The First Antislavery Tract, Samuel Sewall, 1700

1 FOR AS MUCH as Liberty is in real value next unto Life: None ought to part with it themselves, or deprive others of it, but upon most mature Consideration.

2 The Numerousness of Slaves at this day in the Province, and the Uneasiness of them under their Slavery, hath put many upon thinking whether the Foundation of it be firmly and well laid; so as to sustain the Vast Weight that is built upon it. It is most certain that all Men, as they are the Sons of Adam, are Coheirs; and have equal Right unto Liberty, and all other outward Comforts of Life....

3 Yet through the Indulgence of GOD to our First Parents after the Fall, the outward Estate of all and every of the Children, remains the same, as to one another. So that Originally, and Naturally, there is no such thing as Slavery....

4 And all thing considered, it would conduce more to the Welfare of the Province, to have White Servants for a Term of Years, than to have Slaves for Life. Few can endure to hear of a Negro's being made free; and indeed they can seldom use their freedom well; yet their continual aspiring after their forbidden Liberty, renders them Unwilling Servants. And there is such a disparity in their Conditions, Color & Hair, that they can never embody with us, and grow up into orderly Families, to the Peopling of the Land: but still remain in our Body Politick as a kind of extra-vasat Blood [undesirable and unharmonious presence].... It is likewise most lamentable to think, how in taking Negros out of Africa, and Selling of them here, That which GOD ha's joynd together men do boldly rend asunder; Men from their Country, Husbands from their Wives, Parents from their Children. How horrible is the Uncleaness, Mortality, if not Murder, that the Ships are guilty of that bring great Crouds of these miserable Men, and Women.

5 ...GOD expects that Christians should be of a more Ingenuous and benign frame of spirit.... And for men obstinately to persist in holding their Neighbours and Brethren under the Rigor of perpetual Bondage, seems to be no proper way of gaining Assurance that God ha's given them Spiritual Freedom.... [Africans] as black as they are; seeing they are the Sons and Daughters of the First Adam, the Brethren and Sister of the Last ADAM, and the Offspring of GOD; They ought to be treated with a Respect agreeable.

Source: Samuel Sewall. *The Selling of Joseph: A Memorial*. Boston: printed by Bartholomew Green and John Allen, 1700.

Document 4.1—Possessing Land in the Name of God, John Winthrop, 1629 & 1630

By What Warrant Have We to Take That Land, 1629

1 Obj. 5. But what warrant have we to take that land, which is and hath been of long time possessed of others the sons of Adam?

2 Ans. [1stly] That which is common to all is proper to none. This savage people ruleth over many lands without title or property; for they enclose no ground, neither have they cattle to maintain it, but remove their dwellings as they have occasion, or as they can prevail against their neighbors. And why may not Christians have liberty to go and dwell amongst them in their wastelands and woods (leaving them such places as they have manured for their corn) as lawfully as Abraham did among the Sodomites? For God hath given to the sons of men a twofold right to the earth; there is a natural right and a civil right. The first right was natural when men held the earth in common, every man sowing and feeding where he pleased: Then, as men and cattle increased, they appropriated some parcels of ground by enclosing and peculiar manurance, and this in time got them a civil right... 2dly, There is more than enough for them and us. 3dly, God hath consumed the natives with a miraculous plague, whereby the greater part of the country is left void of inhabitants. 4thly, We shall come in with good leave of the natives.

Source: From John Winthrop, *General Considerations for the Plantation in New England with an Answer in Several Objections in Eighteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology* (Washington D.C., 1899).

“A Model of Christian Charity” Sermon, 1630

3 We are a company professing ourselves fellow members of Christ...we ought to account ourselves knit together by this bond of love, and live in the exercise of it.... [Our task] is by a mutual consent, through a special overvaluing providence and a more than an ordinary approbation of the Churches of Christ, to seek out a place of cohabitation...under a due form of Government both civil and ecclesiastical.... The *end* is to improve our lives to do more service to the Lord; the comfort and increase of the body of Christ, whereof we are members.... We must bear one another’s burdens. We must not look only on our own things, but also on the things of our brethren.... Thus stands the cause between God and us. We are entered into Covenant with Him for this work. We have taken out a commission. The Lord has given us leave to draw our own articles.

4 ...If the Lord shall please to hear us, and bring us in peace to the place we desire, then has he ratified this covenant and sealed our Commission, and will expect a strict performance of the articles contained in it; but if we shall neglect the observation of these articles which are the ends we have propounded...the Lord will surely break out in wrath against us; be revenged of such a perjured people and make us know the price of the breach of such a covenant.

5 Now the only way to avoid this shipwreck, and to provide for our posterity, is to follow the counsel of Micah, *to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with our God*. For this end, we must be knit together in this work as one man.... We must delight in each other; make other’s conditions our own; rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together, always having before our eyes our commission and community in the work, as members of the same body.... We shall find that the God of Israel is among us...when he shall make us a praise and glory that men shall say of succeeding plantations, “the Lord make it like that of *New England*.” For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us. So that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause him to withdraw his present help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world. We shall open the mouths of enemies to speak evil of the ways of God....

Source: From Alan Heimert and Andrew Delbanco, eds., *The Puritans in America: A Narrative Anthology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 82–92.

Document 4.2—Life, Liberty, and Property, John Locke, 1690

1 Political power, then, I take to be a right of making laws, with penalties of death, and consequently all less penalties for the regulating and preserving of property, and of employing the force of the community in the execution of such laws, and in the defence of the commonwealth from foreign injury, and all this only for the public good.

2 To understand political power aright, and derive it from its original, we must consider what estate all men are naturally in, and that is, a state of perfect freedom to order their actions, and dispose of their possessions and persons as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of Nature, without asking leave or depending upon the will of any other man. A state also of equality, wherein all the power and jurisdiction is reciprocal, no one having more than another...

3 The *State of Nature* has a law of Nature to govern it, which obliges every one, and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind who will but consult it, that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possessions; for men being all the workmanship of one omnipotent and infinitely wise Maker; all the servants of one sovereign Master, sent into the world by His order and about His business; they are His property, whose workmanship they are made to last during His, not one another's pleasure. And, being furnished with like faculties, sharing all in one community of Nature, there cannot be supposed any such *Subordination* among us that may authorise us to destroy one another, as if we were made for one another's uses, as the inferior ranks of creatures are for ours...

4 The *natural liberty* of man is to be free from any superior power on earth, and not to be under the will or legislative authority of man, but to have only the law of Nature for his rule. The *liberty of man in society* is to be under no other legislative power but that established by consent in the commonwealth, nor under the dominion of any will, or restraint of any law, but what that legislative shall enact according to the trust put in it. Freedom...of men under government is to have a standing rule to live by, common to every one of that society, and made by the legislative power erected in it.

Source: From John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Chapters 3, 4, 6, 21. Thomas Hollis (London: A. Millar et al., 1764).
<http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/222>

Document 5—*Surviving the Middle Passage, Olaudah Equiano, 1794*

1 The first object which saluted my eyes when I arrived on the coast was the sea, and a slave ship, which was then riding at anchor, and waiting for its cargo. These filled me with astonishment, which was soon converted into terror, which I am yet at a loss to describe, nor the then feelings of my mind. When I was carried on board I was immediately handled, and tossed up, to see if I were found, by some of the crew; and I was now persuaded that I had got into a world of bad spirits, and that they were going to kill me. Their complexions too differing so much from ours, their long hair, and the language they spoke, which was very different from any I had ever heard, united to confirm me in this belief. Indeed, such were the horrors of my views and fears at the moment, that, if ten thousand worlds had been my own, I would have freely parted with them all to have exchanged my condition with that of the meanest slave in my own country. When I looked round the ship too, and saw a large furnace or copper boiling, and a multitude of black people of every description [chained] together, every one of their countenances expressing dejection and sorrow, I no longer doubted of my fate, and, quite overpowered with horror and anguish, I fell motionless on the deck and fainted. When I recovered a little, I found some black people about me, who I believed were some of those who brought me on board, and had been receiving their pay; they talked to me in order to cheer me, but all in vain. I asked them if we were not to be eaten by those white men with horrible looks, red faces, and long hair? They told me I was not; and one of the crew brought me a small portion of spirituous liquor in a wine glass; but, being afraid of him, I would not take it out of his hand. One of the blacks therefore took it from him and gave it to me, and I took a little down my palate, which, instead of reviving me, as they thought it would, threw me into the greatest consternation at the strange feeling it produced having never tasted any such liquor before. Soon after this, the blacks who brought me on board went off, and left me abandoned to despair.

2 I now saw myself deprived of all chance of returning to my native country, or even the least glimpse of hope of gaining the shore, which I now considered as friendly: and even wished for my former slavery, in preference to my present situation, which was filled with horrors of every kind, still heightened by my ignorance of what I was to undergo. I was not long suffered to indulge my grief; I was soon put down under the decks, and there I received such a salutation in my nostrils as I had never experienced in my life; so that

with the loathsomeness of the stench, and crying together, I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the least desire to taste any thing. I now wished for the last friend, Death, to relieve me; but soon, to my grief, two of the white men offered me eatables; and, on my refusing to eat, one of them held me fast by the hands, and laid me across, I think, the windlass, and tied my feet, while the other flogged me severely. I had never experienced any thing of this kind before; and although not being used to the water, I naturally feared that element the first time I saw it; yet, nevertheless, could I have got over the nettings, I would have jumped over the side; but I could not; and, besides, the crew used to watch us very closely who were not chained down to the decks, lest we should leap into the water; and I have seen some of these poor African prisoners most severely cut for attempting to do so, and hourly whipped for not eating. This indeed was often the case with myself. In a little time after, amongst the poor chained men, I found some of my own nation, which in a small degree gave ease to my mind. I inquired of them what was to be done with us? They give me to understand we were to be carried to these white people's country to work for them. I then was a little revived, and thought, if it were no worse than working, my situation was not so desperate: but still I feared I should be put to death, the white people looked and acted, as I thought, in so savage a manner; for I had never seen among any people such instances of brutal cruelty; and this not only shewn towards us blacks, but also to some of the whites themselves. One white man in particular I saw, when we were permitted to be on deck, flogged so unmercifully with a large rope near the foremast, that he died in consequence of it; and they tossed him over the side as they would have done a brute. This made me fear these people the more; and I expected nothing less than to be treated in the same manner. I could not help expressing my fears and apprehensions to some of my countrymen: I asked them if these people had no country, but lived in this hollow place the ship? They told me they did not, but came from a distant one. "Then," said I, "how comes it in all our country we never heard of them?" They told me, because they lived so very far off. I then asked, where were their women? Had they any like themselves! I was told they had: "And why," said I, "do we not see them?" [T]hey answered, because they were left behind; I asked how the vessel could go? They told me they could not tell; but that there were cloth put upon the masts by the help of the ropes I saw, and then the vessel went on; and the white men had some spell or magic they put in the water when they liked in order to stop the vessel. I was exceedingly

amazed at this account, and really thought they were spirits. I therefore wished much to be from amongst them, for I expected they would sacrifice me: but my wishes were vain; for we were so quartered that it was impossible for any of us to make our escape....

3 At last, when the ship we were in had got in all her cargo, they made ready with many fearful noises, and we were all put under deck, so that we could not see how they managed the vessel. But this disappointment was the least of my sorrow. The stench of the hold while we were on the coast was so intolerably loathsome, that it was dangerous to remain there for any time, and some of us had been permitted to stay on the deck for the fresh air; but now that the whole ship's cargo were confined together, it became absolutely pestilential. The closeness of the place, and the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us. This produced copious perspirations, so that the air soon became unfit for respiration, from a variety of loathsome smells, and brought on a sickness amongst the slaves, of which many died, thus falling victims to the improvident avarice, as I may call it, of their purchasers. This wretched situation was again aggravated by the galling of the chains, now become insupportable; and the filth of the necessary tubs, into which the children often fell, and were almost suffocated. The shrieks of the women, and the groans of the dying, rendered the whole a scene of horror almost inconceivable. Happily perhaps for myself I was soon reduced so low here that it was thought necessary to keep me almost always on deck; and from my extreme youth I was not put in fetters. In this situation I expected every hour to share the fate of my companions, some of whom were almost daily brought upon deck at the point of death, which I began to hope would soon put an end to my miseries. Often did I think many of the inhabitants of the deep much more happy than myself; I envied them the freedom they enjoyed, and as often wished I could change my condition for theirs. Every circumstance I met with served only to render my state more painful, and heighten my apprehensions and my opinion of the cruelty of the whites.

4 One day they had taken a number of fishes; and when they had killed and satisfied themselves with as many as they thought fit, to our astonishment who were on the deck, rather than give any of them to us to eat, as we expected, they tossed the remaining fish into the sea again, although we begged and prayed for some as well as we could, but in vain; and some of my countrymen, being pressed by hunger, took an opportunity, when they thought no one saw them, of trying to get little privately; but they were discovered,

and the attempt procured them some very severe floggings. One day, when we had a smooth sea, and moderate wind, two of my wearied countrymen, who were chained together (I was near them at the time), preferring death to such a life of misery, somehow made through the nettings, and jumped into the sea; immediately another quite dejected fellow, who, on account of his illness, was suffered to be out of irons, also followed their example; and I believe many more would very soon have done the same, if they had not been prevented by the ship's crew who were instantly alarmed. Those of us that were the most active were, in a moment, put down under the deck; and there was such a noise and confusion amongst the people of the ship as I never heard before, to stop her, and get the boat out to go after the slaves. However, two of the wretches were drowned, but they got the other, and afterwards flogged him unmercifully, for thus attempting to prefer death to slavery. In this manner we continued to undergo more hardships than I can now relate; hardships which are inseparable from this accursed trade. — Many a time we were near suffocation, from the want of fresh air, which we were often without for whole days together. This, and the stench of the necessary tubs, carried off many....

5 At last, we came in sight of the island of Barbadoes, at which the whites on board gave a great shout, and made many signs of joy to us. We did not know what to think of this; but, as the vessel drew nearer, we plainly saw the harbour, and other ships of different kinds and sizes: and we soon anchored amongst them off Bridge Town. Many merchants and planters now came on board, though it was in the evening. They put us in separate parcels, and examined us attentively. — They also made us jump, and pointed to the land, signifying we were to go there. We thought by this we should be eaten by these ugly men, as they appeared to us; and when, soon after we were all put down under the deck again, there was much dread and trembling among us, and nothing but bitter cries to be heard all the night from these apprehensions, insomuch that at last the white people got some old slaves from the land to pacify us. They told us we were not to be eaten, but to work, and were soon to go on land, where we should see many of our country people. This report eased us much; and sure enough, soon after we landed, there came to us Africans of all languages. We were conducted immediately to the merchant's yard, where we were all pent up together like so many sheep in a fold, without regard to sex or age. As every object was new to me, every thing I saw filled me with surprise....

6 We were not many days in the merchant's custody before we were sold after their usual manner, which is this: On a signal given, (as the beat of a drum), the buyers rush at once into the yard where the slaves are confined, and make choice of that parcel they like best. The noise and clamour with which this is attended, and the eagerness visible in the countenances of the buyers, serve not a little to increase the apprehension of the terrified Africans, who may well be supposed to consider them as the ministers of that destruction to which they think themselves devoted. In this manner, without scruple, are relations and friends separated, most of them never to see each other again. I remember in the vessel in which I was brought over, in the men's apartment, there were several brothers, who, in the sale, were sold in different lots; and it was very moving on this occasion to see and hear their cries at parting. O, ye nominal Christians! Might not an African ask you, learned you this from your God? Who says unto you, Do unto all men as you would men should do unto you. Is it not enough that we are torn from our country and friends to toil for your luxury and lust of gain? Must every tender feeling be likewise sacrificed to your avarice? Are the dearest friends and relations, now rendered more dear by their separation from their kindred, still to be parted from each other, and thus prevented from cheering the gloom of slavery with the small comfort of being together, and mingling their sufferings and sorrows? Why are parents to lose their children, brothers their sisters, or husbands their wives? Surely this is a new refinement in cruelty, which, while it has no advantage to atone for it, thus aggravates distress, and adds fresh horrors even to the wretchedness of slavery.

Source: *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, The African. Written by Himself* (London: Printed for and Sold by the Author, 1794), 46–57.

Document 6.1—Common Sense, Thomas Paine, 1776

1 There is something exceedingly ridiculous in the composition of monarchy; it first excludes a man from the means of information, yet empowers him to act in cases where the highest judgment is required. The state of a king shuts him from the world, yet the business of a king requires him to know it thoroughly; wherefore the different parts, unnaturally opposing and destroying each other, prove the whole character to be absurd and useless.... Mankind being originally equals in the order of creation, the equality could only be destroyed by some subsequent circumstance....

2 But there is...[a] distinction for which no truly natural or religious reason can be assigned, and that is, the distinction of men into KINGS and SUBJECTS. Male and female are the distinctions of nature, good and bad the distinctions of heaven; but how a race of men came into the world so exalted above the rest, and distinguished like some new species, is worth inquiring into, and whether they are the means of happiness or of misery to mankind....

3 To the evil of monarchy we have added that of hereditary succession.... For all men being originally equals, no *one by birth* could have a right to set up his own family in perpetual preference to all others for ever.... One of the strongest natural proofs of the folly of hereditary right in kings, is, that nature disapproves it, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule by giving mankind an *ass for a lion*....

4 [C]ould we take off the dark covering of antiquity, and trace [the present lineage of kings] to their first rise...we should find the first of them nothing better than the principal ruffian of some restless gang, whose savage manners or pre-eminence in subtlety obtained him the title of chief among plunderers....

5 But it is not so much the absurdity as the evil of hereditary succession which concerns mankind. Did it ensure a race of good and wise men it would have the seal of divine authority, but as it opens a door to the *foolish*, the *wicked*, and the *improper*, it hath in it the nature of oppression. Men who look upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolent; selected from the rest of mankind their minds are early poisoned by importance; and the world they act in differs so materially from the world at large, that they have but little opportunity of knowing its true interests, and when they succeed to the government are frequently the most ignorant and unfit of any throughout the dominions....

6 In England a king hath little more to do than to make war and give away places; which in plain terms, is to impoverish the nation and set it together by the ears. A pretty business indeed for a man to be allowed eight hundred thousand sterling a year for, and worshipped into the bargain! Of more worth is one honest man to society, and in the sight of God, than all the crowned ruffians that ever lived....

7 I have heard it asserted by some, that as America has flourished under her former connection with Great Britain, the same connection is necessary towards her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument. We may as well assert that because a child has thrived upon milk, that it is never to have meat, or that the first twenty years of our lives is to become a precedent for the next twenty.... I answer roundly, that America would have flourished as much, and probably much more, had no European power taken any notice of her. The commerce by which she hath enriched herself are the necessaries of life, and will always have a market while eating is the custom of Europe....

8 But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families.... Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America....

9 A government of our own is our natural right: and when a man seriously reflects on the precariousness of human affairs, he will become convinced, that it is infinitely wiser and safer, to form a Constitution of our own in a cool deliberate manner, while we have it in our power, than to trust such an interesting event to time and chance.... Ye that oppose independence now, ye know not what ye do: ye are opening a door to eternal tyranny, by keeping vacant the seat of government.

10 O! ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose not only the tyranny but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia, and Africa, have long expelled her. —Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

Source: Excerpts from Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (February 1776).
<https://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/paine-common.asp>

Document 6.2—Thoughts on Government, John Adams, 1776

1 Nothing is more certain from the history of nations, and the nature of man, than that some forms of government are better fitted for being well administered than others. We ought to consider, what is the end of government, before we determine which is the best form. Upon this point all speculative politicians will agree, that the happiness of society is the end of government, as all Divines and moral Philosophers will agree that the happiness of the individual is the end of man. From this principle it will follow, that the form of government, which communicates ease, comfort, security, or in one word happiness to the greatest number of persons, and in the greatest degree, is the best.... All sober enquiries after truth, ancient and modern, Pagan and Christian, have declared that the happiness of man, as well as his dignity consists in virtue.

2 Fear is the foundation of most governments.... Honor is truly sacred, but holds a lower rank in the scale of moral excellence than virtue.... The foundation of every government is some principle or passion in the minds of the people.... [T]here is no good government but what is Republican.... [T]he very definition of a Republic, is “an Empire of Laws, and not of men.” As good government, is an empire of laws, how shall your laws be made? In a large society, inhabiting an extensive country, it is impossible that the whole should assemble, to make laws: The first necessary step then, is, to depute power from the many, to a few of the most wise and good.

3 The principal difficulty lies, and the greatest care should be employed in constituting this Representative Assembly. It should be in miniature, an exact portrait of the people at large. It should think, feel, reason, and act like them.... [E]lections, especially of Representatives... should be annual, there not being in the whole circle of the sciences, a maxim more infallible than this, “Where annual elections end, there slavery begins.” This will teach them the great political virtues of humility, patience, and moderation, without which every man in power becomes a ravenous beast of prey.

4 The Governor is to be invested with the executive power... I think he ought to have a negative upon the legislative. If he is annually elective, as he ought to be, he will always have so much reverence and affection for the People, their Representatives.... The Governor should have the command of the militia, and of all your armies.

5 The dignity and stability of government in all its branches, the morals of the people and every blessing of society, depends so much upon an upright and skillful

administration of justice, that the judicial power ought to be distinct from both the legislative and executive...so it may be a check upon both, as both should be checks upon that. The Judges therefore should always be men of learning and experience in the laws, of exemplary morals, great patience, calmness, coolness and attention. To these ends they should hold estates for life in their offices, or in other words their commissions should be during good behavior.

6 Laws for the liberal education of youth, especially of the lower class of people, are so extremely wise and useful, that to a humane and generous mind, no expence for this purpose would be thought extravagant.

7 A Constitution, founded on these principles, introduces knowledge among the People, and inspires them with a conscious dignity, becoming Freeman. A general emulation takes place, which causes good humour, sociability, good manners, and good morals to be general. That elevation of sentiment, inspired by such a government, makes the common people brave and enterprizing. That ambition which is inspired by it makes them sober, industrious and frugal. You will find among them some elegance, perhaps, but more solidity; a little pleasure, but a great deal of business; some politeness, but more civility.

Source: From John Adams's *Thoughts on Government*, April 1776.
<http://www.heritage.org/initiatives/first-principles/primary-sources/john-adams-thoughts-on-government>

Document 7.1—Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson, 1776

Rough Draft (italicized portion not included in the final draft)

1 ...The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries...all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world....

2 *He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating & carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of INFIDEL Powers, is the warfare of the CHRISTIAN king of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where MEN should be bought & sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce. And that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the LIBERTIES of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the LIVES of another.*

3 In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms: our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injuries....

Source: Boyd, J.P. et al, editors. *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950. Vol. I page 426.

Final Draft

4 When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

5 We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government....

Source: http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html

Document 7.2—The American Mind, Thomas Jefferson, 1825 & 1826

Letter to Henry Lee, May 8, 1825

1 When forced, therefore, to resort to arms for redress, an appeal to the tribunal of the world was deemed proper for our justification. This was the object of the Declaration of Independence. Not to find out new principles, or new arguments, never before thought of, not merely to say things which had never been said before; but to place before mankind the common sense of the subject, in terms so plain and firm as to command their assent, and to justify ourselves in the independent stand we are compelled to take. Neither aiming at originality of principle or sentiment, nor yet copied from any particular and previous writing, it was intended to be an expression of the American mind, and to give to that expression the proper tone and spirit called for by the occasion. All its authority rests then on the harmonizing sentiments of the day, whether expressed in conversation, in letters, printed essays, or in the elementary books of public right, as Aristotle, Cicero, Locke, Sidney, &c....

Source: Thomas Jefferson: Writings, ed. Merrill D. Peterson (New York: Library of America, 1984), 1500-1501.

Letter to Roger C. Weightman, June 24, 1826

2 ...May it be to the world what I believe it will be, (to some parts sooner, to others later, but finally to all), the Signal of arousing men to burst the chains, under which monkish ignorance and superstition had persuaded them to bind themselves, and to assume the blessings and security of self government. That form which we have substituted restores the free right to the unbounded exercise of reason and freedom of opinion. All eyes are opened, or opening to the rights of man. The general spread of the light of science has already laid open to every view the palpable truth, that the mass of mankind has not been born, with saddles on their backs, nor a favored few booted and spurred, ready to ride them legitimately, by the grace of god. These are grounds of hope for others. For ourselves, let the annual return of this day forever refresh our recollections of these rights, and an undiminished devotion to them....

Source: Thomas Jefferson: Writings, ed. Merrill D. Peterson (New York: Library of America, 1984), 1516-1517.

Document 8—Slavery and the Constitution, James Madison, 1787

Regarding the Three-Fifths Clause

Monday, June 11, 1787—In Convention

[Decided (9 - 2) that representation in First Branch of the National Legislature should be based on free population plus 3/5 of all other persons.]

Saturday, June 30, 1787—In Convention

...Mr. James MADISON [Virginia]... But he contended that the States were divided into different interests not by their difference of size, but by other circumstances; the most material of which resulted partly from climate, but principally from the effects of their having or not having slaves. These two causes concurred in forming the great division of interests in the United States. It did not lie between the large & small States: It lay between the Northern & Southern....

Wednesday, July 11, 1787—In Convention

...Mr. Pierce BUTLER & General Charles PINKNEY [South Carolina] insisted that blacks be included in the rule of Representation, equally with the Whites: and for that purpose moved that the words “three fifths” be struck out....

Mr. Pierce BUTLER insisted that the labor of a slave in South Carolina. was as productive & valuable as that of a freeman in Massachusetts, that as wealth was the great means of defense and utility to the Nation they were equally valuable to it with freemen; and that consequently an equal representation ought to be allowed for them in a Government which was instituted principally for the protection of property, and was itself to be supported by property.

Colonel George MASON [Virginia], could not agree to the motion, notwithstanding it was favorable to Virginia because he thought it unjust. It was certain that the slaves were valuable, as they raised the value of land, increased the exports & imports, and of course the revenue, would supply the means of feeding & supporting an army, and might in cases of emergency become themselves soldiers. As in these important respects they were useful to the community at large, they ought not to be excluded from the estimate of Representation. He could not however regard them as equal to freemen and could not vote for them as such....

Mr. James WILSON [Pennsylvania] did not well see on what principle the admission of blacks in the proportion of three fifths could be explained. Are they admitted

as Citizens? then why are they not admitted on an equality with White Citizens? Are they admitted as property? Then why is not other property admitted into the computation? These were difficulties however which he thought must be overruled by the necessity of compromise....

Thursday, July 12, 1787—In Convention

...On the question on the whole proposition; as proportioning representation to direct taxation & both to the white & 3/5 of black inhabitants, & requiring a Census within six years-& within every ten years afterwards....

[Approved (6-2-2) a motion to proportion direct taxes, including 3/5, to representation]

Wednesday, August 8, 1787—In Convention

...Mr. Gouverneur MORRIS [PA]... He never would concur in upholding domestic slavery. It was a nefarious institution. It was the curse of heaven on the States where it prevailed.... Upon what principle is it that the slaves shall be computed in the representation? Are they men? Then make them Citizens and let them vote. Are they property? Why then is no other property included? ... The admission of slaves into the Representation when fairly explained comes to this: that the inhabitant of Georgia and South Carolina who goes to the Coast of Africa, and in defiance of the most sacred laws of humanity tears away his fellow creatures from their dearest connections & damns them to the most cruel bondages, shall have more votes in a Government instituted for protection of the rights of mankind, than the Citizen of Pennsylvania or New Jersey who views with a laudable horror, so nefarious a practice....

The Southern States are not to be restrained from importing fresh supplies of wretched Africans, at once to increase the danger of attack, and the difficulty of defense; nay they are to be encouraged to it by an assurance of having their votes in the Natl. Govt. increased in proportion....

Wednesday, September 12, 1787—In Convention (Committee of Style Report)

...[Article 1, Section 2] *Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several states which may be included within this Union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to servitude for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons....*

Thursday, September 13, 1787—In Convention

...Art. 1. Sect. 2. On motion of Mr. Edmund RANDOLPH [Virginia] the word “servitude” was struck out, and “service” unanimously inserted, the former being thought to express the condition of slaves, & the latter the obligations of free persons....

Regarding the Importation Clause

Monday, July 23, 1787—In Convention

...General Charles PINKNEY [South Carolina] reminded the Convention that if the Committee [of Detail] should fail to insert some security to the Southern States against an emancipation of slaves, and taxes on exports, he should be bound by duty to his State to vote against their Report....

Monday, August 6, 1787—In Convention

... Mr. John RUTLEDGE [South Carolina] delivered in the Report of the Committee of detail as follows: a printed copy being at the same time furnished to each member....

...[Article 7, Section 4]... No tax or duty shall be laid by the Legislature on articles exported from any State; nor on the migration or importation of such persons as the several States shall think proper to admit; nor shall such migration or importation be prohibited.

Tuesday, August 21, 1787—In Convention

...Mr. Luther MARTIN [Maryland], proposed to vary the Sect: 4. art VII. so as to allow a prohibition or tax on the importation of slaves. 1. as five slaves are to be counted as three free men in the apportionment of Representatives; such a clause would leave an encouragement to this traffic. 2. slaves weakened one part of the Union which the other parts were bound to protect: the privilege of importing them was therefore unreasonable. 3. it was inconsistent with the principles of the revolution and dishonorable to the American character to have such a feature in the Constitution....

Mr. Oliver ELSEWORTH [Connecticut] was for leaving the clause as it stands. let every State import what it pleases. The morality or wisdom of slavery are considerations belonging to the States themselves. What enriches a part enriches the whole, and the States are the best judges of their particular interest. The old confederation had not meddled with this point, and he did not see any greater necessity for bringing it within the policy of the new one:

Mr. Charles PINKNEY [South Carolina] South Carolina can never receive the plan if it prohibits the slave trade....

Wednesday, August 22, 1787—In Convention

...Art VII sect 4. resumed. Mr. Roger SHERMAN [Connecticut] was for leaving the clause as it stands.... He observed that the abolition of Slavery seemed to be going on in the U. S. & that the good sense of the several States would probably by degrees complete it....

Colonel George MASON [Virginia]. This infernal traffic originated in the avarice of British Merchants. The British Government constantly checked the attempts of Virginia to put a stop to it. The present question concerns not the importing States alone but the whole Union.... Maryland & Virginia he said had already prohibited the importation of slaves expressly. North Carolina had done the same in substance. All this would be in vain if South Carolina & Georgia be at liberty to import. The Western people are already calling out for slaves for their new lands, and will fill that Country with slaves if they can be got through South Carolina & Georgia. Slavery discourages arts & manufactures. The poor despise labor when performed by slaves. They prevent the immigration of Whites, who really enrich & strengthen a Country. They produce the most pernicious effect on manners. Every master of slaves is born a petty tyrant. They bring the judgment of heaven on a Country. As nations cannot be rewarded or punished in the next world they must be in this. By an inevitable chain of causes & effects providence punishes national sins, by national calamities. He lamented that some of our Eastern brethren had from a lust of gain embarked in this nefarious traffic. As to the States being in possession of the Right to import, this was the case with many other rights, now to be properly given up. He held it essential in every point of view that the General Government should have power to prevent the increase of slavery.

Mr. Oliver ELSWORTH [Connecticut]. As he had never owned a slave could not judge of the effects of slavery on character: He said however that if it was to be considered in a moral light we ought to go farther and free those already in the Country....

Mr. Charles PINKNEY [South Carolina]. If slavery be wrong, it is justified by the example of all the world.... If the Southern States were let alone they will probably of themselves stop importations. He would himself as a Citizen of South Carolina vote for it. An attempt to take away the right as proposed will produce serious objections to the Constitution which he wished to see adopted.

General Charles PINKNEY [South Carolina].... South Carolina & Georgia cannot do without slaves.... It would be unequal to require South Carolina & Georgia to confederate on such unequal terms.... He contended that the importation of slaves would be for the interest of the whole Union....

Mr. John DICKENSON [Delaware] considered it as inadmissible on every principle of honor & safety that the importation of slaves should be authorized to the States by the Constitution. The true question was whether the national happiness would be promoted or impeded by the importation, and this question ought to be left to the National Government not to the States particularly interested....

Mr. John RUTLEDGE [South Carolina]. If the Convention thinks that North Carolina, South Carolina, & Georgia will ever agree to the plan, unless their right to import slaves be untouched, the expectation is vain. The people of those States will never be such fools as to give up so important an interest....

Mr. Edmund RANDOLPH [Virginia] was for committing in order that some middle ground might, if possible, be found. He could never agree to the clause as it stands. He would sooner risk the constitution....

Friday, August 24, 1787—In Convention

Mr. William LIVINGSTON [New Jersey], from the Committee of Eleven... delivered in the following Report: “Strike out so much of the 4th Sect: as was referred to the Committee and insert”—“The migration or importation of such persons as the several States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Legislature prior to the year 1800....”

Saturday, August 25, 1787—In Convention

...The Report of the Committee of eleven... being taken up,

General Charles PINKNEY [South Carolina] moved to strike out the words “the year eighteen hundred” as the year limiting the importation of slaves, and to insert the words “the year eighteen hundred and eight.”

Mr. James MADISON [Virginia]. Twenty years will produce all the mischief that can be apprehended from the liberty to import slaves. So long a term will be more dishonorable to the National character than to say nothing about it in the Constitution....

The first part of the report was then agreed to [(7-4)], amended as follows:

“The migration or importation of such persons as the several States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Legislature prior to the year 1808.”

Mr. James MADISON [Virginia] thought it wrong to admit in the Constitution the idea that there could be property in men. The reason of duties did not hold, as slaves are not like merchandize, consumed, &c....

Wednesday, September 12, 1787—In Convention (Committee of Style Report)

...[Article 1, Section 9] *The migration or importation of such persons as the several states now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight....*

Regarding the Fugitive Slave Clause

Tuesday, August 28, 1787—In Convention

...Mr. Pierce BUTLER and Mr. Charles PINKNEY [South Carolina] moved “to require fugitive slaves and servants to be delivered up like criminals....”

Wednesday, August 29, 1787—In Convention

...Mr. Pierce BUTLER [South Carolina] moved to insert after art: XV. “If any person bound to service or labor in any of the U. States shall escape into another State, he or she shall not be discharged from such service or labor, in consequence of any regulations subsisting in the State to which they escape, but shall be delivered up to the person justly claiming their service or labor,” which was agreed to nem: con [with no one dissenting]....”

Wednesday, September 12, 1787—In Convention (Committee of Style Report)

...[Article 4, Section 2] *No person legally held to service or labour in one state, escaping into another, shall in consequence of regulations subsisting therein be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labour may be due.*

Saturday, September 15, 1787—In Convention

... Art. IV. Sect 2. paragraph: 3. the term “legally” was struck out, and “under the laws thereof” inserted after the word “State,” in compliance with the wish of some who thought the term legal equivocal, and favoring the idea that slavery was legal in a moral view....

Source: From James Madison’s *Notes on Constitutional Convention, 1787*,
<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/convention/debates/>

Document 9.1—What is an American? J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, 1782

1 [The United States of America is] a new continent; a modern society.... It is not composed, as in Europe, of great lords who possess every thing and of a herd of people who have nothing. Here are no aristocratical families, no courts, no kings, no bishops, no ecclesiastical dominion, no invisible power giving to a few a very visible one; no great manufacturers employing thousands, no great refinements of luxury. The rich and the poor are not so far removed from each other as they are in Europe. Some few towns excepted, we are all tillers of the earth, from Nova Scotia to West Florida. We are a people of cultivators, scattered over an immense territory communicating with each other by means of good roads and navigable rivers, united by the silken bands of mild government, all respecting the laws, without dreading their power, because they are equitable. We are all animated with the spirit of an industry which is unfettered and unrestrained, because each person works for himself....

2 [W]hence came all these people? they are mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes. From this promiscuous breed, that race now called Americans have arisen.... In this great American asylum, the poor of Europe have by some means met together, and in consequence of various causes; to what purpose should they ask one another what countrymen they are? Alas, two thirds of them had no country. Can a wretch who wanders about, who works and starves, whose life is a continual scene of sore affliction or pinching penury; can that man call England or any other kingdom his country? A country that had no bread for him, whose fields procured him no harvest, who met with nothing but the frowns of the rich, the severity of the laws, with jails and punishments; who owned not a single foot of the extensive surface of this planet? No! urged by a variety of motives, here they came. Every thing has tended to regenerate them; new laws, a new mode of living, a new social system; here they are become men: in Europe they were as so many useless plants, wanting vegetative mould, and refreshing showers; they withered, and were mowed down by want, hunger, and war; but now by the power of transplantation, like all other plants they have taken root and flourished! Formerly they were not numbered in any civil lists of their country, except in those of the poor; here they rank as citizens. By what invisible power has this surprising metamorphosis been performed? By that of the laws and that of their industry. The laws, the indulgent laws, protect them as they arrive, stamping on them the symbol of adoption;

they receive ample rewards for their labours; these accumulated rewards procure them lands; those lands confer on them the title of freemen, and to that title every benefit is affixed which men can possibly require....

3 ...What then is the American, this new man? He is either an European, or the descendant of an European, hence that strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country. I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations. He is an American, who leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great Alma Mater. Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labours and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world. Americans are the western pilgrims, who are carrying along with them that great mass of arts, sciences, vigour, and industry which began long since in the east; they will finish the great circle. The Americans were once scattered all over Europe; here they are incorporated into one of the finest systems of population which has ever appeared, and which will hereafter become distinct by the power of the different climates they inhabit. The American ought therefore to love this country much better than that wherein either he or his forefathers were born. Here the rewards of his industry follow with equal steps the progress of his labour; his labour is founded on the basis of nature, self-interest; can it want a stronger allurements? Wives and children, who before in vain demanded of him a morsel of bread, now, fat and frolicsome, gladly help their father to clear those fields whence exuberant crops are to arise to feed and to clothe them all; without any part being claimed, either by a despotic prince, a rich abbot, or a mighty lord. Here religion demands but little of him; a small voluntary salary to the minister, and gratitude to God; can he refuse these? The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas, and form new opinions. From involuntary idleness, servile dependence, penury, and useless labour, he has passed to toils of a very different nature, rewarded by ample subsistence. —This is an American.

Source: Excerpts from Letter III, "What is an American," in *Letters from an American Farmer*, by J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1957), 35-40.

Document 9.2—Farewell Address, George Washington, 1796

1 ...[A] solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude, urge me, on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments, which are the result of much reflection...and which appear to me all-important to the permanency of your felicity as a People....

2 The unity of Government, which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home, your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity; of that very Liberty, which you so highly prize....

3 To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a Government for the whole is indispensable.... Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a Constitution of Government better calculated than your former for an intimate Union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This Government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true Liberty....

4 Let me now...warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party, generally. This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but, in those of the popular form, it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

5 The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries, which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation,

on the ruins of Public Liberty....

6 Of all the dispositions and habits, which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Men and Citizens....

7 As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is, to use it as sparingly as possible; avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but to vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts, which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burthen, which we ourselves ought to bear.... [I]t is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be Revenue; that to have Revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised, which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant....

8 Observe good faith and justice towards all Nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all.... In the execution of such a plan, nothing is more essential, than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular Nations, and passionate attachments for others, should be excluded.... The Nation, which indulges towards another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest....

9 The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little *political* connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop. Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns.... Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course.... It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world....

Source: From George Washington, "Farewell Address to the People of the United States,"
Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser, September 19, 1796.

Document 10.1—Arguing Against Slavery, James Tallmadge, 1819

1 ...My purpose is fixed, it is interwoven with my existence, its durability is limited with my life, it is a great and glorious cause, setting bounds to a slavery the most cruel and debasing the world ever witnessed; it is the freedom of man; it is the cause of unredeemed and unregenerated human beings....

2 Sir, if a dissolution of the Union must take place, let it be so! If civil war, which gentlemen so much threaten, must come, I can only say, let it come....

3 Sir, extend your view across the Mississippi, over your newly acquired territory; a territory so far surpassing in extent the limits of your present country.... extend slavery—this bane of man, this abomination of heaven—over your extended empire, and you prepare...[our nation's] dissolution; you turn its accumulated strength into positive weakness....

4 It has been urged that the proposed amendment, prohibiting the further introduction of slavery is unconstitutional. This position, asserted with so much confidence, remains unsupported by any argument, or by any authority derived from the Constitution itself....

5 Whenever the United States have had the right and the power, they have heretofore prevented the extension of slavery... The Territory Northwest of the Ohio.... was declared to be unalterable, the sixth article of which provides that “there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude.” I insist upon the proposed amendment. The declaration of this House, the declared will of the nation, to prohibit slavery, would produce its moral effect, and stand as one of the brightest ornaments of our country....

6 Sir, on this subject the eyes of Europe are turned upon you. You boast of the freedom of your Constitution and your laws; you have proclaimed, in the Declaration of Independence, “That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that amongst these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;” and yet you have slaves in your country. The enemies of your Government...point to your inconsistencies.... If you allow slavery to pass into Territories where you have the lawful power to exclude it, you will justly take upon yourself all the charges of inconsistency....

Source: <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/mr-tallmadge-in-the-congressional-globe/>

Document 10.2—Reacting to the Missouri Compromise, Thomas Jefferson, 1820

1 I thank you, dear Sir, for the copy you have been so kind as to send me of the letter to your constituents on the Missouri question.... I had for a long time ceased to...pay any attention to public affairs, confident they were in good hands.... But this momentous question, like a fire bell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror. I considered it at once as the knell of the Union. It is hushed, indeed, for the moment. But this is a reprieve only, not a final sentence. A geographical line, coinciding with a marked principle, moral and political, once conceived and held up to the angry passions of men, will never be obliterated; and every new irritation will mark it deeper and deeper. I can say, with conscious truth, that there is not a man on earth who would sacrifice more than I would to relieve us from this heavy reproach, in any *practicable* way. The cession of that kind of property, for so it is misnamed, is a bagatelle which would not cost me a second thought, if, in that way, a general emancipation and *expatriation* could be effected; and, gradually, and with due sacrifices, I think it might be. But as it is, we have the wolf by the ears, and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go. Justice is in one scale, and self-preservation in the other....

2 I regret that I am now to die in the belief, that the useless sacrifice of themselves by the generation of 1776, to acquire self-government and happiness to their country, is to be thrown away by the unwise and unworthy passions of their sons.... If they would but dispassionately weigh the blessings they will throw away...[if] they would pause before they would perpetrate this act of suicide on themselves, and of treason against the hopes of the world....

Source: *Thomas Jefferson: Writings*, ed. Merrill D. Peterson. To John Holmes, April 22, 1820 (New York: Library of America, 1984), 1433-1435.

Document 11.1—Indian Removal, Andrew Jackson, 1830

1 It gives me pleasure to announce to Congress that the benevolent policy of the Government, steadily pursued for nearly thirty years, in relation to the removal of the Indians beyond the white settlements is approaching to a happy consummation. Two important tribes have accepted the provision made for their removal at the last session of Congress, and it is believed that their example will induce the remaining tribes also to seek the same obvious advantages.

2 The consequences of a speedy removal will be important to the United States, to individual States, and to the Indians themselves. The pecuniary advantages which it promises to the Government are the least of its recommendations. It puts an end to all possible danger of collision between the authorities of the General and State Governments on account of the Indians. It will place a dense and civilized population in large tracts of country now occupied by a few savage hunters. By opening the whole territory between Tennessee on the north and Louisiana on the south to the settlement of the whites it will incalculably strengthen the southwestern frontier and render the adjacent States strong enough to repel future invasions without remote aid. It will relieve the whole State of Mississippi and the western part of Alabama of Indian occupancy, and enable those States to advance rapidly in population, wealth, and power. It will separate the Indians from immediate contact with settlements of whites; free them from the power of the States; enable them to pursue happiness in their own way and under their own rude institutions; will retard the progress of decay, which is lessening their numbers, and perhaps cause them gradually, under the protection of the Government and through the influence of good counsels, to cast off their savage habits and become an interesting, civilized, and Christian community.

3 What good man would prefer a country covered with forests and ranged by a few thousand savages to our extensive Republic, studded with cities, towns, and prosperous farms embellished with all the improvements which art can devise or industry execute, occupied by more than 12,000,000 happy people, and filled with all the blessings of liberty, civilization and religion?

4 The present policy of the Government is but a continuation of the same progressive change by a milder process. The tribes which occupied the countries now constituting the Eastern States were annihilated or have melted away to make room for the whites. The

waves of population and civilization are rolling to the westward, and we now propose to acquire the countries occupied by the red men of the South and West by a fair exchange, and, at the expense of the United States, to send them to land where their existence may be prolonged and perhaps made perpetual. Doubtless it will be painful to leave the graves of their fathers; but what do they more than our ancestors did or than our children are now doing? To better their condition in an unknown land our forefathers left all that was dear in earthly objects. Our children by thousands yearly leave the land of their birth to seek new homes in distant regions. Does Humanity weep at these painful separations from everything, animate and inanimate, with which the young heart has become entwined? Far from it. It is rather a source of joy that our country affords scope where our young population may range unconstrained in body or in mind, developing the power and facilities of man in their highest perfection. These remove hundreds and almost thousands of miles at their own expense, purchase the lands they occupy, and support themselves at their new homes from the moment of their arrival. Can it be cruel in this Government when, by events which it can not control, the Indian is made discontented in his ancient home to purchase his lands, to give him a new and extensive territory, to pay the expense of his removal, and support him a year in his new abode? How many thousands of our own people would gladly embrace the opportunity of removing to the West on such conditions! If the offers made to the Indians were extended to them, they would be hailed with gratitude and joy.

5 And is it supposed that the wandering savage has a stronger attachment to his home than the settled, civilized Christian? Is it more afflicting to him to leave the graves of his fathers than it is to our brothers and children? Rightly considered, the policy of the General Government toward the red man is not only liberal, but generous. He is unwilling to submit to the laws of the States and mingle with their population. To save him from this alternative, or perhaps utter annihilation, the General Government kindly offers him a new home, and proposes to pay the whole expense of his removal and settlement.

Source: Andrew Jackson: "Second Annual Message," December 6, 1830. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29472>.

Document 11.2—Human Rights Not Founded on Sex, Angelina Grimké, 1837

1 The investigation of the rights of the slave has led me to a better understanding of my own. I have found the Anti-Slavery cause to be the high school of morals in our land—the school in which *human rights* are more fully investigated, and better understood and taught, than in any other. Here a great fundamental principle is uplifted and illuminated, and from this central light, rays innumerable stream all around. Human beings have *rights*, because they are *moral* beings: the rights of *all* men grow out of their moral nature; and as all men have the same moral nature, they have essentially the same rights. These rights may be wrested from the slave, but they cannot be alienated: his title to himself...is stamped on his moral being, and is...imperishable. Now if rights are founded in the nature of our moral being, then the *mere circumstance of sex* does not give to man higher rights and responsibilities, than to woman. To suppose that it does, would be to deny the self-evident truth, that the “physical constitution is the mere instrument of the moral nature.” To suppose that it does, would be to break up utterly the relations, of the two natures, and to reverse their functions, exalting the animal nature into a monarch, and humbling the moral into a slave; making the former a proprietor, and the latter its property. When human beings are regarded as *moral* beings, *sex*, instead of being enthroned upon the summit, administering upon rights and responsibilities, sinks into insignificance and nothingness. My doctrine then is, that whatever it is morally right for man to do, it is morally right for woman to do. Our duties originate, not from difference of sex, but from the diversity of our relations in life, the various gifts and talents committed to our care, and the different eras in which we live.

2 This regulation of duty by the mere circumstance of sex, rather than by the fundamental principle of moral being has led to all that multifarious train of evils.... This principle has given to man a charter for the exercise of tyranny and selfishness, pride and arrogance, lust and brutal violence. It has robbed woman of essential rights, the right to think and speak and act on all great moral questions, just as men think and speak and act; the right to share their responsibilities, perils and toils; the right to fulfill the great end of her being, as a moral, intellectual and immortal creature, and of glorifying God in her body and her spirit which are His. Hitherto, instead of being a help meet to man, in the highest, noblest sense of the term, as a companion, a co-worker, an equal; she has been a mere appendage of his being an instrument of his convenience and pleasure, the pretty toy

with which he wiled away his leisure moments, or the pet animal whom he humored into playfulness and submission. Woman, instead of being regarded as the equal of man, has uniformly been looked down upon as his inferior, a mere gift to fill up the measure of his happiness.

3 I have often been amused at the vain efforts made to define the rights and responsibilities of immortal beings as *men* and *women*. No one has yet found out just where the line of separation between them should be drawn, and for this simple reason, that no one knows just how far below man woman is, whether she be a head shorter in her moral responsibilities, or head and shoulders, or the full length of his noble stature, below him, i.e. under his feet. Confusion, uncertainty, and great inconsistencies, must exist on this point, so long as woman is regarded in the least degree inferior to man; but place her where her Maker placed her, on the same high level of human rights with man, side by side with him, and difficulties vanish, the mountains of perplexity flow down at the presence of this grand equalizing principle. Measure her rights and duties by the unerring standard of *moral being*, not by the false weights and measures of a mere circumstance of her human existence, and then the truth will be self-evident, that whatever it is *morally* right for a man to do, it is *morally* right for a woman to do. I recognize no rights but *human rights*....

4 Now, I believe it is woman's right to have a voice in all the laws and regulations by which she is to be governed, whether in Church or State; and that the present arrangements of society, on these points, are *a violation of human rights, a rank usurpation of power*, a violent seizure and confiscation of what is sacredly and inalienably hers—thus inflicting upon woman outrageous wrongs, working mischief incalculable in the social Circle, and in its influence on the world producing only evil, and that continually. *If Ecclesiastical and Civil governments are ordained of God, then* I contend that woman has just as much right to sit in solemn counsel in Conventions, Conferences, Associations and General Assemblies, as man—just as much right to it upon the throne of England, or in the Presidential chair of the United States.

Source: From Angelina E. Grimké, *Letters to Catherine Beecher*: (Boston: I. Knapp, 1838).

Document 12.1—Rights for Women, Seneca Falls Convention, 1848

1 We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal....

2 The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

3 He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

4 He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.

5 He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men—both natives and foreigners....

6 He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.

7 He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns....

8 He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration [pay]. He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known.

9 He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education, all colleges being closed against her.

10 He allows her in church, as well as state, but a subordinate position, claiming apostolic authority for her exclusion from the ministry, and, with some exceptions, from any public participation in the affairs of the church.

11 He has created a false public sentiment by giving to the world a different code of morals for men and women....

12 He has endeavored, in every way that he could, to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

13 Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country...in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.

Source: from Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *A History of Woman Suffrage*, Vol. 1 (Rochester, N.Y.: Fowler and Wells, 1889).

Document 12.2—What to the Slave is the Fourth of July? Frederick Douglass, 1852

1 Fellow-citizens; above your national, tumultuous joy, I hear the mournful wail of millions! whose chains, heavy and grievous yesterday, are, to-day, rendered more intolerable by the jubilee shouts that reach them.... I shall see, this day, and its popular characteristics, from the slave's point of view. Standing, there, identified with the American bondman, making his wrongs mine, I do not hesitate to declare, with all my soul, that the character and conduct of this nation never looked blacker to me than on this 4th of July! Whether we turn to the declarations of the past, or to the professions of the present, the conduct of the nation seems equally hideous and revolting. America is false to the past, false to the present, and solemnly binds herself to be false to the future. Standing with God and the crushed and bleeding slave on this occasion, I will, in the name of humanity which is outraged, in the name of liberty which is fettered, in the name of the constitution and the Bible, which are disregarded and trampled upon, dare to call in question and to denounce, with all the emphasis I can command, everything that serves to perpetuate slavery—the great sin and shame of America!...

2 What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July? I answer: a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciations of tyrants, brass fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade, and solemnity, are, to him, mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy—a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. There is not a nation on the earth guilty of practices, more shocking and bloody, than are the people of these United States, at this very hour....

3 ...The existence of slavery in this country brands your republicanism as a sham, your humanity as a base pretense, and your Christianity as a lie. It destroys your moral power abroad; it corrupts your politicians at home. It saps the foundation of religion; it makes your name a hissing, and a bye-word to a mocking earth. It is the antagonistic force in your government, the only thing that seriously disturbs and endangers your *Union*. It fetters your progress; it is the enemy of improvement, the deadly foe of education; it fosters pride; it breeds insolence; it promotes vice; it shelters crime; it is a curse to the

earth that supports it; and yet, you cling to it, as if it were the sheet anchor of all your hopes. Oh! be warned! be warned! a horrible reptile is coiled up in your nation's bosom; the venomous creature is nursing at the tender breast of your youthful republic; *for the love of God*, tear away, and fling from you the hideous monster, and *let the weight of twenty millions crush and destroy it forever!*...

4 Fellow-citizens! there is no matter in respect to which, the people of the North have allowed themselves to be so ruinously imposed upon, as that of the pro-slavery character of the Constitution. In that instrument I hold there is neither warrant, license, nor sanction of the hateful thing; but, interpreted as it ought to be interpreted, the Constitution is a GLORIOUS LIBERTY DOCUMENT. Read its preamble, consider its purposes. Is slavery among them? Is it at the gateway? or is it in the temple? It is neither. While I do not intend to argue this question on the present occasion, let me ask, if it be not somewhat singular that, if the Constitution were intended to be, by its framers and adopters, a slaveholding instrument, why neither slavery, slaveholding, nor slave can anywhere be found in it.... Now, take the Constitution according to its plain reading, and I defy the presentation of a single pro-slavery clause in it. On the other hand it will be found to contain principles and purposes, entirely hostile to the existence of slavery....

5 Allow me to say, in conclusion, notwithstanding the dark picture I have this day presented of the state of the nation, I do not despair of this country. There are forces in operation, which must inevitably work the downfall of slavery. "The arm of the Lord is not shortened," and the doom of slavery is certain. I, therefore, leave off where I began, with hope. While drawing encouragement from the Declaration of Independence, the great principles it contains, and the genius of American Institutions, my spirit is also cheered by the obvious tendencies of the age.... Long established customs of hurtful character could formerly fence themselves in, and do their evil work with social impunity. Knowledge was then confined and enjoyed by the privileged few, and the multitude walked on in mental darkness.... Intelligence is penetrating the darkest corners of the globe.... Oceans no longer divide, but link nations together. ... Thoughts expressed on one side of the Atlantic, are distinctly heard on the other.... The fiat of the Almighty, "Let there be Light," has not yet spent its force. No abuse, no outrage whether in taste, sport or avarice, can now hide itself from the all-pervading light.

Source: *Frederick Douglass: Selected Speeches and Writings*, ed. Philip S. Foner (Chicago: Lawrence Hill, 1999), 188-206.

Document 13.1—Proslavery Arguments, John C. Calhoun, 1837 & 1848

1 Abolition and the Union cannot coexist. As the friend of the Union I openly proclaim it—and the sooner it is known the better.... We of the South will not, cannot, surrender our institutions. To maintain the existing relations between the two races, inhabiting that section of the Union, is indispensable to the peace and happiness of both.... But let me not be understood as admitting, even by implication, that the existing relations between the two races in the slaveholding States is an evil:—far otherwise; I hold it to be a good... I appeal to facts. Never before has the black race of Central Africa, from the dawn of history to the present day, attained a condition so civilized and so improved, not only physically, but morally and intellectually....

2 I hold that in the present state of civilization, where two races of different origin, and distinguished by color, and other physical differences, as well as intellectual, are brought together, the relation now existing in the slaveholding States between the two, is, instead of an evil, a good—a positive good....

3 The Declaration of Independence.... asserts that “all men are created equal.”... All men are not created. According to the Bible, only two, a man and a woman, ever were, and of these one was pronounced subordinate to the other. All others have come into the world by being born, and in no sense... either free or equal. But this form of expression... has spread far and wide, and fixed itself deeply in the public mind. It was inserted in our Declaration of Independence without any necessity....

4 We now begin to experience the danger of admitting so great an error to have a place in the declaration of our independence.... [Equality] had strong hold on the mind of Mr. Jefferson... which caused him to take an utterly false view of the subordinate relation of the black to the white race in the South; and to hold... [that blacks], though utterly unqualified to possess liberty, were as fully entitled to both liberty and equality as [whites].... To this error, his proposition to exclude slavery from the territory northwest of the Ohio may be traced... and through it the deep and dangerous agitation which now threatens to engulf... our political institutions, and involve the country in countless woes.

Source: <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=71>
http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=683&chapter=107129&layout=html&Itemid=27

Document 13.2—No Compromise with Slavery, William Lloyd Garrison, 1854

1 I am a believer in that portion of the Declaration of American Independence in which it is set forth, as among self-evident truths, “that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Hence, I am an Abolitionist.... Convince me that one man may rightfully make another man his slave, and I will no longer subscribe to the Declaration of Independence. Convince me that liberty is not the inalienable birthright of every human being, of whatever complexion or clime, and I will give that instrument to the consuming fire. I do not know how to espouse freedom and slavery together. I do not know how to worship God and Mammon at the same time.... My crime is, that I will not go with the multitude to do evil. My singularity is, that when I say that Freedom is of God, and Slavery is of the devil, I mean just what I say. My fanaticism is, that I insist on the American people abolishing Slavery, or ceasing to prate of the rights of man....

2 ...The wealth, the enterprise, the literature, the politics, the religion of the land, are all combined to give extension and perpetuity to the Slave Power. Everywhere to do homage to it, to avoid collision with it, to propitiate its favour, is deemed essential.... The two great parties which absorb nearly the whole voting strength of the Republic are pledged to be deaf, dumb and blind to whatever outrages the Slave Power may attempt to perpetrate.... The tremendous power of the Government is actively wielded to “crush out” the little Anti-Slavery life that remains in individual hearts, and to open new and boundless domains for the expansion of the Slave system....

3 ...The reasons...in justification of slaveholding...are multitudinous. I will enumerate only a dozen of these: 1. “The victims are black.” 2. “The slaves belong to an inferior race.” 3. “Many of them have been fairly purchased.” 4. “Others have been honestly inherited.” 5. “Their emancipation would impoverish their owners.” 6. “They are better off as slaves than they would be as freemen.” 7. “They could not take care of themselves if set free.” 8. “Their simultaneous liberation would be attended with great danger.” 9. “Any interference in their behalf will excite the ill-will of the South, and thus seriously affect Northern trade and commerce.” 10. “The Union can be preserved only by letting Slavery alone, and that is of paramount importance.” 11. “Slavery is a lawful and constitutional system, and therefore not a crime.” 12. “Slavery is sanctioned by the Bible;

the Bible is the word of God; therefore God sanctions Slavery, and the Abolitionists are wise above what is written.”

4 ...The Abolitionism which I advocate is as absolute as the law of God, and as unyielding as His throne. It admits of no compromise. Every slave is a stolen man; every slaveholder is a man-stealer. By no precedent, no example, no law, no compact, no purchase, no bequest, no inheritance, no combination of circumstances, is slaveholding right or justifiable.... Whatever sanctions his doom must be pronounced accursed. The law that makes him a chattel is to be trampled under foot; the compact that is formed at his expense, and cemented with his blood, is null and void....

5 ...How has the slave system grown to its present enormous dimensions? Through compromise. How is it to be exterminated? Only by an uncompromising spirit....

6 ...Whatever may be the guilt of the South, the North is still more responsible for the existence, growth and extension of Slavery.... and now, the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and the consecration of five hundred thousand square miles of free territory forever to the service of the Slave Power!

7 And what does all this demonstrate? That the sin of this nation is not geographical—is not especially Southern—but deep-seated and universal.... Some men are still talking of preventing the spread of the cancer, but leaving it just where it is. They admit that, constitutionally, it has now a right to ravage two-thirds of the body politic—but they protest against its extension. This is moral quackery.... The argument for non-extension is an argument for the dissolution of the Union.... My motto is, “No union with slaveholders, religiously or politically....”

8 ...Living or dying, defeated or victorious, be it ours to exclaim, “No compromise with Slavery! Liberty for each, for all, forever!”

Source: From William Lloyd Garrison's *No Compromise with Slavery*, 1854, <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/24194>

Document 14.1—On the Repeal of the Missouri Compromise, Abraham Lincoln, 1854

1 ...On January 4th, 1854, Judge [Stephen] Douglas introduced [the Kansas-Nebraska Bill]....[I]t is so amended as to declare the Missouri Compromise inoperative and void; and, substantially, that the People who go and settle there may establish slavery, or exclude it, as they may see fit....

2 This declared indifference, but as I must think, covert real zeal for the spread of slavery, I can not but hate. I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world—enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites—causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity, and especially because it forces so many really good men amongst ourselves into an open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberty—criticizing the Declaration of Independence, and insisting that there is no right principle of action but self-interest....

3 ...[I]f the negro is a man, is it not to that extent, a total destruction of self-government, to say that he too shall not govern himself? When the white man governs himself that is self-government; but when he governs himself, and also governs another man, that is more than self-government—that is despotism. If the negro is a man, why then my ancient faith teaches me that “all men are created equal;” and that there can be no moral right in connection with one man’s making a slave of another....

4 ...[N]o man is good enough to govern another man, without that other’s consent. I say this is the leading principle—the sheet anchor of American republicanism....

5 ...Now the relation of masters and slaves is...a total violation of this principle. The master not only governs the slave without his consent; but he governs him by a set of rules altogether different from those which he prescribes for himself. Allow ALL the governed an equal voice in the government, and that, and that only is self government....

6 Much as I hate slavery, I would consent to the extension of it rather than see the Union dissolved, just as I would consent to any GREAT evil, to avoid a GREATER one....

7 The Missouri Compromise ought to be restored. For the sake of the Union, it ought to be restored. We ought to elect a House of Representatives which will vote its restoration....

8 I particularly object to the NEW position which the avowed principle of this Nebraska law gives to slavery in the body politic. I object to it because it assumes that there CAN be MORAL RIGHT in the enslaving of one man by another.... The argument of “Necessity” was the only argument they ever admitted in favor of slavery; and so far only as it carried them, did they ever go. They found the institution existing among us, which they could not help; and they cast blame upon the British King for having permitted its introduction. BEFORE the constitution, they prohibited its introduction into the north-western Territory—the only country we owned, then free from it. At the framing and adoption of the constitution, they forbore to so much as mention the word “slave” or “slavery” in the whole instrument. In the provision for the recovery of fugitives, the slave is spoken of as a “PERSON HELD TO SERVICE OR LABOR.” In that prohibiting the abolition of the African slave trade for twenty years, that trade is spoken of as “The migration or importation of such persons as any of the States NOW EXISTING, shall think proper to admit,” &c. These are the only provisions alluding to slavery....

9 Thus we see, the plain unmistakable spirit of that age, towards slavery, was hostility to the PRINCIPLE, and toleration, ONLY BY NECESSITY....

10 Our republican robe is soiled, and trailed in the dust. Let us repurify it. Let us turn and wash it white, in the spirit, if not the blood, of the Revolution. Let us turn slavery from its claims of “moral right,” back upon its existing legal rights, and its arguments of “necessity.” Let us return it to the position our fathers gave it; and there let it rest in peace. Let us re-adopt the Declaration of Independence, and with it, the practices, and policy, which harmonize with it. Let north and south—let all Americans—let all lovers of liberty everywhere—join in the great and good work. If we do this, we shall not only have saved the Union; but we shall have so saved it, as to make, and to keep it, forever worthy of the saving. We shall have so saved it, that the succeeding millions of free happy people, the world over, shall rise up, and call us blessed, to the latest generations.

Source: *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy P. Basler, Volume 2 (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, NJ, 1953), 248-283.

Document 14.2—On the Dred Scott Decision, Abraham Lincoln, 1857

1 ...[T]he Dred Scott decision...declares two propositions—first, that a negro cannot sue in the U.S. Courts; and secondly, that Congress cannot prohibit slavery in the Territories.... Chief Justice Taney...insists at great length that negroes were no part of the people who made, or for whom was made, the Declaration of Independence, or the Constitution of the United States....

2 ...In those days, our Declaration of Independence was held sacred by all, and thought to include all; but now, to aid in making the bondage of the negro universal and eternal, it is assailed, and sneered at, and construed, and hawked at, and torn, till, if its framers could rise from their graves, they could not at all recognize it....

3 Chief Justice Taney, in his opinion in the Dred Scott case, admits that the language of the Declaration is broad enough to include the whole human family, but he and Judge Douglas argue that the authors of that instrument did not intend to include negroes, by the fact that they did not at once, actually place them on an equality with the whites.... I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include all men, but they did not intend to declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say all were equal in color, size, intellect, moral developments, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness, in what respects they did consider all men created equal—equal in “certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” This they said, and this meant.... They meant simply to declare the right, so that the enforcement of it might follow as fast as circumstances should permit. They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar to all, and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence, and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people of all colors everywhere. The assertion that “all men are created equal” was of no practical use in effecting our separation from Great Britain; and it was placed in the Declaration, nor for that, but for future use. Its authors meant it to be, thank God, it is now proving itself, a stumbling block to those who in after times might seek to turn a free people back into the hateful paths of despotism. They knew the proneness of prosperity to breed tyrants....

Source: Abraham Lincoln, *Speech in Springfield, Illinois* (June 26, 1857)
<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=52>

Document 15.1—The Cornerstone of the Confederacy, Alexander H. Stephens, 1861

1 ...The new [Confederate] constitution has put at rest, forever, all the agitating questions relating to our peculiar institution African slavery as it exists amongst us the proper status of the negro in our form of civilization. This was the immediate cause of the late rupture and present revolution. Jefferson in his forecast, had anticipated this, as the “rock upon which the old Union would split.” He was right. What was conjecture with him, is now a realized fact. But whether he fully comprehended the great truth upon which that rock stood and stands, may be doubted. The prevailing ideas entertained by him and most of the leading statesmen at the time of the formation of the old constitution, were that the enslavement of the African was in violation of the laws of nature; that it was wrong in principle, socially, morally, and politically. It was an evil they knew not well how to deal with, but the general opinion of the men of that day was that, somehow or other in the order of Providence, the institution would be evanescent and pass away. This idea, though not incorporated in the constitution, was the prevailing idea at that time. The constitution, it is true, secured every essential guarantee to the institution while it should last, and hence no argument can be justly urged against the constitutional guarantees thus secured, because of the common sentiment of the day. Those ideas, however, were fundamentally wrong. They rested upon the assumption of the equality of races. This was an error. It was a sandy foundation, and the government built upon it fell when the “storm came and the wind blew.”

2 Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite idea; its foundations are laid, its corner-stone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery subordination to the superior race is his natural and normal condition. This, our new government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.... The errors of the past generation still clung to many as late as twenty years ago. Those at the North, who still cling to these errors, with a zeal above knowledge.... Their conclusions are right if their premises were. They assume that the negro is equal, and hence conclude that he is entitled to equal privileges and rights with the white man. If their premises were correct, their conclusions would be logical and just but their premise being wrong, their whole argument fails.... They were attempting to make things equal which the Creator had made unequal....

Source: Henry Cleveland, *Alexander H. Stephens, in Public and Private: With Letters and Speeches, Before, During, and Since the War* (Philadelphia, 1886), pp. 717-729.

Document 15.2—The Gettysburg Address, Abraham Lincoln, 1863

1 Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

2 Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that the nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

3 But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Source: *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy P. Basler, Volume 7
(Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, NJ, 1953), 22-23.

Document 16.1—Second Inaugural Address, Abraham Lincoln, 1865

1 ...On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it, all sought to avert it.... Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would *make* war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would *accept* war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

2 One eighth of the whole population were colored slaves.... These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war.... Neither party expected for the war, the magnitude, or the duration, which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the *cause* of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease.... Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! If we shall suppose that American Slavery is one of those offences which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South, this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offence came.... Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue, until all the wealth piled by the bond-man's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said "the judgments of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether."

3 With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.

Source: *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy P. Basler, Volume 8 (Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, NJ, 1953), 332-333.

Document 16.2—Black Suffrage, Thaddeus Stevens, 1867

1 Since the surrender of the armies of the confederate States of America a little has been done toward establishing this Government upon the true principles of liberty and justice.... We have broken the material shackles of four million slaves. We have unchained them from the stake so as to allow them locomotion, provided they do not walk in paths which are trod by white men. We have allowed them the unwonted privilege of attending church, if they can do so without offending the sight of their former masters. We have even given them that highest and most agreeable evidence of liberty as defined by the “great plebeian” the “right to work.” But in what have we enlarged their liberty of thought? In what have we taught them the science and granted them the privilege of self-government? We have imposed upon them the privilege of fighting our battles, of dying in defense of freedom, and of bearing their equal portion of taxes; but where have we given them the privilege of ever participating in the formation of the laws for the government of their native land? By what civil weapon have we enabled them to defend themselves against oppression and injustice? Call you this liberty? Call you this a free Republic where four millions are subjects but not citizens?

2 ...No Government can be free that does not allow all its citizens to participate in the formation and execution of her laws. There are degrees of tyranny. But every other government is a despotism.... In this country the whole sovereignty rests with the people, and is exercised through their Representatives in Congress assembled. The legislative power is the sole guardian of that sovereignty....

3 What power would the President have over anyone subject of government until Congress had legislated on that subject? The President cannot enact, alter, or modify a single law; cannot even create a petty office within his own sphere of duties...in short, he is the mere servant of the people, who issue their commands to him through Congress. [W]hence does he derive the constitutional power to create new States; to remodel old ones; to dictate organic laws; to fix the qualification of voters; to declare that States are republican and entitled to command Congress to admit their Representatives? Though the President is Commander-in-Chief, Congress is his commander; and, God willing, he shall obey. He and his minions shall learn that this is not a Government of kings and satraps, but a Government of the people, and that Congress is the people....

4 To reconstruct the nation, to admit new States, to guaranty republican governments to old States are all legislative acts. The President claims the right to exercise them. Congress denies it and asserts the right to belong to the legislative branch. They have determined to defend these rights against all usurpers. They have determined that while in their keeping the Constitution shall not be violated with impunity. This I take to be the great question between the President and Congress. He claims the right to reconstruct by his own power. Congress denies him all power in the matter, except those of advice....

5 ...It is to be regretted that inconsiderate and incautious Republicans should ever have supposed that the slight amendments already proposed to the Constitution, even when incorporated into that instrument, would satisfy the reforms necessary for the security of the Government. Unless the rebel States, before admission, should be made republican in spirit, and placed under the guardianship of loyal men, all our blood and treasure will have been spent in vain.... There are several good reasons for the passage of this bill. In the first place, it is just. I am now confining my arguments to negro suffrage in the rebel States. Have not loyal blacks quite as good a right to choose rulers and make laws as rebel whites? In the second place, it is a necessity in order to protect the loyal white men in the seceded States. The white Union men are in a great minority in each of those States. With them the blacks would act in a body; and it is believed that in each of said States, except one, the two united would form a majority, control the States, and protect themselves. Now they are the victims of daily murder. They must suffer constant persecution or be exiled....

6 ...I am for negro suffrage in every rebel State. If it be just, it should not be denied; if it be necessary, it should be adopted; if it be a punishment to traitors, they deserve it.... The same law which condemns or acquits an African should condemn or acquit a white man. The same law which gives a verdict in a White man's favor should give a verdict in a black man's favor on the same state of facts. Such is the law of God and such ought to be the law of man....

Source: Beverly Wilson Palmer and Holly Byers Ochoa, eds., *The Selected Papers of Thaddeus Stevens*, Vol. 2 April 1865-August 1868 (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998).