

# NEGLECTED VOICES

A Charter of Free Citizenship

The Examples of Family  
Integrity and Personal  
Autonomy

Legal doctrines are stories structured on formal but ambiguous texts.

Doctrinal stories reflect perspective. *They necessarily draw on partial accounts of history and culture: accounts that accentuate certain historical and cultural forces and minimize or ignore others.*

**NEGLECTED STORIES**  
THE CONSTITUTION AND FAMILY VALUES



PEGGY COOPER DAVIS

# Neglected Voices that Speak to Rights of Family Recognition and Personal Autonomy

**What was SAID, INTENDED, HOPED?**

# Voices of Slavery's Victims



# Who Fought for Freedom





# THE LIBERATOR.

VOL. I.] WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON AND ISAAC KNAPP, PUBLISHERS. [NO. 17.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.] OUR COUNTRY IS THE WORLD—OUR COUNTRYMEN ARE MANKIND. [SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 1831.

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- WILLIAM WATKINS, *Baltimore, Md.*

**THE LIBERATOR.**

two committee men and a constable interfered, and would not permit him to take his seat? He was finally driven away, and the pew passed into other hands.

We purpose shortly to visit all our meeting-houses, and ascertain what places are provided for the accommodation of our colored people. A house dedicated to the worship of Almighty God should be open to all for the purpose of worshiping together, without distinction of color:

\* With deep regret we have observed some articles in the columns of the "Liberator," of Boston, apparently from this city, in which its inhabitants are implicated; and which we believe the editor of that publication will deem very injudicious, as well as unkind, when knowing the truth in the case. So far from wishing to deprive the colored population of an opportunity to worship God, by the co-operation of the friends of religion with that part of the inhabitants, a good and convenient house was erected a few years since; clergymen of different denominations have often officiated, gratuitously, from Sabbath to Sabbath; and when it was

be elevated and improved in this country; unanimous in opposing their instruction; unanimous in exciting the prejudices of the people against them; unanimous in apologising for the crime of slavery; unanimous in conceding the right to the planters to hold their slaves in a limited sense; unanimous in opposing the removal of our colored brethren to Liberia; unanimous in their hollow pretence for colonizing, namely, to evangelize Africa; unanimous in their *true* motive for the measure—a terror lest the blacks should rise to avenge their accumulated wrongs. It is a conspiracy to send the free people of color to Africa under a benevolent pretence, but really that the slaves may be held more securely in bondage. It is a conspiracy based upon fear, oppression and falsehood, which draws its aliment from the prejudices of the people, which is sustained by duplicity, which is impotent in its design, which really upholds the slave system, which fascinates while it destroys, which endangers the safety and happiness of the

virtue. I doubt not this conviction will ultimately prevail in every community, where the obligations of religion and philanthropy are acknowledged; though the process may be slow; having to contend with much ignorance, prejudice and error. This conviction, however, is a step towards a result so desirable as the total abolition of slavery. Every long established custom acquires a strong hold on the feelings of those who are habituated to its control; we know that its power in many cases is almost unconquerable; and this is especially the case, where a custom, however injurious in its tendencies, is a source of pecuniary emolument, or worldly aggrandizement to those interested in its continuance. It therefore becomes necessary for the attainment of this great and good object—the universal emancipation of our colored brethren—the complete overthrow of this abominable traffic in human flesh—to investigate the whole subject fairly and calmly; to discuss it fully and freely; to ascertain, as far as possible, what are the best means and method for the removal of

Voices of Other Abolitionists

Wendell Phillips  
Speaking at Boston  
Abolitionist Rally



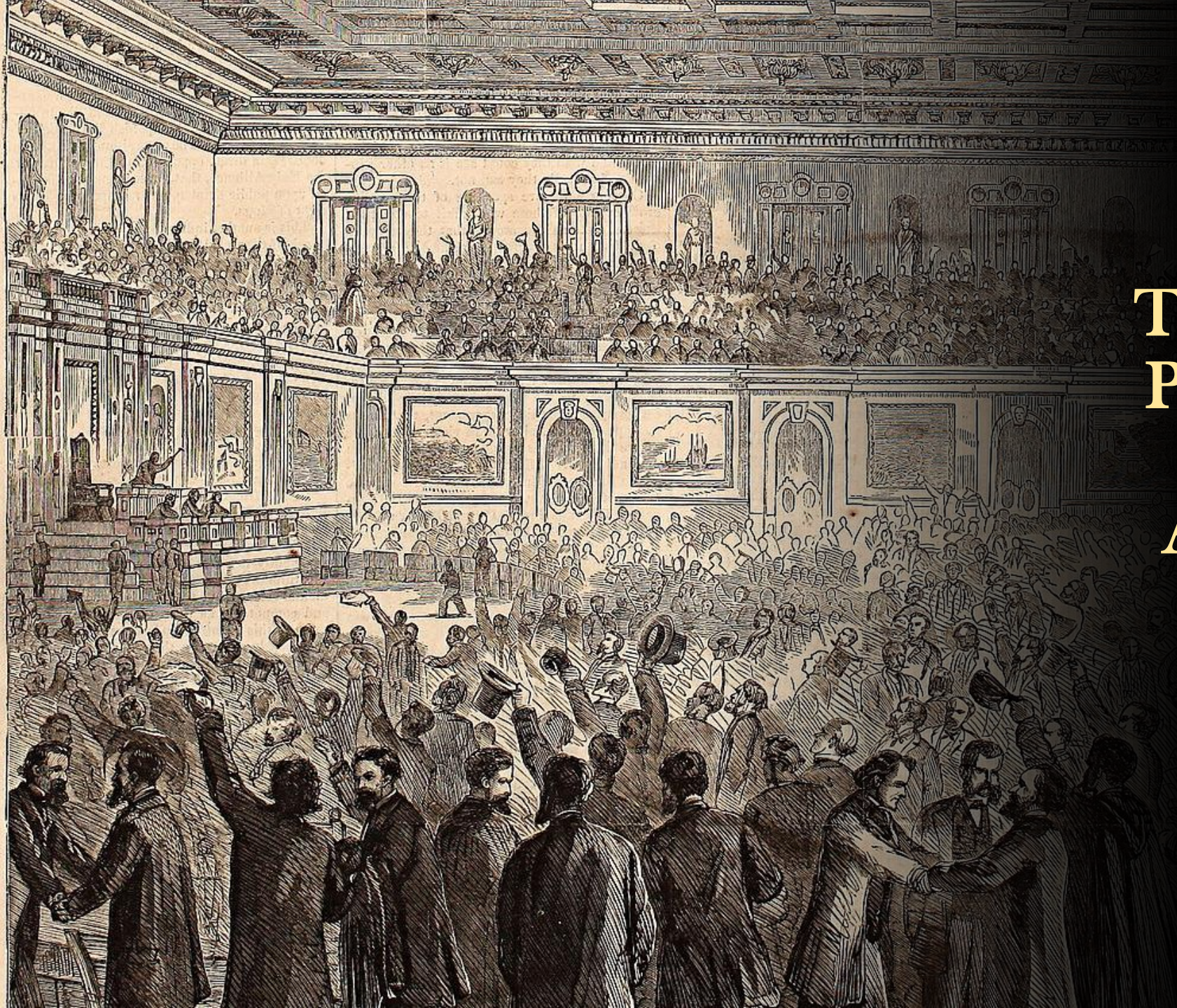
# The Voice of Congress



# Joint House and Senate Committee

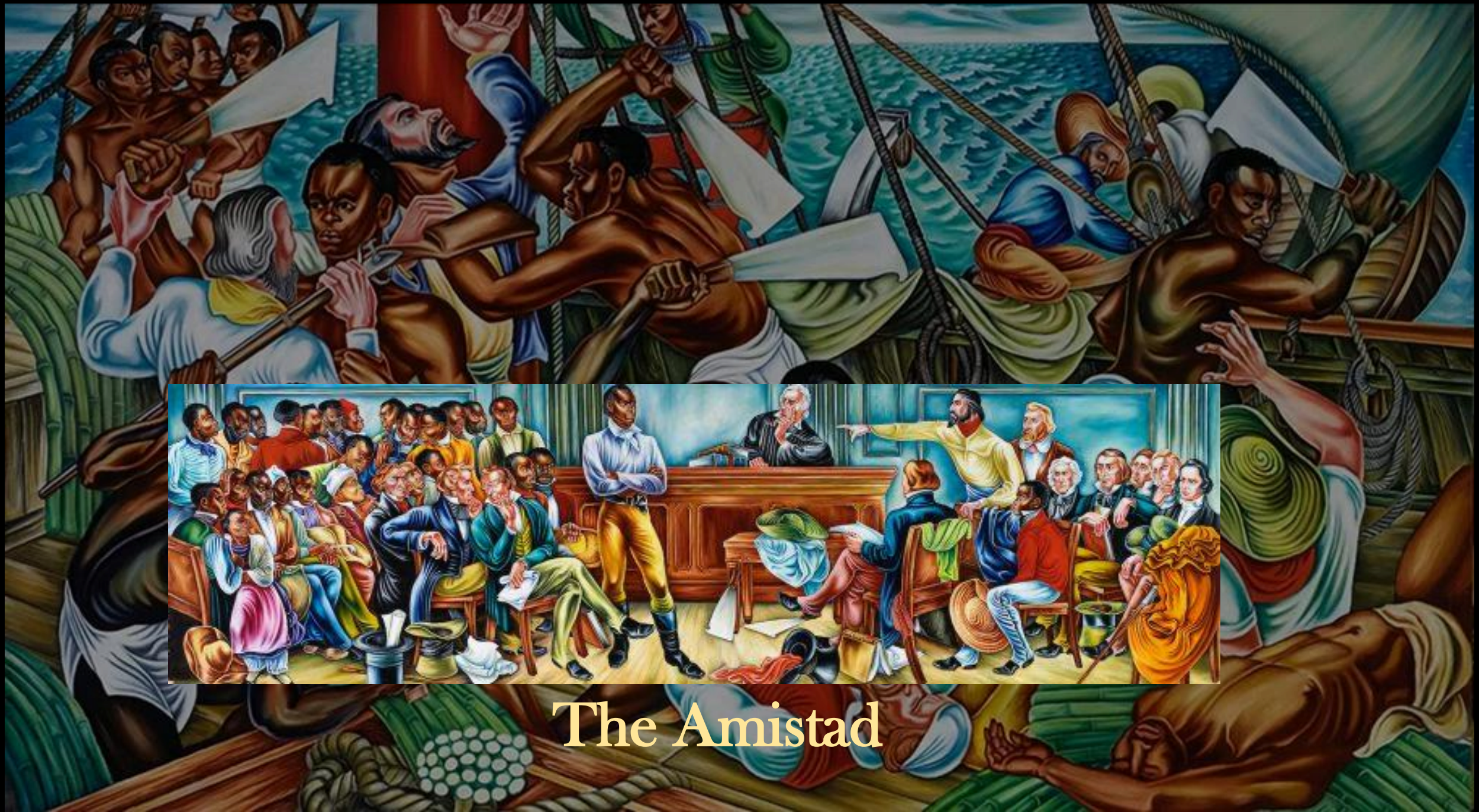
Debating the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment





# The House on Passage of the Fourteenth Amendment

Affiliation / Natal Death



The Amistad

Chabaru, wife

Singbee - father, wife, 3 children

Burna - wife, child, father, 3 sisters, brother

Sessi - 3 brothers, sister, wife, 3 children

Ndama - mother, brother, sister

Kinna - parents, grandparents, 4 brothers, sister

Nghaoni - wife, child

Fakinna - father, wife, 2 children

Burna - mother, 4 sisters, 2 brothers

Kagne - parents, 4 brothers, 4 sisters



## LUNSFORD LANE

“There was the fear that I might be sold away and conveyed to the far south. My family and friends were dear; and the thought that I might be separated from them forever, was like that of having the heart torn from its socket.”



Henry Bibb, formerly enslaved,  
wrote in 1850:

"I presume there are no class of  
people in the United States who  
so highly appreciate the legality  
of marriage as those persons  
who have been held and treated  
as property."

*“The relation that subsisted between us, to which I clung, hoping against hope, for years, after we were tom asunder, not having been sanctioned by any loyal power, [could not] be cancelled by a legal process.”*



At the intersection of the feminist and anti-slavery movements, a courageous, influential group of men and women challenged governmental control of the institution of marriage that it might be reformed to accommodate the fundamental human rights of both men and women.



## Angelina Grimke and Theodore Weld

It was an orthodox anti-slavery affair, including an integrated guest list; anti-slavery luminaries; a wedding cake baked by "a colored baker who used nothing but 'free sugar'"; and prayers offered by black and white clergy.



# Lucy Stone and Henry Blackwell



Give me a free man - he can never be made a slave.  
Give me a free woman - she never can be made  
one either.

The great evil I think, in our institutions lies here -  
that they so crush the spirit out of people that they  
do not make themselves free . . . **The first step**  
**from slavery is to seek freedom for ourselves . . .**  
**the next is to seek it for others & for all . . . .**

# Senator Jacob Merritt Howard



Is a free man to be deprived of the right of . . . having a family, a wife, children, home? **What definition will you attach to the word "freeman" that does not include these ideas?**

## William Wells Brown

I was born in Lexington, Ky. The man who stole me as soon as I was born, recorded the births of all the infants which he claimed to be born his property, in a book which he kept for that purpose. My mother's name was Elizabeth.



# Octavia Rogers Albert

Interviewing “Aunt  
Charlotte” in the 1880s



My old master would make me leave my child before day to go to the canefield; and he would not allow me to come back till ten in the morning to nurse my child. I could hear my poor child crying long before I got to it. Sometimes I would have to walk more than a mile. Sometimes I would overstay my time with my baby; then I would have to run all the way back to the field.



*Aunt Charlotte, what became of your baby?  
were you blest to raise it?*

No; my poor child died when it was two years old. Old master's son was the father of my child.

*Did its father help to take care of it?*

Why, no; he never noticed my child.

# Solomon Northrop



Wagons [were] loaded with little children of many different families, which as they appeared rent the air with their shrieks and cries and vain endeavors to resist the separation which was forced upon them, and the cords with which they were bound; but what should I now see in the very foremost wagon but a little child looking towards me and pitifully calling, **father! father!**

# Peter Randolph

In imagination, stand surrounded by your loved ones, and behold them, one by one, tom from your grasp! Would you not think it sufficient cause for a nation's wail? A nation's interference!



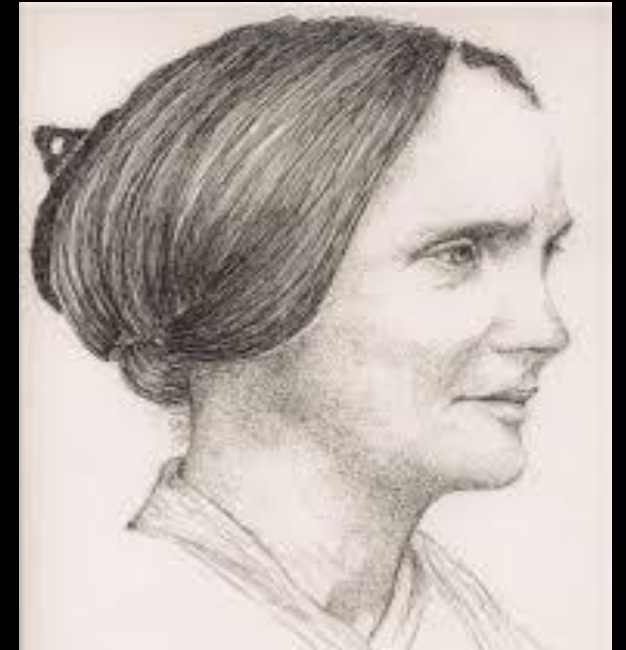
Let parents  
have their own  
children. No  
one else has  
any right to  
them.

America's  
sons are Free!  
Free to snatch  
a babe from  
its parents!

Angelina Grimke



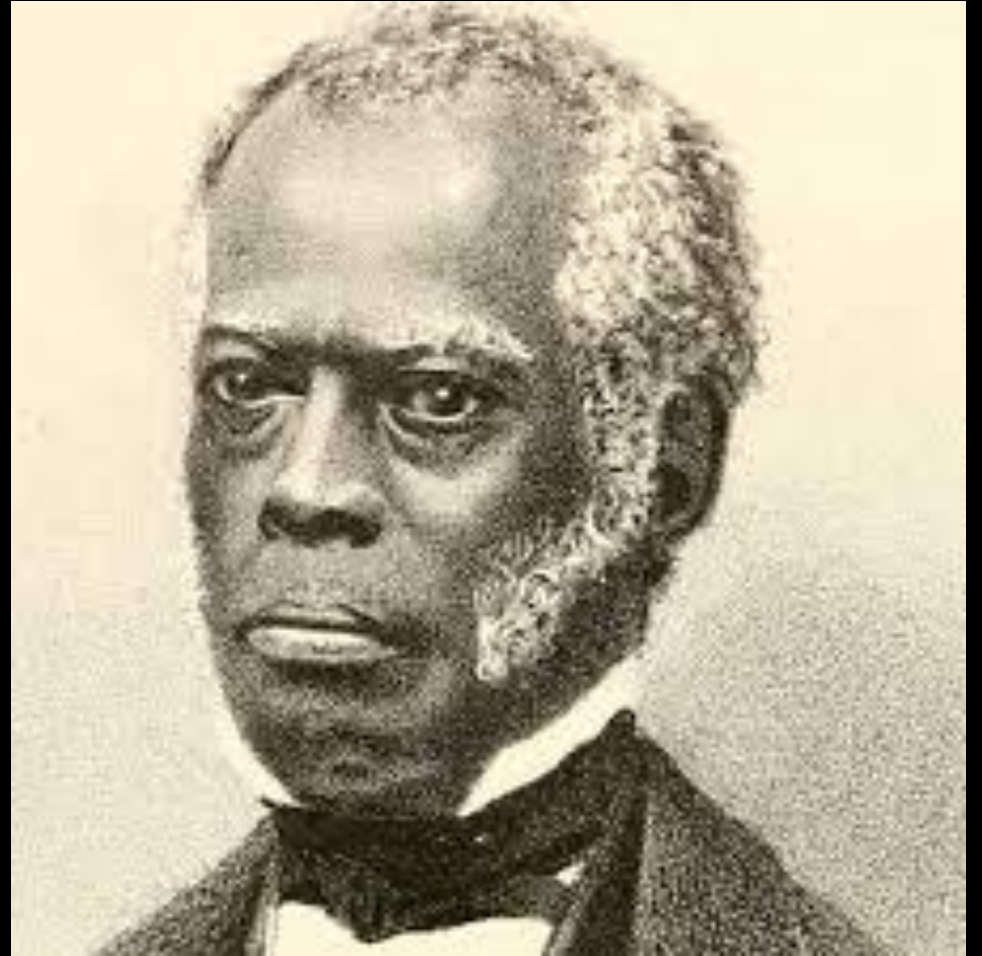
Abby Kelly

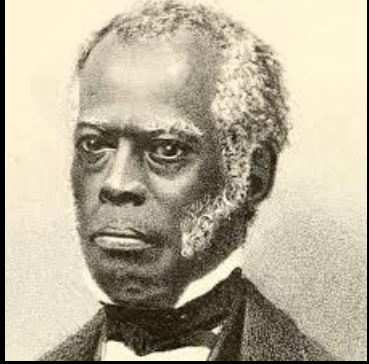


# Right of Self-Definition

# LUNSFORD LANE

“I discovered the difference between myself and white children. They began to order me about and were told to do so by my master and mistress. They had learned to read, while I was not permitted to have a book in my hand.”





*“I was never to consult my own will, but was, while I lived, to be entirely under the control of another”*

# Harriet Jacobs



Slaves were, to their masters, God-breathing machines, no more than the horses they tend.



## Frederick Douglass

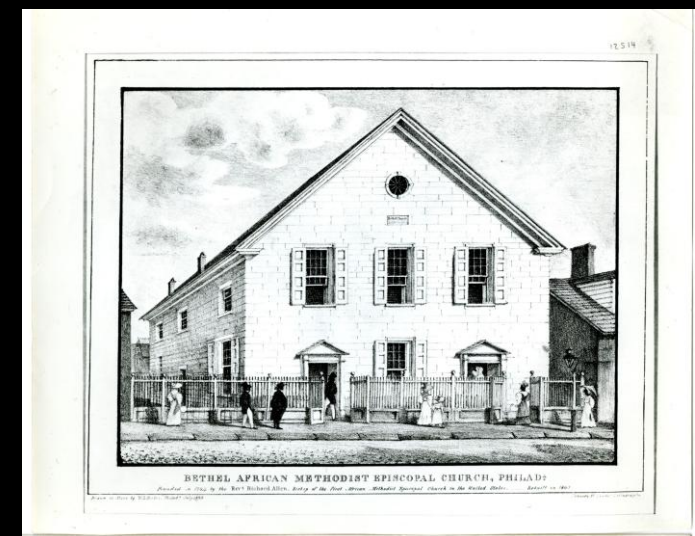
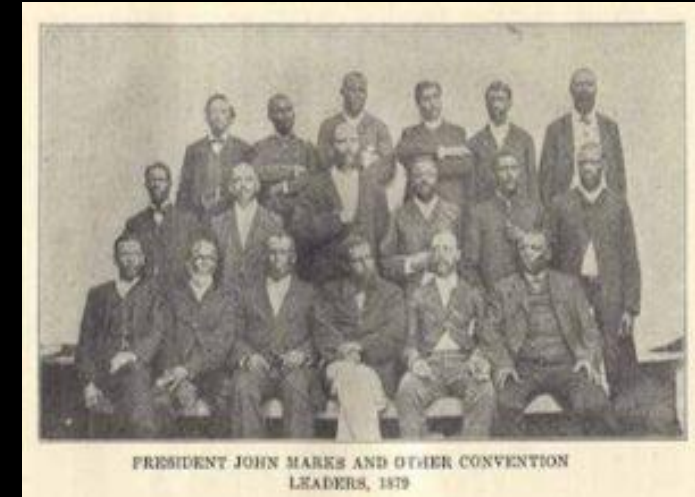


Slavery is the granting of that power by which one man exercises and enforces a right of property in the body and soul of another. The condition of a slave is simply that of the *brute beast*. The will and the wishes of the master are the law of the slave. He is as much a piece of property as a horse.

# First National Negro Convention

To occupy the space  
and enjoy those rights  
in the moral world  
which God, in his  
wisdom, has destined  
us to fill as rational  
beings.

1830



Senator  
Lyman  
Trumble



Liberty and slavery are opposite.  
"Civil liberty is . . . natural liberty, so far restrained by human laws and no further, as is necessary and expedient for the general advantage of the public."\*

*That is the liberty to which every citizen is entitled.*

*\*quoting Blackstone*