

DOCUMENT 7.6

DAVID WALKER, "Walker's Appeal . . . to the Coloured Citizens of the World"

1830

David Walker (1796–1830) was a prominent African American printer who was born in North Carolina and eventually settled in Boston, Massachusetts, where he was an early participant in the abolitionist movement.

Men of colour, who are also of sense, for you particularly is my APPEAL designed. Our more ignorant brethren are not able to penetrate its value. I call upon you therefore to cast your eyes upon the wretchedness of your brethren, and to do your utmost to enlighten them—*go to work and enlighten your brethren!*—Let the Lord see you doing what you can to rescue them and yourselves from degradation. Do any of you say that you and your family are free and happy, and what have you to do with the wretched slaves and other people? So can I say, for I enjoy as much freedom as any of you, if I am not quite as well off as the best of you. Look into our freedom and happiness, and see of what kind they are composed!! They are of the very lowest kind—they are the very *dregs!*—they are the most servile and abject kind, that ever a people was in possession of! If any of you wish to know how FREE you are, let one of you start and go through the southern and western States of this country, and unless you travel as a slave to a white man (a servant is a *slave* to the man whom he serves) or have your free papers, (which if you are not careful they will get from you) if they do not take you up and put you in jail, and if you cannot give good evidence of your freedom, sell you into eternal slavery, I am not a living man: or any man of colour, immaterial who he is, or where he came from, if he is not *the fourth from the negro race!!* (as we are called) the white Christians of America will serve him the same they will sink him into wretchedness and degradation for ever while he lives. And yet some of you have the hardihood to say that you are free and happy! . . .

David Walker, *David Walker's Appeal* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995), 28–29.

TOPIC II | Debating the Identity of America

179

PRACTICING Historical Thinking

Identify: In your own words, characterize the kinds of freedom that African Americans have, according to Walker.

Analyze: What is Walker's tone? Cite key examples of language to support your response.

Evaluate: To what extent do Walker's arguments depend on moral arguments as opposed to legal arguments? Explain your response.

DOCUMENT 7.7**WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON, *The Liberator***

1831

William Lloyd Garrison (1805–1879) started the abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator* in 1831. Frederick Douglass's *North Star* and Garrison's *The Liberator* were the leading abolitionist newspapers until the abolition of slavery in 1865.

During my recent tour for the purpose of exciting the minds of the people by a series of discourses on the subject of slavery, every place that I visited gave fresh evidence of the fact, that a greater revolution in public sentiment was to be effected in the free States—and particularly in New-England—than at the South. I found contempt more bitter, opposition more active, detraction more relentless, prejudice more stubborn, and apathy more frozen, than among slave-owners themselves. Of course, there were individual exceptions to the contrary. This state of things afflicted, but did not dishearten me. I determined, at every hazard, to lift up the standard of emancipation in the eyes of the nation, *within sight of Bunker Hill and in the birthplace of liberty*. That standard is now unfurled; and long may it float, unhurt by the spoliations of time or the missiles of a desperate foe—yea, till every chain be broken, and every bondman set free! Let Southern oppressors tremble—let their secret abettors tremble—let their Northern apologists tremble—let all the enemies of the persecuted blacks tremble.

Wendell Phillips Garrison and Francis Jackson Garrison, *William Lloyd Garrison, 1805–1879* (Boston, MA: Houghton, Mifflin, 1894), 224.

PRACTICING Historical Thinking

Identify: How does Garrison characterize slave owners?

Analyze: Compare Garrison's arguments with David Walker's appeal (Doc. 7.6). How does each argument appeal to its audience in different ways?

Evaluate: Compare the audiences of Garrison's and Walker's messages. Using your knowledge of the time period, explain which writer made a more effective call to action to his audience.