

SEEKING "AN IMMUTABLE PLEDGE FROM  
THE SLAVE HOLDING STATES":  
THE PENNSYLVANIA ABOLITION SOCIETY  
AND BLACK RESETTLEMENT

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America's antislavery movement underwent a sea change in 1817. Struggling since 1804 to gain a quorum at many of their scheduled meetings, the Pennsylvania Abolition Society (PAS) reported to the annual convention of American abolition societies that year that "the number of those actively engaged in the cause of the oppressed Africans is very small." They blamed this apathy on the retirement of many seasoned leaders, combined with "a mistaken impression that the work is nearly accomplished." After securing the nation's first abolition law, the PAS had taken on the role of liaison between the black and white communities, trying to lead the freed along a path of social conditioning which, they hoped, would help them fit into free society. At the same time, both escaped slaves and free blacks were seeking better lives in Philadelphia, and the growing population was causing white resentment. Thus, the PAS agenda of slowly but steadily fighting for the rights of African-Americans

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while guiding them in productive citizenship was failing, and the group was being forced to re-evaluate its own role in the freedom struggle. In this contested state of affairs, the American Colonization Society emerged to compete with gradual abolitionists for dominance in the nation's antislavery movement.<sup>1</sup>

Historians have long sought to understand the relationship between abolitionists and colonizationists, but it is clear that in Pennsylvania the two groups shared much in common, especially a desire to control the state's free black population and prepare them for productive citizenship. Ideally, the PAS hoped, blacks would be allowed to fulfill this role in the United States. As the black population grew, however, more and more whites became resentful of the PAS and the blacks they fought for, and the increasing racial tension left many reformers, even the emancipationists, willing to consider resettlement. Thus, though colonizationists and the immediate abolitionists of the 1830s harbored hostility toward each other, the PAS and PCS shared no such animosity. Indeed, even after the PAS finally rejected colonization, the two groups continued to see each other as fellow advocates for black liberty. To understand this complicated relationship, we must look at the role of control in the gradualist agenda and the ways in which colonization could be seen as an extension of their work.

Gradual abolitionists of the colonial and revolutionary era saw careful control of the freed as an important part of their efforts. Anthony Benezet offers a case in point. Like most gradualists, he opposed slavery for complicated reasons, and he began his attack on the system by focusing on the trade. Seeing the slave trade as both morally wrong and dangerous to white interests, he described it as murder and insisted that Europeans deliberately caused African nations to war with each other and take captives for the market. However, he also appealed to self interest by pointing out that slavery put whites in great peril as well. The system made slaveowners feel themselves "more consequential" than others and encouraged them to become lazy and greedy. At the same time it left laboring people and tradesmen feeling "slighted, disregarded, and robbed of the natural opportunities of Labour common in other countries." As a result, it discouraged white European immigration. But these problems were fairly minor. The real threat lay in the form of retribution at the hands of either God or the enslaved.<sup>2</sup>

Benezet proposed a four-step plan to end slavery and thus prevent such a disaster. First, "all farther Importation [must] be absolutely prohibited." Once the slaves already in the colonies had served long enough to repay the owner

for money he had spent on their purchase or rearing, they should be freed. Then, the freed must be treated in a manner consistent with English poor laws and kept "under the Inspection of the Overseers of the Poor." Benezet's last step called for restitution in the form of land grants. He argued that giving the freed land would make them taxable citizens and give them a stake in society. Also, teaching slaves Christianity and preparing them to take care of themselves would help them prove to doubters that they deserved their freedom. Benezet believed this plan would work as long as Pennsylvania, and the other North American colonies for that matter, did not become the type of large-scale slave societies found in the Caribbean.<sup>3</sup>

In general, Quakers agreed. Those who drafted the celebrated 1688 Germantown Petition, George Keith, and the Quaker Yearly Meeting all warned that large-scale slave importation threatened white society. Thus, they called repeatedly for importation bans, and the Quaker-dominated Pennsylvania Assembly tried to prohibit slave importation by levying high import duties. This focus on the slave trade stemmed from many motives. For one thing, the force inherent in the trade violated Quaker principles of non-violence. Also, concentrating on the trade allowed them to express their qualms about slavery yet still earn respect for their moderation, whereas calling for immediate release of all slaves would have branded them as radicals and alarmed those whose consciences they hoped to awaken. Finally, the focus on importation reveals self interest. Stopping the trade as soon as possible limited the threat by keeping the black population relatively small. As Gary Nash and Jean Soderlund have shown, gradualists attacked slavery at times of high importation because "they feared that the colony, like those to the south was becoming a slave society." In seeking import duties, the legislature listed concern for the spread of disease, alarm at the news of slave revolts in other areas, and dread over the prospect of an increase in the number of runaways and petty criminals among their motives. Thus, both the legislature and the gradualists agreed that the enslaved population needed to be kept as small as possible so that once slavery ended, they would be dealing with as small a population of freedmen as possible.<sup>4</sup>

After the abolition law passed in 1780, gradualists, most of whom were Quakers, began to think about the future of race relations in America. They faced three choices. They could ignore the blacks who were, or would eventually become, free. They could work to help ameliorate the conditions of free blacks, or they could fight to remove them. The reformers chose to take on the added task of protecting the legal rights of the freed while pushing to

"uplift" their new neighbors socially. They reached out to like-minded non-Quakers, opening the society up to larger membership and renaming it the "Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage, and for Improving the Condition of the African Race." A number of states founded similar societies to protest slavery and fight on behalf of the freed, and in 1794, delegates from these different groups came together in Philadelphia for the first national convention of antislavery societies. Most of these reformers subscribed to environmentalist theories that the races were inherently equal but that the condition of enslavement had held blacks back in the march toward progress. Thus, they decided to create education and social conditioning programs to help preserve the social order and protect both whites and blacks.<sup>5</sup>

That most gradualists opposed general emancipation in favor of private manumission which would follow a period of social conditioning should not be surprising. Gradualists were on a mission to prove to whites that free blacks would not destroy society, and they used familiar techniques to secure that end. This is why they amended their original plan in 1789. Admitting that a lack of education may have left many unprepared for freedom, they promised to look after the newly freed. In the decade since they helped secure emancipation they had come to believe that "slavery is such an atrocious debasement of human nature, that its very extirpation, if not performed with solicitous care, may sometimes open a source of serious evils." Clearly influenced by the growing unrest of the times, they believed that abolition's ultimate success depended upon convincing whites not to fear free blacks.

The problems the gradualists faced actually stemmed from a growing number of poor newcomers in general, but though the number of white immigrants far outweighed the number of blacks, and both groups shared the vices that alarmed middle-class onlookers, the blacks drew more attention. Because most whites, including abolitionists and government officials, had seen a small black population as desirable all along, black immigration scared whites from all walks of life. While the blatantly racist pushed for legislation to exclude them, most PAS members continued the struggle to serve as patriarchs of the growing African-American community. Of course, this very attitude precluded them treating even the most respectable blacks as equals, and Quakers generally refused to allow blacks membership status in their meetings or their organizations, including the PAS.<sup>6</sup>

In many ways such efforts to guide free blacks resembled the movement to reform the poor in general. This applies to both gradualists and colonizationists.

In analyzing border state support for colonization, historian Douglas Egerton has argued that American Colonization Society leaders in this region were motivated by “fears of the lower class.” This unease was just a stronger version of that felt by the gradualists. Indeed, within a decade many gradualists began to reconsider their efforts at uplift as they began to agree that the attitude of most white Americans ensured that blacks, no matter how well educated or financially secure, would be forever relegated to a permanent lower class.

Growth in the black population made the situation more volatile. Just as the enslaved of Pennsylvania began to complete their indentures, blacks from other states, either freed by their masters’ or their own initiative, continued to seek asylum in the state known for philanthropy and a relatively low level of racial intolerance. Because of its proximity to the South, along with its reputation for black freedom, Pennsylvania drew fugitives and immigrants from many parts of the country, particularly from neighboring Virginia, a state which had expelled free blacks in 1806. Thus, between 1790 and 1800 the slave population of Philadelphia dwindled considerably, but the free black population increased by 2,661. This meant a total black population of 4,265 in a city of 41,220.<sup>7</sup>

This demographic change came at an unfortunate time. Particularly in Philadelphia, the second largest city in the country after 1810, general growth began to disrupt the traditional social order. A city undergoing industrialization earlier than many, it attracted a number of immigrants, including whites from throughout the world, free blacks, and fugitive slaves. During periods of economic slump, these migrants competed in a shrinking job pool. Also, urban growth led to changes in residential boundaries and fostered a large amount of migration within the city, leading Philadelphia to lose its “walking-city quality” before many others. Because the black population in Philadelphia had been generally smaller and more stable than those in other major cities in the eighteenth century, the growth between 1800 and 1850, though still lagging behind the rate of white population increase, alarmed many observers.<sup>8</sup> This growing population, exhibiting lifestyles and customs foreign to native white northerners, caused a panic. Even whites who had worked to help native blacks establish themselves began to lose confidence in their efforts at uplift.

Despite the success of many of Pennsylvania’s freedpeople, the influx of newcomers caused whites to fear a growing public dole, increasing crime statistics, and the possibility of racial mixing or black violence. While the black population in the almshouse did rise during this period, white

immigrants made up the highest share proportionately. Still, most native whites thought in terms of numbers rather than proportions. Crime rates were a similar story. Though convictions among blacks had been low in the 1790s, they grew after the turn of the century, and by 1810, 45% of the prisoners in the Walnut Street Prison were black. Of course, most black criminals had been convicted of petty theft and other small crimes, and their presence in jail is evidence of the limited opportunities available in an increasingly racist society and the resulting economic desperation rather than inherent black criminality. Contemporary observers, however, did not see it that way. Most whites insisted upon assuming that "black" meant "poor" at best and "criminal" at worst, and even some abolitionists chose to blame the newcomers for the deteriorating racial climate.<sup>9</sup>

Even with the growing tension, the Pennsylvania Abolition Society was able to promote fairly smooth race relations early on. Unfortunately, however, they continued to focus on encouraging free blacks to behave in a manner that would "convince the world that emancipation was indeed a blessing." Hoping to help blacks gain civil equality by learning to blend into American society, they prescribed a detailed system of conduct, calling upon free blacks to "manifest a suitable sense of gratitude" by attending church and avoiding "idleness, dissipation, frolicking, drunkenness, theft, cheating or any other vice." They asked the newly freed to allow a PAS Committee of Inspection to give them "advice and assistance" so they would not cause "animosity" and "unnecessary expense." To avoid white jealousy, they warned free blacks to "observe simplicity" in "dress and furniture, and frugality in the expenses of [their] families." Calling upon them to remain carefully in their places, the PAS asked free blacks to encourage those still in bondage to remain submissive and obedient. They praised those who served as "good examples to [their] brethren" and encouraged them to keep up the good work. Whether the black community, native or immigrant, obeyed or not, the PAS was unable to stem the tide of growing racial animosity. The situation grew increasingly worse as blacks continued to seek refuge in the state.<sup>10</sup>

As the nineteenth century dawned, race relations continued to deteriorate. By 1805, Philadelphia saw its first segregated July Fourth celebration, and between 1805 and 1814 the legislature moved from trying to keep slaves out to attempting to exclude free black migration. They also tried to tax black Pennsylvania householders for the support of black indigents. Historians Gary Nash and Edward Turner agree that an increase in the poor black population, fueled by immigrants from the South, played a role in

the growing tension. Fear of black rebellions, especially after the Haitian Revolution, also led to a growing unease among whites. In addition to upper class whites' fears of violence and racial mixing, blacks also faced lower class whites' resentment with job competition. Finally, a growing number of successful blacks were ignoring PAS injunctions to live as meekly as possible and were founding their own churches and spending their hard earned money as they wished. Black achievement, whether through the formation of independent churches or through economic success, invited white resentment, and Nash cites the popularity of racial caricatures and minstrel shows as evidence of "a deadly contest between black aspirations and white fears."<sup>11</sup> Even in this climate, the PAS trudged onward with the daily tasks of protecting free blacks from kidnapping and other infringements upon their personal liberty, fighting against the remaining vestiges of slavery, and trying to oversee their acculturation.

By the time the ACS emerged, however, the gradualists had their own problems to face. To begin with, by 1805, 25 years had lapsed since the gradual abolition law had passed, and many of those who played prominent roles in that crusade had either died or retired. The new generation of abolitionists was less energetic. They basically gave up on abolition in the South, focusing instead on consolidating their gains in Pennsylvania. The Yearly Meeting revised its Discipline in 1806, leaving out provisions against slave trading and slave owning and keeping only a short clause about their refusal to own slaves and a reminder to Friends to help all blacks. At this point they began meeting less frequently and sometimes lacked a quorum to convene when they did meet.<sup>12</sup>

In some ways, the PAS was becoming a victim of its own success. Not only did many whites see the work of antislavery as complete once the gradual abolition law passed, others resented the end of slavery and its concomitant growth in the free black population in their state. Turner argued that "if the state could have dealt only with its native black people perhaps most of them would have obtained material well-being in a generation after becoming free." In pushing for an end to slavery, however, Quakers and their friends in the PAS turned their state into a "beacon of liberty," inadvertently encouraging blacks from other states to take their destiny into their own hands. Their continuing work on behalf of the freed continued to entice black immigrants, and no matter how hard-working the newcomers were, this situation turned much of the public opinion against the abolitionists. Edward Needles, a Quaker who served as PAS president in 1848, attributed the society's



apparent confusion between 1804 and 1817 to "the inveterate malice by which they were assailed at all points."<sup>13</sup>

A statement issued by the PAS to the American Convention of Abolitionists in 1809 supports this claim. The Pennsylvania delegates, which included Benezet's biographer and later colonizationist Roberts Vaux, told fellow abolitionists assembled for the twelfth annual Convention of American Abolitionists that "hitherto, the approving voice of the community, and the liberal interpretation of the laws, have smoothed the path of duty, and promoted a satisfactory issue to our humane exertions." Now, however, something was going horribly wrong. "Prudence has become necessary to our security, and persuasion to our success." The group attributed "this change of opinion, so injurious to the cause we have espoused . . . to the success, rather than to the misconduct of the Society." Their antislavery crusade had "awakened the attention, and secured the approbation of a large portion of our fellow citizens." After all, the group assembled was there partly to celebrate a federal ban on the slave trade.

But at the same time, they faced a new set of hurdles. "The oppressed became emboldened by success" and as the news of abolitionist achievement spread, "hundreds of our fellow beings in the neighbouring states, who bore with patience the galling yoke of slavery, availed themselves of every opportunity which circumstances might furnish, to claim the protection of our statutes." Free blacks also sought asylum in Philadelphia, hoping for assistance from the celebrated "friends of the Negro," but "as the burthen increased," the PAS's reputation "diminished" among previously uncommitted whites.

This posed an additional challenge for the abolitionists. Sounding like their less humanitarian neighbors, the emancipationists blamed these immigrants for the growth in public hostility. "Freed from the shackles, but not from the vices of slavery, those victims of inhumanity thronged our streets in search of employment—but too many . . . serve only to swell the list of our criminals, and augment the catalogue of our paupers." It would have been easy to give up; instead most gradualists held out hope and continued to push for black assimilation.<sup>14</sup>

Not everyone managed to maintain such hope. Indeed, the idea of colonization predated the American Colonization Society by more than a century, and by the time the ACS formed in 1817, Pennsylvania abolitionists had seen a number of resettlement plans. At least one Philadelphian, physician Jesse Torrey Jr., had proposed an African settlement, but the Louisiana Purchase lands provided a more popular scenario. Philadelphia Quaker John



Parrish saw this territory as prime land for colonization. He suggested that the federal government grant homesteads in the area to black families, believing that such a program would encourage southerners to emancipate their slaves by offering them somewhere to send those they freed.<sup>15</sup>

This line of thought led many early abolitionists to consider colonization. In 1816, a year before the ACS founding, the Abolition Convention itself began to flirt with the idea. Delegates at the convention that year met to discuss a number of pressing issues such as black education, the domestic slave trade, and the kidnapping and selling of free blacks as slaves. After dealing with these matters, the delegates read "several letters addressed to the Pennsylvania Abolition Society . . . from individuals residing in the southern and south-western states, who are desirous to emancipate their slaves, but are prevented by the existing laws of their respective states." The committee which received the difficult task of finding a solution to this matter concluded that they could not "at present, propose any specific plan" to help these benevolent masters. "But feeling the importance of the subject, and being impressed with the weight of the responsibility which the advocates of the rights of persons of colour have assumed," they chose not "to be discouraged by the magnitude of the task," proposing that the convention draft a memorial to Congress.<sup>16</sup>

The memorial began by describing the problems of kidnapping and illegal slave trading before turning to the state laws which restricted and discouraged manumission. They insisted that many more slave owners would free their laborers but for "the difficulty of finding an asylum for the persons proposed to be emancipated." Thus, they asked that Congress, who had no jurisdiction over state law, "consider how far it may comport with the interests of humanity, and public policy, to set apart a portion of the . . . extended territory owned by the United States, for the colonization of legally emancipated blacks." If colonization was not an option, they asked that Congress do something else "to prevent the injury of the mixture of too large a proportion of such persons amongst the white people of our country." Concerned with both blacks and whites, they did not want to simply dump the former slaves. Instead, they insisted that any plan adopted provide a "suitable government" which would oversee "the civilization, improvement and happiness of [the slaves] and their posterity." Proper intervention "would redound no less to the honour than to the security and welfare of the community." The delegates then voted to open a dialogue with English colonizationists to further investigate the issue.<sup>17</sup>

By the time the Abolition Convention convened for their next meeting in 1817 the American Colonization Society had formed, and the issue had become much more complicated. Of the original 13 vice presidents of the society, Robert Ralston and Richard Rush were celebrated reformers from Pennsylvania. The PAS's Bishop William White would join this list by 1819. Though this group of wealthy and influential Philadelphians pledged their support immediately, colonization activity in the state remained lukewarm throughout the first decade. Still, the ACS had gained a foothold in PAS territory and was determined to convince more to join.

General Robert Goodloe Harper, an ACS vice president, shared a general belief that middle state support would prove essential to the group's success. Perhaps realizing that a small black population and large-scale white European immigration had been essential to the gradualist agenda all along, he maintained that "the evils of slavery are most sensibly felt, the desire of getting rid of the slaves is already strong, and a greater facility exists of supplying their place by white cultivators," in these states. He and other leaders enjoyed a brief hope of enlisting emancipationists from this part of the country in their endeavor by emphasizing their scheme's usefulness as a tool in the fight to suppress the slave trade and thus help manage the size of the nation's black population.

Of course, the nation's black population did not want to be managed. Black leaders James Forten and Russel Parrott had responded to the ACS by issuing *An Address to the humane and benevolent Inhabitants of the city and county of Philadelphia*, in which they resolved "we have no wish to separate from our present homes, for any purpose whatever." Both men had once supported the efforts of emigrationist Paul Cuffee in the British colony of Sierra Leone, but only because they thought the British government was willing to allow him a genuine leadership role. Cuffee's death and British mistreatment of black leader Olaudah Equiano ended their enthusiasm. Once they saw that black leaders were only allowed token roles in the British colonization effort they became leery of white-initiated colonization schemes in general, though Forten continued to toy with Haitian emigration. The key difference, however, was that Haiti was an independent republic under black leadership. The ACS's Liberia was a different matter. Whites founded the colony and whites, including slaveholders, were the ones pushing for blacks to settle there. Participation of slaveholders in the ACS left black leaders especially suspicious, and they warned the city's abolitionists not to be fooled by the scheme. The ACS plan was "not asked for by us; nor will it be required by

any circumstances, in our present or future condition; as long as we shall be permitted to share the protection of the excellent laws, and just government which we now enjoy, in common with every individual of the community.”<sup>18</sup>

According to the black leaders, colonization had no role in the abolition movement. Thanks to Philadelphia’s antislavery community, “the ultimate and final abolition of slavery in the United States, is, under the guidance and protection of a just God, progressing.” More blacks gained freedom each year through gradual emancipation and were able to seek “instruction and improvement” in the United States. “But if the emancipation of our kindred shall, when the plan of colonization shall go into effect, be attended with transportation to a distant land, and shall be granted on no other condition,” the freed would not be prepared. “The consolation for our past sufferings and those of our colour, who are in slavery . . . will cease for ever.”

This statement is perhaps too conciliatory, but it would have appealed to those PAS members who dedicated themselves to uplifting and educating free blacks, as well as opposing slavery. Perhaps Forten and Parrott really believed that those in bondage needed to be made ready for freedom and thus found gradual emancipation justified. Whatever they believed, they hoped that the idea of southern slaves emancipated on condition of emigrating, left unprepared to fend for themselves in a foreign land, much less to pursue higher levels of improvement such as education and religion, would pull at the heartstrings of Philadelphia reformers.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, Forten and Parrott insisted, if slaveholders were allowed to free only the slaves of their choice, they would destroy families and strengthen the system of slavery at the same time. Forced migration would bring back “all the heart-rending agonies which were endured by our forefathers when they were dragged into bondage from Africa.” Also, instead of sending the most talented, ablest settlers, slaveholders would surely send the most troublesome slaves, thus eliminating those who challenged their authority and retaining those who were most timid and least likely to resist bondage.

Forten and Parrott begged Philadelphia’s white philanthropists to join them in opposition to this dangerous scheme. “*We humbly*, respectfully, and fervently intreat and beseech your disapprobation of the plan of colonization now offered by ‘the American society for colonizing the free people of colour of the United States.’” The PAS may have had its limits, but most blacks appreciated the group’s work and counted on it to be there in times of need. Now more than ever, they needed the gradualists to help fend off this new group that presumed to speak for them.<sup>20</sup>

On 10 December 1818, the PAS and gradualists from other states responded by calling a special meeting of the American Convention of Abolition societies. After "much and serious deliberation," they concluded that the ACS plan "ought not to receive the support of the friends of universal emancipation," primarily because free blacks opposed the plan and would not participate "unless by force." They cited Forten and Parrott's *Address* and argued that the sentiments expressed likely "prevail very universally." They agreed with the Philadelphia protesters that the freed were better off in a place where "all the benefits bestowed upon our nation by science and the arts, are to a certain extent necessarily communicated to them." They pointed to problems in the British colony of Sierra Leone and argued that "on the whole Atlantic coast of Africa, south of the great Desart, no place can be found in a healthy climate, unembarrassed by European claims, in which there is a tract of land, fit for cultivation and lying in one body, sufficiently extensive to support a colony numerous enough to defend its own independence." Even if a site could be secured, the problems of transportation would be insurmountable. Also, there was the question of whether the colony would be a permanent dependency of the United States, an independent state, or a free nation. As to the fear of colonization being used to secure slavery in the United States, "our object being gradually to abolish this kind of property, we do not perceive the expediency of our supporting a measure, the tendency of which, is admitted by some of its most distinguished friends, to be hostile to the purpose which we are labouring to effect."

Finally, they agreed with Forten and Parrott that African colonization threatened abolition. "Should it receive the approbation of Congress or of the legislatures of the slave states, so as to induce an expectation in those parts of the Union that it will be executed, it is highly probable that the question of emancipation will become connected with it." If this should happen, "every attempt to procure a gradual abolition of slavery will be resisted, on the ground that measures for that purpose cannot conveniently be taken, until a colony shall be established, to which the liberated slaves may be transported." Since the colonization plan was "impracticable," no site would ever be ready so emancipation would be delayed indefinitely.

They did not permanently rule out all forms of colonization, but an investigative committee expressed their "unqualified wish" that no plan of removal "be permitted to go into effect" without first securing "an immutable pledge from the slave holding states of a just and wise system of gradual emancipation." In all cases, "the gradual and total emancipation of all

persons of colour, and their literary and moral education, should precede their colonization." Though the Abolition Convention did not take a clear stand for or against colonization in theory, Forten and Parrott had managed to convince the delegates not to trust the new group, especially since many of its leaders owned slaves.<sup>21</sup>

The gradualists tried one last time to put the matter to rest at their 1819 convention. After discussing the ACS scheme in more depth they determined that they simply could not trust it. "To those who are opposed to the continuance of slavery, colonization abroad is presented as a scheme strongly conducive to gradual emancipation; to the slave-holder it is affirmed that the removal of the free blacks will render their slaves 'more obedient, faithful, honest and useful'." Not sure which argument to believe, the committee remained unwilling to take the chance that the ACS agenda would have "even a remote tendency to rivet the unhallowed fetters of the slave," so they refused to embrace it.

Willing to at least consider the idea of black resettlement under proper conditions, however, they discussed a plan to provide free blacks land in the Louisiana Purchase territory. First and foremost, they insisted that all colonists must be willing participants in any resettlement plan and would be protected by "a territorial or provincial form of government, calculated for the protection of property and personal right." They would be given land "without cost, and without power of alienation to white persons," and "all involuntary servitude except on convictions for crimes" would be "for ever prohibited." "Agriculture and domestic manufactures" would be "made the principal objects of attention," and, at least in the beginning, the colony would enjoy the protection of the United States government. Aware of possible white objections, the committee which offered this alternative promised that any such colony would never become a haven for fugitive slaves, and that "careful and specific regulations [would] be adopted to prevent the introduction of improper persons." To make sure, they suggested that the site of any such colony would be "as much secluded as possible from water communication."

Unlike an African settlement, such a colony would benefit both the black settlers and the United States. While slaves lived in conditions that made them natural enemies to the nation, black freeholders in an independent, adjacent nation would be friendly and could perhaps help to civilize the Native Americans. With freedom and incentive to succeed on their own, a growing black population would no longer be a threat. "Such increase, under

a wise and judicious organization, among themselves, and with good conduct on our part, will only increase the number of our friends and auxiliaries." Still close enough to benefit from white Christian moral guidance, they could even impart the benefits of the gospel upon the Indians and "in time form a strong and useful barrier to the progress and effect of their hostile inclinations."

The committee, which included second generation PAS members William Rawle and Richard Peters Jr., as well as future colonizationist George Boyd, ultimately deemed it "inexpedient, till future information shall be obtained," to "adopt any measures in relation" to resettlement. Instead, they chose to continue their focus on educating free blacks and protecting them from unscrupulous whites while trying to urge slaveholders to educate their slaves and treat them kindly to avoid "driving this hapless race to desperation." "Our first duty is to provide that their peace and happiness, their moral system, their political rights, and their adhesion to our religion, should be enforced and secured." By the next convention the abolitionists had ruled tentatively against colonization, either in Africa or western North America.<sup>22</sup>

The Abolition Convention may have been prepared to set the issue to rest at that point, but the ACS was not. A renewed drive for federal aid in 1824 led them to seek the support of all state governments. To enlist such support, the group employed agents to visit the states and sell the scheme. Those who went to Pennsylvania tried to appeal to residents by focusing on the growth in the state's black population, on the one hand, and the antislavery aspects of the plan, on the other.

Leaders had been discussing the detrimental affects of the growing black population from the beginning. Charles Fenton Mercer, one of the society's vice presidents, pointed out that the nation's free black population had grown from 15,000 to 30,000 in just ten years. He claimed that this growth "impaired the value of all the private property in a large section of our country." Two years later the third report of the society expanded upon this theme, taking care to reveal that this "large section" included the middle states. According to the author, laws requiring emancipated slaves to leave their home states had turned Pennsylvania and Ohio into the "nearest asylums" for large numbers of blacks. In one recent case, these border states had acquired 500 of Virginia's outcasts.<sup>23</sup>

This theme permeated colonizationist writings just as the PAS and the blacks they sought to help were coming under fire from most of their white neighbors. Both echoing and playing upon popular sentiments, the *African Repository* warned that these immigrants were not serving as assets to the

community: "it is impossible, in the nature of things, that a population, just emerged from slavery, distinguished by the peculiarity of its colour, and cut off by unavoidable necessity, from the most powerful incentives to individual exertion, and to moral elevation, should constitute a valuable portion of any community, on which it may be cast. It can add neither to its wealth, its character, nor its strength," regardless of gradualist efforts. One agent brought this argument home in an 1829 address to the twelfth annual meeting of the ACS by arguing that although Philadelphia remained "the pride and ornament" of the country, he had witnessed "squalid and hopeless misery—such as he had never witnessed in any part of the globe" among the blacks of that city.<sup>24</sup>

Others took the argument further by calling attention to crime statistics. A contemporary study of Philadelphia argued that one in 65 of the city's free blacks had been convicted of some form of criminal activity, a statistic which led the author, and certainly many of his readers, "to a very unfavourable estimate of the moral character of the coloured inhabitants of Pennsylvania." The *African Repository* added that "when the white population of Pennsylvania amounted to 800,000 and the people of colour to 30,000, one half of the convicts in the state Penitentiary were of the latter class." They followed up on this argument by claiming that only one thirty-fourth of the general population but one third of the prison population in the state was black. Although the vast majority of prisoners had been convicted for larceny, most likely due to the discriminatory nature of society and the resulting desperation among citizens who faced the dual challenge of being both poor and black, this line of argument took hold.<sup>25</sup> Some colonizationists agreed with the gradualists that the biases inherent in American society encouraged this situation, but they refused to try to change white attitudes.

Colonizationists argued that their scheme would allow for the removal of a lazy and criminal population, but they also emphasized that it would save the entire white race by preventing racial mixing and black retribution. Although the law preventing intermarriage in Pennsylvania had been repealed in 1780, complaints of the "commonness" of interracial unions, and the claim that black men were seducing white women, led to an unsuccessful petition asking for new laws in the 1820s against intermarriage. Legal or not, the issue led to rioting in Pennsylvania. Likewise, Pennsylvania whites, like those throughout the country, had also been grappling with the specter of retribution at the hands of blacks for over a century. In 1737 a Philadelphia judge called for a "strict hand to be kept over" the enslaved



because of "insolent Behavior . . . in and about the city, which has of late been so much taken notice of." Forty years later a resident of Bucks County requested the local committee of safety to dispatch ammunition "in order to quiet . . . people . . . who have been somewhat alarmed with fears about Negroes and disaffected people injuring their families"; and a series of arson attempts by enraged blacks in York in 1803 led the governor to call out the militia. An influx of slaves from Santo Domingo during the Haitian Revolution increased the alarm, as their owners spread tales of black brutality and wanton destruction. Even after slavery ended in Pennsylvania, residents thought they remained in imminent danger of revolts because of the proximity of slave states. Gabriel Prosser's uprising in Virginia in 1800 caused alarm in many adjacent areas.<sup>26</sup>

But slaves were not the only danger to white safety. In 1822 a prosperous carpenter in Charleston who had bought his freedom with a winning lottery ticket 22 years earlier was arrested for plotting against his white neighbors. Sixty years old at the time, Denmark Vesey was liked and even trusted by many whites who saw his strong connections to the African Methodist Episcopal Church as reassuring. The discovery of slave conspiracies always strengthened the hand of colonizationists, but this incident had to be especially alarming to a state with many respected free black citizens with similar affiliations. Abolitionists had argued for over a century that slaves were dangerous because they would some day grow angry enough to revolt, but the Vesey plot turned the focus on free blacks, even those who had seemed harmless. This development soured more people to the gradualist agenda. Even a professed Christian newspaper concluded that "the public safety forbids either the emancipation or the general instruction of the slaves" since a need for vengeance could continue to smolder after emancipation, causing men like Vesey to "stand forth in the might and dignity of manhood." Thus, "the danger is not so much that we have a million and a half of slaves, as that we have within our borders nearly two millions of men who are necessarily any thing rather than loyal citizens—nearly two millions of ignorant and miserable beings who are banded together by the very same circumstances by which they are so widely separated in character and in intent from all the citizens of our great republic."<sup>27</sup>

Colonizationists used this terror of revenge to their advantage. Once again drawing on the *Christian Spectator*, the ACS warned that slaves were learning of their own power and that "a general insurrection in the southern states, might indeed" cause destruction and desolation. Though confident that

whites could rally together in such an instance and ultimately save the county, the author added that it would be better to come together in an effort to send blacks to Africa before such drastic measures could occur. At least two authors used a metaphor of a volcano to explain the impending danger. Philadelphia's Enoch Lewis, the abolitionist editor of the *African Observer*, agreed with the colonizationists on this point and warned that, even when slaves appear content, their "dormant passions are not extinct. The tranquility which prevails may be suddenly disturbed—for the slumbering volcano retains its fires, and those who occupy its smoking verge," slaveholders or not, "may themselves become the victims of the devouring element."<sup>28</sup>

Even as they warned of the dangers of the growing black population, ACS agents also stressed the humanitarian aspects of their plan to entice the abolitionists who had not responded to their focus on disenchantment and fear. Although the first annual report had cited the ultimate goal of gradual abolition, and the society had initiated a campaign against the slave trade the next year, colonizationists had remained reluctant to stress these points too loudly for fear of losing southern support. When known northern humanitarian Ralph Gurley became the society's secretary in 1825, however, he focused on the colonization movements' role in suppressing the trade and returning the victims of illicit merchants to Africa, as well as its potential as a vehicle for missionary work in Africa. He sent agent Francis Scott Key to Pennsylvania to spread this message, and Key gained the support of Pennsylvania philanthropist, PAS member and Abolition Convention delegate Roberts Vaux. This Quaker had initially spoken out against the ACS, but when Key, who had a reputation for defending free blacks, insisted that colonization promoted manumission, Vaux listened. At the same time, other Philadelphia Friends protested the scheme at first because they resented the intrusion on their efforts to uplift free blacks, but again Key's appeals paid off and he managed to entice other Quaker humanitarians such as diplomat William Short, merchant John Elliott, congressman Joseph Hemphill, and reformer Sarah M. Grimke to the cause. Gurley found the new Quaker support quite encouraging and hoped it would provide an inroad into Philadelphia's humanitarian inner circle. In accord with PAS traditions of working through the legal system, many of these new followers immediately suggested sending petitions and memorials to Congress to gain support for the society.<sup>29</sup>

Although more than 20 state and local societies formed throughout the country the same year as the Pennsylvania State Society, the *African Repository* especially celebrated ACS success in this state, immediately conferring upon

the auxiliary "a distinguished place." "The place of its location, . . . the character of its members, and the zeal and success with which it has commenced operation" made this particular society a crown jewel and lent the endeavor a humanitarian angle. A member of the Crawford County, Pennsylvania auxiliary agreed: "As *Pennsylvanian's*, we cannot but approve the grand design, as it is perfectly in accordance with the policy of the state, and the feelings of the citizens."<sup>30</sup>

Indeed, the Pennsylvania Colonization Society's first annual report revealed an enthusiasm which gave the parent society cause to celebrate. Clearly influenced by their state's antislavery legacy, and sounding much like their PAS associates, PCS members began by voicing hope that the African colony would serve as a useful tool in combating the slave trade. Lamenting the failure of efforts to keep the black population small from the beginning, however, the report revealed an ambivalence like that harbored by most gradualists. Although measures had been taken against further importation of slaves, "their increase was every year becoming more alarming, and a dreadful convulsion in the South seemed likely to be the catastrophe." Like gradualists, colonizationists hoped to secure "the removal of immediate danger to the peace of the country and ultimately the total extirpation of slavery throughout the nation, without any invasion of the constitutional rights of the slave-holders." They thought colonization would lead to abolition since "in proportion as the number of white inhabitants increases relatively to the slave population, the inducements to emancipation are multiplied and manumissions are rendered safer and easier." Important too, they saw "the great exertions" being made in the South "to promote emancipation" as evidence for their optimism.<sup>31</sup>

African colonization had won out over western colonization because of its promise to stop the slave trade and introduce Christianity and civilization to the "dark continent." For many, the matter was finally settled. African colonization had become "the only certain means that can be employed for the extinction of the slave trade, as tending to meliorate the condition and elevate the character of a race long oppressed and degraded" while "introducing civilization, peace and true religion into an extensive and populous region."<sup>32</sup>

Quakers especially found this appealing. The Philadelphia Yearly Meeting appropriated money to resettle more than 300 slaves in Liberia, and Gerard Ralston, an officer in the revived PCS, assumed the task of overseeing the society's growth, reporting this "favorable change in . . . sentiments" to Gurley. The ACS had gained favor with North Carolina Friends by offering

an asylum for slaves left under their care, and Ralston congratulated the parent society for this prudent move, "as this gives you a hold on the whole sect." He pointed out that Quakers were "extremely clannish" and "if you can influence their leaders you will be able to move the whole mass and when they move in a body their power is immensely great in the middle states." The Lutheran Synod also offered support by voicing approval of the colonization society and "most earnestly" recommending all churches under its care to offer support and patronage.<sup>33</sup>

PCS secretary William B. Davidson offered an optimistic assessment of the situation, prematurely claiming success among secular humanitarians as well as church leaders. He wrote to Gurley that he "heard it hinted" that the gradualists planned to discuss "the expediency of their furnishing pecuniary aid to persons willing to emancipate" at an upcoming meeting. He quickly added, though, that any PAS money would be used "not to pay the value of the slaves but to defray the expense of their transportation to free countries out of the bounds of the US." As it turned out, no PAS funds would be used for any purpose related to African colonization. At this meeting, which was held on September 27, 1827, the emancipationists adopted a resolution offered by President Thomas Shipley and seconded by Secretary Joseph Parker, that colonization was "wholly unconnected" with the objects of the abolitionist society and that the PAS "will take no part in the measures of the Colonization Society." They did offer their wishes for "full success to every truly benevolent and disinterested scheme for the improvement of the condition of the African Race" and voiced support for Quaker and Free Produce supporter Enoch Lewis's *African Observer*. This paper, like its PAS and Quaker supporters, devoted most of its attention to fighting kidnappers of free blacks, supporting black education, celebrating the accomplishments of outstanding African Americans, and calling for amelioration of the conditions of all blacks, both slave and free.<sup>34</sup>

Despite this official rejection by the PAS, donation records provide evidence that someone was listening to the colonizationists and liking what they heard. In 1827, the new PCS immediately gave \$600 at their inaugural meeting to help relocate conditionally-freed emigrants. Key told his listeners that so many southerners offered their slaves for removal to Liberia that the society was unable to keep up with the transportation demand. In October 1829 he pursued this line of argument to deliver what he hoped would be the coup de gras in the ACS drive for support in the state known for its philanthropic legacy. Speaking at a public meeting at the Hall of the Franklin

Institute, he pled for Pennsylvania's support for the ACS, explaining that the group was out of money and, tragically, 600 slaves waited eagerly for the group to provide transportation funds so their master would release them. Stressing the antislavery potential of colonization, he told listeners that most southern states "discourage the manumission of slaves, unless they are removed from the state," leaving "benevolent persons who may wish to liberate their slaves" the task of finding them new homes. Since owners "who . . . offer to liberate their slaves, deprive themselves, by so doing, of a large portion of their property," they "deserve every assistance in executing their benevolent intentions." He also added that colonization benefited whites and blacks in all sections of the country since the cruelties of sudden and unqualified emancipation would throw the former slave "upon his own resources" and make him a burden to society. If masters were unwilling to adopt abolitionists plans at amelioration, surely a colony closely supervised by fellow humanitarians would offer a viable alternative.<sup>35</sup>

Key's speech invigorated those present. The picture of 600 souls waiting to be rescued from bondage brought the project alive for many Pennsylvania philanthropists, who vowed to work for "the liberation of the slaves referred to." Gerard Ralston wrote to Gurley a week later, sending him over \$400, collected mostly from Episcopal and Presbyterian donors. He celebrated Key's visit and the "favorable impression" it made and called for further action immediately to avoid letting the excitement "pass over without taking advantage of it." Other participants at the meeting shared his enthusiasm and immediately set to work raising money to free the waiting slaves. They resolved their support and vowed to work with the PCS managers to form a committee and raise funds "on condition that they be applied exclusively to the outfit and transportation of slaves, who, being willing to join the colony, can be liberated only with a view to their emigration."

Wasting no time, the committee published a circular appealing especially to gradualists to help them send the conditionally-liberated captives to Liberia. Not only would they be helping the slaves, they would also be helping to "ultimately put an end to the odious foreign traffic in human flesh." Furthermore, their support would "contribute more effectually to promote, and ensure the abolition of the institution of slavery in the United States, than any plan that has hitherto been devised." Anyone interested in participating in this grand scheme was asked to leave money, agricultural and mechanical implements, clothing, books and supplies for the school, and other provisions with Dr. James, Gerard Ralston, Elliott Cresson, Rev.

G. Boyd or Rev. C.M. Duprey. By March 1830, the committee had raised \$2,290 and obtained subscriptions of \$1000 and \$300 to be paid in 10 yearly installments, and by the end of the year they had raised \$3999.50.<sup>36</sup>

In light of the committee's success, the ACS asked the PCS to use the money and oversee an expedition to take the slaves to Africa. By the end of December the auxiliary decided to give it a try, but only after reiterating that any voyage they funded would be to send slaves liberated under the condition of transportation. Though the PCS prepared to fund passage for 100 emigrants, the parent society only managed to deliver 58, 49 of whom were liberated slaves, to Norfolk. Unfortunately, 30 liberated slaves walked 600 miles from Georgia, only to arrive at the port just after the *Liberia* had sailed. The PCS learned of their fate and fitted another voyage that April to send these and 40 other emigrants on the *Montgomery*. All told, the PCS spent \$3214.22 to send 128 colonists.<sup>37</sup>

The PCS issued an exuberant third annual report in 1830. Calling colonization "the best mode of promoting the cause of abolition, a cause deservedly cherished by the philanthropists of Pennsylvania," they projected that "by this means hundreds may be emancipated, and placed in a situation to enjoy all the blessings of liberty, at a comparatively small expense." If they could only send one voyage a year, "the colony would soon be in a condition to render foreign support unnecessary." After all, *Liberia* captain W.E. Sherman, as well as many US naval captains, had sent back glowing reports of the colony.<sup>38</sup>

By 1830, ACS and PCS optimism that their campaign to reach out to Pennsylvania abolitionists seemed well-founded. At least 31 PAS members had either joined one of the two organizations or contributed money to the fund drive to send emigrants to the colony. Of the 100 donors listed by name in the West Chester Colonization Society's ledger, 15 were clearly, and 8 were likely, affiliated with the abolition society. Abolitionists who joined the colonizationists included the Rev. George Boyd, who helped recruit for the PCS in 1823 and 1824; John B. Davis and the Rev. John H. Hopkins, who officially joined the PCS in 1826; William H. Dillingham, who was appointed a delegate to represent the Chester County auxiliary at the ACS convention in 1828; and the Rev. William White, who pledged support during the 1829 fund drive. Richard Rush, a well-known PAS member, was one of the 13 original vice presidents of the ACS, and John Todd became a vice president of the PCS in 1827. The Rev. James Wilson of Philadelphia's First Presbyterian Church joined the movement as well, and Philip Garret

became a PCS manager in 1827. Of the four men from Pennsylvania who joined the Gerrit Smith plan, pledging 10 annual payments of \$100, two—Mathew Carey and Elliott Cresson—were members of the PAS.<sup>39</sup>

Many of these newfound supporters brought their humanitarian agenda with them to the colonization movement. Organizationally as well as ideologically, these humanitarian colonizationists filled a unique space in the American reform movement. Like the PAS and other early abolitionist groups, they focused on the evil of slavery but the need for a gradual solution. They also shared an elitist attitude toward free blacks and working class whites, but this subset of colonizationists, like later immediatists, appealed to the broader public for support. They reached out to pastors of all rankings to take up collections for the society and held public meetings to foster a wide following. They also employed the press in a number of ways to introduce their movement to as many people as possible and urged the formation of youth auxiliaries. Finally, they reached out to blacks and women.<sup>40</sup>

While Pennsylvanians supported the cause for a wide range of motives, the most active PCS members had originally served the gradualist cause. Their concern for the settlers, their efforts to establish schools in the United States and Africa, and their emphasis upon sending slaves rather than free blacks to the colony reveal their humanitarian agenda. Sadly, however, they lost the optimism that sustained those who ended up choosing to stay just with the PAS. Thus they failed horribly as philanthropists by continuing to insist that free blacks could never gain acceptance in the U.S. They shared the abolitionists' ultimate goal and even pioneered many of the tactics immediate abolitionists would later use, yet they adhered to the PAS's gradual agenda, respect for property rights and reluctance to attack slaveowners. To make matters worse, they labored under a patriarchal worldview even stronger than that of most gradualists. They did, however, struggle to make the ACS live up to their own emancipationist goals and eventually led a coup which left the society dominated by reform-minded New Yorkers and Pennsylvanians.<sup>41</sup> The new leadership embraced the black uplift agenda and sent Thomas Buchanan, a Pennsylvanian known for his opposition to slavery and the slave trade, to govern Liberia.<sup>42</sup>

Even as tension mounted between colonizationists and immediatists in the 1830s the relationship between the PAS and the PCS remained ambiguous. PAS president David Paul Brown, while eulogizing British abolitionist and colonizationist William Wilberforce, summed the matter up in 1834. The scheme, at least in the minds of most of its Pennsylvania supporters, had



“originated in the desire to improve the condition of this afflicted race.” Despite immediatist claims to the contrary, the ACS neither supported slavery nor impeded abolition. It was simply impractical as a means of freeing American blacks. At the same time, however, it was “beautiful and beneficial, so far as it related to the introduction of civilization, commerce and Christianity into Liberia, and so far as it conduces to check the slave trade.” As far as improving conditions for American blacks at home, however, such work was best left to the PAS, the group which had long been dedicated to black uplift and acceptance.<sup>43</sup>

## NOTES

1. For the PAS report, see Edward Needles, *An Historical Memoir of the Pennsylvania Society, for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery; The Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage, and for Improving the Condition of the African Race* (Philadelphia: Merrihew and Thompson, 1848, reprint edited by James McPherson and William Loren Katz, Arno Press, New York, 1969), 63–65. For the “apathy” the group faced and their difficulty in reaching quorum, see Arthur Zilversmit, *The First Emancipation: The Abolition of Slavery in the North* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967).
2. Winthrop Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550–1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 357; Zilversmit, *First Emancipation*, 85–86, 90; Gary Nash and Jean Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees: Emancipation in Pennsylvania and Its Aftermath* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 52; Thomas E. Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America* (Gloucester, Massachusetts: Peter Smith, 1965), 91. Roberts Vaux, *Memoirs of the Life of Anthony Benezet* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1817), 92; Anthony Benezet, *A Short Account of that Part of Africa, Inhabited by the Negroes* (Philadelphia: W. Dunlap, 1762), 29, 39, 41, 43–50, 52–58, 64–68, 78–80; Benezet, *Some Historical Account of Guinea, Its Situation, Produce, and the General Disposition of Its Inhabitants, With an Inquiry Into the Rise and Progress of the Slave Trade, It's Nature, and Lamentable Effects* (London: J. Phillips, 1771), 110–14; Benezet, “Caution and Warning to Great Britain and Her Colonies, on the Calamitous State of the Enslaved Negroes in the British Dominions.” Reprinted in *Views of American Slavery, Taken a Century Ago: Anthony Benezet, John Wesley* (Philadelphia: Association of Friends for the Diffusion of Religious and Useful Knowledge, 1858), 48; Vaux, explains that the idea that God’s law superceded man’s was a long-acknowledge part of English Common Law, *Memoirs*, 49–50.
3. Benezet, *Short Account*, 42, 70–71 and *Guinea*, 117–18; Zilversmit, *First Emancipation*, 86; Vaux, *Memoirs of Anthony Benezet*, 31; Drake, *Quakers and Slavery*, 86; Benezet, *Guinea*, 116–17; Zilversmit, *First Emancipation*, 87.
4. Nash and Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees*, 45, 153, xiv, 156, 12, 43, 54, 13; Jean Soderlund, *Quakers and Slavery: A Divided Spirit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 20–23; Drake, *Quakers and Slavery*, 4, 13; Lois Horton, “From Class to Race in Early America: Northern Post-Emancipation Racial Reconstruction,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 19 (Winter 1999), 629–48; Leon A. Higginbotham Jr., *In the Matter of Color: Race and the American Legal Process: The Colonial Period* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 270–72, 285; Edward R. Turner, *The Negro in*

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- Pennsylvania—Servitude—Freedom, 1639–1861* (Washington: American Historical Association, 1911), 113–14. See also Turner, "The Abolition of Slavery in Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 36 (1912), 129–42; *Pennsylvania Archives*, 8<sup>th</sup> Series VI. 5191, 5196, 5197, 5204, 5205–06, 521–14, 5215, 5217. Zilversmit also describes the provisions of the act but adds that the marriage ban and vagrancy laws were later removed, *First Emancipation*, 127–28. For information on the economic side of gradual abolition, see Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, "Philanthropy at Bargain Prices: Notes on the Economics of Gradual Emancipation," *Journal of Legal Studies* 3 (1974), 377–401. Fogel and Engerman argue that the greatest fear expressed during debates over emancipation in the Northeast centered around the concern that non-slaveholders would be hurt financially by emancipation.
5. Zilversmit, *First Emancipation*, 82–83, 158, 174; Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 94; Nash and Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees*, 115; John Newton Boucher, ed., *A Century and a Half of Pittsburg and Her People, Volume I* (The Lewis Publishing Company, 1908), 533; Needles, *Historical Memoir*, 31, 41–42, 47. For more on the connection between Quakers and the PAS see David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), 216–17 and Winthrop Jordan, *White Over Black*, 359; Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 181. For efforts to protect blacks from kidnapping, see Daniel E. Meaders, ed. *Kidnappers in Philadelphia: Isaac Hopper's Tales of Oppression, 1780–1843* (New York: Garland publishing, Inc., 1994); Rush, "To the Citizens of Philadelphia" 28 March 1787 in Lyman Butterfield, ed., *Letters of Benjamin Rush* 1:412–15. See also, Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 120. For the prevalence of environmentalist ideology, see Jordan, *White Over Black*, 365; Benezet to "E.G." reprinted in Vaux, *Memoirs*, 111; Benezet to "S.N." reprinted in Vaux, *Memoirs*, 114.
  6. Meaders, *Kidnappers in Philadelphia*, 23–24.
  7. ACS, *First Annual Report*, 11. For statistics on Philadelphia's black population, see Gary Nash, *Forging Freedom*, 136–37, 143 and Leonard Curry, *The Free Black in Urban America, 1800–1850: The Shadow of the Dream* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 6, 86; Douglas Egerton, "'Its Origin is Not a Little Curious': A New Look at the American Colonization Society," *Civil War History* 43(June 1997), 142–57; Turner, *The Negro in Pennsylvania*, 167. For attempts to legally prohibit black immigration, see Curry, *The Free Black in Urban America*, 86; Nash, *Forging Freedom* 137, 173, 180–81; Nash and Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees*, 32. For population statistics, see James Mease, *The Picture of Philadelphia*, (Philadelphia: B&T Kite, 1811), 35–37, 53.
  8. Curry, *Free Black Urban America*, 1–2, 26–30; Stuart M. Blumin, "Residential Mobility Within the Nineteenth-Century City," in Allen F. Davis and Mark H. Haller, eds., *The Peoples of Philadelphia: A History of Ethnic Groups and Lower-Class Life, 1790–1940* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1973), 49; See also Davis's introduction to this volume, 7.
  9. Nash, *Forging Freedom*, 155–56, 157–58; Curry, *The Free Black in Urban America*, 114–17; Turner, *The Negro in Pennsylvania*, 158. John Alexander points out that 68.3 percent of the criminals convicted were either born in Ireland or were black, and *Gale's Independent Gazetteer* made a similar point in 1797. John K. Alexander, "Poverty, Fear and Continuity: An Analysis of the Poor in Late Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia," in Davis and Haller, *The Peoples of Philadelphia*, 13–35.
  10. Jordan, *White over Black*, 361; Pennsylvania Abolition Society, "An Address from the Pennsylvania Abolition Society to the Free Black People of the City of Philadelphia and its Vicinity," (Philadelphia: John Ormrod, 1800), 3–8; Turner, *The Negro in Pennsylvania*, 251, 149–50.

11. Nash, *Forging Freedom*, 173, 180–81; Larry E. Tise, *Proslavery: A History of the Defense of Slavery in America, 1701–1840* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987); Joanne Pope Melish, *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and "Race" in New England, 1780–1860* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998) 163; Emma Lapsansky, "'Since They Got Those Separate Churches': Afro-Americans and Racism in Jacksonian Philadelphia," in Joe William Trotter Jr. And Eric Ledell Smith, eds. *African Americans in Pennsylvania: Shifting Historical Perspectives* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 93–120.
12. For the role of the PAS in fighting kidnappers, see Nash and Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees*, 196–99. Needles, *Historical Memoir*, 47–49, 59, 62–64, 54–56; Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 114; Jordan, *Black Over White*, 373; Christopher Densmore, "Seeking Freedom in the Courts: The Work of the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery and for the Relief of Negroes Unlawfully held in Bondage and for Improving the Conditions of the African Race," *Pennsylvania Legacies* 5(2) November 2005, 16–20.
13. Turner, *The Negro in Pennsylvania*, 123; Needles, *Historical Memoir*, 54–56.
14. *Minutes of the 12<sup>th</sup> American Abolitionist Convention*, 15–16.
15. John Parrish, *Remarks on the Slavery of the Black People: Addressed to the Citizens of the United States, particularly to those who are in legislative or executive stations in the general or state governments; and also to such individuals as hold them in bondage* (Philadelphia, 1806); see also, P.J. Staudenraus, *The African Colonization Movement, 1816–1865* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 4. Jesse Torrey Jr., *A Portraiture of Domestic Slavery, in the United States: With reflections on the practicability of restoring the moral rights of the slave, without impairing the legal privileges of the possessor; and a project of a colonial asylum for free persons of colour; including memoirs of facts on the interior traffic in slaves, and on kidnapping* (Philadelphia, 1817); Beverly Tomek, "'From motives of generosity, as well as self-preservation': Thomas Branagan, Colonization, and the Gradual Emancipation Movement," *American Nineteenth Century History* 6(June 2005), 121–48.
16. *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Fourteenth American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and Improving the Condition of the African Race* (Philadelphia: W. Brown, 1816), 32, 28–29.
17. *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Fourteenth American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery*, 32–33. For the group's attempts to seek English advice, see Joshua Civin, "The Revival of Antislavery in the 1820s at the Local, National, and Global Levels," a paper presented on October 25–28, 2002, at Yale University, Third Annual Gilder Lehrman Center International Conference, "Sisterhood and Slavery: Transatlantic Antislavery and Women's Rights." Civin cites letters from the Huntington Library's Clarkson Papers, including [Evan Lewis] to T. Clarkson, June 12, 1816; Clarkson to Lewis, 18 March 1817; Clarkson to F.S. Key, 18 March 1817; Key to Clarkson, 8 November 1817; E.B. Caldwell to Clarkson, 10 November 1817 as well as the African Institution's *Twelfth Report* (London: 1818).
18. Staudenraus, *The African Colonization Movement*, 15–30; ACS, Second Annual Report, 3. For an account of the meeting, see Benjamin Quarles, *Black Abolitionists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969) reprint, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1991), 3–5; Forten and Parrott, *To the humane and benevolent Inhabitants of the city and country of Philadelphia*, reprinted in *Minutes of the Proceedings of a Special Meeting of the 15<sup>th</sup> American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery* (Philadelphia: Hall & Atkinson, 1818); Winch, *Gentleman of Color*, 192–97. For more on the connection between black

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- leaders, Sierra Leone, Haiti and the ACS, see Beverly Tomek, “Seeking a Manageable Population: Limitation, Colonization and Black Resistance in Pennsylvania’s Antislavery Movement,” PhD Dissertation, University of Houston, 2006.
19. Forten and Parrot, *To the Humane and Benevolent*.
20. Ibid.
21. *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Fifteenth American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and Improving the Condition of the African Race* (Philadelphia: Merritt, 1817), 30–31.
22. “Report of the Committee, in Relation to the Subjects of the Second Resolution of the Committee of Arrangement,” *Minutes of the Sixteenth American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and Improving the Condition of the African Race* (Philadelphia: William Fry, 1819), 50–56, 58. *Minutes of the Seventeenth Session of the American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and Improving the Condition of the African Race* (Philadelphia: Atkinson & Alexander, 1821), 42–43.
23. ACS, *First Annual Report*, 8.
24. *The African Repository* 4 (March 1829), 363; ACS, *Third Annual Report*, 100; *The African Repository*, 4(November), 1828, 258–59; Reprinted in ACS, *Seventh Annual Report*, 98; *The African Repository* 1(April 1825), 34.
25. *The African Repository* 1(February 1826), 384; “The Degraded Character of the Coloured Population,” *The African Repository* 2(7) July 1826, 153; *Philadelphia in 1824; or, a Brief Account of the Various Institutions and Public Objects in this Metropolis: Being a Complete Guide for Strangers, and an Useful Compendium for the Inhabitants. To which is prefixed, An Historical and Statistical Account of the City. With a Plan of the City, View of the Water-Works, and Other Engravings* (Philadelphia: H.C. Carey & I. Lea, 1824), 144. For a breakdown on the prison population and their crimes, see p. 143. For further analysis of the black prison population and the white tendency to exaggerate the numbers, see Curry, *Free Black in Urban America*, 113; ACS, *Tenth Annual Report*, 22.
26. ACS, *First Annual Report*, 140; “African Colonization. An Enquiry into the Origin, Plan and Prospects of the American Colonization Society; Being an extract from an article in the December number of the *American Quarterly Review*, for 1828” (Frederickburg: Arena Office, 1829), 14–16, 22; Higginbotham, *In the Matter of Color*, 273–74, 285; Turner, *The Negro in Pennsylvania*, 194–96; Gary Nash, *Red, White & Black: The Peoples of Early North America* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1992), 287; Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts* (New York: International Publishers, 1943), 172–73, 184, 22, 239–40; Nash, *Forging Freedom*, 140. For information about Prosser’s rebellion, see Douglas R. Egerton, *Gabriel’s Rebellion: The Virginia Slave Conspiracies of 1800 and 1802* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993); ACS, *Seventh Annual Report*, 91–93, 42.
27. David Robertson, *Denmark Vesey: The Buried History of America’s Largest Slave Rebellion and the Man Who Led It* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), 6–9; Silas McKeen, “A Sermon Delivered at Montpelier, October 15, 1828, Before the Vermont Colonization Society,” (Montpelier, 1828), 19–22.; *Christian Spectator* article reprinted in the ACS, *Seventh Annual Report*, 92–94.
28. McKeen, “Sermon,” 19, 22; “Prospectus,” *African Observer*, April 1827, 2; ACS, *Ninth Annual Report*, 6–8.
29. Staudenraus, *African Colonization*, 170, 85–86, 117–19; ACS, *Seventh Annual Report*, 30–31, 10; ACS, *Eight Annual Report*, 14, 47–50; ACS, *Third Annual Report*, 2; ACS, *Third Annual Report*, 7;

- Boucher, *A Century and a Half*, Vol. 1, 535; Egerton, "Averting," 144; Staudenraus, *African Colonization Movement*, 150, 125–26, 33, 26; Gurley to John Kennedy 12 October 1826; William B. Davidson to Gurley, 2 December 1826; Gurley to Kennedy 25 October 1826; Gurley to Kennedy 30 October 1826; Benjamin O. Peers to Gurley 20 September 1826, all in ACS Papers.
30. *The African Repository* 4(March 1829), 363; ACS, *Tenth Annual Report*, 46, 83, 90–100; William B. Davidson to Ralph Gurley, 2 December 1826; George Cookman to Gurley, 22 December 1826; Connelsville Chapter to Parent Society 18 December 1826, all in ACS Papers.
  31. PCS, *The First Report of the Board of Managers, of the Pennsylvania Colonization Society* (Philadelphia: T. Town, 1827), 3, 4–5, 7.
  32. *Ibid*, 5, 7–8.
  33. *Ibid*, 8; Ralston to Gurley, 23 February 1827; Resolution of the Lutheran Synod, 30 September 1827, both in ACS Papers; Staudenraus, *African Colonization Movement*, 125.
  34. Davidson to Gurley, 28 September 1827, in ACS Papers; "Minutes for a Regular Meeting of 9–27–1827," PAS Papers Reel 2; Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 118–32; "Prospectus," *African Observer*, April 1827, 4; *African Observer*, May 1827, 37–39; *African Observer*, July 1827, 139–40; *African Observer*, September 1827, 173–75; *African Observer*, June 1827, 121–24. The newspaper only lasted a year, and all page numbers are from the bound volume, *The African Observer. A Monthly Journal, Containing Essays and Documents Illustrative of the General Character, and Moral and Political Effects, of Negro Slavery* (Westport, CN: Negro Universities Press, 1970); Needles, *An Historical Memoir*, 85–86, 72–76; Turner, *The Negro in Pennsylvania*, 227–33.
  35. ACS, *Third Annual Report*; *The African Repository* 4(December 1828), 317; *The African Repository* 5(September 1829), 218–19; Staudenraus, *The African Colonization Movement*, 116; PCS, *First Annual Report*, 7; *African Repository* 4(10) December 1828, 299; PCS, *{Third} Report of the Board of Managers of the Pennsylvania Colonization Society* (Philadelphia: Thomas Kite, 1830), 4.
  36. *African Repository* 5(January 1830), 342; Ralston to Gurley, 31 October 1829, in ACS Papers; PCS, *{Third} Report of the Board of Managers*, 4–5, 6, 7; Staudenraus, *African Colonization*, 135.
  37. Bayard to Gurley, 7 December 1829, in ACS Papers; PCS, *{Third} Report of the Board of Managers*, 8–9; *African Repository* 5(February 1830), 373–77.
  38. PCS, *{Third} Report of the Board of Managers*, 9, 13; Sherman to PCS, 4 June 1830, see also appendix A–D of the 1830 annual report.
  39. Most of these joined during the 1829 drive. One example was Sarah Grimke, who gave \$10. I have arrived at these statistics by comparing the financial records and membership lists in the PCS reports with a master list of all PAS members, published in the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, *Centennial Anniversary of the Pennsylvania Society, for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage: And for Improving the Condition of the African Race* (Philadelphia: Grant, Faires & Rodgers, 1875), 51–66. In some cases this was difficult, as a person would be listed by first and last name in one place but by first and middle initial and last name in another. If the name varied but other factors such as occupation seemed to indicate that one person was the same on both rosters, though listed with slight variation, I classified the person as "likely," but not "clearly," the same person; *African Repository* 5(February 1830), 382–83.
  40. For immediatist use of the media, see Richard S. Newman, *The Transformation of American Abolitionism: Fighting Slavery in the Early Republic* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 12;

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Peers to Gurley 4 October 1826, in ACS Papers; Davis, "Northern Colonizationists," 672–73. For donation list, see ACS 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Report, 55; Cresson to Gurley, 3 August 1829, Cresson to Gurley, 12 April 1830, and Josiah Polk to Gurley, 7 July 1830, all in ACS Papers; For Russwurm's role as superintendent, see ACS *Thirteenth Annual Report*, 11; Winch, *Gentleman*, 202, 205, 236; Cresson to Gurley 1 January 1828, in ACS Papers.

41. Kurt Lee Kocher, "'A Duty to America and Africa,': A History of the Independent African Colonization Movement in Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania History* 51(April 1984), 118–53, 139; PCS Minute Book 5 June 1838; "Articles of Association of American Colonies in Africa," *African Repository* 15 (November 1838), 205–07; Staudenraus *African Colonization*, 235–39; Eli Seifman, "The United Colonization Societies of New York and Pennsylvania and the Establishment of the African Colony of Bassa Cove," *Pennsylvania History* 35(January 1968), 23–44, 43. For the new constitution, see *African Repository* 14 (October 1838), 227, 288–89; Early Lee Fox, *The American Colonization Society, 1817–1840* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1919), 115; *Colonization Herald* 1(December 1838), 2; PCS Minute Book 27 December 1838.
42. Kocher, "A Duty to America and Africa," 143; Fox, *American Colonization Society*, 114–23.
43. Calvin Colton, *Colonization and Abolition Contrasted* (Philadelphia: Herman Hooker, 1839), 2–12; David Paul Brown, *Eulogium Upon Wilberforce: With a Brief Incidental Review of the Subject of Colonization. Delivered at the Request of the Abolition Society, March 10, 1834* (Philadelphia: T.K. Collins & Co., 1834, 15, 18–19, 20.