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Contracting the Common Man in Jackson's America

Today we'll be talking about two categories of analysis—gender and race—that we need to understand clearly in order to understand the Early Republic and the ways in which the idea of the "Common Man" were subscribed by those categories.

<discuss the construction of masculinity in the Early Republic—"manly independence" in which aggressiveness, strength, and intelligence were all valued categories—"sharp dealings" are viewed in a positive light, not a negative one—remember that this is the era of "caveat emptor">

But middle class-families recognized that all work had become increasingly exploitive, competitive, and brutalizing. To try to distance themselves from this, even as they benefited from it, they argued for a "natural" gender division between work and nurturance. Men must expose themselves to the degradations of labor, they insisted, but women were naturally of a gentler and more vulnerable disposition. Women, they argued, were intended by nature to remain at home, where their sweet influences and sustaining love could raise children protected from the ravages of industrialization and revive the hardened sensibilities of husbands. This view of women as the primary influence on children represented a dramatic change from colonial opinions, which presumed that fathers were better fit to form the moral character of children. Gradually, nonetheless, the new middle class asserted a view that

associated women with the home and identified the home as the antithesis of labor. Respectable women did not work. Indeed, visible labor was a sign of probable immorality in a woman.

But as this idea of a separate domestic sphere for women made an argument for a "private" home life, the idea of domesticity was also very important for the country as a whole: Listen, for example, to the words of Catherine Beecher, daughter of Lyman Beecher, in her book *Treatise on Domestic Economy*: "The success of democratic institutions, as is conceded by all, depends upon the intellectual and moral character of the mass of the people. It is equally conceded, that the formation of the moral and intellectual character of the young is committed mainly to the female hand. . . The proper education of a man decides the welfare of an individual; but educate a woman, and the interests of a whole family are secured."

So home was important for the nation, but it was also a refuge from the "ceaseless toil after the mammon of this life" and the "restless ambition to turn everything to account in available funds, in bank-stocks, copper stocks, railroad-stocks." And that the home could "check the utilitarianism, the money-loving spirit of the day." <continue here>

Listen to the following dichotomies that were set up in this aphorism that was reprinted in newspapers across the United States

Man is strong—woman is beautiful

Man is daring and confident—woman is diffident and unassuming

Man is great in action—woman in suffering

Man shines abroad—woman at home

Man talks to convince—woman to persuade and please

Man has a rugged heart—woman a soft and tender one

Man prevents misery—woman relieves it

Man has science—woman taste

Man has judgement—woman sensibility

Man is a being of justice—woman of mercy

Was it accurate? <ask if it was accurate for First Ladies? Allgor's book>

This image was largely inaccurate measured by the daily lives of most families of the new middle class. Many middle-class women pursued paid labor of some variety. Lydia Maria Child supported her hapless lawyer-husband with her writing. The earnings from Harriet Beecher Stowe's novels and stories were essential to her family's support. Other middle-class women took in boarders, did fancy sewing, opened schools, and worked in family-owned businesses, among other occupations. All women of the new middle classes worked unpaid at the daily labor of household health and well being: cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing, preserving food, sewing, and caring for the children.

While working-class families were forced into smaller and smaller dwellings, the emerging middle class expressed itself in terms of growing, separated, and increasingly elaborate residential space and sentimentalized its highly privatized household as the icon of American virtue. The ideal home of the emerging middle class--the "cottage"--offered a private sitting room for the family (a refuge from the hazards of social life) and a separate "public" parlor for receiving guests. The parlor also provided a stage where the family could present tangible evidence of its middle-class status: woven carpets, sofas, chairs, and other possessions, all purchased from the new abundance of the market.

Members of the new middle class based their emerging identity on individualism and on the belief in self-culture and personal success-—values strengthened in the religious revivals of the 1820s. Here, too, they contrasted themselves with workers, and especially with the poorer laboring classes of the city: if humans had the power to take control of their own lives, then poverty must be evidence of a flawed character.

<transition to slavery>

In 1800, slavery had been an institution centered in the Chesapeake and along the coast of South Carolina. [explain the relationship between Southerners and slavery—your readings mention that Thomas Jefferson wanted to insert a clause in the Declaration of Independence blaming the British king for slavery—also explain Jefferson's analogy of having the "wolf by the ears."—many assumed that slavery would die a natural death as cash crops like tobacco, rice, and indigo declined]

Two developments in the history of the Early Republic resulted in the rapid expansion of slavery and combined to create the "cotton boom" of the early nineteenth century. America's cotton crop was limited during the colonial and Revolutionary eras to long-staple cotton that was grown in the low country along the coast of Georgia and South Carolina. By the early nineteenth century, demand for cotton had increased greatly as the textile industry in Great Britain and the nascent one in New England began to take off. But the long-staple cotton of the low country could not be adapted inland, and short-staple cotton had seeds that stuck to the cotton more voraciously than the long-staple. So the appearance of ***Eli Whitney's cotton gin*** in 1793, which separated the seeds from short staple cotton allowed southerners to expand production of short staple cotton.

The second development is one that we've already talked about: the defeat of Native American resistance (coming from nations such as the Creek and the Cherokee) opened up large areas of the Old Southwest to white settlement, and as a result, new slave states began to enter the union. For example, in 1812 the United States adds Louisiana, in 1817 Mississippi, and in 1819 Alabama. As it turns out, the climate and soils of these states were perfect for cotton production. Cotton cultivation needs about 200 frostless days, which means that it was limited primarily to the deep south.

The result was a veritable cotton boom: American cotton production rose from 3,000 bales in 1790 to 178,000 bales in 1810. Cotton also provided the basis for the first significant growth of a factory system in New England—without cheap southern cotton, it is doubtful that New England factories would have taken off. American cotton also became a crop of international significance. Cotton exports, which had averaged less than $10 million a year before the War of 1812, rose to over $20 million a year after it. About ¾ of the American cotton crop was exported, and cotton not only constituted the United States' leading export, but exceeded in dollar value all of the other exports combined. Cotton prices did not remain uniformly high in the postwar years. But even when prices fell, southern planters planted more cotton. <show map of 1821>

By the1830s, the cotton boom and westward migration in search of cotton lands had extended a culture and economy of slavery into virtually all of the nation south of Pennsylvania and the Ohio River valley and east of the Mississippi River—as well as into Missouri and Louisiana, across the Mississippi. The number of slaves also increased. In 1790 there were nearly 700,000 slaves in the United States. By 1830 there were more than two million, and on

the eve of the Civil War, nearly 4 million Americans were held in bondage. (total pop: 1790 4 million; 1830 about 13 m.; 1860 31 m). But more impressive than the expansion of the slave population itself was how it grew just as fast as the white population of the South did. In 1790, about a third of southerners were slaves (33.5%), by 1860, this proportion had dropped only to 32.1%. And if we look at certain states in the Deep South, we can really see the impact of slavery. South Carolina and Mississippi actually had black majorities by 1860, and the slave populations of Georgia, Florida, Alabama, and Louisiana all exceeded 40% of the total population. In this way the South became the land of slavery and cotton—and was in some ways a unified region.

This region's very existence was made possible by a further limitation of the "common man" ideology of the era.

For Andrew Jackson, the quintessential "common man" was not the urban craft worker but the western settler, struggling to bring new lands under cultivation and new institutions to life. Pioneers confronted various obstacles—-tight credit, eastern speculators, corrupt land office agents, federal land policies-—but no barrier loomed larger than the resistance of Indian peoples. The War of 1812 had effectively brought an end to intertribal resistance east of the Mississippi. By 1828, most of the large Indian nations had been pushed west out of Ohio and southern Indiana and Illinois, but the Ojibwa, Winnebago, Sauk, Mesquakie, Kickapoo, and Menominee retained sizeable homelands in the Northwest. In the South, in spite of repeated forced cessions, the Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek and Cherokee nations retained ancestral territories and the Seminoles still controlled parts of Florida.

Jackson's views concerning the native Americans had been settled many years before, in the crucible of the Indian wars of the 1790s. "Does not experience teach us that treaties answer no other Purpose than opening an Easy door for the Indians to pass [through to] Butcher our citizens?" he had written to a friend in 1794, from his first home on the Cumberland River. Congress should "Punish the Barbarians," he continued, warning that: "This Country is Declining [fast] and unless Congress lends us a more am[ple] protection this Country will have at length . . . [to] seek protection from some other Source."

Despite recurrent wars and federal treaties, western settlers were no happier with federal initiatives in the 1820s than they had been in the 1790s. This frustration ran especially high in the South, where the inequitable distribution of land among whites threatened to boil over in internal civil disorder. Having signed more than 30 treaties with the federal government since 1789, however, the southern Indian nations refused to cede additional lands. Matters came to a head in Georgia, where officials complained that the federal government had never kept its promise to remove all Indians from the state, which had been a condition of Georgia's willingness to cede its western land claims to the federal government in 1802. By 1820, this meant removing a few Creeks and most of the remaining Cherokee nation. In 1826, the federal government pressured the Creeks to give up all but a small strip of their remaining lands in Georgia, but white Georgians were not satisfied. Encouraged no doubt by former President Monroe's repeated calls for large-scale Indian removal, Georgia Governor Troup sent surveyors onto even that last piece of Creek land. When President Adams objected to this encroachment upon federal treaty powers, Governor Troup threatened to call up the state militia.

<ask them—when is a Native American not a Native American any more. To themselves? To whites?>

The election of Andrew Jackson only a few months later emboldened the Georgians to go after Cherokee land. By state law, they invalidated the constitution of the Cherokee nation within Georgia (one of the many efforts the Cherokees had made to protect themselves against white incursion) and proclaimed that the Cherokees were subject to the authority of the state of Georgia. When discoveries of gold sent white prospectors surging onto Cherokee land, the state of Georgia refused either to stop the trespassers or to protect the Indians. Jackson quickly made his position clear, notifying his Cherokee "children" that "their father cannot prevent them from being subject to the laws of the state" and that it was his duty, as president, to "sustain the States in the exercise of their rights."

Keep in mind there are about 15,000 Cherokee living in the Southeast, along with about 25,000 Choctaws, and about 20,000 Creeks.

Passed in 1830 by a margin of five votes, the Removal Act empowered the president to purchase Indian homelands in the east in exchange for lands west of the Mississippi and authorized $500,000 to begin the work. In one sense, the act only made official a policy that Americans had been pursuing steadily since the founding of the nation. But the fact of official approval accelerated the process and increased the opportunities for graft. In 1830 the Choctaws were removed from their lands in Mississippi to a location in present-day Oklahoma. The Chickasaws (also Mississippi Indians) and the Creeks (now crowded into Alabama) followed in 1832.

In fact, the states were not exercising their rights, as Chief Justice John Marshall made clear in a series of decisions arising from the Cherokee appeal to the Supreme Court. In 1831, in Cherokee Nation v. Georgia, Marshall agreed that the Cherokee nation had the status of a foreign nation and enjoyed certain claims as a result of treaties with the federal government. But the Cherokee nation belonged to a distinct class of foreign governments, Marshall reasoned--not really a foreign power at all, but a “domestic dependent nation.” As such, it was beyond the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. The following year, Marshall strengthened the position of the Cherokee. In Worcester v. Georgia, the court identified the Cherokees as “a distinct community” within the United States (not a part of a specific state) and ruled that the Cherokee nation came under the direct protection of the federal government. The actions of Georgia had been unconstitutional.

But court rulings required executive implementation, and this Jackson was not prepared to provide. Upon being informed of the decision, Jackson is alleged to have responded: "John Marshall has made his decision; now let him enforce it." Despite the court’s ruling, Jackson insisted to Congress that the best policy, “not only liberal, but generous,” would be to remove the Indians entirely from the lands sought by the settlers and to relocate them elsewhere until such time as they “cast off their savage habits.” The place he had in mind was across the Mississippi River.

Full-scale removal of the Indians required shifting populations across state lines and into federal territories, however, and that required congressional consent. In Congress, the Cherokees found unexpected allies. To the old Adams men, now led by Henry Clay, “removal”

was the policy of states, forced upon the federal government. For Congress to pass an act authorizing the policy was simply to encourage states to trample on federal powers.

The controversy soon raged beyond the halls of Congress. Missionaries engaged in quiet efforts to Christianize and "civilize" the Indians were appalled by the brutal lawlessness of miners and settlers. (The Worcester case had been sparked by the arrest of two missionaries trying to prevent miners from trespassing on Cherokee lands.) They were joined in their opposition by numerous foot-soldiers of the urban-based benevolent empire--city and foreign missionaries, Sunday school workers, members of religious tract and Bible societies, and others who saw forced removal as a transparent land grab on the part of the federal government. Led by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, benevolent reformers lobbied hard against the removal bill. In response, Van Buren formed a counter lobby in support of the administration's position. The Board for the Emigration, Preservation, and Improvement of the Aborigines of American insisted that Indians were ill-equipped for contact with white civilization, that they required education and preparation, and that removing them to the lands west of the Mississippi was only humane.

Three years later, after their unsuccessful appeals to the Supreme Court and after several years of continued resistance, the Cherokees were removed from northern Georgia, western North Carolina, and eastern Tennessee. The infamous Treaty of New Echota was signed in 1835, which was really the final legalistic move in removal. The Senate ratified it in 1836. In April 1838, Ross submitted a petition containing 15,665 signatures to Congress, requesting that the United States void the Cherokee removal treaty. In May the War

Department sent General Winfield Scott to Georgia to round up the resisting tribesmen and begin their removal. In what became known as the "Trail of Tears," they were forced into eastern Oklahoma. Although some families had accepted the inevitability of removal, most of the Cherokees--including especially the stalwarts who were most determined not to leave their ancestral homelands--had delayed leaving until the last possible moment and had made few preparations for the journey. When they were finally forced to leave by the United States Army, they went suddenly, with few supplies and little planning. Families were separated. Herds were lost. Crops representing potential supplies for the trip were destroyed in the fields to force the Indians from their homes. Disease and malnutrition became widespread as federally hired contractors skimmed profits off the services and supplies to the migrants. About 4,000 people—a quarter of the Cherokee nation--died in the passage.

But even after the arrival of the Cotton South, some Americans did not buy into the idea that African-Americans were no more than chattel property and a source of labor.

Informal means of resistance. <explain>

And, of course, slave conspiracies constantly reminded Americans that slavery was not a stable institution:

--Gabriel's rebellion in 1800 in Richmond [insurrection inspired by religious and Revolutionary rhetoric—led by Gabriel Prosser--hoped to force a bloody rebellion and negotiate end to slavery—foiled at the last minute]

--Demark Vesey's rebellion in Charleston SC in 1822 [free black carpenter and preacher—also exposed, and 35 rebels executed and 43 deported]

--Nat Turner's rebellion in Virginia in 1831 [led by a slave in Southampton County, Virginia—60 whites killed—Nat Turner captured and hanged]

Impact of these rebellions (3): 1. southerners clamp down with tighter restrictions, increased slave patrols, etc. 2. Suggest also, however, that African-Americans were constantly vigilant in their attempts to undermine slavery in the South. 3. many white and black Northerners become convinced that slavery needs to end in the South—that despite the claims of slave owners, slaves would risk life and limb to escape bondage, and even resort to murder.

As we'll see by the end of this lecture, wealthy white men and women constituted the backbone of the abolitionist movement by the 1830s, but the real roots for an organized anti-slavery MOVEMENT in the United States should be traced to the growing activism of the free Black community in the 1820s. [free blacks: 1820 about 300,000 <total 2 million slaves; 13 million Americans> split about half and half in North and South—NYC has about 15,000 free blacks] By the late 1820s, the African American community organized into a number of mutual aid and benevolent associations. Organizing was most lively in Philadelphia, where free Blacks established over forty new societies between 1820 and 1835, but (propelled by the growth of the free Black community) the self-help impulse extended south to Baltimore and Charleston and north to New York and Boston. Although some societies were clearly limited in membership to relatively prosperous free Blacks, self-help organizing was vigorous across economic lines: coachmen, porters, barbers, brick-makers, sailors, cooks, and washerwomen all formed associations.

In the 1820s, in the wake of the Missouri debates, the radical character of Black organizing became more explicit and more assertive. Early on, Black associations focused their

protest on the efforts of the American Colonization Society to deport emancipated slaves.

- In 1827, we see the foundation of the first Black newspaper, Freedom's Journal, [Boston; John Russman and Samuel E. Cornish] devoted both to self-improvement efforts and to exposing the evils of slavery.
- On July 4, 1827, New York officially abolished slavery, an occasion celebrated by free Blacks as far south as Virginia.

- In 1829, ***David Walker***, a second-hand clothes dealer in Boston, published a pamphlet entitled ***An Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World***, calling upon Blacks to take resistance to slavery into their own hands, by armed insurrection, if necessary. It was a pretty radical document. Walker said that God was on the side of the slave and that: "Our sufferings will come to an end, in spite of all the Americans this side of eternity. . . . 'Every dog must have its day,' the American's is coming to an end." When he reflected upon the nature of his plan, he said that "it is no more harm for you to kill a man who is trying to kill you, than it is for you to take a drink of water when thirsty." <explain the plan> Walker died under suspicious circumstances within the year, and possession of his *Appeal* was grounds for instant imprisonment in the South.

But history tells us that there was no wide-spread slave revolt throughout the South.

So what was going on in the white community about slavery? In the early history of the United States, there had been a few scattered anti-slavery organizations since the founding of the country, especially associated with the Quakers. Most of these early societies worked

toward increasing the number of individual manumissions and in educating white people to believe that Black people could be intelligent, inventive, creative individuals.

In 1816, some Americans had formed the ***American Colonization Society***, dedicated to deporting free African Americans to Africa. Henry Clay was a member of this organization, and eventually served as president. By 1822, the society had been relatively successful in gaining members in the upper south and in 1822 the organization established Monrovia (later called Liberia) on the west coast of Africa. <over next 40 years, about 6,000 African-Americans emigrate—society is around until 1912>

But the dramatic shift in white anti-slavery organizing developed from a gradual repudiation of the efforts and tactics of the American Colonization Society. By the mid-1820s the Colonization Society was the seventh largest benevolent organization in the nation, and the primary focus of northern efforts at improving the conditions of slaves. But the Society also included wealthy slaveholders, a fact that distressed a new, younger generation of New England reformers. Feeling morally compromised by this association with slave-owners, and convinced that the Society would never risk alienating its Southern constituency, young missionaries began to call upon the Northern benevolent empire to engage in a direct and "immediate" assault upon the institution of slavery.

The most vehement of these young renegades was William Lloyd Garrison, who had been a member of the ACS. On January 1, 1831, in Boston, Garrison published the first issue of the abolitionist newspaper Liberator, announcing loudly his break with the compromises of the American Colonization Society:

"I will not equivocate--I will not excuse--I will not retreat a single inch--and I will

be heard."

Massachusetts, Boston in particular, soon became the center of the new “immediatist” critique of slavery—-and of the reformers who endorsed it. In 1831, under Garrison’s Leadership, they formed the New England Anti-Slavery Society.

There were some quick converts, especially in the urban areas of the Northeast, upstate New York, Pennsylvania and in those western states most heavily settled by New Englanders, especially Ohio. Quakers and liberal Congregationalists were particularly active in the early movement. Local antislavery societies were forming throughout New England by 1832. Although Garrison envisioned a gender- and racially integrated abolition movement, local societies generally formed on a sex-segregated—-and often a racially segregated—-basis. The first female anti-slavery societies were formed by Black women in 1832 in Salem, Massachusetts, and Rochester, New York. Anti-slavery societies formed by prominent white women followed. By the end of 1833, local and state organization had grown numerous and strong enough to support a national society, the American Anti-Slavery Society, which included six African Americans on its original board.

<introduce Frederick Douglass and the *Narrative*: the reasons that he wrote it, becomes free for 150 pounds, or $711, while in Britain in 1846; and his own efforts to publish *The North Star* in 1847, becomes celebrity after the *Narrative* and changes the name of his paper to *Frederick Douglass’ Paper* in 1851>

In its founding resolution of sentiments, the American Anti-Slavery Society dedicated itself to the immediate and total abolition of slavery without compensation for owners and to the admission African Americans to full, free citizenship. Society members pledged to pursue

their goals by the non-violent tactics of ***moral suasion***. <explain its non-political, non-violent stance>

Abolitionists had relied on the press to spread their views since the early 1820s. Yet in the early 1830s, even William Lloyd Garrison's Liberator remained largely unknown. The AASS decided to go postal. They wanted to mail abolitionist literature directly to the South. The postal campaign of 1835 was made possible by the fact that the movement's center of gravity had shifted from Massachusetts to New York, where wealthy New York merchants Lewis and Arthur Tappan were able to bankroll its publishing, and by a sudden decline in the cost of printing. In 1835 the Society increased its publication of antislavery pamphlets by 900%—from approximately 100,000 pieces to 1,000,000 pieces. Roughly 20,000 tracts, fliers and periodicals, many of them emblazoned with vivid graphics of the effects of slavery, were mailed to Southern destinations. Meanwhile, a contingent of agents and lecturers panned out across the North.

The response—-in the North as well as the South-—was immediate and fierce. In the South, anger and panic soon turned violent. With the memory of Nat Turner still fresh, slave-owners denounced the campaign as incendiary and pointed to hundreds of alleged slave conspiracies as the direct handiwork of the Northern abolitionists. Southern communities offered large rewards for prominent abolition leaders, dead or alive. Local authorities appointed vigilante committees to patrol free Black neighborhoods (presumed hotbeds of insurrection), to patrol coastal boats for runaway slaves, and to search post offices for offending materials. In Charleston, South Carolina, a mob broke into the post office, ransacked the mail, stole the abolitionist literature and burned it publicly. In Washington, D.C., a mob

several hundred strong (including a good number of unemployed shipyard workers) destroyed the business of a free Black rumored to support the abolitionist campaign and then rampaged through the Black community.

Anti-African American and anti-abolitionist riots tore through St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and Philadelphia. Across the North, from Boston to Utica, New York, to Granville, Ohio, abolitionist meetings were broken up by mobs. In Boston in 1835, a crowd captured William Lloyd Garrison and dragged him through the streets on a rope. English abolitionist George Thompson was hounded by mobs everywhere he went in his American tour. Responding to the abolitionists' use of the press, anti-abolitionist mobs targeted newspapers especially. In 1836, an anti-abolitionist mob in Cincinnati made "the destruction of their Press on the night of the 12th instant" the symbolic warning of greater violence to come. Rioters in Alton, Illinois, destroyed abolitionist newspaper editor ***Elijah Lovejoy***'s press four times in 1837. In the last attack, they also murdered Lovejoy himself. Prominent in most of these disturbances were "gentlemen of property and standing"--pillars of society who were convinced that the abolitionists meant to destroy the union and force a racially integrated society.

Many moderate abolitionists in the North were appalled by the outbreak of violence, which seemed to threaten a complete breakdown in civil society. A few Northern state legislatures admonished radical abolitionists for their extreme measures (although none went so far as to pass laws restricting abolitionist activity). Some active anti-slavery activists rushed to assure Southerners that true abolitionists would always "entreat [slaves] to wait in patience ever so long rather than [take] recourse to insurrection." A larger number chastised what they saw as the extreme fringe of their own movement, criticizing them for a too-zealous approach.

Immediatists were undeterred-—and, indeed, began to find a wider range of converts. Anti-abolition violence suggested to some moderates that pro-slavery forces would stop at nothing to protect their peculiar institution—-even the flagrant violation of civil rights, the destruction of property, and murder! They were the more distressed when, in his annual address to Congress in 1835, President Jackson asked for measures curtailing anti-slavery organizing, including closing the United States mails to abolitionist literature. Congress refused, but Northerners were shocked by the very idea that the President would propose to restrict freedom of the mails to protect Southern interests.

But if Congress declined to interfere with the federal mails, in June of 1836 the House of Representatives did pass a resolution requiring that anti-slavery petitions to Congress be automatically tabled. (The resolution was renewed by succeeding Congresses until 1844.) The petitions provoked especially heated response from Southern Congressmen—-including a series of resolutions by John Calhoun asserting that it was the absolute responsibility of the federal government to protect slavery wherever it existed in the states or territories.

<if time, mention this> The American Anti-Slavery Society was quick to capitalize on the passage of the gag rule. In July the Society published An Appeal to the people of the United States, charging that the gag rule was a flagrant and invidious violation of the Constitutional rights of all Americans—-and especially the time-honored right of petition. “Let no one think for a moment that because he is not an abolitionist,” the tract read, “his liberties are not and will not be invaded.” That same summer, female antislavery leaders from across the North began organizing a systematic, widespread drive to obtain signatures on anti-slavery petitions. Female abolitionists, including Sarah and Angelina Grimke (members of the Southern planter

class, now turned abolitionists), traveled across the North, speaking in private parlors and in public halls—often exposing themselves to harsh public censure. Within two years, they collected some 2,000,000 signatures—-more than two-thirds of which were women's.

The petition campaign served many ends. It not only called attention to the gag rule, to the implication of Congress in the support of slavery, and to the ways in which pro-slavery forces could abridge the rights of all Americans, but also provided moderate sympathizers with a relatively non-confrontational, discreet avenue of protest. Combined with the postal campaign of 1835, the petition drive quickly paid off in the steady growth of the American Anti-Slavery Society. Benefiting from a growing public discussion of the evils of slavery, the Society reported 225 local auxiliaries in 1835; 527 in 1836; over a thousand in 1837; and more than 1500 by the end of the decade. <end with JQ Adams, former president, delivering the petitions to the floor of congress; anti-slave petition of 1842 image is against admission of FL and TX as slave states and for a ban on slavery in Washington DC>

<conclusion>