



Slavery's Opponents and Defenders

Student Name _____ Date _____

Biography Matrix for Slavery's Opponents

Answer the questions below for each person to the right	William L. Garrison	Abraham Lincoln	Frederick Douglass
When was he born?			
Where was he born?			
Was he born into poverty or wealth?			
How educated was he?			
Where and how did he obtain his education?			
What hardships did he endure, if any?			

How did he achieve national prominence?			
What did he stand for in the debate over slavery?			
When did he die?			



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Biography Matrix for Slavery's Defenders

Answer the questions below for each person to the right	John C. Calhoun	James H. Hammond
When was he born?		
Where was he born?		
Was he born into poverty or wealth?		
How educated was he?		
Where and how did he obtain his education?		
What hardships did he endure, if any?		

How did he achieve national prominence?		
What did he stand for in the debate over slavery?		
When did he die?		



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William Lloyd Garrison, “On the Constitution and the Union” (December 29, 1832)

There is much declamation about the sacredness of the compact which was formed between the free and slave states, on the adoption of the Constitution. A sacred compact, forsooth! We pronounce it the most bloody and heaven-daring arrangement ever made by men for the continuance and protection of a system of the most atrocious villany [*sic*] ever exhibited on earth. Yes—we recognize the compact, but with feelings of shame and indignation; and it will be held in everlasting infamy by the friends of justice and humanity throughout the world. It was a compact formed at the sacrifice of the bodies and souls of millions of our race, for the sake of achieving a political object—an unblushing and monstrous coalition to do evil that good might come. Such a compact was, in the nature of things and according to the law of God, null and void from the beginning. No body of men ever had the right to guarantee the holding of human beings in bondage. Who or what were the framers of our government, that they should dare confirm and authorise such high-handed villany—such a flagrant robbery of the inalienable rights of man—such a glaring violation of all the precepts and injunctions of the gospel—such a savage war upon a sixth part of our whole population? —They were men, like ourselves—as fallible, as sinful, as weak, as ourselves. By the infamous bargain which they made between themselves, they virtually dethroned the Most High God, and trampled beneath their feet their own solemn and heaven-attested Declaration, that all men are created equal, and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights — among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. They had no lawful power to bind themselves, or their posterity, for one hour—for one moment — by such an unholy alliance. It was not valid then—it is not valid now. Still they persisted in maintaining it — and still do their successors, the people of Massachusetts, of New-England, and of the twelve free States, persist in maintaining it. A sacred compact! a sacred compact! What, then, is wicked and ignominious?

This, then, is the relation in which we of New-England stand to the holders of slaves at the south, and this is virtually our language toward them—“Go on, most worthy associates, from day to day, from month to month, from year to year, from generation to generation, plundering two millions of human beings of their liberty and the fruits of their toil—driving them into the fields like cattle—starving and lacerating their bodies—selling the husband from his wife, the wife from her husband, and children from their parents—spilling their blood—withholding the bible from their hands and all knowledge from their minds—and kidnapping annually sixty thousand infants, the offspring of pollution and shame! Go on, in these practices—we do not wish nor mean to interfere, for the rescue of your victims, even by expostulation or warning—we like your company too well to offend you by denouncing your conduct—’although we know that by every principle of law which does not utterly disgrace us by assimilating us to pirates, that they have as good and as true a right to the equal protection of the law as we have; and although we ourselves stand prepared to die, rather than submit even to a fragment of the intolerable load of oppression to which we are subjecting them—yet, never mind—let that be—they have grown old in suffering and we iniquity—and we have nothing to do now but to speak *peace, peace*, to one another in our sins. We are too wicked ever to love them as God commands us to do—we are so resolute in our wickedness as not even to desire to do so—and we are so proud in our iniquity that we will hate and

revile whoever disturbs us in it. We want, like the devils of old, to be let alone in our sin. We are unalterably determined, and neither God nor man shall move us from this resolution, that our colored fellow subjects never shall be free or happy in their native land.' Go on, from bad to worse—add link to link to the chains upon the bodies of your victims—add constantly to the intolerable burdens under which they groan—and if, goaded to desperation by your cruelties; they should rise to assert their rights and redress their wrongs, fear nothing—we are pledged, by a sacred compact, to shoot them like dogs and rescue you from their vengeance! Go on—we never will forsake you, for 'there is honor among thieves'—our swords are ready to leap from their scabbards, and our muskets to pour forth deadly volleys, as soon as you are in danger. We pledge you our physical strength, by the sacredness of the national compact—a compact by which we have enabled you already to plunder, persecute and destroy two millions of slaves, who now lie beneath the sod; and by which we now give you the same piratical license to prey upon a much larger number of victims and all their posterity. Go on—and by this sacred instrument, the Constitution of the United States, *dripping as it is with human blood*, we solemnly pledge you our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor, that we will stand by you to the last.”

People of New-England, and of the free States! is it true that slavery is no concern of yours? Have you no right even to protest against it, or to seek its removal? Are you not the main pillars of its support? How long do you mean to be answerable to God and the world, for spilling the blood of the poor innocents? Be not afraid to look the monster SLAVERY boldly in the face. He is your implacable foe—the vampyre who is sucking your life-blood—the ravager of a large portion of your country, and the enemy of God and man. Never hope to be a united, or happy, or prosperous people while he exists. He has an appetite like the grave—a spirit as malignant as that of the bottomless pit—and an influence as dreadful as the corruption of death. Awake to your danger! the struggle is a mighty one—it cannot be avoided—it should not be, if it could.

It is said that if you agitate this question, you will divide the Union. Believe it not; but should disunion follow, the fault will not be yours. You must perform your duty, faithfully, fearlessly and promptly, and leave the consequences to God: that duty clearly is, to cease from giving countenance and protection to southern kidnappers. Let them separate, if they can muster courage enough—and the liberation of their slaves is certain. Be assured that slavery will very speedily destroy this Union, *if it be let alone*; but even if the Union can be preserved by treading upon the necks, spilling the blood, and destroying the souls of millions of your race, we say it is not worth a price like this, and that it is in the highest degree criminal for you to continue the present compact. Let the pillars thereof fall—let the superstructure crumble into dust—if it must be upheld by robbery and oppression.



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Morality and Legitimacy of Slavery under the U.S. Constitution

Answer the questions below for each person to the right	William Lloyd Garrison	John C. Calhoun
Does he uphold the "sacredness" or inviolability of the compact?		
Does he believe that people have a right to hold slaves?		
What does he claim to be the condition of the slaves?		
How does he believe slaves are treated?		
How many races does he think there are?		
Does he appeal to an authority higher than himself? Who or what is it?		

Does he see any room for compromise in devising a political solution to the slavery controversy?		
Does he predict the possibility of disunion? How likely does he think it is?		



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James Henry Hammond, "The Mudsill Theory," (1858):

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h3439t.html>

Question	Answer
According to Sen. Hammond, what makes societies civilized and why did he think this justified the enslavement of black people in America?	
What does Sen. Hammond mean by "the very mud-sill of society and of political government"?	
According to Sen. Hammond, why is the South more civilized than the North?	
Why does Sen. Hammond believe slaves exist in the North as well as the South? Who are these "slaves"?	
Why does Sen. Hammond believe southern slaves have a better life than northern "slaves"?	



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Excerpt from Abraham Lincoln, "Address Before the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society" (1859):
http://www.nal.usda.gov/speccoll/exhibits/lincoln/lincoln_wisconsin.html

The world is agreed that labor is the source from which human wants are mainly supplied. There is no dispute upon this point. From this point, however, men immediately diverge. Much disputation is maintained as to the best way of applying and controlling the labor element. By some it is assumed that labor is available only in connection with capital--that nobody labors, unless somebody else, owning capital, somehow, by the use of that capital, induces him to do it. Having assumed this, they proceed to consider whether it is best that capital shall hire laborers, and thus induce them to work by their own consent; or buy them, and drive them to it without their consent. Having proceeded so far they naturally conclude that all laborers are necessarily either hired laborers, or slaves. They further assume that whoever is once a hired laborer, is fatally fixed in that condition for life; and thence again that his condition is as bad as, or worse than that of a slave. This is the "mud-sill" theory.

But another class of reasoners hold the opinion that there is no such relation between capital and labor, as assumed; and that there is no such thing as a freeman being fatally fixed for life, in the condition of a hired laborer, that both these assumptions are false, and all inferences from them groundless. They hold that labor is prior to, and independent of, capital; that, in fact, capital is the fruit of labor, and could never have existed if labor had not first existed--that labor can exist without capital, but that capital could never have existed without labor. Hence they hold that labor is the superior--greatly the superior--of capital.

They do not deny that there is, and probably always will be, a relation between labor and capital. The error, as they hold, is in assuming that the whole labor of the world exists within that relation. A few men own capital; and that few avoid labor themselves, and with their capital, hire, or buy, another few to labor for them. A large majority belong to neither class--neither work for others, nor have others working for them. Even in all our slave States, except South Carolina, a majority of the whole people of all colors, are neither slaves nor masters. In these Free States, a large majority are neither hirers or hired. Men, with their families--wives, sons and daughters--work for themselves, on their farms, in their houses and in their shops, taking the whole product to themselves, and asking no favors of capital on the one hand, nor of hirelings or slaves on the other. It is not forgotten that a considerable number of persons mingle their own labor with capital; that is, labor with their own hands, and also buy slaves or hire freemen to labor for them; but this is only a mixed, and not a distinct class. No principle stated is disturbed by the existence of this mixed class. Again, as has already been said, the opponents of the "mud-sill" theory insist that there is not, of necessity, any such thing as the free hired laborer being fixed to that condition for life. There is demonstration for saying this. Many independent men, in this assembly, doubtless a few years ago were hired laborers. And their case is almost if not quite the general rule.

The prudent, penniless beginner in the world, labors for wages awhile, saves a surplus with which to buy tools or land, for himself; then labors on his own account another while, and at length hires another new

beginner to help him. This, say its advocates, is free labor--the just and generous, and prosperous system, which opens the way for all--gives hope to all, and energy, and progress, and improvement of condition to all. If any continue through life in the condition of the hired laborer, it is not the fault of the system, but because of either a dependent nature which prefers it, or improvidence, folly, or singular misfortune. I have said this much about the elements of labor generally, as introductory to the consideration of a new phase which that element is in process of assuming. The old general rule was that educated people did not perform manual labor. They managed to eat their bread, leaving the toil of producing it to the uneducated. This was not an insupportable evil to the working bees, so long as the class of drones remained very small. But now, especially in these free States, nearly all are educated--quite too nearly all, to leave the labor of the uneducated, in any wise adequate to the support of the whole. It follows from this that henceforth educated people must labor. Otherwise, education itself would become a positive and intolerable evil. No country can sustain, in idleness, more than a small percentage of its numbers. The great majority must labor at something productive. From these premises the problem springs, "How can labor and education be the most satisfactory combined?"

Question	Answer
Does Lincoln believe that how you make a living is a fixed or permanent condition?	
According to Lincoln, in his day did most people (a) work for others, (b) work for themselves, or (c) hire laborers to work for them? Does Lincoln think this was different in the southern slaveholding states than in the northern free states?	
Does Lincoln believe a poor person can become wealthy? If so, what is the path to prosperity?	
How does Lincoln explain folks who remain "hired laborers" throughout their life?	
According to Lincoln, what advantages does free labor have over the "mud sill" approach to making a living?	



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What did each group below think about the subjects to the right?	Morality of Slavery	Legitimacy of Slavery under the U.S. Constitution	Economics of Slavery
Slavery's Opponents			
Slavery's Defenders			



Slavery's Opponents and Defenders

Student Name _____ Date _____

Excerpt from Thomas R. Dew, "An Essay on Slavery" (1832)

It is said slavery is wrong, in the *abstract* at least, and contrary to the spirit of Christianity. To this we answer . . . that any question must be determined by its circumstances, and if, as really is the case, we cannot get rid of slavery without producing a greater injury to both the masters and slaves, there is no rule of conscience or revealed law of God which *can* condemn us. The physician will not order the spreading cancer to be extirpated although it will eventually cause the death of his patient, because he would thereby hasten the fatal issue.

So, if slavery had commenced even contrary to the laws of God and man, and the sin of its introduction rested upon our heads, and it was even carrying forward the nation by slow degrees to final ruin—yet if it were *certain* that an attempt to remove it would only hasten and heighten the final catastrophe . . . then we would only be found to attempt the extirpation but we would stand guilty of a high offense in the sight of both God and man if we should rashly make the effort. But the original sin of introduction rest[s] not on our heads, and we shall soon see that all those dreadful calamities which the false prophets of our day are pointing to will never, in all probability, occur.

With regard to the assertion that slavery is against the spirit of Christianity, we are ready to admit the general assertion, but deny most positively that there is anything in the Old or New Testament which would go to show that slavery, when once introduced, ought at all events to be abrogated, or that the master commits any offense in holding slaves. The children of Israel themselves were slaveholders and were not condemned for it. All the patriarchs themselves were slaveholders; Abraham had more than three hundred, Isaac had a "great store" of them; and even the patient and meek Job himself had "*a very great household.*" When the children of Israel conquered the land of Canaan, they made one whole tribe "hewers of wood and drawers of water," and they were at that very time under the special guidance of Jehovah; they were permitted expressly to purchase slaves of the heathen and keep them as an inheritance for their posterity; and even the children of Israel might be enslaved for six years.

When we turn to the New Testament, we find not one single passage at all calculated to disturb the conscience of an honest slaveholder. No one can read it without seeing and admiring that the meek and humble Saviour of the world in no instance meddled with the established institutions of mankind; he came to save a fallen world, and not to excite the black passions of man and array them in deadly hostility against each other. From no one did he turn away; his plan was offered alike to all—to the monarch and the subject, the rich and the poor, the master and the slave. He was born in the Roman world, a world in which the most galling slavery existed, a thousand times more cruel than the slavery in our own country; and yet he nowhere encourages insurrection, he nowhere fosters discontent; but exhorts *always* to implicit obedience and fidelity.

What a rebuke does the practice of the Redeemer of mankind imply upon the conduct of some of his nominal disciples of the day, who seek to destroy the contentment of the slave, to rouse their most deadly passions, to break up the deep foundations of society, and to lead on to a night of darkness and

confusion! “Let every man” (says Paul) “abide in the same calling wherein he is called. Art thou called *being* a servant? Care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use *it* rather” (I *Corinth. vii.* 20, 21) . . . Servants are even commanded in Scripture to be faithful and obedient to unkind masters. “Servants,” (says Peter) “be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle but to the froward. For what glory is it if when ye shall be buffeted for your faults ye take it patiently; but if when ye do well and suffer for it, yet take it patiently, this is acceptable with God” (I *Peter ii.* 18, 20). These and many other passages in the New Testament most convincingly prove that slavery in the Roman world was nowhere charged as a fault or crime upon the holder, and everywhere is the most implicit obedience enjoined.

Abraham Lincoln, “Fragment on Pro-slavery Theology” [October 1, 1858?]

Suppose it is true, that the negro is inferior to the white, in the gifts of nature; is it not the exact reverse justice that the white should, for that reason, take from the negro, any part of the little which has been given him? “Give to him that is needy” is the christian rule of charity; but “Take from him that is needy” is the rule of slavery.

PRO-SLAVERY THEOLOGY.

The sum of pro-slavery theology seems to be this: “Slavery is not universally *right*, nor yet universally *wrong*; it is better for *some* people to be slaves; and, in such cases, it is the Will of God that they be such.”

Certainly there is no contending against the Will of God; but still there is some difficulty in ascertaining, and applying it, to particular cases. For instance we will suppose the Rev. Dr. Ross* has a slave named Sambo, and the question is “Is it the Will of God that Sambo shall remain a slave, or be set free?” The Almighty gives no audible answer to the question, and his revelation--the Bible--gives none--or, at most, none but such as admits of a squabble, as to it’s meaning. No one thinks of asking Sambo’s opinion on it. So, at last, it comes to this, that *Dr. Ross* is to decide the question. And while he consider[s] it, he sits in the shade, with gloves on his hands, and subsists on the bread that Sambo is earning in the burning sun. If he decides that God Wills Sambo to continue a slave, he thereby retains his own comfortable position; but if he decides that God will’s Sambo to be free, he thereby has to walk out of the shade, throw off his gloves, and delve for his own bread. Will Dr. Ross be actuated by that perfect impartiality, which has ever been considered most favorable to correct decisions?

But, slavery is good for some people!!! As a *good* thing, slavery is strikingly peculiar, in this, that it is the only good thing which no man ever seeks the good of, *for himself*.

Nonsense! Wolves devouring lambs, not because it is good for their own greedy maws, but because it [is] good for the lambs!!!

* Note: The minister referred to was the Reverend Frederick A. Ross (1796-1883), pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Alabama, and author of *Slavery Ordained of God* (1857) despite the fact that he emancipated his own slaves. The book comprises speeches and letters of Dr. Ross that defend slavery as biblical, American slavery as a beneficent institution, and the slavery agitation by abolitionists as a spur to public discussion—especially regarding its merits on biblical grounds. Ross criticizes abolitionists who argue that slavery is wrong based upon the Declaration of Independence, a document he believed contained “false affirmations” as to the natural equality of man.



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Excerpts from Frances Anne Kemble, *Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation* (ca. 1841):
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h2922t.html>

Excerpt from George Fitzhugh, "The Universal Law of Slavery" (1857):
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h3141t.html>

"The Danger of Insurrection," *Staunton Spectator*, November 29, 1859:
<http://www.vcdh.virginia.edu/teaching/vclassroom/proslavewsht1.html>

"Freedom and Slavery," *Staunton Spectator*, December 6, 1859:
<http://www.vcdh.virginia.edu/teaching/vclassroom/proslavewsht2.html>

"Northern Free Negroes and Southern Slaves," *Staunton Spectator*, January 17, 1860:
<http://www.vcdh.virginia.edu/teaching/vclassroom/proslavewsht3.html>

Firsthand Experience with the "Peculiar Institution":
 What evidence is cited by each side in these documents?

In opposition to the experience of slavery	In defense of the experience of slavery

