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Reacting to the Past handout: The Liberator, Issue 1

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Reacting to the Past handout: The Liberator, Issue 1

Cover Page Footnote

This was prepared for HIS 220H: Debates in African-American History, a class using Reacting to the Past curriculum.



THE LIBERATOR

○ All men are born free and equal — with certain natural, essential and unalienable rights — among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

○ Three millions of the American people are in chains and slavery — held as chattels personal, and bought and sold as marketable commodities.

○ Seventy thousand infants, the offspring of slave parents, kidnapped as soon as born, and permanently added to the slave population of Christian, (!) Republican, (!!) Democratic (!!!) America every year.

○ Immediate, Unconditional Emancipation.

○ Slave-holders, Slave-traders, and Slave-drivers are to be placed on the same level of infamy, and the same fiendish category, as kidnappers and men-stealers — a race of monsters unparalleled in their assumption of power, and their despotic cruelty.

○ The existing Constitution of the United States is “a covenant with death and an agreement with hell.”

NO UNION WITH SLAVEHOLDERS.

WM. LLOYD GARRISON, EDITOR. OUR COUNTRY IS THE WORLD -- OUR COUNTRYMEN ARE ALL MANKIND. J. BROWN YERRINTON, PRINTER.

VOL. XV. -- NO. 27.

BOSTON, FRIDAY, JULY 4, 1845.

WHOLE NO. 755

THOUGHTS INSPIRED BY THE NARRATIVE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Thank you all for being here today and giving me this great opportunity to speak before you. While I am very grateful for this chance, I am disturbed by the direction that this discourse has taken so far. Why is the merit of Frederick Douglass's narrative still being questioned? I believe that the fact we are all gathered here today from all our different walks of life is proof enough of its value. I am incredulous as well that there are some present who are questioning whether or not Mister Douglass is the author of this work. The eloquence and calm reasoning that he has demonstrated before this assembly are equal to if not greater than that demonstrated in this narrative. I initially had some doubts about speaking my mind on this matter because I was concerned none would listen. However, I must stand up for my

friend. This is such an important conversation to have and I am not throwing away my shot. I am not throwing away my shot. Just like this, my country, I am young, scrappy, and hungry and I am not throwing away my shot. Look, I never got a scholarship and I never went to college. I shouldn't brag or swear, but damn it, I amaze and I astonish! As a youth I had a lot of brains but no polish. But I still have to holler just to be heard, even though with every word I drop knowledge. Douglass is just like me. He's a diamond in the rough, a shining piece of coal. He's striving to reach his goal and his powers of speech are unimpeachable. Now I'm no longer nineteen, but my mind hasn't moldered. As these New York City streets have grown colder I have shouldered every burden and disadvantage but I have learned to manage. I have never had a gun to brandish; in fact I've walked these streets

flame, but before I continue, let me spell out my name; I am the G-A-double R-I-S-O-N. My weapon is not a gun, but rather, a pen. I plan to feed fuel to this fire of abolition, but we can't ignore that this country is controlled by white slave-holding men! Essentially, they degrade us all relentlessly. Then they turn around and spout their laws self-righteously! They lie when they say that will set their slaves free and if they don't, there could be revolution before the end of the century! Enter we, the abolitionists, who want all to be free. We won't stop until we achieve for all men full equality. Now, I would lay down my life if it would set all slaves free. But shedding blood will prevent our ascendancy. Look, I am not throwing away my shot. I am not throwing away my shot. Just like this country, my mind is young, scrappy, and hungry and so I am not throwing away my shot. Everyone, we must raise up the slaves

from where they live upon their knees. We must raise them up from where they live in abject poverty. We must raise up these brothers, sisters, and families. We must raise them up, raise them up. I've encountered death so closely that it feels more like a memory. The rope around my neck, the ground several feet away from me. That moment was silent, no beat, and no melody. Look, I never thought I'd live past twenty. In poverty where I grew up some get half as many. That's why if people ask why I live so fast and always seize a chance to laugh, I'm just trying to make the moment last because for me that's plenty. Actually, scratch that, this is not a moment but a movement! This is where all the moral and just went! Foes oppose us but we take an honest stand. We'll rise like Moses, claiming our promised land. And, if we win slaves' independence, is that a guarantee of freedom for their descendants? We can't allow blood to be shed because that will start an endless

cycle of vengeance and death with no defendants. I know the action in the press and the streets is exciting, but we cannot fall into bleeding and fighting. We need to address our moral situation. Are we a nation of states? Then what's the state of our nation? I'm past patiently waiting. I'm passionately smashing every expectation and every act of these slavers' so called "creation!" I've lived through countless casualties and sorrows, and now as I look forward I see so much further than tomorrow! I am not throwing away my shot. I am not throwing away my shot. Just like this country I am young scrappy and hungry and I am not throwing away my shot!

-GARRISON


Salem, July 2, 1845.

My Dear Friend Garrison:

Will you be kind enough to intimate in your next paper, my intention to be at the Plymouth County meeting in Situate, on the 4th inst.; and in Portland on Sunday

evening, 6th; in Holliston, Monday, 7th, Moderation Mills, Tuesday, 8th, Uxbridge, Sunday, 13th, Upton, Monday, 14th, Milford, Tuesday, 15th, Northboro, Wednesday, 16th, Southboro, Thursday, 17th.

The friends in the several places are requested to make the necessary arrangements for the meetings.

Yours, faithfully,
-C. Lenox Remond

DUNCAN BEIGNET



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THE
SUBMERGE-
ABLE PASTRY!
SUPPORT THE
BUSINESSES OF
YOUR
ABOLITIONIST
BROTHERS!**



THE LIBERATOR

WM. LLOYD GARRISON, EDITOR.

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J. BROWN YERRINTON, PRINTER.

VOL. XV. -- NO. 27.

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REFLECTIONS, SPRINGTIME

As I journey through this unprecedented time and this glorious country, I cannot help but marvel at it. This finally is the glorious spring, so longed for throughout the course of the static, cinereous, biting winter. Revel in it!

In this moment when the sun casts it golden glow upon our country and waves of color have graced Nature with their presence, I cannot help but think of my beautiful country and ponder its future. I muse over those who inhabit it. Are we, as the caretakers and occupants of this greatest portion of the world, living in a manner worthy of that part of the world which we are so fortunate to indwell? Are we careful when we till a tract of land? Are we contentious as we amble through the forest? I know that many of us have an innate respect for the world around us, and we may all easily agree to this level of care. Yet I speak now not of simply how we live with and

within the Nature that surrounds us, but also of that beautiful part of Nature which resides in each of us. Hear me—within our beings we each contain a precious portion of that same Nature which we admire around us in seasons such as these.

And so, good people, I implore you to proceed throughout this day and those to come with the same reverence that the natural world inspires in you; I unashamedly entreat you to take those splendid feelings and actions that you display toward the Nature that displays its splendor to you and to, in turn, apply them to your brothers, your sisters, and to your very selves. Do not engage in anything (nor indeed imbibe anything) that will dull the Nature within in you, that will inhibit and shackle your abilities to reason freely and to think without restraint. Do nothing that will cause your fellow brothers and sisters to hide that portion of Nature which is theirs to show forth. I urge you, good people of

America, to embrace this love for Nature, and She in all men and women!

—Walt Whitman

THE FUGITIVE'S SONG,

I'll be Free! I'll be Free!

Dedicated to Frederick Douglass and other Fugitives, by Jesse Hutchinson, Jr.

Also, "Get off the Track," and the various other Songs of the Hutchinsons.

For sale by Bela Marsh,

June 6. No. 25 Cornhill

MUSINGS ON PROHIBITION

The enjoyment of alcohol by all men should not be regulated. Men should be allowed to drink alcohol freely, the consumption of spirits is the right of any man. Understandably, there is a need to protect the general public and to be sure that when partaking in such activities a person is not too exuberant or belligerent. To me alcohol unlocks parts of the mind that

allow us to see the horrors around us, spirits allow me to write the truth.

"Words have no power to impress the mind without the exquisite horror of their reality." Further I'd like to say "fill with mingled cream and Amber, I will drain that glass again. Such hilarious visions clamber through the chamber of my brain. Quaintest thoughts-queerest fancies come to life and fade away; what care I how time advances? I am drinking ale today."

—Edgar Allan Poe

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR: I have been asked by many parties to provide a defense for the literary merit of *Narrative of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself*. A most recent and most eloquent defense of this work was provided by the author himself in a speech presented before a literary forum at Astor House Hotel and as I stand by all that he said, I have re-printed here his closing

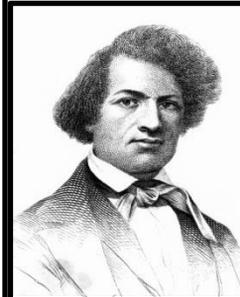
arguments as an answer to all those questioning the value of the narrative.

—Garrison

IN DEFENSE OF MY NARRATIVE (excerpts)

For those of you who bring into question the experiences found throughout my narrative, calling them fiction, or not my own, I say, is not fiction just as powerful as facts? As I said earlier, the purpose of my work is to bring attention to the terrors of slavery. Whether you believe its authenticity or not, it has brought light to this issue, or we would not all be sitting here today having this conversation. So regardless of it being fact or fiction, original or the experiences of many, the literary merit of this narrative should not be brought into question. When "Oliver Twist" was published, did people cry out that Mr. Twist did not exist? No, because regardless of the validity of the

novel's story, it still has literary merit and still is able to evoke emotion in its reader. In this way, my narrative still accomplishes its goal, it sparks discussion and informs the reader of its authors commitment to an immediate end to slavery, everywhere, without the compensation of slaveowners and for the establishment of all men and women, regardless of color or race to be viewed as equals in every sense of the word. —Frederick Douglass



NO UNION WITH SLAVE HOLDERS