

Social Movement Lessons From the British Antislavery Movement

Focused on Applications to the Movement Against Animal Farming

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Authors: Kelly Anthis and Jacy Reese Anthis

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Abstract

Studying past social movements can provide invaluable insights for modern movement strategy. This report aims to assess (1) what factors led the British government to abolish the transatlantic Slave trade in 1807 and then human chattel slavery in 1833, and (2) what those findings suggest about how modern social movements should strategize. While many of the implications are generalizable to a variety of movements, the analysis will focus on applications to the movement against animal farming. Key implications include the need to focus on institutional change, the circumstances under which strategic reforms can facilitate the eventual elimination of the institution, and what messaging can best generate support.

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Introduction

Slavery — and more specifically, human chattel slavery — was not a new phenomenon in the time of the transatlantic Slave trade, which started in the early 16th century and lasted through the mid-19th century. It had long been perceived as normal, natural, and necessary, and historian Robert Fogel says it “stood above criticism for 3,000 years.”¹ Antislavery was one of the first movements to take off and to succeed in the modern push for social justice, and its history is well-documented. This makes the British antislavery movement, which preceded and ignited successful antislavery movements throughout the world, a remarkable case study for modern advocates.

This report provides a condensed history of the British antislavery movement, charting a course from its roots through the ban on the transatlantic Slave trade and culminating in the ban on human chattel slavery in the British empire. Unless otherwise specified, this report uses the term *abolition* to refer to the legal ban on the transatlantic Slave trade and *emancipation* to refer to the legal ban on human chattel slavery.² It uses *antislavery* to refer to the movement or advocates who worked on both or either effort; *Slavery*, capitalized, to refer to the chattel enslavement of Africans and their descendants, as well as some Native Americans, by Europeans and their descendants; *Slaves*, capitalized, to refer to those slaves; and *the (transatlantic) Slave trade* to refer to the trade in human slaves from Africa to the Americas. After providing this history, the report will draw conclusions about which strategies seemed to be most effective for the movement and propose tentative implications for the movement against animal farming.

Studying successful movements of the past can provide invaluable insights into the most effective strategies for modern movements. The two institutions of the European enslavement of Africans and their descendants in the Americas and the modern farming of nonhuman animals share the fundamental characteristic of *commodification*: They treated/treat sentient beings as property, rather than as individuals who had/have their own interests. Both movements also relied/rely on discrimination based on group membership — in Slavery, race, and in animal farming, species.

¹ Robert Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989), 205.

² This usage is common in British history, and not to be confused with American “abolitionists” which usually refers to advocates who worked to abolish the entire institution of Slavery. America had already banned the trade before the time of the American advocates like Frederick Douglass and William Lloyd Garrison who are commonly referred to as “abolitionists.”

The focus of this report is on strategic insights for the movement against animal farming, but we will discuss some insights for the broader animal rights movement, and these insights may be useful for other movements as well.

Historically, many people have compared Slavery and various forms of nonhuman commodification in rough, oversimplified, and sometimes even vindictive ways without considering the impact of that comparison on one or both oppressed populations.³ While the comparison is typically made in an attempt to elevate nonhumans, it often has the effect of degrading black people, because broader society regards nonhuman animals as fundamentally inferior to humans. Simplistic comparisons can also fail to appreciate how racist oppression is historically predicated on speciesist oppression — the history of Slavery, for instance, is replete with assertions that black humans are as inferior to white men as nonhuman animals, and such dehumanization, however unfair to the nonhumans whose moral insignificance was silently assumed, has probably had lasting impacts on people of color and may still directly contribute to racism in society.⁴ As such, crude comparisons of the similarities between each groups' subjugation can alienate people with genetic ancestry or cultural heritage in Slavery and may subtly reinforce racism, especially when the person making the comparison is white. In addition, the comparison may even backfire and perpetuate the speciesism that people of many races have worked to distance themselves from.

This context means advocates should take care not to reduce the lived experiences of individuals in either group to their common denominator with the lived experiences of those in the other, erasing the circumstances and experiences that are unique to each of them and ignoring the contextual relationship between racism and speciesism, which has a long history of simultaneously degrading both nonhuman animals and people of color alike.

The fundamental comparison this report hinges on is that the individuals of both groups were/are sentient individuals who faced/face discrimination and were/are treated as chattel. Our

³ For example, many anti-animal-farming advocates have seen and shared images that merely show nonhuman animals and enslaved black humans being treated in the same or similar ways, for instance with shackles, muzzles, whips, or branding.

⁴ See for example Tanvi Misra, "We're Still Dehumanizing Others," *CityLab*, September 9, 2015, <http://citylab.com/life/2015/09/were-still-dehumanizing-others/403030>: Ranking Middle Eastern people as "less evolved" and more like nonhuman apes "... was linked to more tolerance for military violence in Arab nations. For African Americans, dehumanization predicted that respondents would have less sympathy when encountered with incidents of injustice and wrongful incarceration. For Hispanic Americans, it meant less support for immigration."

purpose is to analyze and compare the movement for the welfare and liberation of commodified Africans — and their hereditarily commodified descendants — who were used for labor in the New World with that of commodified animals who are used in the food industry in order to assess the strategic implications the latter can draw from the former.

Of course, no historical document is perfectly comprehensive, and some important details may be missing from the varied histories used to compile this report. There is also significant disagreement and debate among historians about the nature and importance of some circumstances and events, such as the economic value of the transatlantic Slave trade. The interpretation of necessarily incomplete historical information is imperfect and inevitably warps the truth of what happened to some degree.

To mitigate these issues and craft as comprehensive yet brief and digestible a history as possible, this report relied on a recent and relatively comprehensive book about the movement, called *Bury the Chains*, and augmented that history with information from several other long-form histories taking a variety of perspectives, with clarifications and additional information sourced from parliamentary records, other contemporary publications, journal publications, and several other resources. This history will venture away from the topic of British antislavery at times, but only insofar as it's useful to understand the strategy and outcomes of British antislavery.

While a handful of significantly less invested nations and American colonies or states achieved abolition and/or emancipation before the UK, the British antislavery movement was the first to launch into the public spotlight. The UK and US were the first of the handful of major stakeholders in the transatlantic Slave trade to abolish the trade, more or less simultaneously, and the UK compelled other major stakeholding nations including Spain, France and Portugal to abolish the trade after they did. The UK was also the second major stakeholder in Slavery to permanently emancipate its Slaves, after Spain. Perhaps most importantly, the citizens and Slaves of other nations both knew about the antislavery movement in the UK and were directly influenced by it in some important ways: For instance, William Lloyd Garrison, a major American movement leader, visited the British movement leaders to learn from them, and antislavery advocate and later Member of Parliament (MP) George Thompson gave a speaking tour in the US shortly after the UK legislated emancipation. This makes the evidence we can obtain from studying abolition and emancipation in other major stakeholding nations who adopted their reforms, abolitions, and emancipations after the UK more tenuous, because it is unclear how relatively important the UK's movement, precedent, and direct influences were to the decisions

of the nations who followed suit within a mere generation. The UK was likely in turn affected by the activism, attitudes, and legal changes in other regions with which it exchanged significant flows of people, trade, and information, so further study of other nations' movements during and before the time of the British movement is especially valuable.

The British antislavery movement also had the particularly interesting feature of a push for improvements to the cruelties of the industry, which advocates pursued both in the near-term interest of Slaves and in the longer-term interest of eliminating the institution. Welfare reforms have also been a strong emphasis of the farmed animal movement, making this a unique opportunity to study the effectiveness of this strategy.

The anti-animal-farming movement as this report describes it is weighted towards the Western and particularly the US movement, as this is where the author has the most familiarity, so readers from other regions may see different similarities and differences between the early 19th century British antislavery movement and their own region and movement, and should adjust the applicability of this report's conclusions to their own region's advocacy accordingly. This report assumes the reader has some knowledge of the animal farming industry and the movement against it, and does not for instance detail the industry's humanewashing or the movement's reform campaign history.

Note that the history in this report will use the terms *person* and *people* to describe individuals who were regarded by the law as such at the time — as opposed to as property — rather than as a moral term to describe individuals with interests, or entities the author thinks the law should regard as persons. Both to avoid confusion about anyone's legal status and so as to not reinforce a false dichotomy between humans and all other animals, enslaved black humans will be referred to as *black humans* or *individuals*, and similarly, nonhuman animals will be referred to as *nonhuman animals*, *farmed animals*, or *individuals*.

Summary of Key Implications

There are many challenges in integrating evidence from historical social movements into modern advocacy decision-making.⁵ This section lists a number of strategic claims supported by the

⁵ For a more detailed discussion of the pros and cons of different sources of evidence, see the section "Social movements vs. EAA randomized controlled trials (RCTs) vs. intuition/speculation/anecdotes vs. external findings"

evidence in this report. Of course, one's view of the strength of these claims should depend on all available evidence, not just the evidence provided by this case study.

- Focus more on political campaigns for institutional change than on individual consumer change. If advocating for consumer action, focus on a specific symbol of the problem (e.g. sugar as a product of Slavery) and clearly contextualize the action as supporting the political campaign.
- Run a major legislative campaign that is more agreeable to the public than eliminating the whole industry, but which will still significantly curtail it (e.g. abolishing the Slave trade instead of either immediately emancipating Slaves or making small reforms to the industry).
- Smaller reforms to the industry — whether industry- or advocate-initiated — are likely to cause more momentum than complacency, at least if (1) advocates frame them as a step towards an end goal of eliminating the entire institution, (2) advocates do not present them as more directly impactful for the victims than they are, and (3) the industry fails to fully implement them.
- To launch the issue into the public spotlight, synchronize a petition campaign with literature distribution, book publications, op-ed submissions, publications by famous people, and wearable imagery (e.g. “Am I Not a Man And a Brother?” medallions).
- Move the public spotlight onto a few individual liberated victims so they and their stories become common knowledge. Emphasize the respectable and relatable qualities in the victims.
- In their alliances, advocates should focus narrowly on their shared goals rather than try to agree on all social issues or even the other issues that are most important to them.
- It might not be effective to conduct dramatic protests and other public demonstrations before there is broad public support of the specific goal, if at all.
- Instead of demonizing the people involved with the industry, advocates should speak of them as merely unfortunate people who made what we can now see is a bad investment. Put the blame on society as a whole.

of “Summary of Evidence for Foundational Questions in Effective Animal Advocacy,” *Sentience Institute*, last updated November 15, 2017, <https://www.sentienceinstitute.org/foundational-questions-summaries>.

- Use secondary self-interested arguments (e.g. economic benefits) if they are sound, but keep the focus on the moral argument.
- If moral advocacy seems insufficient, look for ways to significantly reduce the size of the industry through indirect means (e.g. an agreeable wartime law that indirectly affects this issue).

A Condensed Chronological History of the British Antislavery Movement

Early History of the Movement

Slavery has taken many forms throughout human history and has existed in many human societies,⁶ in addition to similar practices of serfdom, indentured servitude, or otherwise coerced labor. The Sumerian Code of Ur-Nammu, dated 2100–2050 BC as the oldest legal code in existence, includes specifications for lawful slavery.⁷ In 1086, 10% of England's population was slaves.⁸ When Europeans began colonizing the Americas in the late 15th century, various populations were enslaved throughout the world, including in Europe, and some regions had passed laws against human slavery or particular forms of it. In 1315, for instance, Louis X had decreed that any slave setting foot in France would be free,⁹ though this was not applied to France's colonies. In the centuries before Europeans started taking African slaves to the New World, human chattel slavery was still relatively normal and unopposed in Europe even when the slaves were other Europeans: in 1375 Pope Gregory XI ordered excommunicated Florentines to be captured and enslaved; in 1488 Pope Innocent VIII accepted Ferdinand of Spain's gift of a hundred Moorish slaves and then passed them to on cardinals and nobles; famous humanist

⁶ Junius P. Rodriguez, introduction to *The Historical Encyclopedia of World Slavery Volume I A-K*, ed. Junius P. Rodriguez (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1997), xiii.

⁷ "Code of Ur-Nammu," *Wikipedia*, last edited October 11, 2017, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Code_of_Ur-Nammu.

⁸ "The Domesday Book," *BBC*, accessed November 24, 2017, http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/normans/doomsday_01.shtml.

⁹ Christopher L. Miller, *The French Atlantic Triangle: Literature and Culture of the Slave Trade* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 20.

Thomas More included human chattel slavery in his 1516 vision of Utopia as an appropriate condition for the "vyle drudge," the "poor laborer," and the criminal; in 1525 Martin Luther did not appreciate serfs' appeals for emancipation on the basis that Christ died to set men free, affirming Saint Paul's assertion that "the earthly kingdom could not survive unless some men were free and some were slaves." John Locke, whose assertions of the natural rights of man may have gone on to inspire antislavery advocates, provided for human chattel slavery in his draft of the 1669 Fundamental Constitution of Carolina. He also invested in the transatlantic Slave trade, and asserted that any man who found himself enslaved "by fault or act... could not complain" and could kill himself if he preferred death to enslavement.¹⁰

The Portuguese started the trade in African Slaves in 1442.¹¹ Over the next century, authorities took varying positions on the transatlantic trade and expressed varying levels of discomfort,¹² but the trade nonetheless expanded. Even the Pope condemned human slavery in 1537.¹³ Evidence suggests that most Slaves taken from Africa were not free people captured by Europeans, but people who were enslaved locally,¹⁴ originally as prisoners of war, in punishment for a crime, or as payment for debt they owed. They were not born into slavery and were originally more of a status symbol than a source of labor or tradeable value, and they had a less harsh experience than Slaves laboring in the West Indies. They could even earn their freedom or marry a free person.¹⁵ When European colonists established trading ports and bought these Slaves for firearms and other goods, they introduced a massive local demand for Slaves,¹⁶ so it would be misleading to merely state that they were slaves already, as some proponents of the trade did.

¹⁰ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 201-202.

¹¹ William Cobbett, *The Parliamentary History of England* vol. 34 (London: T.C. Hansard, 1819), col. 1092.

¹² Thomas Clarkson, *The History of the Rise, Progress, and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave-trade by the British Parliament*, vol. 1 (London: John W. Parker, 1839), 34-42.

¹³ Heinz-Gerhard Justenhoven and William A. Barbieri, Jr. eds., *From Just War to Modern Peace Ethics* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co. KG: 2012), 252.

¹⁴ Adam Hochschild, *Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), 2.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁶ "The Expansion of Europe," *Lumen*, accessed November 24, 2017, <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-ushistory/chapter/the-expansion-of-europe>.

The British trade in African Slaves started in 1555,¹⁷ and in the nearly three centuries before emancipation there was some confusion about the legality of Slavery within England with some judges basing rulings on the assumption that it was legal and others on the assumption that it was not. Some examples will be discussed. A 1569 case ruled that English law did not recognize Slavery.¹⁸

In 1676, William Edmundson, an early Quaker missionary and the founder of Quakerism in Ireland, spoke against Slavery.¹⁹

A case in 1677 ruled that Slaves could be held in trover. Habeas Corpus was established in 1679, with no exception for people of African descent.²⁰

The first English abolitionist treatise may have been *Negro's and Indians Advocate Suing for Their Admission Into the Church* by Anglican clergyman Morgan Godwyn in 1680.²¹

In 1685, France adopted a *Code Noir*, the most comprehensive code regarding Slavery at the time, which thoroughly regulated plantation life. The law was made not to protect Slaves' welfare but to further France's clear separation of domestic and imperial law — it was clear that Slaves could be whipped, branded, and mutilated as punishments, but the harshest punishments required a judge's approval.²² The code stated that Slaves could not own property and only gave them access to court for occasional testimonies that were regarded as inferior to those of free persons. Slaves were to be baptized and thoroughly instructed in Catholicism, and while marriage was subject to their owner's consent, Slaves' spouses and families could not be sold separately. Owners were also permitted to manumit their Slaves, who would then receive all the rights of citizens.²³ Some

¹⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 13.

¹⁸ V.C.D. Mtubani, "African Slaves and English Law", *PULA Botswana Journal of African Studies* 3, no. 2 (November 1983), 71.

¹⁹ James Powell, *Greatest Emancipations: How the West Abolished Slavery* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 247.

²⁰ Mtubani, 72.

²¹ Clarkson, *The History of the Rise* 46.

²² Caroline Quarrier Spence, "Ameliorating Empire: Slavery and Protection in the British Colonies, 1783-1865" (doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 2014), 36, <https://dash.harvard.edu/handle/1/13070043>.

²³ *Ibid.*, 37.

officials such as a colony's attorney general were also tasked with prosecuting particularly neglectful or abusive owners, and Slaves were allowed to complain to him, though they were punished if the judge decided their complaint was of insufficient severity or substantiation.²⁴

In the British colony of Germantown, Pennsylvania in 1688, four Quakers wrote a formal document arguing against Slavery based on the Golden Rule, the equality of men regardless of race, and the Christian need to preserve liberty:

Now tho they are black, we can not conceive there is more liberty to have them slaves, as it is to have other white ones. There is a saying that we shall doe to all men licke as we will be done ourselves; macking no difference of what generation, descent or Colour they are. and those who steal or robb men, and those who buy or purchase them, are they not all alicke? Here is liberty of conscience wch. is right and reasonable; here ought to be likewise liberty of ye body, except of evildoers, wch is an other case. But to bring men hither, or to robb and sell them against their will, we stand against.²⁵

Enough antislavery sentiment was stirring in the public by this time, if it hadn't always been at least to some minor degree, that poets, writers, and other artists lightly peppered the period constituting this history with expressions of sympathy for Slaves and discomfort with or opposition to Slavery. For example, in *Paradise Lost* Milton wrote "but man over men / he made not lord... human left from human free,"²⁶ and a 1696 play *Oronooko*, about a royal Slave, enlightened people on the subject.²⁷

In 1700 the influential New England judge Samuel Sewall, recently repentant for his involvement in the Salem witch trials, published an antislavery pamphlet.²⁸ He does not appear to have been taken seriously, and in fact his sanity may have been questioned for this position.²⁹

²⁴ Ibid., 48.

²⁵ Anne Moore Mueller, "Early Protests," *Quakers & Slavery*, <http://web.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/speccoll/quakersandslavery/commentary/themes/earlyprotests.php>.

²⁶ Clarkson, *The History of the Rise* 45.

²⁷ Ibid., 48.

²⁸ Powell, 247.

²⁹ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 204.

In 1701, Chief Justice Sir John Holt ruled against multiple claims to property over an enslaved black man on English soil, ignoring the contrary precedent of the earlier case of *Butts v. Penny*. His decision stated that “as soon as a Negro comes into England, he becomes free,” and that there was “no such thing as a slave by the law of England.”³⁰ In 1706, he made a similar ruling that “By the common law no man can have property in another.” These judgements did not abolish Slavery within England, as Slaves were still bought and sold in the nation and later judges allowed it to continue.³¹

By this time, Western Europeans had come to disapprove of the enslavement of other Western Europeans. In addition to assumptions about Slavery still being a natural, necessary, and normal state of the world, and assertions of the economic importance of Slavery, racist rationalizations for European dominion over Africans were gaining traction, as was scientific racism.³²

Slavery was commonplace at this time even in places that would a century later become strongholds of antislavery. In 1703, for instance, some 42% of New York households held Slaves.

³³

In 1729 two officials named Yorke and Talbot stated a formal “opinion” that Slaves did not become free upon baptism or setting foot in England, as some claimed.³⁴ The same year, Benjamin Franklin published Ralph Sandiford’s book attacking Slavery, entitled *A Brief Examination of the Practice of the Times*

In 1730 several chapters of Quakers publicly stated opposition to the transatlantic Slave trade like the Germantown Quakers had in 1688.³⁵

³⁰ William Newland Welsby, *Lives of Eminent English Judges of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centurie* (London: S. Sweet, 1846), 125.

³¹ Mtubani, 72.

³² Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 202-203.

³³ *Ibid.*, 203.

³⁴ “Strong, Somerset and Sharp – liberating black slaves in England,” *Institute of Historical Research* last updated October 2003, <http://www.history.ac.uk/gh/strong.htm>.

³⁵ John Kinsey, “Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Minutes, 1730 [extracts],” *Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends*, September 19-23, 1730, http://tritych.brynmawr.edu/cdm/ref/collection/HC_QuakSlav/id/936.

In 1735 the founders of Georgia banned Slavery in the colony, probably primarily in the interest of security as the colony was close to the Spanish territory of Florida and Spain offered freedom to Slaves for military service.³⁶

In 1749, Lord Chancellor Hardwick ruled that Slaves were chattels.³⁷ Baptist minister James Foster's *Discourse on Natural Religion and Social Virtue* of the same year called Slavery "a criminal and outrageous violation of the natural rights of mankind" and proposed a thought experiment questioning how the English would want other nations to treat them if those nations were more powerful than England and could enslave the English.³⁸

Some Quaker advocates personally criticized Slave owners. One Quaker named Benjamin Lay even harshly criticized other Quakers who were not taking a stand against Slavery. He published a text on Quaker complicity and, at a Meeting for Worship, entered clothed as a soldier with a sword, spoke at length on the evils of Slavery, and pierced his Bible, which was hollowed out and contained a bladder filled with red juice that splattered onto some Friends to symbolize the blood on Quakers' hands. He was disowned by the Quaker community.³⁹ Another more prominent Quaker advocate named John Woolman took a gentler approach, and stressed the importance of equality without directly addressing Slave-holders.⁴⁰ In 1754, the leadership of the international Quaker community publicly came out against the buying and holding of Slaves, and in 1758 a ban on Slave-holding was instituted in the Quaker community, preventing Slave-holding members from holding positions of authority.⁴¹ Note that the Quakers were a small and somewhat ostracized community in Great Britain and its American colonies.⁴²

³⁶ Betty Wood, "Slavery in Colonial Georgia," *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, September 19, 2002, <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/slavery-colonial-georgia>. The ban was overturned in 1750.

³⁷ Mtubani, 72.

³⁸ Clarkson, *The History of the Rise* 50.

³⁹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 91; Mark Kaharas, "Benjamin Lay," *Quakers & Slavery*, accessed November 24, 2017, <http://web.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/speccoll/quakersandslavery/commentary/people/lay.php>.

⁴⁰ Anne Moore Mueller, "John Woolman," *Quakers & Slavery*, accessed November 28, 2017, <http://web.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/speccoll/quakersandslavery/commentary/people/woolman.php>.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 78.

Scottish philosopher Francis Hutcheson's *A System of Moral Philosophy*, which denounced Slavery, was published posthumously in 1759.⁴³

Lord Chancellor Hardwick's successor ruled in 1762 that Slaves were free upon setting foot on English ground.⁴⁴

The Industrial Revolution started in England around 1760, and over the next century it transformed the British economy, infrastructure, and population. Historians have credited it for facilitating political movements for labor rights, electorate expansion, social welfare, education, and other changes.⁴⁵ By the late 18th century, Britons had developed an exceptionally strong culture of democracy, confidence in citizen's rights and liberty, and enthusiastic political interest.⁴⁶

This likely owed to a number of converging developments, such as the improvements to roads in the already small island, which made it easier to traverse.⁴⁷ Great Britain also established the best postal service at the time, which carried not just personal communication but news, and the number of daily newspapers increased both in London and nationally, as did coffeehouses where people could purchase, read, and discuss them.⁴⁸ Libraries and bookstores became more popular, as did debate societies, and debates in both the press and Parliament became more vigorous.⁴⁹ There was also a lack of censorship, which was extraordinary for the time and gave great freedom to those papers, books, and debates, as well as to future protesters.⁵⁰ Britons had little fear of arbitrary rule, and lived under a rule of law such that even the poor, while still unprivileged by the judicial system, at least had a jury, and former Slaves could take former owners to court and win,

⁴³ Powell, 248.

⁴⁴ Mtubani, 73.

⁴⁵ "The Industrial Revolution and the changing face of Britain," *The British Museum*, accessed November 28, 2017, https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/publications/online_research_catalogues/paper_money/paper_money_of_england_wales/the_industrial_revolution.aspx.

⁴⁶ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 214-221.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 214.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 215-217.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 217-218.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 218.

as several did.⁵¹ Britons were aware that they had greater liberty than the citizens of other nations,⁵² which may have made individual rights and liberty a particular point of pride and identity. Few other European nations even had legislatures, and none of them were more powerful than their country's King, unlike Great Britain's legislature, which was also partially elected.⁵³ Increasing numbers of Britons were working for wages,⁵⁴ and working-class white people were probably telling the Slaves who were brought to Great Britain and working alongside them that they should be paid.⁵⁵

A former Slave's account of white fellow sailors telling him, when he was a Slave, that his owner could not sell him and that they would stand by him speaks to the particular support that Slaves had from working-class white people, even if a threat of severe discipline ultimately discouraged these particular sailors from assisting the man. It's possible that working class white people's own experiences with such injustice were a significant factor in their support of antislavery. Other accounts show white prisoners assisting in the escape of Slaves who were jailed merely to prevent them from running away, and of local white laborers raising funds for the legal defense of a former Slave who a Slaveholder was trying to return to the West Indies.⁵⁶ That many white laborers had been uprooted and exploited may have made them identify with uprooted and exploited Slaves.⁵⁷

By around this time, in the mid-1700s, several British colonies had written laws to deter the mutilation and killing of Slaves, and some had written laws regarding minimal provisions and the management of those too sick to work, though these were likely poorly enforced and intended more for the benefit of the colonists than the Slaves.⁵⁸

⁵¹ Ibid., 220-221.

⁵² Ibid., 221.

⁵³ Ibid., 220.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 219.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 221.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 221-222.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 214.

⁵⁸ Elsa V. Goveia, *The West Indian Slave Laws of the Eighteenth Century* (Eagle Hall, Barbados: Caribbean Universities Press, 1973), 87-88.

In 1761, the Portuguese ruler established a “free soil” policy freeing all Slaves who set foot in Portugal, even though there seemed to be little or no antislavery movement in the nation.⁵⁹

British Quakers may have voted to expel any members participating in the trade in 1761.⁶⁰ In 1762, many Quakers began refusing to purchase goods made by Slave labor.⁶¹

In 1765 a Slave named Jonathan Strong who had been severely beaten by his owner and left for dead made his way to a free clinic run by William Sharp, whose brother Granville Sharp was shocked by his condition and asked him about his experience. William Sharp arranged for him to receive treatment at a hospital, where he recovered for four months, after which the Sharp brothers secured his employment as an errand boy. Two years later, Strong’s former owner saw him in the street, followed him home, and had Slave hunters capture him and take him to a city jail to be detained until he could sell him to a ship headed for the West Indies. Strong appealed to Granville Sharp for help, and Sharp took the case to court, where the judge discharged him because he “had not stolen anything, and was not guilty of any offence.” Strong’s former owner sued the Sharps for trespass and depriving him of his property, and to the brothers’ disappointment their lawyers quoted them the 1729 Yorke-Talbot “Joint Opinion” that a Slave was not free upon entry to England. Sharp, who was a clerk at the time and unfamiliar with the letter of the law, was dismayed and determined to defend himself, his brother, and Strong, so he thoroughly studied English law. Convinced that it did not sanction Slavery, he took his findings to lawyers at the Inns of Court who succeeded in intimidating the planter’s lawyers into backing

⁵⁹ Cristina Nogueira and Keila Grinberg, “Soil Free from Slaves: Slave Law in Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Portugal,” in *Free Soil in the Atlantic World*, ed. Sue Peabody and Keila Grinberg (Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge, 2016), 104. The Portuguese colony of Brazil, which became independent of Portugal in 1822, was the last Western nation to abolish Slavery, in 1888. Over a third of the Slaves who survived the Middle Passage landed in Brazil. See Mintz.

⁶⁰ Powell, 248. The same source says “London” Quakers did the same in 1772 and in Robert William Fogel, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* vol. 1 (Boston: Little, Brown and Company: 1974; reprint New York: Norton & Company, 1989), 33, says “English” Quakers did the same in 1774. Whether two of these three dates are inaccurate or the societies were effectively separate is unclear.

⁶¹ Mueller, “John Woolman.”

down.⁶² Sharp said Strong's case had "wonderful & unexpected consequences both in England & America & since in France,"⁶³ though what he's referring to is unclear.

An American Quaker abolitionist named Anthony Benezet published a piece titled *A Caution and Warning to Great Britain and Her Colonies in a Short Representation of The Calamitous State of The Enslaved Negroes in The British Dominions* in 1766, and by 1768 1,500 copies had been printed in England and were given to every available MP.⁶⁴ Benezet believed black humans to be equal in their capabilities and worth to white humans, which was rare even for antislavery advocates.⁶⁵

In 1769, Scottish philosopher Adam Ferguson published *Institutes of Moral Philosophy* which contained denunciations of Slavery.⁶⁶ Sharp published *A Representation of the Injustice and Dangerous Tendency of Tolerating Slavery; or of Admitting the Least Claim of Private Property in the Persons of Men, in England*, concluding that anyone who lived in England was a subject of the King and therefore subject to *habeas corpus*, meaning they could not be forcibly removed to another country, and asserting the humanitarian argument against Slavery. At the time, some had pointed to abandoned laws around the medieval custom of villeinage to justify Slavery, which Sharp warned put Englishmen in danger of being condemned to bondage again.⁶⁷ While Sharp privately received letters welcoming his publication, it was only reviewed once and there was no public reaction.⁶⁸ He took on other cases and developed a reputation for helping black humans.⁶⁹

⁶² "Strong, Somerset and Sharp – liberating black slaves in England."

⁶³ Steven Wise, *Though the Heavens May Fall: The Landmark Trial That Led to the End of Human Slavery* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2005), 22.

⁶⁴ *The Friend*, vol. 20, 78, <https://books.google.com/books?id=OHw4AQAAAMAJ>.

⁶⁵ Roger Bruns, "Anthony Benezet's Assertion of Negro Equality," *The Journal of Negro History* 56, no. 3 (1971): 230-238, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2716274>.

⁶⁶ Powell, 248.

⁶⁷ Wise, 50.

⁶⁸ "Strong, Somerset and Sharp – liberating black slaves in England."

⁶⁹ Wise, 59.

In 1771 British newspapers were granted the right to print speeches that took place within the walls of Parliament, enabling greater public participation in political discussion, which was furthered by the publication of letters from readers.⁷⁰

1772: Somerset v. Stewart

1772 saw the famous case of James Somerset, who had been bought in Boston and brought to England, and who sued for his freedom when his owner tried to take him to Jamaica. Somerset was being detained on a ship and Sharp secured a writ of habeas corpus from Lord Mansfield, the Lord Chief Justice, ordering his release from the ship so he could be brought to court.⁷¹ In response to the impending trial, multiple newspapers published editorials denouncing Slavery.⁷² Sharp made the unconventional move of sending antislavery material to the Prime Minister.⁷³

When the trial started, Francis Hargrave, one of Somerset's lawyers, asserted that because Somerset was being held for the reason that he was owned by Charles Stewart, the question at hand was whether Slavery was legal in England, regardless of the laws and customs of the Americas. Apparently West Indian interests were financially backing Stewart and directing him.⁷⁴ Stewart's lawyer's pointed to the Joint Opinion, which some lawyers regarded as law, and to precedents which regarded Slaves as chattel. Mansfield was more interested in principle than precedent or in an unofficial opinion that Slaves were neither free upon baptism or entry into England.⁷⁵ Stewart's lawyers turned to economic arguments and asserted the importance of Slavery to the proper functioning of society — centerpieces of Slavery proponents' arguments all the way to emancipation.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ Srividhya Swaminathan, "Reporting Atrocities: A Comparison of the Zong and the Trial of Captain John Kimber," *Slavery & Abolition* 31, no. 4 (2010): 488, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0144039X.2010.521336>.

⁷¹ "Slave or Free?" *The National Archives*, accessed November 24, 2017, http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/blackhistory/rights/slave_free.htm.

⁷² Wise, 145-146.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 147.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 155.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 157-159.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 163-164.

Interestingly, one of Stewart’s lawyers had defended escaped Slave Thomas Lewis in a similar case the year prior, at that time asserting, to the same judge, that English law did not allow men to own other men.⁷⁷ Lewis’s owner had lost him, along with the brig on which he was being transported, to a Spanish privateer, and later found and recaptured him. In the case Mansfield stressed that break in the chain of property, and the jury found the owner guilty and Lewis was released.⁷⁸

Mansfield eventually decided that the question at hand was whether or not colonial Slave law was binding in England or positive law established Slavery in England.⁷⁹ He seemed primarily concerned with the ramifications his judgement would have either way.⁸⁰ He determined that neither villeinage nor contractual slavery applied to the present case.⁸¹ He then suggested that Stewart resolve the matter privately by manumitting Somerset, which he did not.⁸² Further press ensued, including a knowledgeable and outraged letter in the *Gazette* signed only “Negro,” which addressed Mansfield directly and expressed his loss at comprehending why a man’s color was sufficient to “exempt him from the blessings of liberty.”⁸³ A London agent for Barbados, who had been attending the trial, hastily wrote and published his thinking, which included discontentment with the use of the term “slavery” instead of “property” and a commendation of the “solemnity” and “deliberation” of the Joint Opinion.⁸⁴

Mansfield eventually delivered his judgement, declaring that the “odious” practice of Slavery could not exist in England as it was not supported by positive law, and that therefore Somerset was discharged.⁸⁵ While the sum and weight of influences on Mansfield is hard to asses, he did

⁷⁷ Ibid., 163.

⁷⁸ James Oldham, *English Common Law in the Age of Mansfield*(Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 310-312, <https://books.google.com/books?id=nFNwQ9IahcwC>.

⁷⁹ Wise, 170.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 171.

⁸¹ Ibid., 172.

⁸² Ibid., 174.

⁸³ Ibid., 175.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 177.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 182.

have a niece whom he cared for and protected who was born to a white family member and a black Slave.⁸⁶

His decision implied that ownership of a human was, in its legal standing, like incestuous or polyamorous marriage: something assumed to be illegal unless made legal by positive law.⁸⁷ This stands in contrast to, for instance, the ownership of nonhuman animals, which was and still is assumed to be legal without the verification of positive law. The decision meant Slaves could now not be taken from England against their will.⁸⁸ The other several thousand Slaves in England at the time were not lawfully emancipated by the ruling,⁸⁹ despite Mansfield's declaration that Slavery could not exist in England, and papers with opposing conclusions indicate a confused public.⁹⁰ Many lower courts after this ruled against men who tried to assert ownership over their once-Slaves, and there may have been a de facto emancipation, though at least some Slaves were still sold or recaptured in Great Britain afterwards.⁹¹ Mansfield himself asserted that he had only determined that Slave owners could not forcibly remove a Slave from England.⁹² This appears to contradict his statement that Slavery was "so odious that nothing can be suffered to support it but positive law" and his decision that as such Stewart's case for dominion over Somerset could not be "allowed or approved by the law of England."⁹³ Later, in 1785, he ruled that "black slaves in Britain were not entitled to be paid for their labour."⁹⁴

Neither the use of *habeas corpus* to bring a Slave before court nor the legal outcome of the case were very novel: Sharp and Mansfield had only just before this dealt with the similar case of Thomas Lewis,⁹⁵ who was brought to court through a writ of *habeas corpus*, though that case did

⁸⁶ Ibid., 183.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 182.

⁸⁸ "Strong, Somerset and Sharp – liberating black slaves in England."

⁸⁹ Spence, 35.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 50.

⁹² Wise, 209.

⁹³ Ibid., 182.

⁹⁴ "Slave or Free?"

⁹⁵ Ibid., 116.

not require Mansfield to make a broader judgement on the forcible removal of a Slave from England. Previous judges had, however, declared Slaves to be made entirely free by setting foot on English ground, which seemed to mean little as other judges had ruled otherwise. In 1762, only decade earlier, a Lord Chancellor had said the same and asserted that “a negro may maintain an action against his master for ill usage, and may have *Habeas Corpus* if restrained of his liberty.”⁹⁶

The impact of the case on the antislavery movement is difficult to assess, as the movement would not take flight for another decade and a half. Perhaps it hardened Sharp’s resolve, but he had already worked on other Slaves’ cases and appeared committed to the cause. The case did draw significant public attention though, and whether owing to an opportunity to consider the institution from which they were so removed, or to a misinterpretation that the ruling freed all Slaves in England, it may have inspired many Britons to disapprove of Slavery.⁹⁷ However, two years later, at least as reported by historian Adam Hochschild, still “only a tiny minority of people in Britain openly opposed slavery.”⁹⁸ In parliamentary proceedings on emancipation it seems the case was only mentioned once, briefly and with no exchange on the subject.⁹⁹ Because of the attention it drew it may still have, however, increased the public’s private misgivings about Slavery.

It may have also influenced early Slave laws in America,¹⁰⁰ and was plausibly a cause of the fugitive Slave clause in the US Constitution, which may have inspired greater outrage in the US North than its citizens would have felt otherwise, though the US movement didn’t take off until quite some time after the Constitution was written.¹⁰¹ It also came up in several similar US cases,¹⁰² but to unclear impact.

Though Slavery was still not a mainstream topic in 1774, a planter in Jamaica devised an amelioration scheme modelled on the French Slave code and advocating strategies to promote a more self-sustaining Slave population and to give Slaves some protection from the harshest

⁹⁶ Ibid., 48-49; Mtubani, 71-73.

⁹⁷ “Strong, Somerset and Sharp – liberating black slaves in England.”

⁹⁸ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 53.

⁹⁹ HC Deb. June 3, 1833, vol. 18, col. [316-317](#).

¹⁰⁰ Wise, 200.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 201.

¹⁰² Ibid., 201-203.

punishments. He noted the discrepancy between law and practice and supported greater enforcement.¹⁰³ He also called for stronger efforts to Christianize the Slave population,¹⁰⁴ something planters may have generally opposed, though perhaps not very strongly or actively, out of fear of how Christian instruction may restructure social relations and Slaves' identities, as well as how it could make the public more sympathetic to their plight than if they remained heathens.¹⁰⁵ This planter, Edward Long, spoke about black humans as being as inferior to the white man as oxen or apes.¹⁰⁶

The same year, Methodism co-founder John Wesley published a pamphlet denouncing Slavery,¹⁰⁷ and the English Society of Friends voted to expel members involved in the transatlantic Slave trade.¹⁰⁸

The Continental Congress ceased trade with Great Britain and the West Indies in 1774, and the price of food in the West Indies shot up. Prices remained high throughout and after the American Revolution.¹⁰⁹

In 1775 the first abolitionist society was founded, by Quakers, in the British colony of Philadelphia.¹¹⁰ Thomas Paine was a founding member and wrote a letter to Americans arguing against Slavery,¹¹¹ and as his later "Rights of Man" would become famous among revolutionaries

¹⁰³ Spence, 55-56.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 57.

¹⁰⁵ Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 59.

¹⁰⁶ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 134. Note that this claim of black inferiority rested on an assumption that oxen and (nonhuman) apes were inferior. Keep in mind that at this time evolution and the genetic relationships between humans and other apes and animals was not yet understood.

¹⁰⁷ Powell, 248.

¹⁰⁸ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 206.

¹⁰⁹ "The British Antislavery Movement and the Abolition of the Slave Trade in 1807," *Animal Charity Evaluators*, accessed November 29, 2017, <https://animalcharityevaluators.org/research/social-movement-analysis/the-british-antislavery-movement>, see footnote 11.

¹¹⁰ "First American abolition society founded in Philadelphia," *History*, accessed November 28, 2017, <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/first-american-abolition-society-founded-in-philadelphia>.

¹¹¹ Thomas Paine, "African Slavery In America," <http://www.constitution.org/tp/afri.htm>.

and the broader public, his support of abolition may have influenced supporters of his other views on justice to oppose Slavery as well.

With signs of rebellion in America that year, Great Britain offered freedom to Slaves of American rebels who deserted their owners to join the British army, and gave the first 300 uniforms with the words “Liberty to Slaves.” This was merely a tactical use of the Slaves, and liberty for all Slaves was not on the agenda.¹¹²

Emancipation was, however, brought up in Parliament for the first time in late 1775, by an MP named David Hartley, who proposed, along with a small package of items for the pacification of the rebellious American colonies, that Slaves in the empire’s colonies be given access to trial by jury. He asserted that Slavery was “contrary to the laws of God and the rights of man” and declared a desire for its uprooting and destruction, but also caution about how to proceed, and expressed his hope that each colony would start taking its own steps to abolish Slavery.¹¹³ The motion for the package as a whole was overwhelmingly opposed.¹¹⁴

America declared its independence from Great Britain on the fourth of July in 1776, starting a war with the kingdom.¹¹⁵ The Declaration of Independence established the American identity as one committed to liberty and equality.¹¹⁶

The British offer to free deserting American Slaves was later extended to Slaves who deserted rebel owners merely to cross into British territory, whether they volunteered to fight or not.¹¹⁷

¹¹² Ibid., 98.

¹¹³ Cobbett, vol. 18 (1813), col. 1049.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., col. 1056.

¹¹⁵ “American Revolutionary History,” *History*, accessed November 28, 2017, <http://www.history.com/topics/american-revolution/american-revolution-history>.

¹¹⁶ Thomas Jefferson et al., “The Declaration of Independence,” July 4, 1776, <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript>.

¹¹⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 99.

America initially barred black participation in its military, but shortly allowed free black men and then Slaves to enlist, with a promise of freedom for Slaves and compensation for their owners.¹¹⁸

Americans had similar governance to Great Britain and similarly poorly treated white laborers, but its antislavery movement would take longer to take off. This difference may owe in part to how Britons had a much easier time communicating with all corners of their much smaller region in a time when communication was restrained by travel by horse, but perhaps more importantly to how there were fewer Slave owners residing in Great Britain than in its colonies and, relative to the colonies, virtually no Slaves.¹¹⁹ White people within Great Britain were for the most part uninvolved in or only indirectly invested in Slavery, and were not nearly as used to the sight of it. Despite the proslavery camp's enduring primary argument of the necessity of Slavery to Great Britain's economy, a threat to Slavery may have felt like less of a threat to people's way of life in Great Britain than it did in the Americas, where the Slaves were.

Great Britain was also set apart by its practice of naval impressment. Since the 1600s, its ports had been patrolled by armed press gangs, who would capture men without warning — on the streets, and even from their homes — and take them onto a naval vessel where they were compelled to work as crewmen, for unregulated durations. Great Britain dominated the Atlantic because its naval fleet was massive, and in times of war at least a third to half of the navy's crewmen had been pressed into service.¹²⁰ This meant that British men — mostly of the working class, though those from more privileged classes were not always protected — feared being

¹¹⁸ Michael Lee Lanning, "African Americans in the Revolutionary War," *The Gilder Lehrman Institute of African American History*, accessed November 24, 2017, <http://gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/war-for-independence/essays/african-americans-revolutionary-war>.

¹¹⁹ Estimates suggest that when emancipation finally passed in 1833, only 3,000 of a total of 46,000 Slave-owners — 6.5% — were absentee owners. See David Olusoga, "The history of British slave ownership has been buried: now its scale can be revealed," *The Guardian*, July 11 2015, <http://theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/12/british-history-slavery-buried-scale-revealed>; "How many Britons are descended from slave-owners?" *BBC*, February 27, 2013, <http://bbc.com/news/uk-21601374>. Around the time of Somerset's case in 1772, roughly 0.1% of the population of the British Isles was Slaves. See William M. Wiecek, "Somerset: Lord Mansfield and the Legitimacy of Slavery in the Anglo-American World," *University of Chicago Law Review* 42, no. 1: 95; "Enumeration abstract, 1801," *Online Historical Population Reports*, accessed November 24, 2017, [http://histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/PageBrowser?path=Browse/Census%20\(by%20date\)/1801/Great%20Britain&active=yes&titlepos=0&mno=2&pageseq=4](http://histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/PageBrowser?path=Browse/Census%20(by%20date)/1801/Great%20Britain&active=yes&titlepos=0&mno=2&pageseq=4). In the West Indies, Slaves constituted 80-90% of the population. See Steven Mintz, "American Slavery in Comparative Perspective," *The Gilder Lehrman Institute of African American History*, accessed November 24, 2017, <http://gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/origins-slavery/resources/american-slavery-comparative-perspective>.

¹²⁰ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 223.

kidnapped and forced to labor against their will in terrible conditions that included severe corporal punishment and foreign illnesses with high mortality rates.¹²¹ Impressment was so common that some merchant ships dropped off their able-bodied crewmen on remote parts of the coast and came to port with only their elderly or disabled sailors, who were unlikely to be pressed. These men also escaped when they could, and many fought back just as Slaves did.¹²² In the American Revolutionary War, press gangs kidnapped over 80,000 men, which resulted in riots in at least 22 ports.¹²³ We can imagine how these working class white men might sympathize with the plight of Slaves who experienced similar kinds and severities of hardships, and more.

Adam Smith's 1776 *Wealth of Nations* claimed that the economy would be more prosperous if it used cooperative instead of compulsory labor.¹²⁴

Also in 1776, Granville Sharp publicized knowledge he had acquired that Spain's island of Cuba gave its Slaves Sundays and other Catholic holidays off, and enabled them to use those days to work for pay, which they could eventually use to purchase their freedom, either directly or in degrees, and he claimed that the policy encouraged the local economy.¹²⁵ He failed to note that in reality Cuban Slaves seeking freedom had to seek out a judge to represent them, and that judge along with two appraisers representing the Slave's owner would determine the price of their freedom, after which the Slave would have to make an initial deposit before starting to receive some wage for the work they would then perform until they secured enough to purchase their

¹²¹ "Overcrowding and poor ventilation turned men-of-war into particularly lethal breeding grounds for disease. Dirty water and unsanitary conditions led to outbreaks of typhoid and dysentery. Rats, lice, and cockroaches spread diseases like typhus. In the Caribbean and other tropical regions, malaria and yellow fever devastated already sickly crews. During the American Revolutionary War, 18,500 of the British navy's seamen died of disease, compared to only 1,240 killed in action... The mortality rate on ships in West Indian naval campaigns could approach 50 percent from disease alone. Sailors and officers alike considered service in the Caribbean to be suicidal or, in the case of impressment, a death sentence... The Royal Navy's overall desertion rate hovered around 7 percent for most wars between 1689 and 1815, with occasional spikes above 10 percent such as during the American Revolutionary War... The threat alone of flogging, starting, gagging, ducking, standing spread-eagle, wearing the wooden collar, carrying the capstan bar, and running the gauntlet could scare potentially rebellious sailors into performing their jobs without incident." Denver Brunsman, *The Evil Necessity: British Naval Impressment in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Charlottesville: The University of Virginia Press, 2013).

¹²² Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 223.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 224.

¹²⁴ Powell, 248.

¹²⁵ Spence, 42.

freedom.¹²⁶ Very few ever did. Cuba did, however, have compulsory manumission for Slaves judged to have been extraordinarily mistreated,¹²⁷ and other forms of manumission and self-purchase existed throughout the Spanish colonies.¹²⁸ Voluntary manumission was also fairly common in Spanish colonies.¹²⁹

The same year, Quaker societies in England and Pennsylvania required members to free their Slaves or be expelled.¹³⁰

In 1777, during the American Revolution, Vermont's constitution abolished human chattel slavery in the state.¹³¹

In Scotland in 1778, a judge ruled that Slavery was not recognized "by the laws of this Kingdom," that "the law of Jamaica, being unjust, could not be supported in this country," and that Scotland's Criminal Procedure Act of 1701, essentially a *habeas corpus* act, protected the plaintiff "from being sent out of the country against his consent." The ruling was upheld by the Court of Session, Scotland's supreme civil court.¹³²

In 1779, Sharp recounted that in his private conversations with members of the House of Lords, the majority of them expressed "[a]bhorence" of the transatlantic Slave trade and "a desire to suppress it."¹³³

¹²⁶ Ibid., 43.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 46.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 43.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 47.

¹³⁰ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 206.

¹³¹ Powell, 248.

¹³² Mtubani, 73.

¹³³ James Walvin, *The Zong: A Massacre, the Law and the End of Slavery* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 169.

In 1780 Pennsylvania legislated gradual emancipation, providing that children born to Slaves from then on would be required to work as indentured servants for their mother's owner until age 28, at which time they would become free.¹³⁴

In 1781 Jamaica passed a weak Consolidated Slave Act that would only be in effect for three years.¹³⁵ It restricted Slaves' work days to 11 hours and mandated a day off every other week.¹³⁶

That year when a Slave ship called the *Zong* had been at sea longer than anticipated, and Slaves were sick and dying in high numbers, the captain threw 133 of his human cargo overboard in order to claim insurance on them for today's equivalent of roughly \$4,000 each, which would be covered by jettison law if he claimed the ship faced a water shortage.¹³⁷

The *Zong*'s owners successfully brought the claim for their lost property to court in 1783 with Lord Mansfield presiding and little attention from the press and public.¹³⁸ Sharp and Olaudah Equiano — a manumitted Slave and abolitionist who bore several names over the course of his time as a Slave, including Gustavus Vassa, his last Slave name and the name he became known by locally¹³⁹ — unsuccessfully tried to bring press attention to the case and to make the courts treat it as murder. According to Sharp, the *Zong* owners' lawyer said it was “madness” for Sharp to attempt to bring a criminal prosecution, as “the Blacks were property.”¹⁴⁰

1783 also saw a Massachusetts judiciary ruling that its constitutional declaration, put down three years prior, that all men are born free and equal, had the force of immediately abolishing Slavery, which the state did.¹⁴¹

¹³⁴ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 206.

¹³⁵ Goveia, *The West Indian Slave Laws of the Eighteenth Century*, 88.

¹³⁶ Richard M. Juang, *Africa and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2008), 639.

¹³⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 79-80.

¹³⁸ Seymour Drescher, “The Shocking Birth of British Abolitionism,” *Slavery & Abolition* 33, no. 4 (March 29, 2012): 576, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0144039X.2011.644070>.

¹³⁹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 34.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 81-82.

¹⁴¹ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 206.

Also in 1783, William Wilberforce, a Tory Member of Parliament who later became the Parliamentary leader of abolition, met a man named James Ramsay, and had what may have been his first serious conversation about the institution of Slavery.¹⁴² Ramsay was a ship's doctor who had witnessed the conditions on a Slave ship in 1759 and lived in a French colony in the West Indies for some time as a minister, preaching to enslaved individuals and welcoming them into his home, to the outrage of local planters.¹⁴³

Great Britain accepted America's independence in 1783 after eight years of war.¹⁴⁴ American and British negotiators agreed that the American Slaves the British had freed and enlisted would be returned to their American owners,¹⁴⁵ but the British and American commanders disputed this for some time and the Slaves' recapture never came to pass, though four decades later Great Britain paid the Slaves' owners or their heirs half the value of their appropriated property.¹⁴⁶ The 1780s saw an increase in the black population in Great Britain and particularly in London, as many of those freed Slaves came to England. They seem to have been accepted as members of the community, though not as equals — for instance, white people were privileged in hiring and many black people remained in poverty.¹⁴⁷ But the public may have had significant sympathy for the black community as many were veterans, a status they respected.¹⁴⁸

Great Britain's loss of America inspired a wealth of patriotic arguments against Slavery, perhaps because Britons felt a need to prove their commitment to principles of liberty after America liberated itself from them and founded itself on principles of liberty.¹⁴⁹ This may have been

¹⁴² “William Wilberforce (1759 -1833): The Politician,” *The Abolition Project*, accessed November 28, 2017, http://abolition.e2bn.org/people_24.html.

¹⁴³ Adam Hochschild, “The Unsung Heroes of Abolition,” *BBC*, February 17, 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/abolition/abolitionists_gallery_06.shtml.

¹⁴⁴ “American Revolutionary History.”

¹⁴⁵ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 101.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 103.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 143-144.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 148.

¹⁴⁹ Spence, 33. See also Robert Bucher Nickolls, *A Letter to the Treasurer of the Society Instituted for the Purpose of Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade* (London: James Phillips, 1788), 29: Reverend Nickolls wrote that abolition would “prove” the “equity and humanity” of Britons, and impart “liberty and happiness” to “nations yet unborn.”

compounded by some American antislavery advocates and states which had passed abolition or emancipation asserting that the liberation of their Slaves followed from their own struggle for liberation.¹⁵⁰ Half of Great Britain's Slaves, who were in the American colonies, were also now American property and only 20% as many Slaves were being shipped to British colonies.¹⁵¹

1783 was also the year in which British Quakers presented the first petition against the transatlantic Slave trade to the House of Commons.¹⁵² The response was friendly but insubstantial, and the petition was essentially neither met with support nor opposition — or even much discussion — in Parliament, the press, or the public.¹⁵³ A peer in the House of Lords stated that the goal “did credit” to the Quakers but was “impossible” as the trade had, “in some measure, become necessary to almost every nation in Europe.” Another said he went “heart and hand with the petitioners, and wished that something might be done towards abolishing an infamous traffic that disgraced humanity, whilst it heaped misfortunes on a devoted race of our fellow-creatures.” He moved for the petition to lie on the table, which passed “without opposition.”¹⁵⁴ Quakers had long since taken up opposition to Slavery and had experience agitating for their own causes,¹⁵⁵ but they were politically ostracized and socially marginalized by a largely Anglican community.¹⁵⁶

The Quakers also published *The Case of Our Fellow Creatures, the Oppressed Africans, respectfully recommended to the serious Consideration of the Legislature of Great Britain by the people called Quakers*, which argued that the abolition of the Slave trade was “required by the calls of justice and humanity, but is also consistent with sound policy.”¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁰ Brown, 141.

¹⁵¹ Drescher, “The Shocking Birth of British Abolitionism,” 572-573.

¹⁵² Quaker Petition to UK Parliament, June 16, 1783, http://gallery.nen.gov.uk/asset77386_1481-abolition.html.

¹⁵³ Drescher, “The Shocking Birth of British Abolitionism,” 574.

¹⁵⁴ Cobbett, *vol. 23* (), 1027.

¹⁵⁵ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 108.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 78.

¹⁵⁷ Judith Jennings, *The Business of Abolishing the British Slave Trade, 1783-1807* (Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge, 2013), 25.

The next year William Wilberforce began to reflect on his life, and with the advice of his reverend John Newton and his college friend and now Prime Minister William Pitt, left off many of the indulgences of his upper-class lifestyle and began devoting himself to causes he believed to be righteous even if they were unpopular.¹⁵⁸

For the next three years, a committee of six Quakers continued to agitate against Slavery, focusing most of their efforts on people of influence.¹⁵⁹ They published pamphlets, canvassed Members of Parliament, distributed literature and sermons to clergy, officers, bankers, investors, insurers, local magistrates, and school headmasters, and printed classified notices detailing the conditions of the transatlantic Slave trade in the London and provincial press. They were still largely met with indifference and assertions that it wasn't the time to tackle the issue, often wrapped in compliments to their compassion.¹⁶⁰

In 1784 Grenada planters endorsed a law giving each parish in the colony three "guardians" who would inspect plantations and receive complaints from Slaves. It also provided some protections for the old and infirm including standard clothing, food, and shelter requirements; prohibited planters from working Slaves at night with some exceptions; imposed fines for mutilation; gave labor exemptions to female Slaves who bore six or more children; and gave tax rebates to planters whose plantations saw such "natural increase." The guardians were unfortunately just other planters who had no interest in hearing Slaves' complaints, and British commissioners of enquiry later found the law entirely unenforced.¹⁶¹ Jamaica's 1781 Consolidated Slave Act expired that year, and was not renewed. Laws were passed, however, to provide hunting parties for runaway Slaves and to punish Slaves who stole horses or cattle by death.¹⁶²

James Ramsay's 1784 *Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of African Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies* which advocated for welfare reform, achieved great notoriety among planters and received substantial positive press.¹⁶³ The British had been aware since the 1760s that Spanish South

¹⁵⁸ Powell, 80.

¹⁵⁹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 78.

¹⁶⁰ Drescher, "The Shocking Birth of British Abolitionism," 575.

¹⁶¹ Spence, 59-60.

¹⁶² Goveia, *The West Indian Slave Laws of the Eighteenth Century*, 91.

¹⁶³ See Brown, 364-366; Drescher, "The Shocking Birth of British Abolitionism."

American colonies had offices of Slave protectors to mediate disputes between Slaves and their owners — one of the changes Ramsay proposed Great Britain adopt — but were apparently uninterested in implementing such laws themselves.¹⁶⁴ James Phillips, the abolitionists' printer, shortly published another essay by Ramsay on the positive consequences for Great Britain of ending the trade,¹⁶⁵ which was of little interest to the press, though the press did publish some letters in the ensuing drama between himself and several planters who slandered and attacked him.¹⁶⁶

That year Dr. Peter Peckard, a clergyman who had heard of the *Zong* case the year before and was disturbed by it, condemned the whole transatlantic Slave trade in a sermon, and the next year, after he became Vice Chancellor of Cambridge University, he assigned a prestigious Latin essay contest the question, “Is it lawful to make slaves of others against their will?”¹⁶⁷ A divinity student named Thomas Clarkson, who had no extraordinary prior knowledge of Slavery, entered the contest merely with an ambition to win, but through his research he became intensely uneasy with the institution. He won the contest, and with his thoughts now consumed by Slavery, he decided someone had to stop it.¹⁶⁸

Neither Sharp nor the Quakers promoting antislavery received enough public notice to be known to Clarkson at the time. A Quaker and family friend of Clarkson's, who had heard of his essay, approached him and introduced him to the Quaker group of abolitionists in London, including their printer, who published Clarkson's essay.¹⁶⁹ They recruited Clarkson — an Anglican — to be their public face, and enlisted Sharp as a chairman to sign their letters to Members of Parliament, knowing both men would be taken more seriously than the Quakers.¹⁷⁰ From then, Clarkson was

¹⁶⁴ Spence, 49.

¹⁶⁵ James Ramsay, “An Inquiry Into the Effects of Putting a Stop to the African Slave Trade, and of Granting Liberty to the Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies,” James Phillips, 1784, <https://archive.org/details/aninquiryintoef00ramgoog>.

¹⁶⁶ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 111.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 87.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 88-89.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 90-91.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 107-108.

a tireless and radical advocate, and travelled throughout Great Britain regularly to acquire information and witnesses and to organize supporters.

In 1783 the Marquis de Lafayette had asked George Washington, his old commander, to join him in purchasing land where Slaves could work as free tenants, in the hope that Washington's participation would set a precedent for such action. Three years later, the Marquis and his wife bought two plantations and their Slaves, freed them, gave them land, and taught them to become independent farmers.¹⁷¹ Their effort to establish such practice as a norm appears to have been unsuccessful.

Around this time, many charitable societies and committees were springing up in London, and in 1786 a Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor was established by a philanthropist and pamphleteer who held various eccentric opinions.¹⁷² Several notables donated to the relief committee, and its most generous funders were abolitionists who regarded black relief as part of the abolitionist cause.¹⁷³ The committee devised a plan to resettle former Slaves in a colony in Africa, which for abolitionists including Sharp sounded like a brilliant plan that would both help poor former Slaves and prove that Africa had resources beyond Slave laborers.¹⁷⁴ If the plan were to succeed, it could provide a vision of a future after emancipation. For some, removing black people from England was also motivated by racism.¹⁷⁵

The House of Commons asked the King in 1786 to provide for such a relocation.¹⁷⁶ Sierra Leone was decided as the destination because a supporter who lived there claimed the land was exceptionally fertile. Apparently no one thought it was an issue that Sierra Leone was a major Slave trading center, nor it would seem did they bother to verify this supporter's claim with the many other British settlers and traders who were familiar with the region and who presumably would, given the reality of the region, paint a less utopian picture. Sierra Leone's Slave trade

¹⁷¹ "Marquis de Lafayette's Plan for Slavery," George Washington Digital Encyclopedia, accessed November 28, 2017, <http://www.mountvernon.org/digital-encyclopedia/>; Powell, 249.

¹⁷² Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 144-145 and 147.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 148.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 146.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 148.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

activity worried the free black people who were otherwise interested in relocation, but after both the founder of the project and the local proponent fell ill and died, Sharp was left in charge, which alleviated their worries as he had by that time established himself as a committed antislavery advocate. Parliament agreed to provide transport and three month's worth of supplies.¹⁷⁷ Sharp laid out detailed plans for the organization of the colony, Olaudah Equiano was enlisted as a commissary — and fired last-minute after an argument with the white superintendent — and the next year 459 passengers boarded the ships — two dozen or so of whom deserted last minute with Equiano — including seventy prostitutes who were married to the black men,¹⁷⁸ presumably to rid London of them, and several white people who were recruited for their skills.¹⁷⁹

Their destination was not nearly as bountiful as promised; the white settlers did not recognize the black elected leadership; and they arrived to heavy rains which both prevented them from planting seeds in already difficult ground and brought malaria. More than a quarter of the settlers died in the first four months.¹⁸⁰ As supplies wore thin, many settlers, black and white, abandoned the settlement to seek jobs in the local economy — which was dominated by the Slave trade. Sharp was furious with them, particularly the former Slaves, for going to work in the Slave trade, even though they didn't have much if any alternative.¹⁸¹

The ideological divide on Slavery between the US North and South was by this time well established, and as the framers were writing the Constitution, they engaged in significant arguments around Slavery,¹⁸² which Britons may have been privy to. Under the threat of the Southern states refusing to join the Union, it was ultimately decided that the Constitution would give Slave states excess representation — known as the Three-Fifths Compromise — and require that fugitive Slaves be returned to their owners, in addition to protecting the trade in Southern

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 149.

¹⁷⁸ Joko Sengova, "Aborigines and Returnees," in *New Perspectives on the Sierra Leone Krio*, eds. Mac Dixon-Fyle and Gibril Raschid Cole (Bern, Switzerland: Peter Lang, 2006), 169.

¹⁷⁹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 150-151.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 175.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 176-177.

¹⁸² Steven Mintz, "The Constitution and Slavery," *The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History* accessed November 28, 2017, <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/creating-new-government/resources/constitution-and-slavery>.

states for the next twenty years.¹⁸³ The Continental Congress did ordain, however, that new states in the Northwest Territory would ban Slavery.¹⁸⁴

1787: Formation of the Abolition Committee

In late 1787 Jamaica passed a new Consolidated Slave Act, to take effect the following year, based on Edward Long's proposals from a decade earlier. The law included minimum requirements for food, shelter, and clothing, a mandate for Slaves to have an acre of land for growing their own food, protections for the old and the ill, Christian instruction, and a limit of ten lashes for corporal punishment, and provided that the mutilation of a Slave would result in the loss of ownership of that Slave, in addition to which killing a Slave was made a felony, and Slaves were given modest access to courts. The reforms were primarily intended to make Slavery more efficient and sustainable.¹⁸⁵

While Sharp wanted antislavery advocates to publicly advocate for full emancipation, the other London advocates — who almost universally ultimately wanted full emancipation¹⁸⁶ — thought abolishing the transatlantic Slave trade was more achievable, both because emancipation would involve interference with colonial legislature and because property rights were enormously important in British law and tradition. They were also convinced that putting an end to the trade would either result in the gradual demise of Slavery given Slaves' high death rates or compel planters to treat their Slaves so much more like free laborers that emancipation would be easy to campaign for from there.¹⁸⁷ Thomas Clarkson later said the decision to call for abolition instead of emancipation was made

... not on the ground that Slavery was less cruel, or wicked, or impolitic, than the slave trade, but for other reasons. It was supposed, that, by effecting the abolition of the slave trade, the axe would be laid to the root of the whole evil:—for what was more reasonable to suppose, that, when masters could no longer obtain slaves from Africa or elsewhere,

¹⁸³ Ibid. Interestingly, this section of the Constitution refers to human chattel slaves as “persons” and does not explicitly mention slavery — see U.S. Const. art 1. sec. 9. cl. 1.

¹⁸⁴ Powell, 249.

¹⁸⁵ Spence, 57-58.

¹⁸⁶ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 227.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 110.

they would be compelled, by a sort of inevitable necessity, or by a fear of consequences, or by a sense of their own interests, to take better care of those whom they might then have in their possession.¹⁸⁸

They established the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade — also known as the Abolition Committee — in 1787.¹⁸⁹ At this time, the very few people calling for abolition or emancipation were either seen as eccentric or naively idealistic.¹⁹⁰ Clarkson reached out to Wilberforce, who despite his deep conservativeness¹⁹¹ expressed earnest interest in the cause, noting that he had thought about it often.¹⁹² After some time inquiring into the issue further, Wilberforce cautiously agreed to bring a measure for abolition forward in Parliament.¹⁹³ Wilberforce was thought of as an exceptionally eloquent speaker with a “melodious” voice.¹⁹⁴

In 1787 the committee collected information about the atrocities of Slavery, held lectures, had some letters published in the press,¹⁹⁵ published a newsletter,¹⁹⁶ and distributed print material.¹⁹⁷ Renowned potter Josiah Wedgwood created the famous image of a black man in chains, pleading on his knees, surrounded by the words “Am I Not a Man and a Brother?” which became the

¹⁸⁸ Thomas Clarkson, *Thoughts on the Necessity of Improving the Condition of the Slaves in the British Colonies, with a View to Their Ultimate Emancipation* (London: J. Hatchard and Son, 1824), 1.

¹⁸⁹ “Abolition of the Slave Trade,” *The National Archives*, accessed November 29, 2017, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/blackhistory/rights/abolition.htm>.

¹⁹⁰ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 213.

¹⁹¹ Adam Hochschild, “William Wilberforce: The Real Abolitionist?” *BBC*, last updated February 17, 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/abolition/william_wilberforce_article_01.shtml. He for instance disapproved of women participating in public affairs, including for the antislavery cause, and was zealous about controlling what he perceived as vice. See Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 327 and 126.

¹⁹² Clarkson, *The History of the Rise* 241.

¹⁹³ Clarkson, *The History of the Rise* 254.

¹⁹⁴ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 160.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 118.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 128.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 127.

emblem of the cause, not only used on printed material but also sported openly by supporters on ornaments, medallions, shoe buckles, hair pins, cufflinks, pendants, and bracelets.¹⁹⁸

In parallel in 1787, a former Slave named Quobna Ottobah Cugoano, who was unassociated with the committee, published a book titled *Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil and Wicked Traffic of the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species*, which the public took so much interest in that it went through three printings that year and was translated into French.¹⁹⁹

Clarkson travelled to the major Slave ports of Bristol and Liverpool to acquire information on the Slave trade.²⁰⁰ On his way he learned of how traders were often very cruel people, including to white sailors, possibly owing more to the corrupting influence of their experience than to a selection effect. He heard of several officers who murdered white sailors, and tried and failed multiple times to prosecute such officers.²⁰¹

On his travels, Clarkson found that the Slave trading port of Liverpool was very hostile to — and physically unsafe for — abolitionists.²⁰² But in Manchester, where the Industrial Revolution was sprouting, despite significant economic involvement with the trade — they sold a great deal of goods to Slave ships, namely cloth, which was made from Slave-picked cotton — one in five people signed a petition for the abolition of the trade.²⁰³ Bear in mind that only men could sign.²⁰⁴ Soon after, in early 1788, Manchester advocates sent letters to the chief magistrates of every major town in Great Britain as well as to other influential persons, and spent a significant sum to advertise their petition in newspapers.²⁰⁵

¹⁹⁸ See, for example, the antislavery medallion at The National Museum of American History, accessed November 28, 2017, http://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah_596365.

¹⁹⁹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 135-136.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 111.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 116 and 118.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 118-119.

²⁰³ See Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 119-121; Seymour Drescher, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 216.

²⁰⁴ It does appear at least that some later petitions did include a few names of women who felt compelled to participate in the public life they were barred from, though not many. See Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 228.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 130.

The same month John Newton published an opinionated and informative pamphlet titled *Thoughts Upon the African Slave Trade*. Newton had several decades prior been impressed into the navy and he was a Slave trader for some time. Now he was a renowned preacher and hymn writer, who wrote the hymn “Amazing Grace” a decade before this, which would later become an emblem of civil rights in the US.²⁰⁶ He had not expressed opposition to Slavery in the thirty-four years since leaving the trade — including at the time when he wrote “Amazing Grace,” contrary to popular fiction — so his pamphlet may be an indicator of a sudden awakening of concern in Great Britain. The pamphlet was immediately popular, and the Abolition Committee sent a copy to every Member of Parliament.²⁰⁷ The committee also published an interview with a doctor Clarkson had met who had been on several Slave ships much more recently.²⁰⁸

Debate societies had hardly touched the topic of Slavery before, but in February of 1788 half of London’s public debates were about abolition.²⁰⁹ At two of those seven events, a former Slave spoke — likely Equiano or Cugoano, who published several antislavery letters in London newspapers that month.²¹⁰

Press mentions of the “slave trade” or “African trade,” as well as “abolition,” which were all previously very scarce, exploded that year, and thereafter continued to appear with substantially greater frequency than before.²¹¹ A news and gossip magazine called *Gentleman’s Magazine*, which had not published a single word on Slavery in 1787, mentioned it 68 times in 1788.²¹² The *Zong* massacre now became better known to the public, as abolitionists used it to raise awareness for

²⁰⁶ Note that the hymn was put to the tune we recognize today in 1847, and Harriet Beecher Stowe added verses when she wrote it into *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* in 1852. See Julia Franz, “The complicated story behind the famous hymn ‘Amazing Grace,’” *PRI*, April 20, 2017, <http://pri.org/stories/2017-04-30/complicated-story-behind-famous-hymn-amazing-grace>.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 130-131.

²⁰⁸ “Source 18 - Alexander Falconbridge,” *British Library*, accessed November 28, 2017, <http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/campaignforabolition/sources/witnesses/falconbridge/falconbridgeaccount.html>.

²⁰⁹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 129.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 136.

²¹¹ Drescher, “The Shocking Birth of British Abolitionism,” 577.

²¹² Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 129.

their cause.²¹³ A painting disapproving of the transatlantic Slave trade was also put on display in the prestigious Royal Academy.²¹⁴ Deciding they needed international advocacy to solve an international problem, the Abolition Committee had their pamphlets translated into the languages of the other nations involved in the transatlantic Slave trade. They sent letters to these other powers, and an American sympathizer sent a copy of Clarkson's essay to the governor of every US state. The committee appears to have been very committed to meticulous organization and efficiency.²¹⁵ They also sent newsletters to supporters and appeals for further contributions from donors, which was new at the time, like much of what they did, as charitable interest groups were unheard of.²¹⁶

Petitions received by Parliament in 1788 for either the abolition or reform of the transatlantic Slave trade outnumbered all other petitions presented that year. While previously most petitions to Parliament had come from people with status, 70% of the 1788 petitions against the trade were simply from "inhabitants" of a town or city, and that share would increase as the abolitionist campaign went on. Two dozen of these petitions were created at local public meetings, one explicitly inviting "the rough sons of lowest labor" to sign, marking a new age of broad public mobilization.²¹⁷ Some people, such as Adam Smith, had put forward free-market economic arguments against Slavery,²¹⁸ but judging by the moral arguments that appear to have characterized both support for abolition in Parliament and support in public discussions on abolition, as well as the fact that the grassroots campaign was organized by the deeply morally-driven Clarkson, the petitions probably focused on the moral issue.

Fearful of the abolitionist campaign achieving its goals, British merchants threatened to take their business to other nations, and moved significant capital to France that year.²¹⁹

²¹³ Drescher, "The Shocking Birth of British Abolitionism," 485.

²¹⁴ "Horror of Slavery Turns Art Into Protest," *The Root*, November 28, 2017, <http://www.theroot.com/horror-of-slavery-turns-art-into-protest-1790899097>.

²¹⁵ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 127.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 128.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 138.

²¹⁸ Adam Smith, *An Inquiry Into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nation*(London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1776), 159.

²¹⁹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 154.

Though the white abolitionists of the Abolition Committee knew Equiano and other former Slaves in London, there are no records of former Slaves strategizing with them or being interviewed for their stories. In general, antislavery advocates appear to have seen themselves more as lifting Slaves out of their abject misery than raising black humans to equality.²²⁰ Their elite Parliament may also have been easier to move through pity than a plea for equality.²²¹ Nonetheless, Equiano had become a public figure, writing a number of strong letters to London newspapers, and signing — and likely also drafting — a few letters from groups of black men in London. He spoke resolutely and did not temper his opinions for his audience, even praising interracial marriage, which white abolitionists would not endorse.²²²

Wilberforce was unable to raise the question of the transatlantic Slave trade in Parliament in the 1788 session due to illness.²²³ But Sir William Dolben, another MP who was a friend of Wilberforce's, took a group of MPs to see a Slave ship on the Thames, and a Slave Trade Act was subsequently passed 56-5.²²⁴ This was the first regulation of the British trade. It limited the number of Slaves a ship could transport, required every ship to have a doctor, and required every ship to record the deaths of Slaves and crew. The Abolitionist Committee worried that this would subvert the idea that the trade was fundamentally unjust. The act was weakened by amendments and often evaded.²²⁵

Abolitionists also applied pressure for official investigation of the trade, which resulted in ongoing hearings for a year. Though those hearings took place before the Privy Council's Committee on Trade and Plantations, which had limited political power, they put substantial information about the trade on public record. People who had worked in the trade in various capacities gave testimony, some advocating for and others against the trade. Though the president of the committee was supportive of Slavery, he was thorough in retrieving information.²²⁶ At that

²²⁰ Ibid., 133.

²²¹ Ibid., 134.

²²² Ibid., 168.

²²³ Ibid., 139.

²²⁴ Cobbett, vol. 27 (1816), col. 599.

²²⁵ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 140.

²²⁶ Ibid., 153.

time, no other country's government had investigated the trade. Clarkson brought a case of Slave subjugation tools like shackles, a punishment collar, and a speculum oris, as well as samples of African goods like wood specimens, cinnamon, cloth, and ornaments, to the hearings, along with a rope knotted into a large ball to illustrate how some sailors were beaten to death. The Privy Council did not call on any former Slaves to testify, but Equiano wrote a long letter to the committee's president and published it in a London newspaper. Clarkson travelled far and wide to find witnesses to the horrific conditions of the transatlantic Slave trade, but many would not give their names for fear of not being able to work in the trade again.²²⁷

On his travels throughout Great Britain, Clarkson helped establish local abolitionist committees. The chairman of the Plymouth committee produced the famous diagram of the *Brookes* ship, which the London committee reworked and expanded, actually showing fewer Slaves than the ship was recorded to have carried. The diagram was printed in newspapers, magazines, books, and pamphlets, and seven thousand posters of it were printed and hung in homes and pubs,²²⁸ making it one of the first images to be widely reproduced for a political purpose.²²⁹

The rise of abolitionist sentiment and the success of the extremely limited Slave Trade Act alarmed those with interests in the trade. In addition to arguments about the economic significance of the trade and the risk of it being taken over by — and thus giving great power to — Great Britain's enemies, they made dismissive, dishonest, and nonsensical arguments.²³⁰ For instance, several proslavery advocates tried to shut down the debate over abolition by insisting that Slaves would revolt and kill all the white people they outnumbered on the West Indian islands at merely hearing of the debate.²³¹ In one hearing a proslavery advocate claimed of Slaves taken from Africa that “Nine out of Ten rejoice at falling into our Hands,”²³² an instance of what advocates today often refer to as *humanewashing*.²³³ Another dismissed Ramsay's horror at Slaves

²²⁷ Ibid., 155.

²²⁸ Ibid., 155-156.

²²⁹ Ibid., 309.

²³⁰ Ibid., 140-141 and 154.

²³¹ Ibid., 140-141.

²³² Ibid., 154.

²³³ *Humanewashing* refers to the marketing of a product as being produced by individuals who were treated humanely, when in reality they suffered substantially. It is constructed like the terms *whitewashing* and *greenwashing*, among others, which indicate the intentional misrepresentation of a product. The term originated in the farmed animal advocacy

being burnt alive by noting that they were strangled beforehand.²³⁴ A famous admiral said Slaves were never flogged as hard as white schoolboys, and a former captain presumably either exaggerated significantly or lied outright when he described the Slaves of his ship receiving lavish amenities on board including cordials, pipes and tobacco, instruments, and attendants to wipe their sweat off with towels.²³⁵ Wilberforce explicitly addressed this claim in Parliament.²³⁶ Slave ship captains also maintained that they only bought black humans who were already slaves in Africa,²³⁷ which as noted in the Introduction is probably mostly true in the most literal sense, but is a significant distortion of reality as Slave traders drove the demand for that supply of Slaves.

In apparent response to this sudden swell of momentum against Slavery, Caribbean land prices were dropping and fewer new plantations were opening. The West India Committee — the political lobby for merchants and planters with interests in the Caribbean and the chief proslavery lobby — started levying significant taxes on its members' imports in order to fight the rising tide of abolitionism,²³⁸ and Slave prices were rising due to fear the supply would be cut off.²³⁹

movement to describe the abundance of misleading images, terms, and certifications that mean less for the animals than they suggest. See for instance Rachel Mathews, "Humanewashed: USDA Process Verified Program Misleads Consumers About Animal Welfare Marketing Claims," *Animal Welfare Institute*, March 2012, http://awionline.org/sites/default/files/publication/digital_download/fa-humanewashedreportonusdapvp.pdf. As the term *humane* is not restricted to descriptions of human behavior towards nonhuman beings, this report will use the term *humanewashing* to describe both proslavery advocates' efforts to make Slavery appear more humane than it was and the animal farming industry's efforts to do the same for their industry.

²³⁴ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 161.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 154.

²³⁶ As the notetaker wrote in paraphrase: "The truth of this observation was evidently the very reverse, and if it were possible to cast a *film* over the *eyes of mankind*, so as to deprive them of sight by a *total blindness*, the prevaricating mode of mentioning the transactions, could not be depicted in a more absurd point of view. The poor wretches were in such a deplorable state and unparalleled torment, and suffering such torture, that the surgeon who visited them, when bound two and two, could not pass without having his legs bitten by the slaves. Sir George Yonge affirms, that the stench was so intolerable as to be past all sufferance; and that in the article of water there was a miserable allowance. It was extremely worthy of observation to explain how the *songs* and *dances* were promoted. It was not a scene of freedom or spontaneous joy; for one man was employed to dance the *men*, and another to dance the *women*. If they found themselves inclined not to undergo the fatigue, certain persons were ordered to *whip* them into a compliance." Cobbett, vol. 28 (1816), col. 41-42.

²³⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 188.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 159-160.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 188.

The Privy Council issued an 850-page report with testimony from both sides three weeks before Wilberforce was to raise the issue of the abolition of the transatlantic Slave trade in Parliament in 1789.²⁴⁰ Most MPs did not read the report.²⁴¹ The abolitionists lobbied both houses of Parliament, and abolition seems to have been the hottest topic of conversation that session. The abolitionists also enlisted the help of poets, including the renowned William Cowper, whose poem “The Negro’s Complaint” was set to music and spread quickly throughout the country.²⁴² The proslavery camp launched a less successful musical play called *The Benevolent Planters*,²⁴³ along with a campaign of pamphlets depicting Slave owners as benevolent caretakers.²⁴⁴ Ramsay published an *Address to the Publick, on the Proposed Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade* and continued to receive attacks on his character, including from MPs.²⁴⁵ In Wilberforce’s eloquent speech to Parliament, he made no attacks on any Britons — but did speak harshly of the Africans supplying the trade — and said “We ought all to plead guilty.”²⁴⁶ While he said cutting off the trade would lead to better treatment of Slaves in the colonies, and a resulting prosperity on those plantations, he did not mention the hope the core abolitionist group held that abolishing the trade would lead to the end of Slavery as a whole. To the popular concern that France would take up any trade Great Britain abandoned, he declared that such logic would have to justify committing other crimes that may otherwise be committed by another person. The proslavery lobby convinced the House of Lords to push the bill back to hold their own hearings.²⁴⁷

Clarkson had planned to travel again to collect new witnesses and organize more supporters, but then the Bastille was stormed and talk of democracy was in the air in France, so the British abolitionists decided someone should coordinate efforts with French abolitionists, and he headed for Paris.²⁴⁸ Soon after he arrived the French National Assembly adopted the Declaration of the

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 158.

²⁴¹ Ibid., 161.

²⁴² Ibid., 158.

²⁴³ Ibid., 159.

²⁴⁴ Spence, 33.

²⁴⁵ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 162.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 160.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 161.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 163.

Rights of Man and Citizen.²⁴⁹ One of its contributors was the Marquis de Lafayette.²⁵⁰ French newspapers accused Clarkson of being a British spy, published his address in Paris, and accused the local abolitionist group of arming black people in the colonies. The French abolitionists discovered two spies in their ranks, likely the responsibility of the French planter lobby, and faced a few other troubles. The lobby also sent an agent to London to spy on abolitionist activities there.²⁵¹ After half a year of organizing with poor success, it was clear to Clarkson and the French abolitionists that France was too absorbed in its massive revolution to concern itself with the transatlantic Slave trade, and that the Rights of Man was only meant for white men.²⁵²

Also in 1789, Spain drafted a law to regulate Slavery in all its colonies. Though the law merely outlined existing common practice more than it proposed greater restriction, planters resisted and succeeded in preventing the proposed law from being implemented.²⁵³

Insistent that his plan for the Sierra Leone colony succeed, Sharp sent another ship of black and white settlers, many of whom abandoned the settlement, like those before them, to seek food and shelter with the Slave trade — the only work the local economy made available to them. The relief committee and the government had no further role in the colony after its original settlers first arrived, so Sharp and other abolitionists established a private corporation, the Sierra Leone Company, to continue trade with the colony, which was unprofitable. A British navy ship fired a shot that set a neighboring Sierra Leone village on fire, and its chief gave the British settlers three days to evacuate. After three days he burnt the settlement to the ground, and remaining settlers were evacuated on the canoes of Slave traders.²⁵⁴

Equiano also wrote an autobiography in 1789, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano; or, Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself*, which quickly became a bestseller in England and a popular read abroad, and was published in several editions and translations.²⁵⁵

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 182.

²⁵⁰ Powell, 250.

²⁵¹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 182.

²⁵² Ibid., 187-188.

²⁵³ Spence, 66.

²⁵⁴ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 177.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 168.

Many MPs, dukes, professors, and other persons of influence ordered a copy.²⁵⁶ Equiano prefaced each new edition with endorsements and lists of prominent patrons. The book appealed to the Queen of England to grant Africans “the rights and situation of men.”²⁵⁷ It bothered little with descriptions of the middle passage or what were by then publicly familiar economic arguments against the trade, and mostly spoke of his own journey from freedom, to Slavery, and into freedom again. He made use of the most popular forms of literature at the time — stories of adventure, riches-to-rags-to-riches, and finding God.²⁵⁸ He also presented himself as a courageous and compassionate hero taking risks to help those still trapped as he had been.²⁵⁹

Equiano toured the country to speak about his book, and tens of thousands of Britons were able to see Slavery through the eyes of a former Slave.²⁶⁰ He even went to the Slave port of Bristol, which seemed dangerous for any black person or abolitionist.²⁶¹ As he would find, new and growing manufacturing cities were especially favorable to antislavery.²⁶² He was also well-received in Ireland, where the people felt oppressed themselves and were advocating for better representation.²⁶³ White Britons, who largely thought of Africans as illiterate heathens, now saw an African who had earned his freedom through skillful tradesmanship and the hard work British culture valued, who was literate, Christian, intellectually curious, patriotic, and compassionate towards white sailors, and who had learned to play the French horn. He also flattered his British readers, even stroking their white supremacism by noting that the British “did not sell one another, as we [Africans] did” and saying he was “astonished at the wisdom of the white people in all things I saw.”²⁶⁴

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 171.

²⁵⁷ Jeffrey Gunn, “Literacy and the Humanizing Project in Olaudah Equiano’s *The Interesting Narrative* and Ottobah Cugoano’s *Thoughts and Sentiments*,” *Orality and Literacy*, accessed November 28, 2017, https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_64274_en.pdf.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 172-173.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 174.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 169.

²⁶¹ Ibid., 172.

²⁶² Ibid., 169.

²⁶³ Ibid., 172.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., 173.

In 1790, particularly around the time of Parliament's sitting, Wilberforce had many visitors, and hosted a dinner once a week for his abolitionist friends, who also met often at the Parliament Coffee House.²⁶⁵

That round of Parliamentary hearings ended in early 1791, and in the few weeks they had, the abolitionists distilled 1,700 pages of House of Commons testimony and the 850 pages of Privy Council testimony into a 648-page account to give to every MP before the next debate in the Commons. A Slave revolt broke out on the British colony of Dominica, which proslavery advocates blamed on abolitionists because Slaves had heard about proceedings in Great Britain and now, according to the proslavery camp, had ideas about their rights. Clarkson would later be accused of supplying them with ammunition. At the debate, as he commonly did, Wilberforce insisted that ending the trade would help the plantation economy.²⁶⁶ One proslavery MP asserted that Africans didn't object to the trade, and another that they couldn't be miserable because they showed an appreciation of fine things. Two days of debate ended in a 163-88 vote against the abolition of the transatlantic Slave trade.²⁶⁷

Vincent Ogé, a free biracial man from France's St. Domingue (later Haiti) who had met Clarkson in France two years earlier and told him of his intention to organize a revolt on the island, was finding it difficult to return to the West Indies because the French planter lobby was watching his movements and preventing him from leaving. Clarkson gave him some money to pay his way.²⁶⁸

Clarkson further distilled the testimony the abolitionists had given to the MPs into a book a quarter the size, and went travelling again to distribute copies.²⁶⁹ The book was a dense mine of information, and was intended to let the evidence speak entirely for itself. Investigative journalism like this was entirely new at the time.²⁷⁰ The copies also made their way to Slaves, and

²⁶⁵ Robert Isaac Wilberforce and Samuel Wilberforce, "The Life of William Wilberforce," in *The British Critic, and Quarterly Theological Review* (October 1838): 259-260, <https://books.google.com/books?id=eWtPAQAAMAAJ>; Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 188.

²⁶⁶ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 189.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 190.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 191.

²⁶⁹ The book would still be used by American antislavery advocates decades after British emancipation. See Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 196-197.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 198.

an alarmed Governor's Council of Jamaica reported that it contributed significantly to Slaves' notions of freedom.²⁷¹

Women could not participate in politics, but in response to Parliament's rejection of abolition, they came up with another way to harm the transatlantic Slave trade: a boycott of sugar from the West Indies.²⁷² Boycotts were unheard of at the time and the term wouldn't appear until a century later.²⁷³ It's unclear whether these boycotters even knew of the small number of Quakers who abstained from all Slave-made goods. The boycott was encouraged through purchasable pamphlets, one of which sold seventy thousand copies in four months.²⁷⁴ Clarkson estimated that 300,000 people were refusing West Indian sugar, a number which may have actually been up to half a million or more.²⁷⁵ This would mean approximately 4-6% of the population of Great Britain participated in the boycott,²⁷⁶ and it seems those participants had outsized impacts as sales of sugar from the colonies dropped by a third to a half. This may owe to higher participation among wealthy individuals who consumed more sugar than those less well-off. Sales of sugar from India increased dramatically. Some shops advertised sugar and other goods produced by "freemen." This focus on the consumer product of Slavery may have helped Britons understand their connection to it. Some pamphleteers sought to amplify that understanding by for instance saying that putting one lump of sugar in a cup of tea would result in a Slave's groan, the next in a whipping.²⁷⁷ One proslavery advocate published a pamphlet asserting on medical authority that the consumption of sugar was "a necessary of life; and great injury have many persons done to their constitutions by totally abstaining from it."²⁷⁸ Note that while sugar was Great Britain's largest import, Slaves harvested other products that Britons were aware of and did not boycott, including tobacco, coffee, and cotton.²⁷⁹

²⁷¹ Ibid., 197.

²⁷² Ibid., 192.

²⁷³ Ibid., 195.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 192.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., 193.

²⁷⁶ "Key dates in Census, statistics and registration, Great Britain 1000 - 1899," *thepotteries.org*, accessed November 28, 2017, <http://www.thepotteries.org/dates/census.htm>.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 194.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 195.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 194.

While Clarkson privately supported the boycott, Wilberforce worried it was too radical.²⁸⁰

In 1791, Clarkson recruited a ship's surgeon named Alexander Falconbridge, who had two years earlier written *An Account of the Slave Trade on the Coast of Africa*²⁸¹ to re-establish the original Sierra Leone settlement on behalf of the Sierra Leone Company.²⁸²

By the rejection of the abolition bill in 1791, many small Slave revolts had taken place throughout the West Indies and had been quickly suppressed, including a rebellion of free biracial people in St. Domingue later that year, which was started among others by Vincent Ogé, the man whose travel Clarkson had financially supported.²⁸³ In August, the island's Slaves rose up again in what would become known as the Haitian Revolution,²⁸⁴ the only instance of rebelling Slaves achieving colony-wide freedom. Many Slaves throughout the colonies had overheard talk of the “rights of men” and knew about Wilberforce and the abolitionists in Great Britain, and the Slaves of French-controlled St. Domingue were mostly born free in Africa and so had known freedom, in addition to which likely many had fought in wars before.²⁸⁵ Hearing about the French Revolution and seeing some of its influence on rebellious local white laborers²⁸⁶ may have encouraged them and the free black people of the island to revolt. A Slave named Toussaint L'Ouverture led the guerilla militia of Slaves. When the violent rebellion broke out in the North of St. Domingue, France reversed a very recent decree allowing some biracial men to vote, which compelled biracial

²⁸⁰ Seymour Drescher, “Public Opinion and Parliament in the Abolition of the British Slave Trade,” *Parliamentary History* 26, no. S1 (2007): 55, <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1750-0206.2007.tb00679.x/full>.

²⁸¹ Powell, 250.

²⁸² Anna Maria Falconbridge, *Two Voyages to Sierra Leone During the Years 1791-2-3, In a Series of Letters* (London, 1794), <http://www.sierra-leone.org/Books/Two%20Voyages%20to%20Sierra%20Leone%20during%20the%20years%201791-2-3.pdf>.

²⁸³ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 265.

²⁸⁴ Edward E. Baptist, “The Bittersweet Victory at Saint-Domingue,” *Slate*, August 6, 2015, http://www.slate.com/articles/life/history/2015/08/the_most_successful_slave_rebellion_in_history_created_an_independent_haiti.html.

²⁸⁵ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 259.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 266.

people in the South to rebel.²⁸⁷

Other famous revolts that had already happened and failed in the British West Indies by this time include Jamaica's First Maroon War of 1731 and Tacky's War, also in Jamaica, in 1760. Other revolts of various scales would start and fail — in the colonies and aboard ships, sometimes succeeding in the latter case²⁸⁸ — before abolition and emancipation.

The planters of St. Domingue offered the colony to England.²⁸⁹

1792: Gradual Abolition Passes in Commons, Postponed by Lords

In 1792, Great Britain was abuzz with enthusiasm for abolition, and the sugar boycott reached its peak.²⁹⁰

Presumably to quell the rebellion on St. Domingue, France changed its mind on black rights again and gave full rights to all free black people. St. Domingue plunged into further disorder when white royalists and republicans in the colony started a civil war. The republicans promised freedom to Slaves who joined them.²⁹¹ The rebellion came to the attention of Britons, who were horrified by it, in early 1792, several months after it started.²⁹² St. Domingue produced a third of the world's sugar and more than half of its coffee, among other crops, with double the annual production of all the British islands combined. The colony accounted for a third of France's foreign trade, and matched America's. It was the transatlantic Slave trade's largest market.²⁹³ Because of the sharply decreased production in St. Domingue, the sugar boycott back in Great Britain declined as the price of other colonies' sugar shot up, undercutting the boycott's goals.²⁹⁴

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 259.

²⁸⁸ ABS Contributor, "5 Slave Ship Uprisings Other Than Amistad," *Atlanta Black Star*, February 7, 2014, <http://atlantablackstar.com/2014/02/07/5-slave-ships-uprisings-amistad/>.

²⁸⁹ Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944) 147.

²⁹⁰ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 226.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 266-267.

²⁹² Ibid., 229.

²⁹³ Ibid., 261.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 229.

1792 also saw the highest traffic in the British transatlantic Slave trade to date, and profits for England were high.²⁹⁵ This may owe not just to the trade's success but also to the threat of abolition, which was probably amplified in people's minds by the rebellion in St. Domingue.

The West India Committee launched a media campaign, publishing articles and responding to abolitionist publications, vastly outspending abolitionists. They distributed proslavery books to libraries and “in the Country, particularly at Cambridge”; printed eight thousand pamphlets depicting Slave families as each having “a snug little house and garden, and plenty of pigs and poultry”; and had a pamphlet written asserting that sugar was a “nutritious, vegetable substance” that possessed “a power of correcting the ill effects arising from a too free use of animal food.”²⁹⁶

The Sierra Leone Company arranged for the immigration of 1,196 black men, women and children from Nova Scotia to the Sierra Leone settlement.²⁹⁷ They had relocated to Nova Scotia after serving in the British Army.²⁹⁸ Several of them had originally been captured by or sold to Slave traders in Sierra Leone. The company's directors still relied far more on optimism and fantasy than on the knowledge they now had an abundance of in providing for these new settlers, and as with previous settlers, things did not go well.²⁹⁹

After the death of Falconbridge, the surgeon who was sent to Sierra Leone, his wife published an account of her travels to Sierra Leone, including her voyage to the Caribbean on a Slave ship, and despite the death on board of twelve Slaves before the ship had even departed,³⁰⁰ she asserted that the Slaves were well provided for and treated with “utmost kindness and care” and remarked that Slave owners wouldn't treat Slaves poorly anyway if just out of a selfish interest to keep them healthy enough to be useful.³⁰¹

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 230.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 229-230.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 204.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., 199.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., 208-209.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 212.

³⁰¹ Falconbridge.

The first popular feminist manifesto, Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women*— which included a recognition of the fundamentally similar “prejudices” faced by women and Slaves — was also published in 1792.³⁰²

The same year, the King of Denmark decreed that the trade would be banned as of 1803, making Denmark the first European colonial power to legislate abolition,³⁰³ though the nation had such little stake in the transatlantic Slave trade that no public movement against it was needed to compel that decree.³⁰⁴

In England, 1792 also saw the first trial for the murder of captives on a Slave ship, which resulted in the captain's acquittal.³⁰⁵ The trial received significant press, suggesting public interest not only in Slavery but also the question of whether “blacks” were people who could be “murdered.”³⁰⁶ A series of stories about the captain's cruelty towards captured women elicited sympathy in the public,³⁰⁷ and the case was always contextualized by the debate on the transatlantic Slave trade.³⁰⁸

That year, Parliament received 519 petitions and 390,000 signatures for the abolition or reform of the trade — five times as many petitions and over six times as many signatures as the already extraordinary 1788 drive.³⁰⁹ The number of people who signed their support of the petitions surpassed the number of the nation's eligible voters. Only four petitions were submitted in favor

³⁰² Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 196.

³⁰³ “Danish decision to abolish transatlantic slave trade in 1792,” *The Danish West Indies - Sources of History* accessed November 28, 2017, <https://www.virgin-islands-history.org/en/history/slavery/danish-decision-to-abolish-transatlantic-slave-trade-in-1792/>.

³⁰⁴ Bertil Haggman, “Abolition, Scandinavia,” in *The Historical Encyclopedia of World Slavery* ed. Junius P. Rodriguez (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 1997), 9, https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Historical_Encyclopedia_of_World_Sla.html?id=ATq5_6h2AT0C.

³⁰⁵ Swaminathan, 483.

³⁰⁶ Swaminathan, 484.

³⁰⁷ Swaminathan, 491.

³⁰⁸ Swaminathan, 495.

³⁰⁹ “Petitioning and lobbying Parliament,” *The Abolition Project*, accessed November 28, 2017, http://abolition.e2bn.org/campaign_16.html; Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 230.

of the trade.³¹⁰ Wilberforce followed his speech at the trial with a call for a vote on the bill he had proposed two years earlier.³¹¹ Banastre Tarleton, one of the main proslavery MPs, accused the abolitionists of extorting signatures and lying about the horrors of the trade.³¹² He also claimed the mortality rate on the middle passage was only 4.5%,³¹³ in contrast to Wilberforce's claim of 12.5%.³¹⁴ The Duke of Clarence, a member of the House of Lords and the third son of King George III, asserted that he was "an attentive observer" of the state of the Slaves and claimed they "were not treated in the manner which had so much agitated the public mind," dismissing the wealth of evidence Parliament now had as insufficiently "full and substantial" without bringing forward his own evidence, and then repeating the standard argument and widely-held belief that the empire's economy, navy, and colonies required the continuance of the transatlantic Slave trade.³¹⁵ Another member of the Lords declared the Slaves appeared so happy he wished he were a Slave.³¹⁶

An Irish statesman named Edmund Burke, who in 1780 had written but apparently not shared a potential British Slave code for the regulation and gradual elimination of not just the trade but of Slavery itself, shared the code with the Home Secretary and Scottish MP boss Henry Dundas.³¹⁷ Dundas declared himself in favor of abolition and eventually emancipation, but "gradually" and without specification of how he saw that happening.³¹⁸

To the argument that other nations would take on the share of the trade Great Britain relinquished, Prime Minister William Pitt — who had been friends with Wilberforce since they

³¹⁰ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 231.

³¹¹ Swaminathan, 487.

³¹² Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 231.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, 232.

³¹⁴ Cobbett, vol. 28 (1816), col. 47.

³¹⁵ Cobbett, vol. 29 (1817), col. 1349-1350.

³¹⁶ Wise, 165.

³¹⁷ Edmund Burke, *Sketch of the Negro Code* (Indianapolis, Indiana: Liberty Fund, 1990), <http://www.econlib.org/library/LFBooks/Burke/brkSWv4c7.html>.

³¹⁸ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 232.

studied together at Cambridge³¹⁹ — argued that other nations did not have the resources to acquire what Great Britain would be leaving behind, least of all France, their main rival, while they were trying to quell revolutions in St. Domingue and at home. He pointed out that there would likely be no time when all the powers in the trade would agree together to abolish it, and asserted that Great Britain, as the dominant player in the trade, not only had the most guilt but would in abolishing the trade set an example other nations would look up to. To the objection that Africans would never achieve civilization, he offered that ancient Romans, on finding the people of England committing human slavery and sacrifice, could just as well have asserted that they would never achieve civilization.³²⁰

The Commons voted against the immediate abolition of the trade 158-109, but passed a proposal for its abolition effective January 1, 1796, by a 151-132 vote.³²¹ The House of Lords — which is comprised of appointed and hereditary nobility — had no interest in abolition, and stalled with their own hearings, which were dominated by Slave interests, until Parliament adjourned for the year, killing the bill.³²²

The French Revolution made the British government nervous, as news came to London of massacres of aristocrats, clergy, and royalists, and the capture and now execution of King Louis XVI.³²³ Great Britain entered the war against France in 1793 and Wilberforce brought his bill to the Commons a mere two weeks after the declaration of war. It failed 53-61.³²⁴ This decreased support may owe in part to a lull in interest given urgent priorities of war, and in part to the possibility of Great Britain's stake in the transatlantic Slave trade increasing substantially if it could take over French colonies.³²⁵ Two months later Wilberforce brought forward a bill for the abolition of the trade to foreign powers, which failed 29-31, and the Commons denied to hear a

³¹⁹ “William Wilberforce (1759 - 1833),” *BBC*, accessed November 28, 2017, http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/wilberforce_william.shtml.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, 233.

³²¹ Sylvanus Urban, *The Gentleman's Magazine* 72, part 2 (1792): 823 and 825, <https://books.google.com/books?id=N3zPAAAAAMAAJ>.

³²² Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 234.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 235-236.

³²⁴ Cobbett, *vol. 30* (1817), col. 530.

³²⁵ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 237.

bill for the abolition of the trade to British colonies.³²⁶ Great Britain sent troops to invade St. Domingue in an attempt to seize the colony from France.³²⁷

The abolitionists were growing more disheartened, and Clarkson was experiencing severe anxiety and burnout.³²⁸ The French Revolution also ignited a public scare and erosion of civil liberties in Great Britain. A friend of Clarkson's was charged with treason for gathering people with guns to defend his house against a mob³²⁹; debate societies were shut down, as was a working-class organization that advocated universal male suffrage; troops stopped peaceful demonstrators planting a tree representing liberty; and radical groups were infiltrated by government spies.³³⁰ Progressive politics were severely repressed, and abolitionist committees stopped meeting.³³¹

Proslavery advocates blamed the continuing rebellion in St. Domingue on abolitionists, and Clarkson was one of the few abolitionists bold enough to defend the rebels by pointing out that slaves had rebelled since ancient Greece and Rome, and by asserting they had been stripped of the "Rights of Men." It seemed the only politicians willing to support abolition now were those also willing to support republicanism.³³²

Despite this, it's possible that Wilberforce's bill would not have failed in the Commons each year if it weren't for poor organizing, though it still would have failed in the House of Lords. Debate attendees had voted unanimously in favor of abolition before the debate societies were shut down.³³³ At a meeting of metalworkers led by an orator who was soon convicted of conspiracy, thousands of metalworkers endorsed both republican reform and emancipation for Slaves.³³⁴

³²⁶ Cobbett, *vol. 30* (1817), col. 514.

³²⁷ David Patrick Geggus, "The British Invasion," accessed November 28, 2017, <http://islandluminous.fiu.edu/part02-slide06.html>.

³²⁸ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 237.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, 238.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, 242-245.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, 255.

³³² *Ibid.*, 243-244.

³³³ *Ibid.*, 252.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, 245.

In St. Domingue in the fall of 1793, some Slaves were declared free, after which all Slaves in the North were emancipated, though this changed their lives little as they were still bound to their owners. Then a Civil Commissioner with apparent sympathy for the French Revolution and emancipation freed his Slaves and encouraged other planters in the West to do the same, which they did. In early 1794 France emancipated all of its Slaves, prompted by the revolt in its prized St. Domingue, weak control of the colony, and incursions by Great Britain and Spain in the colony, though the Slaves continued their resistance because their lives were hardly improved.³³⁵

In early 1794, the Commons passed a ban on the trade in Slaves to foreign powers 56-38,³³⁶ but the Lords presumably postponed it because nothing came of it.³³⁷

A month later, the United States Congress restricted American participation in foreign Slave trading to the best of its ability without violating the constitutional limitation on abolishing the trade.³³⁸

The British Army started buying Slaves in 1795 which increased Great Britain's interest in the trade. Prime Minister Pitt stopped talking about abolition around this time,³³⁹ and the Seditious Meetings Act passed that year restricted public meetings to fifty people,³⁴⁰ halting public Slavery meetings and limiting antislavery activity for the next decade.³⁴¹

³³⁵ Sue Peabody, "French Emancipation," *Oxford Bibliographies*, last modified October 28, 2014, <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199730414/obo-9780199730414-0253.xml>; Kona Shen, "Upheavals in France and Saint-Domingue," *Brown University Department of Africana Studies*, last modified October 27, 2015, <https://library.brown.edu/haitihistory/7.html>.

³³⁶ Cobbett, *vol. 30* (1817), col. 1449.

³³⁷ Cobbett, *vol. 31*, may contain discussion in the Lords.

³³⁸ "Slave Trade Act of 1794," *The Library of Congress*, <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsl&fileName=001/llsl001.db&recNum=470>.

³³⁹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 275.

³⁴⁰ "Seditious Meetings Act," *Encyclopedia.com*, November 29, 2017, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/history/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/seditious-meetings-act>.

³⁴¹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 304.

A colony of free black people in Jamaica revolted after their leaders were seized en route to discuss grievances with local officials.³⁴² The governor of Jamaica advocated the use of bloodhounds to subdue the rebellious Slaves, which the British public, along with the King and many MPs, opposed so thoroughly that the governor's friends in Parliament felt compelled to not defend him.³⁴³

War was taking a significant toll on enlisted British men, and survivors returned home with stories of the terrible conditions of Slaves used in the military, and of Slaves fighting to free themselves.³⁴⁴

In 1796, Wilberforce's bill failed in the Commons 70-74. It seems would have passed if a handful of supportive MPs were not attending the opera, a trip allegedly sponsored by Slavery supporters.³⁴⁵

St. Domingue's uprising had inspired revolts in other colonies and American states, and a British General fighting self-freed Slaves on St. Lucia attempted to make peace with them by offering a vaguely reformed enslavement with "kind treatment and good feeling," but they knew better, and ultimately only surrendered on the condition they would never be enslaved again.³⁴⁶

The humanewashing of the trade continued from traders. Wilberforce's brother-in-law witnessed this as a passenger on a ship owned by Banastre Tarleton. The captain demonstrated the humanity of his trade by quietly uttering unintelligible words to two small groups of Slaves, who both responded with the same three cheers and a laugh — presumably meaning that he told them to do that, likely under threat — and the captain said this should convince him that Wilberforce's accusations of the cruelty of the trade were wrong. Wilberforce's brother saw the Slaves chained,

³⁴² Ibid., 282.

³⁴³ Sara E. Johnson, "You Should Give Them Blacks to Eat": Waging Inter-American Wars of Torture and Terror," *American Quarterly* 61, no. 1 (2009): 79, https://www.sas.upenn.edu/~cavitch/pdf-library/Johnson_dogs_and_torture.pdf.

³⁴⁴ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 281.

³⁴⁵ Clarke Forsythe, *Politics for the Greatest Good: The Case for Prudence in the Public Square* (Westmont, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 98, <https://books.google.com/books?id=8gMRsNyOA88C>.

³⁴⁶ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 281.

living in filth, trying to revolt, and attempting to kill themselves.³⁴⁷ While much of the industry’s humanewashing was, like this, either intentional misrepresentation or a combination of that and misbelief, some proslavery advocates seem to genuinely believe that Slavery was in the interest of Africans as a civilizing force.³⁴⁸

It seems there were also a few ships and plantations that were less bad than the others, or at least that it was easy for a naive eye motivated to see them that way to do so. An army physician arriving in Barbados wrote that “cheerfulness and contentment prevailed” on a Slave ship that just arrived, detailing that he found the Slaves were fed, fit, and clean, and that the Slaves on the first plantation he visited appeared happy as well.³⁴⁹ But with more exposure to Slavery, his impression changed, and like many soldiers who came to the colonies with no attachments to the institution, he did not like what he saw.³⁵⁰

By the time Great Britain captured Trinidad from Spain in 1797, antislavery sentiment had grown strong in Great Britain again, and both Parliament and the Colonial Office were debating the abolition of the trade and the amelioration of the harsh conditions faced by Slaves in the West Indies. The British were exposed to the Spanish laws and customs of their new island, whose slaving tradition was regarded as more benevolent. The island had, for instance, a Protector of Slaves, and liberal manumission practices.³⁵¹ Iberia had maintained its links with ancient Roman chattel slavery custom through the Middle Ages, so the Spanish slave code acknowledged slaves’ humanity and emphasized the possibility that they could regain their freedom.³⁵² It regarded slavery as an unfortunate, but necessary, fact of life, and as a stage in a person’s life, rather than their and their progeny’s permanent condition. This set it apart from other empires’ laws, which had been developed in the context of the transatlantic trade. Spanish slave laws were also not based in race, and prohibited Slave owners from altering slaves’ contracts, opposing a Slave’s marriage, or separating a lawfully united husband and wife.³⁵³

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 253-254.

³⁴⁸ Spence, 124.

³⁴⁹ Hochschild 285.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 286.

³⁵¹ Spence, 3-4.

³⁵² *Ibid.*, 38-39.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 40.

As a new colony, Trinidad was an opportunity for legal experimentation.³⁵⁴ For antislavery advocates, it was an opportunity to introduce industries that did not require Slave labor, and to ameliorate the conditions of existing Slaves prior to their eventual emancipation. It offered the chance to embrace a foreign set of regulations to make the industry more humane in the short term. For planters, the new territory was an opportunity to acquire land and Slaves much more cheaply than elsewhere, and they only seemed to endorse amelioration proposals that they believed would help perpetuate the practice of Slavery.³⁵⁵ In the island's first years under British rule, its Slave law was rewritten with reduced protections for Slaves, and fines were established for Slave owners who continued the practice of allowing their Slaves to rest on Saturdays, though it retained some aspects like minimum shelter, clothing, and food requirements, as well as limited days off from labor for mothers of multiple children.³⁵⁶ For years, both Parliament and the Colonial Office remained uncertain about how to proceed with legislature regarding colonial autonomy and restrictions on Slavery in new colonies.³⁵⁷ Both a First Commissioner and a Chief Justice of the island failed in their efforts to implement limited protections to Slaves and to free black people.³⁵⁸

“Spanish regulations” became popular among antislavery advocates, who took particular interest in manumission, the Protector office, and a restriction on Slaves being forced to work seven days a week.³⁵⁹

In Parliament in 1797, an MP who opposed abolition voiced that while he opposed the principle of Slavery, in practice he did not support abolition both because Slavery was tied through a long history to the empire's economy and politics, which would suffer if the trade were abolished, and because such an act could compel the establishment of an illicit trade, which would be even worse for the Slaves.³⁶⁰ He brought up the code Burke had written for gradual emancipation over a

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 72.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 69.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 75.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 132.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 44 and 71.

³⁶⁰ Cobbett, vol. 33 (1818), col. 252-253.

decade and a half prior, and called for a manageably gradual reform of Slave “manners and morality” in the interest of increasing their population naturally so as to render the trade less necessary. To that end, he suggested that increased clergy be sent to the West Indies; that rewards be given to industrious Slaves and to Slave women who bear many children, and punishment to “profligate” Slaves; and that as many women as men should be imported.³⁶¹ He motioned that Parliament request the King to recommend these measures to the colonial legislatures.³⁶² The motion passed 99-63.³⁶³ That year’s attempt at abolition failed 74-82.³⁶⁴

The Leeward Islands passed such a law the following year.³⁶⁵

In 1798 Great Britain decided St. Domingue’s army of self-freed Slaves had beaten them, and left the island.³⁶⁶ British papers described their leader Toussaint in more admiring terms than before.³⁶⁷ That year, abolition failed in the Commons 83-87.³⁶⁸

In 1799 Parliament authorized the construction of new West Indian docks to facilitate increased trade with the colonies.³⁶⁹ This was the last successive year since Wilberforce first introduced a bill for abolition in 1791 that he brought an abolition bill to the Commons, which again rejected it, 84-54.³⁷⁰ A bill limiting the trade from certain regions in Africa, in order to support the Sierra Leone colony of freed Slaves and encourage English industry in those regions, was also rejected 32-25.³⁷¹ Repeated failures seem to have demotivated abolitionists, war and sedition acts were

³⁶¹ Ibid., col. 252-269.

³⁶² Ibid., col. 269.

³⁶³ Ibid., col. 294.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., col. 576.

³⁶⁵ Spence, 60.

³⁶⁶ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 278.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., 279.

³⁶⁸ Cobbett, vol. 33 (1818), col. 1415.

³⁶⁹ *Reports from Commissioners, Inspectors, and Others*, vol. 43 (London: Royal Commission, 1902), 63, <https://books.google.com/books?id=J8s5AQAIAAJ>.

³⁷⁰ Cobbett, vol. 34 (1819), col. 565.

³⁷¹ Ibid., col. 1139.

preventing them from organizing and petitioning Parliament, and the wave of antislavery media had subsided.³⁷²

That year and the next, acts were passed to outlaw trade unions,³⁷³ restricting the freedoms of the working class.

In 1800, the US barred its citizens from exporting Slaves.³⁷⁴

Great Britain united with Ireland in 1801, becoming the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland,³⁷⁵ or the United Kingdom (UK) for short, and bringing 100 Irish MPs into Parliament, many of whom supported abolition.³⁷⁶

In 1802, after Napoleon came to power, he restored Slavery in the French empire,³⁷⁷ and the black population of St. Domingue rose up again.³⁷⁸ After a brief peace, France was at war with England again, which enabled British abolitionists to claim abolition as a part of Britons' moral superiority over their French enemies.³⁷⁹ Toussaint was no longer presented as an insurgent leader but as a prisoner of the enemy, and the British press and public took more of a liking to him.³⁸⁰ James Stephen, a prominent lawyer, MP advisor, public intellectual, and antislavery advocate wrote about how costly the Slave rebellions taking place in the West Indies were to the British empire.³⁸¹

³⁷² Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 304.

³⁷³ "Combination Acts," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed November 29, 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Combination-Acts>.

³⁷⁴ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 206.

³⁷⁵ "Act of Union," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed November 29, 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Act-of-Union-United-Kingdom-1801>.

³⁷⁶ "The 1807 Act and its effects," *The Abolition Project*, accessed November 29, 2017, http://abolition.e2bn.org/slavery_113.html.

³⁷⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 301.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 293.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 301.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 294.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 303.

Denmark's ban on the transatlantic Slave trade took effect in 1803.³⁸²

1804: The Slaves of St. Domingue Free Themselves

By 1804, all of the US's Northern states had legislated immediate or gradual emancipation, though some Slaves were still held through 1850.³⁸³

The black rebels in St. Domingue were able to push the French off the island, and in 1804 they declared the previously French part of the island an independent republic and named it Haiti, the name the island's native human inhabitants, since eradicated, had given it.³⁸⁴ It's possible that years of smaller rebellions and the duration and ultimate success of the Haitian Revolution significantly damaged Britons' image of Slavery in the colonies as a great and reliable source of wealth,³⁸⁵ particularly given the enormous value of St. Domingue in the West Indies. Since the Haitian Slaves liberated themselves, their revolution may have also inspired hope and resolve in those still enslaved. It may have also introduced or bolstered the concern expressed later that Slaves would eventually violently liberate themselves if they were not emancipated.

Wilberforce tried to pass an abolition bill in 1804 after a four-year hiatus. The bill passed in the Commons 124-49 — a massive success compared to previous years, and the first time immediate abolition succeeded — before being yet again postponed by the Lords.³⁸⁶

In 1805 James Stephen wrote a widely read book arguing that the UK should seize French vessels hiding under an American or other neutral flag, intentionally forgoing mention that much of the

³⁸² "Danish decision to abolish transatlantic slave trade in 1792," *The Danish West-Indies - Sources of HIstory* accessed November 29, 2017, <https://www.virgin-islands-history.org/en/history/slavery/danish-decision-to-abolish-transatlantic-slave-trade-in-1792/>.

³⁸³ Nicholas Boston and Jennifer Hallam, "Freedom & Emancipation," *Thirteen.org*, accessed November 29, 2017, <https://www.thirteen.org/wnet/slavery/experience/freedom/history.html>.

³⁸⁴ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 295.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 296.

³⁸⁶ "Wilberforce," in *Dictionary of National Biography* Vol. 61, ed. Sidney Lee (London: Smith, Elder, & Company, 1900), 213, <https://books.google.com/books?id=k8QcAQAIAAJ>.

cargo of these vessels was Slaves.³⁸⁷ It was not commonly understood that many British trading ships also flew American flags and that such a measure inhibiting their use could cut off two-thirds of the British trade.³⁸⁸

In 1805 Wilberforce introduced an abolition bill again but it seems it fell by the wayside, not making it to a vote.³⁸⁹ Convinced of the importance of property law by the West India lobby, Irish MPs who supported the bill the year before now defected.³⁹⁰

Wilberforce implored Pitt to ban sales of Slaves to the Dutch and French colonies the UK had captured in 1803. Pitt had the authority to regulate the trade of captured territory without consulting Parliament, and issued a decree in August of 1805, which he defended as a necessary expediency of war.³⁹¹

1806: Passage of the Foreign Slave Trade Act

Pitt died in early 1806, and Lord Grenville, who was both more committed to abolition and had more influence on the House of Lords, acceded to the office of Prime Minister.³⁹² Charles Fox, a prominent politician, became the Foreign Secretary and leader of the Commons.³⁹³

That year, when Wilberforce prepared to bring his abolition bill to the House of Commons again, Stephen urged him to instead propose a bill banning Britons from involvement in the trade of Slaves with France and its allies, which would have significant ramifications on the British trade³⁹⁴ as more than half of the British trade may have been to foreign colonies.³⁹⁵ In an effort to slide

³⁸⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 302.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 303.

³⁸⁹ “Wilberforce,” 214.

³⁹⁰ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 214.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*

³⁹² Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 304.

³⁹³ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 214.

³⁹⁴ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 302-303.

³⁹⁵ The Duke of Clarence said “out of upwards of 38,000 slaves, more than 22,000 were afterwards exported from the British islands to foreign colonies and settlements.” HC Deb. May 16, 1806, vol. 7, col. [228](#).

the bill past proslavery MPs, it was given to the Attorney General to bring forward and the abolitionists in the Commons stayed quiet about it, barely mentioning the evils of Slavery — Wilberforce did not speak at all.³⁹⁶ The brief debate focused on limiting trade with their French enemies as a wartime act, and its ramifications for the British transatlantic Slave trade were downplayed. The prominent proslavery MP Banastre Tarleton eventually ascertained the attempt to slide through an agreeable bill that would indirectly impact the trade, but was unable to convince enough of the few MPs who bothered to attend the debate, and the bill, known as the Foreign Slave Trade Act or the Slave Importation Bill, passed in the Commons 35-13.³⁹⁷

The House of Lords received a petition from Manchester opposing the bill, but the abolitionists hastily organized their own petition in the city, which garnered five times as many signatures.³⁹⁸ The Duke of Clarence insisted that the bill would “diminish nearly two-thirds” of the British Slave trade, and that other nations would merely fill the gap, and would not use the Slaves with such “tenderness and care” either. Another opposing peer appealed to the long history of the trade and attacked abolitionists as “atheists, enthusiasts, jacobins”; another asserted that the bill was “pregnant with infinite danger to the very existence of the West-India islands”; another professed that no man was “more inclined to the abolition of the slave trade” than himself but that he nonetheless had to oppose the bill on the basis of its economic impact, a concern another expressed; another asserted that Slaves were generally treated well; and another expressed his concern for the livelihoods of planters in the West Indies as well as for the welfare of Slaves if the presently “well-regulated” trade were banned because it would become a smuggling trade and be rendered “extremely severe and cruel.”³⁹⁹

A supportive peer was content to abolish the trade as a whole and rely on the natural increase of Slave populations as happened where, he said, they were “treated with common humanity”; another said British planters were in favor of the bill and claimed it would not harm trade in British goods; three supported it as a step towards the full abolition of the trade; another

³⁹⁶ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 303; “Parliament abolishes the slave trade,” www.parliament.uk, accessed November 24, 2017, <http://parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/tradeindustry/slavetrade/overview/parliament-abolishes-the-slave-trade>.

³⁹⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 303.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 304.

³⁹⁹ HC Deb. May 16, 1806, vol. 7, col. 236.

supported it because he thought it would harm the UK's enemies and cost them little as the lost capital would "easily find some other channel, in which it might be employed in a manner equally beneficial"; another expressed assurance that British West Indian interests would be "considerably advanced" by the measure; and a long-time abolitionist supported it on moral grounds as an effective measure for "justice and humanity."⁴⁰⁰

Prime Minister Grenville more or less acknowledged that the bill was abolition in disguise, but he already supported abolition. He suggested that the UK replace the trade in Slaves with Africa with industries that would "civilize" Africans. He expressed frustration with continued suggestions that Parliament delay abolition in the interest of inquiry on the subject, as such an excuse for delay had been made for 18 years by this time.⁴⁰¹

The Lords passed the bill 43-18.⁴⁰²

Historian Seymour Drescher claims that the bill had the effect of cutting off one-quarter of the British transatlantic Slave trade,⁴⁰³ though another estimates a change of three-quarters.⁴⁰⁴ The annual volume of the trade was a rather volatile figure, so this correlation may mean little. At any rate, it may have been perceived as substantially reducing the trade.

A month later, Foreign Secretary Charles Fox brought up the subject of abolition, and after some discussion on the topic, the Commons agreed to his motion to bring forward a bill for abolition the following year.⁴⁰⁵

While the economic impact of the Foreign Slave Trade Act on the British or whole transatlantic Slave trade is unclear, its passage reanimated British abolitionists, who were further encouraged

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., col. 230.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid., col. 233.

⁴⁰² Ibid., col. 236.

⁴⁰³ Seymour Drescher, *Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition* 2nd ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 29.

⁴⁰⁴ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 214.

⁴⁰⁵ HC Deb, June 10, 1806, vol. 7, col. 580-603.

by the biggest price drop sugar had seen, as this both limited planters' ability to purchase new Slaves and reduced British interest in the trade.⁴⁰⁶

The West India lobby ran a two-week ad campaign in newspapers and produced new proslavery pamphlets.⁴⁰⁷

In the parliamentary elections that year, for the first time, the transatlantic Slave trade was a major election issue, and several originally proslavery candidates were compelled to adopt abolitionism. A proslavery MP complained that the church, theater, and press were all endeavoring “to create a prejudice against the Slave Trade.”⁴⁰⁸

Note that the transatlantic Slave trade had been dominated by the British for some time.⁴⁰⁹ In peak years, British ships had transported as many Slaves from Africa as all other nations combined.⁴¹⁰ Based on the value of imports to Great Britain from the West Indies and exports from Great Britain to the West Indies, which increased substantially over the course of the 18th century, Drescher claims that “of all the non-European [trading] areas, the British West Indies were generally the most important sector to Britain for the entire century between 1722 and 1822,”⁴¹¹ though economist Philip R. P. Coelho estimates that Great Britain lost £1 million on net to its West Indian colonies annually between the years 1768 and 1772.⁴¹² Drescher further claims that while British economic survival and growth were never entirely dependent on Slavery, “to the extent that both were aided by overseas trade, slavery was more important to the British economy during the last decade of the eighteenth and the first decade of the nineteenth centuries,

⁴⁰⁶ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 304.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 305.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁹ Jane Webster, “The Zong in the Context of the Eighteenth-Century Slave Trade,” *The Journal of Legal History* 28, no. 3 (2007): 285.

⁴¹⁰ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 14.

⁴¹¹ Drescher, *Econocide*, 17.

⁴¹² Phillip R. P. Coelho, “The profitability of imperialism: The British experience in the West Indies 1768–1772,” *Explorations in Economic History* 10, no. 3 (1973): 253-280, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4879641_The_profitability_of_imperialism_The_British_experience_in_the_West_indies_1768-1772.

than ever before or after.”⁴¹³ At least since the mid-1700s, the British had also held the largest share of Slave exports, generally by a significant margin, even accounting for a slight majority of the entire trade in some years.⁴¹⁴

1807: Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

Early in 1807, for the first time in a decade, a full debate over abolition was brought to Parliament. It was widely believed that the abolition of the trade would lead to the end of Slavery within a few generations,⁴¹⁵ and this motive for abolition was widely understood.⁴¹⁶ Wilberforce, still leading the parliamentary opposition to the transatlantic Slave trade, did not want to risk radicalism, so he continued to stay away from talk of emancipation and opposed a younger MP’s proposal for children born to Slaves to be born free.⁴¹⁷

MP Sir William Young published a book estimating that between 1796 and 1805 the net income of the West Indian colonies had dropped by half or more.⁴¹⁸ This probably owed partly to debts accrued by planters who optimistically started producing too much sugar after France lost St. Domingue and was compounded by Napoleon’s efforts to keep the UK out of the European market.⁴¹⁹ An MP with interests in the West Indies argued in early 1807 that Parliament should financially assist planters, whose profits had been low for over a decade and were now gone. The West India lobby convinced Parliament to increase trade restrictions on France, subsidize sugar, provide tax breaks on British sugar-based spirits, ban the distillation of competing wheat-based

⁴¹³ Drescher, *Econocide*, 184.

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁴¹⁵ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 305.

⁴¹⁶ Fox had explicitly stated this motive in Parliament the summer before. HC Deb. June 10, 1806, vol. 7, col. 603. See also HC Deb. June 13, 1804, vol. 2, 653; Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery Throughout the British Dominions, *Substance of the Debate in the House of Commons on the 15th May, 1823, on a Motion for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery Throughout the British Dominions* (London: Ellerton and Henderson 1823), 130.

⁴¹⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 305.

⁴¹⁸ Sir William Young, *The West-India Common-Place Book: Compiled from Parliamentary and Official Documents; Shewing the Interest of Great Britain in Its Sugar Colonies, &c. &c. &c.* (London: Richard Phillips, 1807), 42.

⁴¹⁹ “The British Antislavery Movement,” *Animal Charity Evaluators*, see “The economic effects of the St. Domingue uprising would ultimately...”

spirits, raise taxes on foreign brandy, and take some other measures to support colonial industry.
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George Walpole, a former general who had first hand exposure to Slavery in the colonies and had fought black rebels, was now in the House of Commons and strongly supported abolition,⁴²¹ along with other new MPs who had served in the war in the colonies. The abolitionists hadn't had prominent military figures on their side before, and now MPs could hear accounts of Slavery from their own colleagues. When an MP brought forward the common argument that other nations would take up the trade the UK abandoned, one of these former officers retorted that this was like a highway robber justifying his crime by asserting that another robber down the road would have committed it if he did not, and complaining that he had already bought the horses to use for the robbery. Every MP also knew that France, having lost their crown jewel St. Domingue, the most productive sugar colony, would no longer be able to dominate the sugar market even if abolition passed.⁴²² Predicting the inevitability of abolition, proslavery MPs who did not want to be left behind defected to abolitionism. With the working class agitated, upper class MPs may also have seen this as a concession to the public that threatened their own ways of life less than concessions for the republican reforms they also wanted.⁴²³

After more than a century and a half of carrying more than three million captive humans in total across the Atlantic, and two decades after the first introduction of the bill to abolish the transatlantic Slave trade, Parliament finally passed abolition 100-36 or 74% in the Lords⁴²⁴ and "without a division" in the Commons.⁴²⁵ The bill penalized engagement in the trade with fines.⁴²⁶ King George III assented three weeks later, turning the bill into law effective just over a month afterwards.⁴²⁷

⁴²⁰ Ibid., see "On the cusp of abolition in 1807..."

⁴²¹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 305.

⁴²² Ibid., 306.

⁴²³ Ibid., 307.

⁴²⁴ HL Deb. February 5, 1807, vol. 8, col. 672.

⁴²⁵ HC Deb. March 16, 1807, vol. 9, col. 140.

⁴²⁶ "Abolition," *National Archives*, accessed November 29, 2017, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/slavery/pdf/abolition.pdf>.

⁴²⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 307.

There was no large scale antislavery movement in the US yet, but some in the North supported a ban on the trade, and according to Prime Minister Grenville a majority of the US was hostile to the trade and the whole of the US was “professedly more or less, against the trade” with the exception of Carolina.⁴²⁸ Because the South’s Slave population was not only self-sustaining but increasing due to domestic births, banning the trade was little threat to its planters. The US government initiated, debated, and passed a ban on the trade at the same time as the British Parliament passed its ban, to take effect the next year.⁴²⁹ However, with little public momentum against the trade, the government had little reason to enforce the ban.⁴³⁰

The Abolition Committee now dissolved, having succeeded in its aims, and a new organization called the African Institution was established, for the purposes of ensuring enforcement, promoting Slave-free commerce with Africa, and encouraging other nations to abandon the trade.⁴³¹ It does not seem they played an important role in the broader British effort to advance these goals.⁴³²

Both abolitionists and the planter lobby — which was interested in stifling competitors who had the advantage of continued access to new Slaves — advocated for the British navy to enforce the British and American bans, and the UK gradually assigned up to a third of its navy’s ships to patrol the Atlantic, intercepting Slave ships from all nations⁴³³ and leveraging their economic and political power over them.⁴³⁴ Other colonies and nations instituted their own bans on the trade, either within their border or for their citizens, in short order, starting with Mexico and Venezuela in 1808 and Chile in 1810.⁴³⁵

⁴²⁸ HC Deb. May 16, 1806, vol. 7, col. 233.

⁴²⁹ “Congress abolishes the African slave trade,” *History*, accessed November 29, 2017, <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/congress-abolishes-the-african-slave-trade>.

⁴³⁰ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 309.

⁴³¹ Powell, 84.

⁴³² *Ibid.*, 85.

⁴³³ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 310.

⁴³⁴ Toyin Falola and Amanda Warnock, introduction, in *Encyclopedia of the Middle Passage* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2007), 21.

⁴³⁵ Powell, 250.

Spain emancipated the Slaves in most of its colonies in 1811, excluding Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Santo Domingo. The same year, Chile freed children thereafter born to slaves,⁴³⁶ and Argentina adopted a law for gradual emancipation.⁴³⁷

The fines imposed by the 1807 ban were not sufficient to deter the British trade, so in 1811 engagement in the trade was made a felony.⁴³⁸

For a time, Slaves on captured ships were compelled into the military, and after wartime, were left in Sierra Leone under colonial rule. Europeans now travelled the African coast to trade in commodities other than Slaves, which led to an increase in indigenous Slavery as local rulers subjected more people to Slavery to put them to work harvesting these commodities.⁴³⁹

Several now aging abolitionists, including Sharp, died within a few years of abolition, and others turned their attentions to new political projects.⁴⁴⁰ Leading abolitionists remained silent on emancipation, and Stephen may have been the only one who did not share the common confidence that the international death of the trade would lead to the death of whole institution of Slavery.⁴⁴¹

Wilberforce sincerely believed his countrymen with interests in Slavery to be merely “utterly unacquainted with the true nature and practical character” of the institution,⁴⁴² though they had been exposed to the same substantial testimony that he had over the previous two decades. Sharp

⁴³⁶ Martha J. Cutter, *The Illustrated Slave: Empathy, Graphic Narrative, and the Visual Culture of the Transatlantic Abolition Movement, 1800-1852* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2017), 32.

⁴³⁷ Powell, 250.

⁴³⁸ An Act for Rendering More Effectual an Act made in the Forty Seventh Year of His Majesty's Reign, entitled An Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, also known as the Slave Trade Felony Act, 51 Geo III C 23, May 14, 1811.

⁴³⁹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 310-311.

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 311-314.

⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 322.

⁴⁴² *Ibid.*

had similarly written in 1787 that “the nature of the slave-trade needs only to be known to be detested,” and Clarkson held the same confidence in rational appeals.⁴⁴³

Note that Wilberforce, even as the parliamentary leader of the abolitionist movement, held racist enough beliefs that at a public dinner he chaired for the African and Asiatic Society he had Africans and Asians eat at the opposite end of the table from white people, separated by a screen.⁴⁴⁴ He was generally conservative in other matters as well. For instance, he scolded a woman for “a certain quickness of reply which is unbecoming the submissive obedient demeanour which certainly should distinguish the wife towards her husband,” declared the theatre “most pernicious,” opposed expanding the electorate,⁴⁴⁵ and opposed wage increases for laborers and other disruptions of what he saw as the God-given social order, even though he was personally very charitable with the poor.⁴⁴⁶ While James Stephen may have also been more conservative in his thoughts on social hierarchy than other abolitionists, he would prove to be one of the few interested in giving black humans full rights of citizenship, including the vote, though he only advocated for that after emancipation.⁴⁴⁷

In 1813 Sweden banned the trade⁴⁴⁸ and Argentina adopted gradual emancipation.⁴⁴⁹ In 1814 The Netherlands banned the trade⁴⁵⁰ and Columbia adopted gradual emancipation.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁴³ Ibid., 366.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid., 314.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid., 124.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid., 314-315.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid., 349.

⁴⁴⁸ “CHRONOLOGY-Who banned slavery when?” *Reuters*, March 22, 2007, <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-slavery/chronology-who-banned-slavery-when-idUSL1561464920070322>.

⁴⁴⁹ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 206.

⁴⁵⁰ “CHRONOLOGY-Who banned slavery when?”

⁴⁵¹ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 207.

In 1813 a contemporary statistician estimated that West Indian Slave colonies produced 5% of the British empire's total income.⁴⁵² He did not provide an estimate for counterfactual forms of labor.

After Napoleon was defeated in 1814, the peace treaty between the UK and France allowed France to resume their transatlantic Slave trade for five years. British abolitionists organized rapidly to lobby Parliament, collecting more than 750,000 signatures — representing one in 16 Britons, out of a total population of around 12 million including women and children who could not sign — in just over a month, and the kings of the UK and France were persuaded not to let France resume the trade. Unfortunately the ban was not enforced and France's trade continued.⁴⁵³

In 1815 the UK, France, Prussia, and Russia — the latter two only supplying moral support as they were not involved in the trade — authorized the British Royal Navy to search suspected Slave ships. The same year France, Spain, and Portugal were persuaded to sign a general declaration against the trade, and Portugal agreed to only supply Slaves to Portuguese colonies. In 1817 the UK and Portugal authorized each other to search ships flying their flags, and the UK gave Spain a large loan in exchange for signing a treaty banning Spanish citizens from participating in the trade.⁴⁵⁴

Also in 1815, a small group of pamphleteers, radical MPs, and reformers within the navy started informally campaigning against naval impressment. Initially, they directed significant attention to William Wilberforce and other antislavery MPs who supported impressment despite opposing the transatlantic Slave trade and Slavery.⁴⁵⁵

In 1816 there was a major Slave revolt on the British-colonized island of Barbados, which had seen no Slave rebellions in over a century.⁴⁵⁶ One of the leaders, Nanny Grigg — a woman, which was atypical of Slave rebellion leadership — was a literate domestic Slave who had reportedly

⁴⁵² Drescher, *Econocide*, 24.

⁴⁵³ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 317-318.

⁴⁵⁴ Powell, 250-251.

⁴⁵⁵ Brunsman, 270.

⁴⁵⁶ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 318.

read that Slaves were to be freed.⁴⁵⁷ As in several earlier rebellions in the colonies, Wilberforce was hailed by insurgents and hopeful Slaves as a savior. Like every uprising before it, with the single exception of the over a decade-long rebellion in St. Domingue, the revolt was suppressed.

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Robert Wedderburn, a free-born biracial advocate of workers' rights and antislavery, wrote pamphlets aiming to inspire revolution in Jamaica, where he was born. Planters were so afraid of such propaganda that they offered Slaves turning in a single copy of the work their freedom, and free people were offered a Slave.⁴⁵⁹

France officially banned the transatlantic Slave trade in 1817, though no penalties were stipulated and the ban was not to take effect until 1826, and Portugal banned it north of the equator in 1819.⁴⁶⁰

Parliament passed legislation for Slave registration in 1819, to deter illicit trading.⁴⁶¹ The UK also established a naval squadron to patrol the west coast of Africa to deter the international Slave trade.⁴⁶² The risk of capture seems to have raised the cost of trading so substantially that the whole international trade in Slaves from patrolled regions was reduced by 75%. Estimates suggest that transatlantic Slave trade suppression cost the UK around £12.5 million, 60% of which was accounted for by the squadron. Indirect costs many have amounted to another £16 million.⁴⁶³

In the 1820s some American antislavery advocates took a page out of the British advocates' book and boycotted products made by Slave labor, though instead of focusing on a single product like sugar, they eschewed all Slave-made goods. Some stores advertised or even exclusively sold goods

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid., 319.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid., 320.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., 320-321.

⁴⁶⁰ "CHRONOLOGY-Who banned slavery when?"; Powell, 251.

⁴⁶¹ HL Deb. July 13, 1819, vol. 40, col. 1581.

⁴⁶² Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 207.

⁴⁶³ Ibid., 218.

made by free labor.⁴⁶⁴ The movement did not catch on, and it does not appear that Slave-holders or politicians gave this “free produce” movement much attention, nor apparently did it have an economic impact on Slavery. Critics argued that free labor products were unaffordable to the poor, and that the line between Slave-made and free-labor goods was fuzzier and much more complicated than the movement made it appear. Critics within the antislavery movement worried that a focus on consumer purity would divert energy from and stymie the political fight. Within two decades, antislavery leaders who had originally rallied around the boycott, including William Lloyd Garrison, abandoned the consumer movement in favor of political strategies.⁴⁶⁵ Some individuals in the UK may have still been refusing Slave-made sugar and other goods at this time, but there appears to have been no momentum for a consumer movement.

Around this time, planters were somewhat improving their Slaves’ health and safety, to increase Slave birth rates.⁴⁶⁶

1823: Formation of the London Anti-Slavery Society

Realizing that after a decade and a half, the abolition of the transatlantic Slave trade did not appear to be leading to the end of Slavery on its own, the remaining core of the original Abolition Committee and a new generation of antislavery advocates met in 1823 to form the London Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery Throughout the British Dominions, also known as the London Anti-Slavery Society.⁴⁶⁷ The President of the Society was a prince and a duke — Prince William Frederick, Duke of Gloucester.⁴⁶⁸ We can gather from the society’s name that its members made their end goal clear but emphasized a smooth transition to that goal. Clarkson went on the road again, and the West India Committee published proslavery

⁴⁶⁴ Lawrence B. Glickman, *Buying Power: A History of Consumer Activism in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 69.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 83-84.

⁴⁶⁶ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 322-323.

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 323.

⁴⁶⁸ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 220.

propaganda again.⁴⁶⁹ Wilberforce passed on Parliamentary leadership of the antislavery cause to Thomas Fowell Buxton.⁴⁷⁰

When Buxton introduced a motion that year to gradually eliminate Slavery, he started by expressing sympathy for Britons who were involved with Slavery, saying he considered them more “unfortunate than culpable” for making an investment which “at that time, was considered to be moral and consistent with justice but which, when the subject has been thoroughly sifted, is found to be irreconcilable with the principles of justice and humanity.”⁴⁷¹ This was a moderate Parliament,⁴⁷² but there was widespread opposition to Slavery in the Commons, as well as disappointment that the trade ban had failed to lead to the dissolution of the broader institution.⁴⁷³ Buxton proposed a suite of reforms in the interest of leaving Slavery “gently to decay—slowly, silently, almost imperceptibly, to die away, and to be forgotten.” Chief among them was the freeing of children born to Slaves, and he cited the success of such legislation in other regions including several US states and East Indian British colonies.⁴⁷⁴ The Commons resolved on a modified package of reforms, without the provision for freeing children, and without declaring emancipation or providing any timeline for the decline of Slavery.⁴⁷⁵ Among the passed reforms were a removal of fines for manumission, the right of Slaves to hold property and to marry, a day

⁴⁶⁹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 323.

⁴⁷⁰ HC Deb. March 18, 1823, vol. 8, col. [630](#).

⁴⁷¹ HC Deb. May 15, 1823, vol. 9, col. [258](#).

⁴⁷² Spence, 232.

⁴⁷³ HC Deb. May 15, 1823, vol. 9, col. [257-360](#). For instance, one MP said, “What then has been done, let me ask, since the abolition of the Slave-trade, to improve the condition of the slave... [we] had been indulging in a fond, but vain hope, that the abolition of the Slaver trade was all that was wanted for bettering the condition of the slaves... It was indeed long our hope, that if we did but abolish the Slave-trade, through the gradual progress of improvement, slavery itself would soon be extinguished. I myself gave into the delusion... How bitterly have we been disappointed in these fond expectations.” See col. [334](#). Wilberforce said, “Do we not remember, that, from the first moment when any proceedings were commenced for the amelioration of the condition of the slaves, the colonial legislatures invariably opposed every endeavour of the kind... In 1797, an hon. gentleman now sitting opposite to me (Mr. C. Ellis), who had shewed a disinterested spirit of benevolence towards I the negroes on his own properties, wished to prevail on the colonist to adopt some general reforms... But he wished his reform to be patronised and carried into effect by the legislatures of the West Indies. The consequence was, that all his exertions were ineffectual; and that though his application was enforced by the most powerful of all pleas, viz. that, if they did not reform the system themselves, the British parliament would infallibly pass the much-dreaded abolition law, yet even with this enforcement, the colonial assemblies would do nothing.” See col. [293](#).

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, col. [266](#) and [273](#).

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, col. [285](#) and [360](#).

of rest on Sundays, restrictions on the usage of the whip and of corporal punishment for women, and provisions for Christian instruction in the interest of preparing the Slave population for entrance into society.⁴⁷⁶

Enforcement was left to the colonial legislatures, and the reforms hardly materialized. The West India Committee proposed its own code, and planters ignored these regulations too.⁴⁷⁷ This recalcitrance likely frustrated moderate politicians and moved them towards emancipation.⁴⁷⁸ This will be discussed further on.

Planters had complained that giving Slaves the freedom to attend church on Sundays was a slippery slope that would result in them demanding ever more freedom.⁴⁷⁹ The increasing number of missionaries in the colonies did not challenge Slavery directly, but did preach to Slaves that all humans are equal in the eyes of God, and in the church's hymns, prayers, community, learning opportunities, and stories, offered Slaves a dignity they had otherwise been denied.⁴⁸⁰ The most popular biblical story in Slaves' churches was that of Moses leading his enslaved people to freedom. Churches became meeting places to plot rebellions.⁴⁸¹

A major Slave revolt on the British-colonized island of Demerara happened soon after the passage of the ineffectual welfare reforms,⁴⁸² partly inspired, as attempted uprisings before had been, by some knowledge of the debate in Parliament and a rumor that Slavery had been abolished.⁴⁸³ The Slaves claimed they were fighting for their "rights," presumably influenced by the increasing popularity of the relatively new concept in their captors' Motherlands. Like other attempted uprisings before, the rebellion ended in a massacre of Slaves. A missionary whose church the Slave rebels had met in, but who was unaware of their plots, was blamed for the

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid., col. 273.

⁴⁷⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 324.

⁴⁷⁸ Spence, 197.

⁴⁷⁹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 328.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid., 338.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid., 329.

⁴⁸² Ibid., 229.

⁴⁸³ Ibid., 329.

rebellion, and the colonial legislature sentenced him to hang. The King pardoned him, but he died of tuberculosis while waiting in prison. Britons were outraged by the death of this white missionary at the hands of the Slaves' owners — far more than they were by the 250 Slaves who were also killed.⁴⁸⁴

The owner of the Slaves who initiated the revolt called the rebels “ferocious and brutal,” and portrayed himself and the owners of other Slave rebels as extremely benevolent, lamenting that their plantations were “distinguished for kind and indulgent treatment” and assuring that these men were astonished that their Slaves would revolt.⁴⁸⁵

James Cropper, a merchant and antislavery advocate who published an attack on Slavery in the wake of the revolt, argued that Slavery “would gradually become extinct if the produce of slave societies were cast into equal competition with the produce of free labor,” as free labor was an “altogether more efficient economic model.” Presumably in an effort to gag the entire issue, planters argued that the revolt indicated the dangers of discussing reform at all, while antislavery advocates argued that it indicated the necessity of reform by demonstrating Slaves' discontentment with their current situation.⁴⁸⁶

Chile emancipated its Slaves in 1823.⁴⁸⁷ Central America did the same in 1824.⁴⁸⁸

In 1824, the 1799 and 1800 acts banning unions were repealed, resulting in a surge in union activity.⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid., 330-331.

⁴⁸⁵ Spence, 194.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid., 195.

⁴⁸⁷ “La abolición de la esclavitud en Chile,” *Archivo Nacional de Chile*, accessed November 28, 2017, <http://www.archivonacional.cl/616/w3-article-8084.html>.

⁴⁸⁸ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 207.

⁴⁸⁹ “Combination Acts,” *Encyclopedia.com*, November 28, 2017, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/history/modern-europe/british-and-irish-history/combination-acts>.

By the time of the Anti-Slavery Society's first public meeting in 1824, the society had established 230 branches and was able to bring 777 petitions for emancipation to Parliament.⁴⁹⁰ As before, there were undecideds and moderates in between the antislavery and proslavery poles. Henry Bathurst, third Earl Bathurst, denounced the inherent "evils" of the institution of Slavery, and advocated "progressive measures of amelioration."⁴⁹¹ MP Joseph Hume expressed a moderate position of being morally opposed to Slavery while feeling practically constrained by the importance of the property law, and suggested that planters receive compensation if emancipation were to pass.⁴⁹²

A Slave Trade Act was passed outlining and increasing penalties for engagement with the trade.⁴⁹³

Against the protests of planters, though with significant endorsement from the West India Committee,⁴⁹⁴ an Order in Council for amelioration in Trinidad was passed as well.⁴⁹⁵ Planters insisted, as they had before, that reforms were a slippery slope to emancipation,⁴⁹⁶ but antislavery advocates' end goal of emancipation was not a secret — it was in their society's name — and it does not appear that emancipation sounded ludicrous to the general public or to MPs who did not have investments in the trade. The Order included forty-three provisions, for instance allowing Slave marriages, forbidding the separation of family members by sale, removing obstacles to manumission, admitting Slave evidence in courts, setting adequate minimum requirements for food and clothing, urging religious instruction, and prohibiting work on Sundays.⁴⁹⁷ It provided for a Protector who solely held that office, and provided for his assistants, and required that he not own plantation Slaves though domestic Slave ownership was allowed.⁴⁹⁸ It also notoriously declared that all Slaves belonging to anyone twice-convicted of Slave abuse

⁴⁹⁰ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 324.

⁴⁹¹ HC Deb. March 16, 1824, vol. 10, col. [1060-1061](#).

⁴⁹² HC Deb. March 23, 1824, vol. 10, col. [1332](#).

⁴⁹³ Slave Trade Act, 1824, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo4/5/113/contents>.

⁴⁹⁴ Spence, 172.

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 169.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 172.

⁴⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 169.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 171.

would be confiscated by the crown,⁴⁹⁹ and it enabled compulsory manumission by the process of appraisal.⁵⁰⁰ It also made it illegal for drivers to carry whips, which Wilberforce and some other antislavery advocates thought unwise as the whip was an important emblem of authority and its removal invited rebellion.⁵⁰¹

Hume also introduced a motion to begin “remedying the evils of Impressment”, which was rejected as most MPs could not envision a Royal Navy which did not use press gangs.⁵⁰²

The government then negotiated with the other newer colonies of Demerara and St. Lucia to help them create their own reform policies,⁵⁰³ and while the colonies’ advisory councils accepted basic health and safety requirement reforms, which fed their narrative of humane Slavery without threatening their ownership, they resisted limitations of their rights in holding and selling their human property.⁵⁰⁴ Bathurst threatened these islands with an Order in Council like that of Trinidad’s, and the policy was revised, though despite Bathurst’s insistence it was allowed to reject compulsory manumission.⁵⁰⁵ As in Trinidad, the reforms were easy to circumvent and poorly enforced.⁵⁰⁶ On Mauritius, where Slaves could bring complaints of abuse to court, more Slaves were punished for bringing complaints ruled “false” than were dismissed for want of evidence, and fewer complaints still resulted in any consequences for a Slave’s owner.⁵⁰⁷ Some freed black people were also re-enslaved as they had no ability to suitably prove their freedom⁵⁰⁸.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid., 170.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid., 169.

⁵⁰¹ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 220.

⁵⁰² Brunzman, 271. Anti-impressment advocates were unsuccessful in achieving a ban on impressment, but while the employment of the practice was discussed in Parliament on several occasions in times of war after the end of the war with Napoleon, it was never used again. See Brunzman, 272. Shortly after emancipation was passed in 1833, a limitation on how long a man could be impressed was passed, though it was never needed. See “British Navy Impressment,” *PBS*, accessed November 24, 2017, <http://pbs.org/opb/historydetectives/feature/british-navy-impressment>.

⁵⁰³ Spence, 199.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid., 206.

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid., 207.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid., 219.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid., 225.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid., 226.

Antislavery advocates focused on the worst abuses, emphasizing for instance that it was not a felony in Barbados for a Slave's owner to murder them, and he would merely be fined less than 12 pounds.⁵⁰⁹ Opponents insisted that such flagrant abuses were exaggerated or atypical.⁵¹⁰

According to Clarkson, the public was impatient for immediate emancipation. Elizabeth Heyrick, a former teacher, Quaker convert, and advocate for many social justice issues, wrote a popular radical pamphlet in 1824 titled *Immediate, not Gradual Abolition*, which included condemnation of the mainstream antislavery movement's moderatism.⁵¹¹ In an early appeal to intersectionality, Heyrick asserted that women were "especially qualif[ied]... to plead for the oppressed"⁵¹² and hoped the poor too would rally to the cause given the empathy she expected them to have on account of their own struggles.⁵¹³

Unlike advocates before her who avoided the topic of Slave rebellions, she openly expressed sympathy for Slaves' resistance, calling it self-defense and comparing it to the contemporary heroically-regraded struggle of the Greeks for independence from the Ottoman Empire.⁵¹⁴ Among women and men who opposed Slavery, she was virtually alone in this support of resistance.⁵¹⁵ Heyrick also believed Slaves should receive reparations, and receive them before any planters deprived of their chattel received compensation.⁵¹⁶ Heyrick campaigned for a new boycott of West Indian sugar — which was indeed taken up again⁵¹⁷ — and urged all of Leicester's grocers to stop carrying any Slave-grown goods. She believed — incorrectly, it turned

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid., 29.

⁵¹⁰ Ibid., 230.

⁵¹¹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 324.

⁵¹² Ibid., 325.

⁵¹³ Ibid., 326.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid., 325.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid., 326.

⁵¹⁶ Ibid., 347.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid., 324.

out — that encouraging the public to discontinue their consumption of goods made by Slaves in the colonies would be easier than convincing Parliament to outlaw Slavery.⁵¹⁸

Seventy women’s antislavery societies sprang up in the UK, distributing boycott pamphlets and organizing a pledge of boycotters.⁵¹⁹ While these women had no direct political power, they may have influenced the men in their communities to participate in advocacy and sympathetic wives of MPs may have had some influence on their husbands — one “Lady of distinguished ability” held a gathering of women to discuss whether wives of MPs should entreat them to support abolition.⁵²⁰

In 1826, Brazil, now an independent nation, agreed to the end transatlantic Slave trade by 1830,⁵²¹ though that did not actually happen until two decades later.⁵²²

That year, two years after Trinidad’s Order in Council, a Slave in the colony was appraised for self-purchase at a value three times what she had been purchased for, which would have been impossible for her to earn.⁵²³ She was the subject of significant public debate, though nothing came of it for her.⁵²⁴ Many appraisals in this time were similarly unmanageable, but the average price of a *successful* self-purchase slightly decreased even while the average value of Slaves increased. Trinidad’s Protector of Slaves cited this as an indication of “the kind feeling which generally actuates the proprietors and planters of this island in the liberation of their less fortunate brethren from a state of bondage.” This glossed over the fact that cheaper child manumissions brought the average price down despite adults’ appraisals reaching record sums, in addition to the fact that more domestic Slaves were able to purchase their freedom than

⁵¹⁸ Ibid., 325.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid., 326.

⁵²⁰ Ibid., 137.

⁵²¹ Powell, 251.

⁵²² “Slavery and Abolition in the 19th Century,” *Brown University Library Center for Digital Scholarship*, accessed November 28, 2017, <https://library.brown.edu/create/fivecenturiesofchange/chapters/chapter-3/slavery-and-abolition/>.

⁵²³ State Papers, Relating to the Slave Population in the West Indies, On the Continent of South America, and at the Cape of Good Hope, Session 26 November 1826-2 July 1827, vol. 26, 271.

⁵²⁴ Spence, 140.

plantation Slaves despite there being twice as many of the latter on the island.⁵²⁵ After a few years, Slaves stopped applying for manumission.⁵²⁶

The men of the antislavery movement were at this time focused on gradual measures like legislating an emancipation date thirty years in the future, or fundraising to buy women out of Slavery. Heyrick urged men who could vote in 1826 to only support candidates who would demand immediate emancipation. Many women agreed with this, and that year the women's society in Sheffield was the first antislavery society to demand immediate emancipation. Women's groups canvassed house to house, and reworked the iconic antislavery image to show a woman — still on her knees, a pleading victim, rather than a resistor — and read “Am I Not a Woman and a Sister?”⁵²⁷

Women's antislavery societies were consistently more radical than the men's groups, and the Worcester group for instance not only stopped purchasing West Indian sugar but also refused to buy anything from bakers who used it and shops that sold it. Though their abstinence was already contextualized by antislavery, this may have rendered it more clearly as a serious political signal than a personal choice.⁵²⁸ In 1829 the Birmingham Ladies' Society for the Relief of Negro Slaves hired (white, male) lecturers to speak out against Slavery.⁵²⁹ The next year they decided to withhold their annual donation to the national Anti-Slavery Society until the society relinquished its gradualism. Women, themselves without significant rights that women in many nations can take for granted today, may have at this time become the moral leadership of the movement to free the empire's Slaves.⁵³⁰

Mexico's president, who may have been partly of African descent, emancipated Mexico's Slaves in 1829.⁵³¹

⁵²⁵ Ibid., 178-179.

⁵²⁶ Ibid., 181.

⁵²⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 326.

⁵²⁸ Ibid., 327.

⁵²⁹ Ibid., 336.

⁵³⁰ Ibid., 327.

⁵³¹ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 207.

Despite women's and other grassroots efforts, by the end of the 1820s, the whole antislavery movement was losing its momentum.⁵³² After several years of campaigning, Heyrick, like others, grew burnt out and depressed.⁵³³ The electoral system weighed heavily in favor of landowners,⁵³⁴ and the MPs with land or commercial interest in the colonies were not only growing in size, numbering over fifty already, but with new, younger members they were also growing more articulate, smooth, and skilled at professing their concern for and commitment to Slaves' welfare.⁵³⁵ However, the decade had been economically difficult, and profits from Slavery had diminished.⁵³⁶ Most dishearteningly, in 1830 the Duke of Clarence, one of the members of the House of Lords most committed to opposing Wilberforce's abolition bills, became King William IV.⁵³⁷

Methodism was also growing at this time, from around 3% of the population in 1800 to 10% in 1840.⁵³⁸ It encouraged more democratic and egalitarian ideals than the Church of England had.⁵³⁹ One of the religion's co-founders passionately opposed Slavery — a rarity among Tories — though the other defended it,⁵⁴⁰ and another leading figure in the movement, Jabez Bunting, was an active supporter of the London Anti-Slavery Society.⁵⁴¹ 1829 and 1830 saw strong opposition to Slavery from the Methodist community. Methodists may have felt persecuted by planters, and as such more allied to Slaves, both because of prominent Methodists' antislavery views and because of the 1/7 Slaves who were converted to Christianity through missionary work in the colonies, 4/5 were converted to Methodism.⁵⁴²

⁵³² Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 331.

⁵³³ *Ibid.*, 327.

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*, 333.

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*, 331.

⁵³⁶ Spence, 241.

⁵³⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 332.

⁵³⁸ Clive D. Field, "Counting Religion in England and Wales: The Long Eighteenth Century, c.1680–c. 1840," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 63, no. 4 (October 2012): 711.

⁵³⁹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 336.

⁵⁴⁰ Powell, 73.

⁵⁴¹ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 219-220.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*, 226.

A wave of interest in electoral reform to distribute more political power to the British public reanimated the antislavery movement in 1830. By now advocates and sympathetic politicians had abandoned hope for amelioration and gradual emancipation, particularly since amelioration efforts had been pursued to incredible failure even in the new colonies, where Slavery was less entrenched and should have been easiest to reform.⁵⁴³ They became interested in more immediate emancipation. In May of 1830, two thousand people filled the Freemasons' Hall — and hundreds more had to be turned away — for a public meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society.⁵⁴⁴ The impatient younger advocates filled the room with shouts of enthusiasm for a bill to free all children born to Slaves from that year forward,⁵⁴⁵ and in July the society announced its plans to bring a motion for immediate emancipation to Parliament, though this didn't happen until the following year.⁵⁴⁶

The Whig government refused to consider immediate emancipation but agreed to take stronger measures to compel the colonies to adopt the reforms passed several years prior. They also restricted Slaves' workdays to nine hours during crop season, which drove planters to shut down their sugar mills in protest as even child laborers in England could still be worked for twelve hours. During this time, public meetings in Jamaica discussed secession and the possibility of acquiring protection from the US.⁵⁴⁷

The younger advocates who wanted to push for more radical change created a subcommittee of the Anti-Slavery Society that year, in 1830, and hired a handful of lecturers, including two who had been hired by the Birmingham women's antislavery society two years earlier, to travel the country and rouse the public, giving them materials and thorough guidance.⁵⁴⁸ The West India lobby hired hecklers to try to break up the meetings and paid their own lecturers to attend so they could understand the opposition. The radical subcommittee soon broke off from the society and formed the Agency Antislavery Committee. They brought a new zeal to the movement, using dramatizing tactics like publicly displaying black people — or white people in blackface if no

⁵⁴³ Spence, 230.

⁵⁴⁴ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 334.

⁵⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 335.

⁵⁴⁶ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 226.

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴⁸ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 335.

black people were around and willing — in chains. The number of antislavery groups reached over 1,200 by 1831.⁵⁴⁹

In early 1831, the Reform bill to expand the electorate was introduced, and politicians debated it hotly.⁵⁵⁰

1831 also saw emancipation in Bolivia, the first publication of *The Liberator* in the US, Nat Turner's famous and failed rebellion in the US, and another treaty between the UK and Brazil banning the importation of Slaves to Brazil and providing both emancipation for imported Slaves and serious penalties for Slave traders, in addition to exempting plantation owners from debts to Slave traders.⁵⁵¹

Several attempted Slave rebellions in the colonies had been suppressed in the 1820s, and most Slaves who had escaped had been recaptured, but with the antislavery movement gaining steam again, planters grew worried about new uprisings.⁵⁵² They held meetings to discuss how to control the Slaves and increase their submission, for instance almost unanimously refusing Parliament's ban — left to the colonies' enforcement — on the flogging of Slave women, and determining that Slave women should actually be flogged naked.⁵⁵³

A revised Slave code for all colonies in 1831 still relied on a sole Protector and his assistants for enforcement, but instructed that neither he nor his immediate family could own any Slaves, declared that the intimidation of Slaves would be subject to prosecution and that sudden Slave deaths would be investigated, established stricter enforcement of the Sunday labor moratorium, reduced the maximum number of lashes allowed, offered stricter detail about requirements for food, clothing and shelter, and provided that Slave testimony would count equally to white testimony in court.⁵⁵⁴ Slaves' submission to their owners' wills relied on corporal punishment and intimidation, so efforts to limit those subjugation tools were particularly threatening to planters.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid., 336.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid., 337.

⁵⁵¹ Powell, 251.

⁵⁵² Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 337.

⁵⁵³ Ibid., 338.

⁵⁵⁴ Spence, 189.

⁵⁵⁵ An 1822 order allowing extreme measures of corporal punishment against free people of color was also repealed. In British Guiana, all ordinances that made distinctions based on race were repealed, and free people of color were theoretically given equality with white people.⁵⁵⁶

Later in the year, the Commons and Lords passed a dramatically reduced version of the electoral reform bill, and in the same session denied an emancipation bill. The working class rioted in the streets, primarily about the reform bill.⁵⁵⁷

By the end of 1831, tensions had increased in Jamaica because Slaves once again thought they had been freed and that the British army would fight on their side if they revolted. The governor released a proclamation clarifying that the King had not freed them. Shortly after Christmas, they revolted, burning over two hundred plantations and causing massive economic damage. Their leader, Samuel Sharpe, a Baptist convert and preacher, believed God had promised them their freedom, and told the other Slaves that the King had freed them and that the planters were now plotting to kill the men and keep the women and children in bondage. It seems Sharpe originally planned something more like a strike, with the modest demand that Slaves receive half the free mens' wages for their work, and only intended to take up arms and destroy planters' houses if attacked.⁵⁵⁸ The Slaves were unable to coordinate such a strike in their conditions, so the rebellion took on a life of its own and became the biggest Slave uprising the British colonies would ever see. The rebellion was suppressed in a month, and several free men were convicted of aiding the rebels, including a white sailor and a white plantation official.⁵⁵⁹ Colonists blamed and attacked missionaries.⁵⁶⁰

In 1832, because of overwhelming and loud public support, the reluctant House of Lords accepted the Representation of the People Act and the King signed it into law.⁵⁶¹ The act resulted

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid., 187.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid., 230.

⁵⁵⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 337.

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid., 339-340.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid., 341.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., 342.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid., 343.

in a moderate increase to the still very small electorate⁵⁶²: still fewer than one out of five men in England and Wales — even fewer in Scotland and Ireland — and no women could vote.⁵⁶³ Despite these limitations, it was clear that the upcoming elections would reduce the number of MPs with interests in the West Indies by half.⁵⁶⁴

A former Jamaican plantation manager and police magistrate was confident that the empire would see more uprisings, and ones which the British would not be able to control. Urging immediate emancipation, the parliamentary undersecretary of the Colonial Office offered a similar warning that the British military could not suppress the Slaves if they engaged in a widespread war, which could lose them their colonies entirely just as France had lost its prized St. Domingue. Vice Admiral Fleming, the British naval commander for the West Indies, lent significant support to this urgency for emancipation, claiming that the Slaves only hadn't revolted yet because they were expecting to be emancipated soon, and would revolt if they were not.⁵⁶⁵ A minister named Henry Bleby, who had interviewed Sharpe in prison after the rebellion he led on Jamaica, felt similarly, later expressing his belief that the desire for freedom had grown so strong among Slaves at this point as to make the institution too dangerous to not eliminate immediately.⁵⁶⁶

The public demand for emancipation grew louder that ever. The British public seems, however, to have identified less with resisting Slaves and more with white missionaries who were attacked and whose Baptist and Methodist churches were burned by mobs of planters. These missionaries tried to help the Slaves, primarily by converting them to Christianity in order to save their souls, and spoke out against Slavery afterwards.⁵⁶⁷ They were regarded by the public of the Motherland as martyrs, and were likely easier for most of the British public to identify with than Slaves

⁵⁶² “Reform Acts,” *Encyclopedia.com*, November 28, 2017, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/history/modern-europe/british-and-irish-history/reform-acts>.

⁵⁶³ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 346.

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 343.

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 344.

⁵⁶⁶ Richard Hart, *Slaves who Abolished Slavery: Blacks in Rebellion* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2002), 334.

⁵⁶⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 344-345.

because they were white, British, and Christian. This likely gave British Baptists and Methodists a common enemy with the Slaves and fused their religious missions with the antislavery cause.⁵⁶⁸

Several missionaries from the West Indies went on speaking tours through the UK, and testified before Parliament. They were particularly able to reach fellow Baptists and Methodists of the lower middle and working classes, which according to Hochschild were now the groups with the highest proportions of emancipation supporters. Halls were crowded when they spoke, and the crowds sung hymns and wept together. Missionaries were able to speak of Slaves as Christians who had been denied places of worship and even the ability to pray without being flogged, and at least one prominent missionary spoke of some Slaves as Christian martyrs themselves.⁵⁶⁹

Half a century after antislavery took flight, at the first elections of the new Parliament in 1832, the movement reached its peak, as advocates focused first on electing a sympathetic Parliament, and then on pressuring them to act.⁵⁷⁰ The Agency Antislavery Committee, the National Political Union, and non-Anglican churches asked every standing politician to pledge support for emancipation, and around 200 did⁵⁷¹ — approximately one-fifth of the candidates.⁵⁷² The Agency Antislavery Committee published lists of candidates' positions on the emancipation in newspapers and on posters.⁵⁷³ Buxton was asked to draw up a specific plan for emancipation to guide the government, and a leading figure in the Colonial Office warned the West India lobby that unless they could reach an arrangement for emancipation with the government, it would be forced on the colonies. A Cabinet committee was established and met almost daily for several months to direct the West Indian lobby, the parliamentary antislavery advocates, and the leaders of the Tories in the Lords, to negotiate a bill. One in seven adults — two in seven who could — signed petitions for emancipation.⁵⁷⁴

⁵⁶⁸ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 226.

⁵⁶⁹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 344-345.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 345-346.

⁵⁷¹ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 227.

⁵⁷² F.W.S. Craig, ed, *British Parliamentary Election Results 1832-1885* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1977), 621, <https://books.google.com/books?id=PtewCwAAQBAJ&pg=PA621>.

⁵⁷³ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 346.

⁵⁷⁴ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 227-228.

1833: Emancipation

According to one historian, since the abolition of the Slave trade, the Slave population of the British Caribbean had by this time fallen from 775,000 to 665,000 — a decrease of around 14%.⁵⁷⁵

When the newly elected Parliament, now an overwhelming Whig majority,⁵⁷⁶ met in 1833, advocates organized a large crowd to march peacefully to the Prime Minister's office. Marches were rare at the time.⁵⁷⁷

The movement in the UK was stirring the latent movement in the US, and William Lloyd Garrison, who went on to become a leader of the American antislavery movement, visited England to study the British advocates' tactics.⁵⁷⁸ Since the mid 1700s, and particularly in the late 1700s, several US colonies and later states had banned the import or export of Slaves and legislated gradual measures for emancipation. These were mostly in Northern states, where there were fewer Slaves and likely less of a perceived economic reliance on their labor. The US movement appears to have been small and generally quiet up through British emancipation, however, when it accelerated with the founding of the American Anti-Slavery Society.⁵⁷⁹ Enforcement of the few laws that were passed may therefore have been poor.

The debate over the bill in Parliament that year, 1833, was one of the longest, continuing for three months.⁵⁸⁰ Lord Edward Stanley, the new Colonial Secretary, said that a decade earlier it had been the “confident expectation” of the Commons that the colonies would enact the amelioration measures they had decreed but left to the colonial legislatures to enforce, and he

⁵⁷⁵ B. W. Higman, “Population and Labor in the British Caribbean in the Early Nineteenth Century,” *Long-Term Factors in American Economic Growth* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 605, <http://www.nber.org/chapters/c9689.pdf>

⁵⁷⁶ Spence, 241.

⁵⁷⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 346.

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 347.

⁵⁷⁹ “American Anti-Slavery Society,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, July 28, 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/American-Anti-Slavery-Society>.

⁵⁸⁰ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 346.

expressed regret that the reform measures had been “unheeded and disregarded by all the Colonial Legislatures.”⁵⁸¹ Lord Grenville also asserted “without fear of contradiction even from themselves, that nothing has been done of that nature, extent, or character, which may fairly be characterized as a step towards the ultimate extermination of the system,” and urged Parliament to “take the matter at once into its own hands.”⁵⁸² Admiral Fleming stated that “it must have been visible to all who would or could see, that [slavery] was drawing-fast to a close, and that the horrid system would either blow up, as it has done, or end in insurrection, or the total extinction of the negro race.”⁵⁸³ The West India lobby, weakened by the Whig majority and apparently having all but given up on the continuation of Slavery, was now fighting aggressively for reimbursement should emancipation happen. For plantation owners — at least those residing in the UK — retaining the value of their property mattered more than the continuation of Slavery.

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The Slavery Abolition Act passed in both houses,⁵⁸⁵ 206-89 in the Commons⁵⁸⁶ and 31-16 in the Lords,⁵⁸⁷ abolishing Slavery throughout the British empire. Planters received roughly 40% of the national budget in compensation,⁵⁸⁸ in the largest bailout in the UK’s history until 2008.⁵⁸⁹ The act went into effect the next year, though it bound Slaves to their owners as “apprentices” who were to work 45 hours a week unpaid for another four years if they were domestic Slaves or six if they were field hands,⁵⁹⁰ giving planters the chance to end the institution gradually without relying on them to do so on their own.

⁵⁸¹ HC Deb. May 14, 1833, vol. 17, col. 1197.

⁵⁸² *Ibid.*, col. 1198.

⁵⁸³ HC Deb. June 3, 1833, vol. 18, col. 326.

⁵⁸⁴ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 347.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸⁶ HC Deb. July 26, 1833, vol. 19, col. 1269.

⁵⁸⁷ HL Deb. August 15, 1833, vol. 20, col. 632.

⁵⁸⁸ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 347.

⁵⁸⁹ See Olusoga, “The history of British slave ownership has been buried.”

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*; Peter P. Hinks and John R. McKivigan, eds., “Brougham, Henry Peter (1778-1868),” *Encyclopedia of Antislavery and Abolition* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2007), vol. 1, 129.

Fogel claims that while the voter reform seemed to put more supporters of emancipation in Parliament, and while capitalists and non-Anglicans were more supportive, these effects were so weak that the bill still would have passed. What seems critical was the aristocrats' increased support, which is likely attributable to their desire to placate the public in order to deter them from opposing issues they prioritized more highly.⁵⁹¹ Radicals at the time viewed the antislavery campaign as an intentional diversion from English labor issues, which they referred to as “wage slavery.”⁵⁹²

An act improving the conditions of children working in factories was also passed that year.⁵⁹³

Committed to immediate emancipation and fearful of planters treating their Slaves even worse in the four to six year interim to get the most value out of them, advocates campaigned hard against the apprenticeship provision. “Apprentices” in the colonies staged strikes, marches, and demonstrations, and half a million British women signed a petition against the provision.⁵⁹⁴ The term was shortened to four years for all Slaves.⁵⁹⁵ As advocates feared, many planters withdrew privileges they had given their Slaves after the abolition of the trade to get as much value out of them as possible before they were released,⁵⁹⁶ though Fogel claims that on the whole Slave labor discipline on sugar estates decreased.⁵⁹⁷

Antigua and Bermuda opted to emancipate their Slaves immediately.⁵⁹⁸ Antigua increased sugar output by around one percent per year, which was used as evidence for antislavery advocates' claims that free labor was more profitable.⁵⁹⁹ However, according to Fogel, British consumers “paid 48 percent more for sugar during the first four years of freedom than they had to pay

⁵⁹¹ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 230.

⁵⁹² Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 231.

⁵⁹³ “1833 Factory Act,” *The National Archives*, accessed November 28, 2017, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/1833-factory-act/>.

⁵⁹⁴ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 346-347.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 348.

⁵⁹⁶ Spence, 260.

⁵⁹⁷ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 228.

⁵⁹⁸ Spence, 256.

⁵⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 261. Barbados' increase after emancipation took effect in 1838 was 37%.

during the last four years of slavery,⁶⁰⁰ suggesting that other forms of labor may not have been economically superior to Slave labor. Between 1835 and 1842, sugar may have cost the UK an extra £21 million.⁶⁰¹

On the first of August 1838, all British West Indian Slaves were no longer lawfully regarded as anyone else's property.⁶⁰² The Slavery Abolition Act explicitly excepted East India and several other British colonies outside of the West Indies,⁶⁰³ but the exception was eliminated not long after in 1843.⁶⁰⁴ The British continued buying goods that other nations produced through Slave labor,⁶⁰⁵ former Slaves continued to labor in conditions little better than they had experience as Slaves and under harsh punishment legislation, and poor indentured laborers were now being brought in from India.⁶⁰⁶ White society was still deeply racist and much of the rest of world's human laborers were still oppressed in chattel slavery, indentured servitude, debt peonage, serfdom, or other kinds of labor which we would today call slavery or forced labor, but the UK's abolition of human chattel slavery was the death knell for the global legal and social acceptance of the practice, and a major step in the continuing global movements against slavery, racial inequity, and labor exploitation. The movement for emancipation in the US took flight that year on the heels of the British movement's success, and the UK continued to use its economic and political leverage with other nations to shift other Western powers away from the transatlantic Slave trade and human chattel slavery.⁶⁰⁷

⁶⁰⁰ Fogel 229. It is unclear whether he is referring to the periods of 1830-1834 and 1838-1842, 1830-1834 and 1834-1838, or 1834-1838 and 1838-1842.

⁶⁰¹ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 229.

⁶⁰² Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 348.

⁶⁰³ An Act for the Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Colonies; for promoting the Industry of the manumitted Slaves; and for compensating the Persons hitherto entitled to the Services of such Slaves, August 28, 1833, http://www.pdavis.nl/Legis_07.htm.

⁶⁰⁴ The Slavery Act (India Act V. 1843), April 7, 1843, http://www.myanmarconstitutionaltribunal.org.mm/lawdatabase/sites/default/files/myanmar_code/2015/07/5-1843%20THE%20SLAVERY%20ACT.pdf.

⁶⁰⁵ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 354.

⁶⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 359.

⁶⁰⁷ Powell, 93-116.

Today, in no country is a human legally allowed to own another. International law recognizes the enslavement of other humans as a crime against humanity,⁶⁰⁸ and the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights prohibits human chattel slavery and the trade in human slaves "in all their forms."⁶⁰⁹ Illegal human trafficking is still a global issue; investigators do still find human slaves in some places, including in circumstances very similar to and even rooted in the African Slave trade at the time of European involvement, hidden by deceit and poor enforcement,⁶¹⁰ and the world still has other forms of coercive labor and a substantial amount of exploitative labor, but many countries including the UK now have extensive labor laws as well as unions and social services protecting most their population from labor exploitation. At the end of the 18th century, possibly over three quarters of all humans were in some form of bondage that would in modern terms be described as "slavery,"⁶¹¹ but less than a third of a percent are today.

As a final note in this history, there was a struggle for the framing of the history of emancipation and whether it would be seen as a mobilization of public opinion that was reinforced by Slaves' resistance — that is, as a social justice movement — or as a gift from pious and benevolent superiors to pitiable victims.⁶¹² Emancipation was for some time conceived of as the result of the benevolence of a wise elite in the oppressing class, but the grassroots activism and Slaves' resistance accounted for here suggest these played a more important role than previously thought.⁶¹³

⁶⁰⁸ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 360.

⁶⁰⁹ UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, December 10, 1948, 217 A (III), <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3712c.html>.

⁶¹⁰ For instance, 4% of the human population of Mauritania appears to be chattel slaves. John D. Sutter, "It's unbelievable': Turning point for slavery's last stronghold," *CNN*, May 19, 2016, <http://cnn.com/2016/05/19/opinions/sutter-mauritania-slavery-convictions>.

⁶¹¹ See Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 2. See also "Frequently Asked Questions," *Free the Slaves*, accessed November 24, 2017, <http://freetheslaves.net/about-slavery/faqs-glossary>, which defines a slave as "a [human] who is forced to work, without pay, under threat of violence, who cannot walk away" and includes debt bondage — the extreme form of indentured servitude — as well as contract slavery, sex trafficking, forced or servile marriage, domestic servitude, forced child labor, and the use of child soldiers.

⁶¹² Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 350.

⁶¹³ *Ibid.*, 351.

Other Contemporary British Human Rights Movements and Their Intersections with Antislavery

This whole period, encompassed by the era of the “Enlightenment,” saw a general rise of enthusiasm for liberty.

Towards the end of the antislavery movement, the movement was drawing criticism from the left,⁶¹⁴ exemplified by a ballad rebuking advocates for their concern for Slaves while white children suffered as forced laborers in English factories.⁶¹⁵ Leaders of working-class movements, while typically opposed to Slavery, thought emancipation was easier for the elites in Parliament to accept than their own demands for significant changes at home like banning child labor, allowing trade unions, recognizing Irish rights, or allowing men who didn’t own property to vote. They contended that Slavery helped to distract the government from these other issues.⁶¹⁶

However, emancipation appears to have a part of, and an early victory in, a swelling culture of moral circle expansion that has continued to this day along with a wave of democratic revolutions. Antislavery was essentially the first international movement for a group’s fundamental rights, even if not explicitly framed as such at the time.

The antislavery movement also made politics important to women and to men of the working class. At some abolitionist gatherings, women spoke, which was rare outside of a religious context,⁶¹⁷ and local organizing and outreach was often conducted by women or working-class men. The questions that arose from the precedent the movement set may have also stimulated interest in other movements. For instance, people could now consider that if black humans should have rights, why not women, and if brutal working conditions should be abolished in agriculture, why not in factories as well?⁶¹⁸ The movement’s petition campaigns inspired petitions

⁶¹⁴ Ibid., 352.

⁶¹⁵ A verse reads, “Their tender hearts were sighing / As negro wrongs were told.” *The Farmer’s Register* 1 (June 1833): 190, <https://books.google.com/books?id=MJQxqiWKIdUC>.

⁶¹⁶ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 352.

⁶¹⁷ Ibid., 137.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid., 352.

for a minimum wage and better working conditions at home, and its revived interest in 1823 brought with it petitions to Parliament on other progressive issues.⁶¹⁹ Advocates in other movements now had an arsenal of such tactics pioneered by the antislavery advocates, such as the rounding up of witnesses for parliamentary hearings, which the child labor rights movement used to great success.⁶²⁰

Because antislavery petitions sought signatures from any man even if he could not vote, they may have led people to question why those men couldn't vote, and why women couldn't vote or even sign petitions.⁶²¹ On the other hand, antislavery leaders in Parliament, including Wilberforce, may have seen Slavery as a wholly different issue than voter representation and other social issues, as they were generally not so supportive of the revolutionary sentiments that threatened their own comfortable place in domestic society. Other antislavery leaders, however, including Sharp, Clarkson, Stephen, and Heyrick — all also from privileged classes — were concerned with and saw parallels between Slavery and injustices happening at home to workers, child laborers, women, and men impressed into the navy, and were affected by other political currents of revolution and rights.⁶²²

Many movement leaders also presumably had a substantial and broad enough influence on their children, as indicated by some of their descendants' leadership in other movements.⁶²³

Contemporary British Animal Use and Advocacy and Their Intersections with Antislavery

By the rise of the antislavery movement in the late 1700s, it was common to keep nonhuman animals as family pets, and it seems that many people were at least uncomfortable with animal experimentation.⁶²⁴ There were Britons and other people in the West who abstained from eating

⁶¹⁹ Ibid., 353.

⁶²⁰ Ibid., 352.

⁶²¹ Ibid., 138.

⁶²² Ibid., 349.

⁶²³ Ibid., 353.

⁶²⁴ Hilda Kean, *Animal Rights: Political and Social Change in Britain Since 1800* (London: Reaktion Books, 1998), 15.

nonhuman animals for reasons of compassion or rights, including John Wesley, the co-founder of Methodism who as mentioned passionately opposed Slavery, and who spoke on other matters of compassion for nonhuman animals.⁶²⁵ In the US, commercial slaughterhouses were over a century old, and had quickly aroused concerns of public health and the morally corrupting effects on workers. The slaughterhouses in New York City had been relocated away from densely populated areas,⁶²⁶ but not in Great Britain, where nonhuman animals were still killed in unregulated stockyards, butchers' sheds, or on private residential properties.

Several early antislavery leaders, who were from the Quaker community and supported not just abolition and emancipation but black equality, were also vegetarian and supported animal rights: Benjamin Lay, the demonstrator who was disowned by the community⁶²⁷; John Woolman, who avoided both products of Slavery and products of animal abuse and "oppress[ion]," including stage coaches and couriers; and Anthony Benezet, who decided later in his life to give up all animal foods, and who responded to a request to join his family in dining on a bird by saying "would you have me eat my neighbors?"⁶²⁸

In Granville Sharp's 1769 *A Representation of the Injustice and Dangerous Tendency of Tolerating Slavery* he expressed an intersectional view that "the wretch who is bad enough to maltreat a helpless beast, would not spare his fellow man, if he had him as much in his power," though he also asserted that "the comparing of a man to a beast... is unnatural and unjust."⁶²⁹

Around the time of Somerset's case, when there were around 14,000-15,000 Slaves living in the British Isles,⁶³⁰ there were nearly 1,000,000 horses and oxen engaged in compulsory labor in

⁶²⁵ Ibid., 20.

⁶²⁶ Amy J. Fitzgerald, "A Social History of the Slaughterhouse: From Inception to Contemporary Implications," *Human Ecology Review* 17, no. 1 (2010): 60.

⁶²⁷ Marcus Rediker, "The Fearless Benjamin Lay," *Beacon Press*, accessed November 28, 2017, <http://www.beacon.org/The-Fearless-Benjamin-Lay-P1357.aspx>.

⁶²⁸ Carol Helstoky, ed., *The Routledge History of Food* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 180.

⁶²⁹ Granville Sharp, *A Representation of the Injustice and Dangerous Tendency of Tolerating Slavery* (London: Printed for Benjamin White, 1769), 80.

⁶³⁰ William M. Wiecek, "Somerset: Lord Mansfield and the Legitimacy of Slavery in the Anglo-American World," *University of Chicago Law Review* 42, no. 1 (1974): 95, <http://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/uclrev/vol42/iss1/4>.

England alone⁶³¹ and approximately 20,000,000 farmed mammals — primarily sheep, who were used for wool and milk.⁶³² This is similar to the number of mammals on farms in England today.⁶³³ Farming fish or farming birds for meat was uncommon at the time. We have limited information on the numbers, experiences, and conditions of farmed animals, working animals, and other nonhumans who were used in the British mainland and colonies, but while factory farms had not yet been invented, we can expect, as on pasture farms today, that their lives still typically involved, to some degree, separation from family, confinement and restraint, mutilation, disease, over-working and disciplinary violence — particularly for working animals like horses and oxen — and at least some blatant abuse like hitting and kicking, as well as an unpleasant death.

One barrister in Somerset’s case said, “Upon what principle is it that a man can become a dog for another man,”⁶³⁴ without seeming to question the principle upon which a dog could become the property of a man. White people used the dominion of humans over nonhuman animals to justify the dominion of white humans over black humans, and conflated black humans with nonhuman animals on several occasions. Advocates of racial equality have continued since this time to work to separate black humans — and humans of other races — from animals in the public conscience, though in doing so have often capitalized on human supremacism and elevated black humans by degrading other animals.

In the late 18th century, a British farmer named Robert Bakewell began the practice of controlling farmed animals’ reproduction through selective breeding.⁶³⁵

⁶³¹ Stephen Broadberry et al., “British Economic Growth, 1270-1870” (August 19, 2010): 37, <https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/staff/sbroadberry/wp/britishgdplongrun8a.pdf>.

⁶³² *Ibid.*, 40.

⁶³³ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, *Farming Statistics - Livestock Populations at 1 December 2012, UK and England*, March 14, 2013, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/183227/defra-stats-foodfarm-landuselivestock-farmstats-dec2012-130314.pdf.

⁶³⁴ Wise, 143.

⁶³⁵ “Robert Bakewell (1725 - 1795),” *BBC*, accessed November 28, 2017, http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/bakewell_robert.shtml.

In the *Zong* case, as noted previously, Mansfield dismissed the injury to the Slaves by stating that “the case of the slaves was the same as if horses had been thrown overboard.”⁶³⁶ Such unquestioned human supremacism was often used to justify white supremacism.

When Ramsay was facing backlash from planters for his antislavery publications, he responded to the claim that black humans were by their nature inferior and like (nonhuman) animals by writing, “Had nature intended negroes for slavery... they would have been born without any sentiment for liberty.”⁶³⁷ It does not appear that he followed this logic through to the captivity of nonhuman animals, though to be charitable their expressions of “sentiment for liberty” are much more apparent in modern factory settings than they were in Ramsay’s time.

In 1789, the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham expressed the view that nonhuman interests should be considered because what matters in accounting for other beings’ interests is merely whether they can suffer, not whether they are human or white. He explicitly compared the discrimination against and subjugation of black humans to the discrimination against and subjugation of nonhuman animals, and objected to both.⁶³⁸

In 1791, a British Lieutenant influenced by his time in India wrote *The Cry of Nature or an Appeal to Mercy and Justice on Behalf of the Persecuted Animals*.⁶³⁹

The same year, a Member of Parliament agreed that Slavery was not an “amiable” trade, but justified it by acknowledging that neither was butchery.⁶⁴⁰ Apparently that aroused no questions as to the legitimacy of butchery. Similarly, a seemingly common counterargument to antislavery sentiment was that black humans were more like “animals” than white humans, and as such inferior and meant to be used,⁶⁴¹ again assuming human supremacy and that such supremacy justified indifference and exploitation.

⁶³⁶ Walvin, 153.

⁶³⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 93.

⁶³⁸ Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907; reprint of 1823 edition; first printed 1780), ch. 17, footnote 122.

⁶³⁹ Kean, 23.

⁶⁴⁰ Cobbett, vol. 29 (1817), col. 281.

⁶⁴¹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 93.

One of the most famous artistic works of antislavery was an engraving of a Slave bound and hung up on a meat hook.⁶⁴² Whether or not the image itself was based in reality, its political meaning for antislavery advocates presumably rested on an assumption that the individuals the meat hooks were made for were not important, while the individual hanging on it was.

In 1800 the first animal protection bill was brought to Parliament, aimed at banning bull-baiting. It was defeated, but only by a two-vote margin.⁶⁴³ Another, broader bill against “routine cruelty” to nonhuman animals, such as the beating of cattle being marched to market or unusually harsh goading of work horses, failed in 1809.⁶⁴⁴ In 1822, a widely approved bill known as Martin’s Act passed that made it a criminal offense to beat, abuse, or mistreat ruminants in a “wanton and cruel” way.⁶⁴⁵ The highly pragmatic Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals — later sanctioned by the British government as the Royal SPCA — was established two years later — shortly after the establishment of the Anti-Slavery Society, and in the midst of the renewed surge in antislavery advocacy — to enforce Martin’s Act.⁶⁴⁶

The SPCA was comprised of middle-class citizens who were chiefly opposed to exceptional cruelties inflicted on nonhuman animals by members of lower classes, though they also opposed scientific experimentation on nonhuman animals. They aimed for “the mitigation of animal suffering and the promotion and extension of the practice of humanity towards the inferior classes of animated beings.”⁶⁴⁷ Not unlike many antislavery advocates, they held strongly discriminatory views towards the individuals they sought to help, but nonetheless wanted to curb severe suffering among nonhumans.

⁶⁴² William Blake, *A Negro hung alive by the ribs to a gallows*, 1796, engraving and etching on paper, London, Victoria and Albert Museum.

⁶⁴³ Corwin R. Kruse, “Baby Steps: Minnesota Raises Certain Forms of Animal Cruelty to Felony Status,” *William Mitchell Law Review* 28, no. 4 (2002): 1654, <http://open.mitchellhamline.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1697&context=wmlr>.

⁶⁴⁴ Kean, 33.

⁶⁴⁵ Kruse, 1654; Kean, 34.

⁶⁴⁶ Kean, 35.

⁶⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 36.

At least a few antislavery advocates were also concerned with cruelty towards nonhuman animals, among other issues — Wilberforce and Buxton, the antislavery movement’s primary leaders in Parliament, were among the SPCA’s founders, and several other founders supported antislavery to vary degrees of activity.⁶⁴⁸ Wilberforce is said to have stopped a cart driver he met on the road from beating a downed horse.⁶⁴⁹ Elizabeth Heyrick bought a bull and hid him to spare him from a bull-baiting contest.⁶⁵⁰

Lewis Gompertz, the SPCA’s secretary from 1826-1832, wrote *Moral Inquiries on the Situation of Man and of Brutes* a radical book advocating against the killing of nonhuman animals and recommending a vegan diet, in the SPCA’s founding year.⁶⁵¹ He was pushed out for his radicalism.⁶⁵² At this time, the main public concern with animal abuse was not the suffering of the nonhuman animals, but the effect on the abuser’s moral character and the risk that they would go on to hurt humans.⁶⁵³

The UK by this time had private and public menageries, and a zoo for scientific study.⁶⁵⁴

After public advocacy in Western Europe to move nonhuman animal slaughter to centralized slaughterhouses outside of towns, in the interests both of removing the unpleasant sight from the public’s view and of helping the government regulate such unsanitary and “morally dangerous”

⁶⁴⁸ “The History of the RSPCA,” *Michigan State University Animal Legal & Historical Center*, accessed November 28, 2017, <https://www.animallaw.info/article/history-rspca>.

⁶⁴⁹ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 315.

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 325.

⁶⁵¹ Kean, 36.

⁶⁵² *Ibid.*, 37.

⁶⁵³ Kruse, 1655. This seems to have been a reasonable concern, as demonstrated by recent data on how “slaughterhouse employment increases total arrest rates, arrests for violent crimes, arrests for rape, and arrests for other sex offenses in comparison with other industries” when controlling for factors such as community unemployment, poverty, proportion of young men, and population density. Amy J. Fitzgerald, Linda Kalof and Thomas Dietz, "Slaughterhouses and Increased Crime Rates: An Empirical Analysis of the Spillover From 'The Jungle' Into the Surrounding Community," *Organization & Environment* 22, no. 2 (2009): 1.

⁶⁵⁴ “The story of British zoos,” *BBC*, accessed November 28, 2017, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/timelines/z2njq6f>.

work, slaughterhouses and stockyards started appearing in the early 1800s and were increasingly removed from public view.⁶⁵⁵

Around the time of British emancipation, scattered individuals in the West were vegetarian and supportive of animal rights. For instance, Louisa May Alcott's father established a vegetarian commune in America and lamented that, "In apparel, we cannot as yet dispense well with cotton and leather, the first a product of slaves and the last an invasion of the rights of animals."⁶⁵⁶ The American Vegetarian Society was established in the time between British and American emancipation.⁶⁵⁷

Similarities Between the British Antislavery Movement and the Modern Anti-Animal-Farming Movement

The more similar the context and content of two movements, the more we should expect what worked for one movement to work for another. Today's movement against animal farming bears many similarities to the British antislavery movement, meaning advocates for the former can learn from advocates of the latter. This and all following sections assume the reader has some knowledge of modern animal farming and animal advocacy.

Victims

Victims were/are sentient beings who were/are reduced to objects to be used with no or essentially no regard for their interests, especially where those interests conflicted/conflict with those of their owners. Victims were/are totally controlled, and that control was/is forcefully obtained.

Both sets of victims seem to have solicited/solicit sufficient levels of empathy to produce substantial public outrage. Compared to fish, chickens, pigs, cows, and other farmed animals, enslaved black humans were much more similar to their oppressors, presumably making them easier for their oppressors to empathize and communicate with. However, human empathy and

⁶⁵⁵ Fitzgerald, "A Social History of the Slaughterhouse," 60.

⁶⁵⁶ Helstosky, 183.

⁶⁵⁷ "The American Vegetarian Society," *International Vegetarian Union*, accessed November 28, 2017, <https://ivu.org/history/societies/americanvs.html>.

nonhumans' nonverbal communication are sufficient that most people are still highly troubled when they see footage of nonhuman animals suffering in farms and slaughterhouses. Slaughterhouse workers are often traumatized by their experiences, despite speciesism and their psychological motivation to desensitize.⁶⁵⁸ Young children, before they've been as conditioned with speciesism as they will be by adulthood, appear to have no or little more trouble empathizing with dogs, cats, pigs, or chickens than with humans, and we flag a young child as a likely psychopath — as deficient in empathy for everyone — if they intentionally hurt a nonhuman animal. White Slave traders also appear to have typically treated the Slaves in their charge with the same total deficit of empathy with which human farmers typically treat the animals in their charge, but if the British public had more empathy for Slaves than the public today has for farmed animals, then we might expect the employees of the Slave trade to have shown greater empathy as well — and that doesn't appear to be the case. Remember, too, the many instances of black humans being explicitly spoken of as inferior “animals” and Slaves being spoken of as though they were literally inanimate objects. All of this suggests that our empathy in the contemporary situation, even if potentially weaker, is sufficient for us to have a successful movement against the institution.

Both groups of victims had/have little to no way of communicating with the general public without the help of allies, despite humans being able to do so more easily in theory. Slaves were largely illiterate and spoke only broken English, and white antislavery advocates, politicians, and members of the general public seem to have heard much more about Slaves' experiences from other white people's observations than from Slaves directly. That abolition and emancipation were successfully achieved anyway suggests that farmed animal advocacy could succeed as well despite a heavy reliance on allies. To the extent that this is an impediment, it can probably be mitigated by efforts to emphasize victims' voices, for instance through the use of audio and visual recordings of victims' nonverbal expressions. However, since allies' voices were emphasized in the antislavery movement, it's possible that prioritizing them over victims' voices is the best strategy.

Neither population could participate in the politics of their oppressors. While most Slaves who could speak some English had the necessary intrinsic capacities to participate in British politics, farmed animals lack the ability to understand or communicate about human politics. However,

⁶⁵⁸ Anna Dorovskikh, “Killing for a Living: Psychological and Physiological Effects of Alienation of Food Production on Slaughterhouse Workers” (undergraduate honors theses, University of Colorado, Spring 2015): 20-25, https://scholar.colorado.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=2157&context=honr_theses.

circumstances prevented enslaved and free black humans from participating in politics and even from doing much of their own political organizing for self-liberation. Though they staged more organized and larger rebellions than farmed animals can, only one was successful in achieving its participants' freedom, and it does not appear that their unsuccessful rebellions had much if any positive impact on abolition and emancipation as political acts. In fact, far from foregrounding Slaves' own struggle for freedom, the most antislavery leaders usually said on the topic of rebellion was to respond to the claim that speaking of abolition or emancipation would incite rebellion by suggesting that those rebellions demonstrated the Slaves' desire for freedom. Rebellions appear have made the industry less stable and as such less valuable to the empire, but so too do the disease outbreaks and environmental disasters caused by animal farming. As mentioned earlier, rebellions may have also indicated to Britons the failure of Slavery to "civilize" and Christianize Slaves, a purported proslavery motivation of unclear importance, but so too does animal farming fail to sustainably feed the world, a purported pro-animal-farming motivation.

Victims lived/live without enough health and safety to prevent a significant portion of them from dying, and were/are often worked to death.⁶⁵⁹

Individuals in either case who were/are free from the institution either since birth or through individual liberation had/have limited protection and were/are at risk of capture, at least if they resided in the Americas or were previously enslaved in the case of victims of Slavery.

Institution

By the time each movement developed societies/organizations opposing the institution, it had been around for all living memory. Neither institution was campaigned *for* or considered righteous — in both cases it was/is just assumed to be a perpetual fact of life.⁶⁶⁰

⁶⁵⁹ Sugarcane was particularly brutal work with 3% annual mortality, and it may have been common to work Slaves as hard as possible until they died, at which point their owner would just replace them. See Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 67. Hens made to labor for their eggs are also overworked for the year and a half to three years of their lives, with anywhere between around 2% to 21% annual mortality as laying adults, before they are considered unprofitable enough to be killed, discarded, and replaced. See "Understanding Mortality Rates of Laying Hens in Cage-Free Egg Production Systems," *The Humane Society of the United States*, 2010, http://animalstudiesrepository.org/acwp_faafp/3.

⁶⁶⁰ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 86-87.

Each movement faced/faces ample insistence that the institution was/is necessary for the quality of life of the group in power. However, both were/are also generally regarded as *unfortunate* necessities.

In both situations the horrors of the present were/are excused by a shift of blame to other cultures or people in the past. Today, some justify animal farming and slaughter — even that using modern, industrial techniques — because our hominid ancestors ate nonhuman animals. Similarly, proslavery advocates justified their involvement in Slavery by saying they were only capitalizing on the human chattel slavery already present in Africa.⁶⁶¹

Each industry was/is resistant to reforms, and enforcement was/is a serious challenge for each even when reforms were/are passed.⁶⁶²

In each case, the industry responded to early advocacy against its cruelties with substantial humanewashing. Both also responded/respond to some specific accusations with assertions that such cruelty was/is atypical or exaggerated.

The West India lobby outspent antislavery advocates, just as the animal farming lobby currently outspends farmed animal advocates.

Despite the heavy racism of the time, the West India lobby virtually never said a word about black inferiority, and in fact almost exclusively argued that Slavery was necessary to the economy. The movement against animal farming has barely touched the political sphere, and only with campaigns for welfare reforms, but so far explicit speciesism seems to have made little to no appearance in industry opposition here either. In fact, in response to reform campaigns, the animal farming industry has taken a similar approach of prioritizing an economic defense of the industry's practices, emphasizing the price increases reforms would result in.

Proslavery advocates pointed to the stain on the reputation of the captain of the *Zong* as an indication of the inhumanity, cruelty, and malice of abolitionists, presumably to discredit and

⁶⁶¹ J. Debrett, *The Parliamentary Register*, vol. 29 (London: Printed for J. Debrett, 1791), 224.

⁶⁶² At a conference on animal law at Harvard University attended by the editor of this report, the Deputy Administrator of the USDA's Animal Care Program, Bernadette Juarez, acknowledged that the USDA does not have the resources to enforce existing laws, which for the most part apply only to a minority of farmed animals and are extremely limited even for them.

dismiss them, and farmed animal advocates' pressure campaigns against companies that cause nonhuman animals to suffer are sometimes referred to as attempts at bullying. In both cases, the focus was/is implicitly moved from the victims' needs to the abusers' freedom to do as they please with the victims. Proslavery advocates also asserted that all representations of the case were unfair to the captain, and to the transatlantic Slave trade by proxy.⁶⁶³ Similarly, the animal farming industry tries to deny farmed animal advocates' claims of cruelty on farms and in slaughterhouses even when there is ample and representative video evidence of it.⁶⁶⁴

Work in the transatlantic Slave trade and in animal farming — particularly animal slaughter — was/is among the most dangerous and undesirable occupations of its time to its white/human workforce. As such, many of the lowest ranking white/human laborers in the industry, who were/are integral to it, were/are there out of necessity rather than enthusiasm for the industry.⁶⁶⁵

Both industries seem to have had/have a corrupting influence on their free workforce, restricting their empathy not only for those they are paid to exploit but also for other people they interact with.⁶⁶⁶

Advocacy

Both movements were/are politically led mostly or entirely by allies of the oppressed rather than by the oppressed themselves.

⁶⁶³ Swaminathan, 490.

⁶⁶⁴ Mercy for Animals states that they investigate “randomly selected” Tyson farms and slaughterhouses. *Tyson Tortures Animals*, accessed November 24, 2017, <http://tysonstorturesanimals.com>.

⁶⁶⁵ Crew in the transatlantic Slave trade were not only treated unjustly but also faced a 20% mortality rate round-trip. See Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 94. Slave ship crew were recruited as naive young men enticed with promises of riches and women, and given excess liquor until they could be convinced, or were compelled to overspend at the pub just before the Slave ships left port, compelling them to join a crew to pay their debts — or they were simply poor and that was the only work available. See Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 114-115. Slaughterhouse work is notorious for dangers associated with heavy machinery, sharp tools, rapid line speed, and diseased animal carcasses — workers have a 51% chance of injury, and slaughterhouse work is “very likely to have a serious, negative psychological impact on the employees.” 200% turnover rates for first-time slaughterhouse employees are common. See James McWilliams, *The Modern Savage: Our Unthinking Decision to Eat Animals* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2015), 91. Animal farmers have also brought lawsuits against the companies they contract with for treating them like indentured servants. See David Pitt, “Chicken farmers say processors treat them like servants,” *Associated Press*, February 8, 2017, <http://apnews.com/93141db585a648d4bdb488ba18d3e59a>.

⁶⁶⁶ See Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 22-23 for examples of a Slave trader's violence towards his crew, and 118 for Clarkson's observations and conclusions on Slave trader violence. See also Fitzgerald, “Slaughterhouses and Increased Crime Rates.”

The prejudice enabling the institution was/is generally held to at least some degree by the advocates in the movement.

There were/are individuals in the oppressing class in both situations who held/hold significantly less prejudicial views of the victims.⁶⁶⁷

Both movements required/require oppressors to concede at least some degree of power over the oppressed.

Advocates were/are motivated by and spoke about moral factors other than the impact on the oppressed. Antislavery advocates, and British culture at the time more generally, had a desire to Christianize Africans, and the failure of Slavery to do so was a critique of it.⁶⁶⁸ Antislavery advocacy may have in part been motivated by this secondary effect. Today the general public is concerned with issues that would be significantly improved as a secondary effect of the elimination of animal farming, such as climate change, resource depletion, and public health.

Early advocates of both movements were/are met with rage, violence, and threats — Slave traders threatened Clarkson with violence in Liverpool, and planters loudly attacked Ramsay's character in the press.

Some people who interacted with either movement's advocates praised/praise the compassion of those advocates before excusing themselves from acting on such compassion.

⁶⁶⁷ While some white people insulted black people in the street, some welcomed them into their homes, and even into their families through marriage. See Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 134. Today, while some people make degrading jokes about chickens, pigs and cows and many more eat them, some rescue those animals from farms and adopt them into their homes and families. In the proto-stages of each movement, rare but reputable writers also asserted that the institution was wrong, that the suffering of the victims was an unconscionable cruelty, and that their liberty was an extension of the public's interest in social justice.

⁶⁶⁸ Secondary motivations do not seem to have made much of an appearance in parliamentary debates, however, so a more detailed review of parliamentary records is required to determine how important they were as motivations and/or as arguments.

Society

Individuals of the oppressing class in either case who were/are not directly involved in the industry had/have some, but very limited, opportunity to interact with individuals of the oppressed class.

Today's consumers and the Slavery-era British public — including the people in its Northern colonies in America, who were more opposed to Slavery than the people in the Southern colonies — were rarely exposed to the exploitation itself. In other words, while they were/are used to the products, they were/are not used to the process.

Both publics generally held/hold severely discriminatory views towards the victims.⁶⁶⁹ The discrimination in both cases was/is a form of supremacy, which held/holds that the “negro”/“animal” was/is inferior in ability and moral value to the white man/human and as such was/is meant, by the decree of God or nature, to be the dominion of the latter.

In both cases, it was/is commonly seen as ridiculous to consider the individual in question — the property — as a person. Some people assume that there is, or that humans perceive, so fundamental a chasm between human and nonhuman animals that the movement for nonhuman animals is in an entirely separate ballpark from all human rights movements, but how white humans treated and spoke about black humans — for instance explicitly comparing them to nonhuman animals to assert their inferiority — suggests that black humans were generally put on nonhuman animals' side of that chasm. For instance, respected people wrote things about black humans like, “It is impossible for us to suppose these creatures to be men.”⁶⁷⁰ A Chancellor in a case in 1749 asserted a Slave was “as much property as any other thing,” referred to a Slave as an “it,” and insisted Slaves were fungible and “wore out with labor as cattle, and other things.”⁶⁷¹ After Somerset's case, one planter who wrote a proslavery pamphlet and would later become an

⁶⁶⁹ Even well into the antislavery movement someone described the situation of British troops arresting a white boy for kicking a black man and making him apologize to the man as a humiliating cruelty to the white boy. See Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 104. There was little to no discussion about rights for black humans beyond freedom from enslavement, including from antislavery advocates.

⁶⁷⁰ Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws*(1748), ch. 15, sec. 5, <http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch15s4.html>.

⁶⁷¹ Wise, 49; John Codman Hurd, *The Law of Freedom and Bondage in the United States*, vol. 1 (Boston: Little, Brown & Company: 1807), 185.

MP asserted that “blacks” were an altogether separate species from “whites” because were defective in their ability to reason,⁶⁷² and another said black humans were as inferior to the white man as oxen or (nonhuman) apes.⁶⁷³ In the *Zong* case, Mansfield stated that “the case of the slaves was the same as if horses had been thrown overboard.”⁶⁷⁴ A surgeon who had been on Slave ships also observed that their decks were often so covered with blood and mucus from dysentery that it looked like the floor of a slaughterhouse.⁶⁷⁵

Like the British public in the century leading up to the beginning of the abolition movement, the public today is already moved by animal farming at least enough that some people can be found abstaining from consuming the products of the industry, and popular art and literature occasionally express discontent with it, such as in Banksy’s “Sirens of the Lambs” and the New York Times best-seller *Eating Animals*. Occasionally philosophers and public figures have expressed opposition to, or forecast a future without animal farming, just as some did about Slavery in the time before the abolition movement took flight.

Leading intellectuals did not defend Slavery, though with the exceptions of James Stephen and Thomas Paine, most did little or nothing to advocate against it either.⁶⁷⁶ Few leading public intellectuals today have made nonhumans a primary or even secondary focus of their work, with a notable exception of Peter Singer, and though some defend higher-welfare forms of animals farming, most generally do not defend factory farming, the majority of the institution, and in fact most of those who have said something on the topic tend to oppose it.

In the US, bills to reform, limit, or eliminate animal farming may conflict with principles of states’ rights, just as antislavery efforts seem to have conflicted somewhat with principles of colonial autonomy.

⁶⁷² Wise, 196.

⁶⁷³ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 134.

⁶⁷⁴ Walvin, 153.

⁶⁷⁵ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 132.

⁶⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 86.

Differences Between the British Antislavery Movement and the Modern Anti-Animal-Farming Movement

The more different the context of two movements, the less we should expect what worked for one movement to work for another.

Differences that May Make the Abolition of Animal Farming Harder

Victims

While black humans who were considered slaves were regarded as property by the law, black humans as a group were not. Some were considered free and held the basic legal rights of white men of their class, meaning for instance that they could own property and testify, and that killing them was murder and enslaving them illegal. Some regions have granted some rights to a few nonhuman species, but there are no nonhumans animals who have the same rights as a human. Nonhumans are therefore categorically more objectified in law. As they do not as individuals have the possibility of becoming persons like black humans did if they were manumitted, born free, or judged to be free, it may also be harder for society to envision them as persons. People who own nonhuman animals are also referred to as “owners” — though some owners of common “pet” species choose to use the term “guardian,” though there is no legal distinction — while people who owned Slaves were referred to as “masters,” suggesting those Slaves were perceived somewhat more as servants than nonhuman animals.⁶⁷⁷

Individuals in the contemporary nonhuman situation who are manumitted or rescued, or who escape, or who are born in the wild or into a family that does not treat them as property, can essentially only integrate into society to the extremely limited degree that some humans take them into their homes as their property or visit such homes and sanctuaries to interact with them. Ex-Slaves, on the other hand, could work, buy property, and learn European table manners, instruments and languages.

⁶⁷⁷ See HC Deb. May 15, 1823, vol. 9, col. [332](#), in which an MP describes the owner of a Slave as an “master” and the owner of a horse as an “owner.”

Enslaved black humans were also more closely related to their oppressors than any farmed animals are to theirs. This is the case both in terms of genetic makeup and in terms of humanity's assignment of biological taxonomy. While all victims and oppressors are sentient individuals who also share the same kingdom and phylum, black humans shared the same species as their oppressors, while farmed animals share at closest the same biological class. Because of this greater genetic proximity, Slaves were more similar to their oppressors in appearance and were also easier to communicate with. Given this greater distance, as well as the longer, more widespread, and more pervasive history of nonhuman subjugation, it is possible that prejudice against other species today is stronger than racism was in the time of Slavery.

While both groups of victims were/are laborers, farmed animals are also raw materials. Though enforcement was probably very limited, it was often lawfully considered murder to kill a Slave, at least after 1797.⁶⁷⁸ In the production of animal meat, killing the animals is currently unavoidable, and while it may not be technically necessary for egg and dairy production, it is economically necessary, so the norm in the industry is to kill all farmed animals.⁶⁷⁹ Unlike animal farming, the Slave industry did not have dedicated facilities for killing its victims and rendering them into consumer products. That farmed animals are literally turned into goods suggests that they are more readily regarded as objects than Slaves were, as does their lack of protection for their lives relative to the little, but non-zero, protection Slaves had.

Institution

The consumer products of the Slave industry were unchanged when production shifted to free labor, but before cellular agriculture or plant-based food technologies can satisfactorily replace animal-based foods, or if they cannot, a ban on animal farming would deprive people of the industry's products.

It seems that what mattered most about Slaves' resistance was how economically volatile and physically dangerous it made the institution of Slavery. Farmed animals' resistance may cause a

⁶⁷⁸ James Stephen, *The slavery of the British West India colonies delineated, as it exists both in law and practice, and compared with the slavery of other countries, ancient and modern* (London: J. Butterworth and Son, 1824), 36 and 38, <https://archive.org/details/slaveryofbritish01step>.

⁶⁷⁹ There are some dairy farmers in India and the UK who do not kill the calves or cows, but this model seems too expensive and unsustainable to meet current dairy consumption. See Josh Harkinson, "Slaughter-Free Milk Is Great for Cows, But Not the Environment," *Mother Jones*, July 21, 2014, <http://motherjones.com/environment/2014/07/downside-no-kill-dairies>.

few human injuries and result in a very small number of individuals lost in efforts to escape, but their resistance does not seem nearly as costly to the industry or society as Slave rebellions in the colonies appear to have been relative to the size of each industry.⁶⁸⁰

Advocacy

While antislavery advocates pioneered many their tactics, and were one of the few charitable organizations lobbying government at the time — as opposed to religious bodies and trade groups — today government officials and the public are saturated with many interest groups, many of them using similar advocacy tactics and potentially making it harder for each individual group to have their voice heard.

This greater abundance of advocacy groups may also provide individuals with more opportunities to find purpose and identity in and to rally to other causes that speak to them. Antislavery advocates' mobilization of the lower classes was also a novel strategy at the time, so there may have been very limited competition for their purpose and identity. It may also have been very fortunate for antislavery advocates that they started when they did, launching the issue into the public spotlight only a year before the storming of the Bastille and start of the French Revolution, and as such committing people to the cause before republican revolutionary movements started competing for their attention.

Slavery was a luxury of the upper classes, even in terms of the consumption of West Indian goods, and working class white people saw the upper classes as an enemy, particularly in this time of revolution. This shared enemy could have both made them feel more solidarity with Slaves than people today can feel with farmed animals, and made it easier to oppose the institution's financial benefactors since on another level they already did. The animal farming industry may be an enemy to many people who oppose corporate influence over government or the industry's costs to public health, the environment, or the economy, but the public does not perceive the industry as treating them so fundamentally unjustly that they are staging mass revolutions against the industry's stakeholders out of their own interest.

⁶⁸⁰ This excludes the ordinary industry costs of subduing resistance and escape efforts that are easily prevented through, for instance, cages, walls, and mutilations in the case of farmed animals, or whips, shackles, and overseers in the case of Slaves.

The year before emancipation was finally granted, a planter, a Vice Admiral, the parliamentary undersecretary to the Colonial Office, and a minister all insisted that if the Slaves were not emancipated very soon, the UK was at risk of losing its colonies entirely. While nations that farm animals on large scales today face significant and increasing public health, environmental, and associated economic costs and risks for doing so, those costs and risks are increasing slowly and not likely to get to a similar state of urgency in the near future. That said, over time, given population growth and climate change, eventually those costs should increase to a point where replacing animal agriculture with plant and/or cellular agriculture is regarded widely, if begrudgingly, as the preferable alternative to issues such as widespread food and water shortages, so while the currently lower salience of the risks may mean animal farming is harder to eliminate now, this disadvantage should decrease with time.

Society

In the UK, though perhaps not in its West Indian colonies, racism may not have been as entrenched as speciesism is now. While most humans in Western societies today rarely interact with live farmed animals, the vast majority do interact with their dead bodies several times a day. Humans also see the other people in their communities joining them in this practice daily, socially affirming the speciesist action. Eating animals restricts our empathy for them⁶⁸¹ in a significant way that Britons probably didn't experience with Slaves away in the colonies or with their consumption of Slave-made goods, which was probably more akin to consuming goods containing non-obvious animal products like gelatin as one of many ingredients, or consuming goods that may but don't always use animals somewhere in the production line, like wine.

Today we also have a rhetoric and strong cultural identities specifically around "human rights," which asserts that the criteria for moral inclusion is membership in the human species.

That one in five people in Manchester signed a petition for abolition could suggest that it was easier to congregate large swaths of the population in the time of the antislavery movement, perhaps because there were far fewer people. Manchester's population is around 40 times the size now.

⁶⁸¹ Brock Bastian et al., "Don't Mind Meat? The Denial of Mind to Animals Used for Human Consumption," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 38, no. 2 (2012): 247-256.

Differences that May Make the Abolition of Animal Farming Easier

Institution

Slavery and animal farming were/are both argued to be necessary for the good of the people, but in different ways: Slavery was considered necessary to the British economy, animal farming to human health. Anti-animal-farming advocates have more robust data and the support of dietetic and medical authorities⁶⁸² to counter claims of the necessity of animal-based foods to human health than antislavery advocates did to counter claims of economic necessity. Note that animal farming is sometimes argued for as an economic necessity in specific regions, like US states whose major exports are products of or for animal farming. Animal farming is also unlikely to face a moment of increased perception of necessity like Slavery did when Great Britain started drafting Slaves into its military in wartime.

On a national level, animal farming seems less economically important than Slavery was. Though the profitability of Slavery is a complicated and hotly debated topic among economic historians, profits from both the transatlantic Slave trade and from the West Indian plantations that relied on Slave labor may have amounted to 5% of the British national income.⁶⁸³ Slaves themselves represented up to 2% of the wealth of British property holders.⁶⁸⁴ As noted earlier, the net value of the West Indies to Great Britain in the years before abolitionist campaigning started may have been a cost of £1 million annually, but since the main argument against abolition and emancipation was the economic value of the institution and since that objection appears to have held off legislation off for decades, it is likely that the public and politicians perceived the industry as economically significant. In contrast, the whole of US agriculture — plant and animal —

⁶⁸² Craig W.J. and Mangels A.R., "Position of the American Dietetic Association: vegetarian diets," *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 109, no. 7 (2009): 1266.

⁶⁸³ Drescher, *Econocide*, 24; Stanley L. Engerman, "The Slave Trade and British Capital Formation in the Eighteenth Century: A Comment on the Williams Thesis," *Business History Review* 46, no. 4 (1972): 442.

⁶⁸⁴ Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract*, 232.

accounts for only 0.7% of the nation's GDP,⁶⁸⁵ and animal farming has only a share of that: only 30% of calories consumed in the US are from animal-based foods.⁶⁸⁶ Animal farming also carries greater externalized costs than its alternatives, reducing its economic contribution further.⁶⁸⁷

Anti-animal-farming advocates can not only more robustly claim that the institution is not necessary, but can moreover claim that it is harmful, to the climate, to the sustainability of water, land, and global food supplies, to biosecurity and public health, and to its human laborers. These reasons make it harmful to the economy as well, beyond being merely unimportant to it. All of these major uncontrollable circumstances weigh in anti-animal-farming advocates' favor, perhaps even more heavily than they did for antislavery advocates.

According to Hochschild, the proslavery lobby was widely regarded as the strongest lobby of the time.⁶⁸⁸ The animal farming industry, on the other hand, spends little on lobbying compared to larger industries today like health, insurance, electronics manufacturing, oil and gas, or defense.⁶⁸⁹

Advocacy

Though antislavery advocates had to innovate and test out many of their tactics, including trying use the tactics of noncharitable interest groups for charitable purposes, advocates of all social movements today have records of more than two centuries of social movements using such tactics to learn from. In addition, modern movements can use historically renowned tactics to associate their own movement with those historical, now widely applauded movements, to elevate its status.

⁶⁸⁵ "GDP-by-Industry," U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis November 2, 2017, <https://www.bea.gov/iTable/iTable.cfm?ReqID=51#reqid=51&step=51&isuri=1&5114=a&5102=1>.

⁶⁸⁶ Sarah Rehkamp, "A Look at Calorie Sources in the American Diet," *United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service*, December 5, 2016, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2016/december/a-look-at-calorie-sources-in-the-american-diet/>.

⁶⁸⁷ See the analysis shared in Bruce Friedrich, "Meatonomics: The Bizarre Economics of the Meat & Dairy Industries," *Huffington Post*, November 3, 2013, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/bruce-friedrich/meatonomics-the-bizarre-e_b_3853414.html. Though this calculation is rough given uncertainties around e.g. the health effects of realistic nutrition counterfactuals, it nonetheless suggests that externalized costs may be very high.

⁶⁸⁸ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 187.

⁶⁸⁹ See "Agribusiness," *OpenSecrets.org*, 2017, <https://www.opensecrets.org/lobby/indus.php?id=A>; "Top Spenders," *OpenSecrets.org*, 2017, <https://www.opensecrets.org/lobby/top.php?showYear=2017&indexType=s>.

Anti-animal-farming advocates can target slaughterhouses, which may be even more emotionally salient and compelling to the public than factory farms or Slave ships because of the extremity of the violence. This is less valuable if it means slaughterhouses — or particular images from and depictions of slaughterhouses — are more likely to make people react by avoiding the issue as a psychological defense.

There seem to be relatively stronger secondary motivations to oppose animal farming — namely its host of heavy environmental costs — than there were to oppose Slavery — such as its potential economic inefficiency and its failure to Christianize Slaves — so the movement against animal farming should be able to rally a larger base of support beyond individuals primarily concerned for the direct victims of the institution.

Antislavery advocates only had testimonies and illustrations to inform the public. anti-animal-farming advocates have documentary images, video, audio, and even virtual reality which are presumably much more evocative and at least somewhat more credible, even if they operate in a society where people are more inundated with these media.

Advocates today are unlikely to face as broad or severe a restriction on public political activity as antislavery advocates and their other contemporary social justice advocates did during wartime. Modern activism repression like the Green Scare is concerning, but has not been nearly as sweeping or chilling as the republican scare in the late 1700s and early 1800s in Great Britain/the UK.

With modern technology — including video-audio recording enabling accurate documentation and the internet enabling easy access to that information — the realities of modern issues are easier to document, access, and verify than the realities of Slavery were.

Society

Much of today's society has developed a general ethic and rhetoric of nondiscrimination that the antislavery movement did not have available to it. We also have many cultural heroes who fought for social justice or the freedom of their people; dearly love stories about superheroes who selflessly protect the innocent from evil; and in general place substantially more value on liberty

and justice — purportedly “for all,” according to the US pledge of allegiance, which school children recite daily.

Today, throughout the Western world, we accept animal welfare as a sometimes-justifiable reason to seize neglected or abused animals from their owners, which indicates that we are less concerned with the sanctity of property law than politicians appear to have been in the era of Slavery, and so are less likely to encounter that particular objection.

Women can now vote, which is important as women tend to be significantly more supportive of animal rights than men.⁶⁹⁰

In the UK and many Western nations, though perhaps not in the US, bills to reform, limit, or eliminate animal farming will not conflict as strongly with the principles of state’s rights as antislavery measures did with colonial autonomy.

Economies today change at a much faster pace than they did in the Industrial Revolution, including in ways that significantly change individuals’ daily lives. People today may therefore be more comfortable with products they are used to being replaced with new products, and with major sectors of the economy being replaced with new industries.

While people who were invested in Slavery often passed those investments on, bringing younger people into the fold, young people today probably have more opportunities and incentive to take different paths than their family members, as there are more kinds of jobs, more educational opportunities, and a greater emphasis in both business and culture on progress and new technologies. This also probably means the animal farming industry is less likely to grow savvier with time, as the proslavery lobby did.

⁶⁹⁰ Rebecca Riffkin, “In U.S., More Say Animals Should Have Same Rights as People,” *Gallup*, May 18, 2015, <http://news.gallup.com/poll/183275/say-animals-rights-people.aspx>, shows that 42% of women and 22% of men agree “animals” should have the “same rights as people.” Frank Newport, “In U.S., 5% Consider Themselves Vegetarians,” *Gallup*, July 26, 2016, <http://news.gallup.com/poll/156215/consider-themselves-vegetarians.aspx>, shows 7% of women self-identify as “vegetarian” while 4% of men do. Jacy Reese, “Survey of US Attitudes Towards Animal Farming and Animal-Free Food October 2017,” *Sentience Institute*, November 20, 2017, <https://www.sentienceinstitute.org/animal-farming-attitudes-survey-2017>, found women more opposed to animal farming than men.

Differences of Unclear Sign

Victims

Globally, farmed animals outnumber humans at least 14 to 1,⁶⁹¹ whereas at the time of emancipation Slaves in the British empire were outnumbered by Britons 1 to more than 21.⁶⁹² That animal farming affects a much larger number of individuals may make it easier to perceive as a massive tragedy, but its scale may also make it feel more integral to our lives and less solvable. Note that in West Indian colonies, Slaves generally accounted for 90% of the population, far outnumbering free white Britons.⁶⁹³

While both groups of victims experienced/experience both physically and psychologically imposed subjugation and restraint, Slave subjugation was primarily maintained through the latter — through repeated abuse and threats of severe repercussions for disobedience — whereas farmed animal subjugation is primarily maintained by physical confinement.⁶⁹⁴

If farmed animals were emancipated immediately, they would have a need for sanctuary and caretakers that Slaves did not, as Slaves could continue working as free laborers and be left to care for themselves. This could make a ban on animal farming more costly, but since the transition to an animal-free food system will likely be gradual, this cost will be low, and could even be nothing if it becomes a roadblock because in that case the bill for a ban could allow farms to kill and sell the remaining animals in their charge up to a particular date, just as emancipation legislation

⁶⁹¹ Sentience Institute, "Sentience Institute Global Farmed & Factory Farmed Animals Estimates," sheet "Estimates," accessed November 28, 2017, https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1NjI_GS7jDOELjOtywvk3thIFpW_v10uZ5APjI1KgaY0

⁶⁹² Olusoga, "The history of British slave ownership has been buried," says there were 800,000 Slaves, while the population of Great Britain, not including its colonies, Ireland, and other territories, was recorded as 16,539,318. See "Enumeration abstract, 1801," *Online Historical Population Reports*, accessed November 24, 2017, [http://www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/PageBrowser?path=Browse/Census%20\(by%20date\)/1831/Great%20Britain&active=yes&mno=13&tocstate=expandnew&tocseq=500&display=sections&display=tables&display=pagetitles&pageseq=first-nonblank](http://www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/PageBrowser?path=Browse/Census%20(by%20date)/1831/Great%20Britain&active=yes&mno=13&tocstate=expandnew&tocseq=500&display=sections&display=tables&display=pagetitles&pageseq=first-nonblank).

⁶⁹³ Higman, 626.

⁶⁹⁴ Other forms of nonhuman animal exploitation, such as in the entertainment industry, rely more heavily on psychological subjugation.

allowed Slave-holders to keep their Slaves for another four years before a deadline when emancipation would be imposed.

There is no threat of violent rebellion or other organized uprisings of farmed animals. This facilitates advocates' portrayals of them as pitiable, helpless victims, but inhibits advocates from demonstrating their agency. How this weighs depends on which portrayal is more compelling, which is discussed under "Unclear Implications" in the "Strategic Implications" section below.

Institution

Slaves saw little or no change in their conditions from the beginnings of the trade to the time of the antislavery movement, but animal farming has changed dramatically between its inception and the modern era of mass industrial enterprise. People today can envision and have sometimes seen animal farms that either lack or at least appear to lack the blatant cruelty and extensive suffering that happens on factory farms. On the one hand, this greater opportunity to envision a humane institution may mean that people today have a stronger psychological refuge excusing and upholding the institution broadly. In addition to making the project of ending animal farming or even factory farming more difficult, this could mean that reforms, which presumably play into the fantasy of a humane system, pose greater risks of making people more misinformed about and comfortable with the industry. On the other hand, the contrast between factory farms and farms perceived as humane, coupled with the newness of the more cruel industrial system, could make it easier for people to oppose the new system and as such the whole industry which it now dominates.

Before the formation of the Abolition Committee, some planters made or recommended efforts to improve Slaves' welfare in ways that also improved productivity, without the urging of antislavery advocates to do so. It's unclear to what degree corporate commitments to reform animal farming practices to date have directly benefitted profitability or been concessions to advocates, but most reforms have come at the explicit urging of advocates.

Humanewashing is more pervasive in the animal farming industry, which for instance runs commercials explicitly expressing their concern for the animals' welfare, prolifically employs cartoons of happy farmed animals in marketing efforts, and extensively labels their products in ways that suggest high welfare standards. On the one hand, this may make people believe the industry is more benevolent than it actually is, resulting in less impetus to oppose it. On the other

hand, since humanewashing messages fundamentally concede that the welfare of their subjects is important, they may encourage people to care more about them, resulting in more willingness to act when they are presented with the realities of the industry.⁶⁹⁵

The sugar, coffee, tobacco, and other goods produced by Slaves in the West Indies were consumed less and probably viewed more as luxury goods than products of animal farming in the UK and US are today, as opposed to, for instance, in China, where animal products have long been a luxury, though that is changing with the adoption of industrial animal farming in the region.⁶⁹⁶ This could mean the animal farming industry has more power despite what appears to be less economic significance. However, since the American Dietetic Association considers animal products inessential,⁶⁹⁷ advocacy may be able to diminish the notion that animal products are necessary rather than luxury goods, even if at present many people treat them as staples and even if they are currently more accessible to some people than alternative sources of adequate nutrition.

Advocacy

Antislavery advocates' tactics were generally novel, which could have been to their advantage, but advocates using those same tactics today have nearly two centuries of trials proving their effectiveness.

Modern communications technologies enable modern advocates to share information and messages far more easily and more widely than antislavery advocates could. Individuals who want to know more can also much more easily seek that information out. On the other hand, these technologies give the offending industry greater reach as well, though at present the modern animal farming industry is less savvy with these tools than advocates and it seems to be the case that as people find out more about animal farming they tend to become more supportive of

⁶⁹⁵ For further discussion of whether humanewashing is harmful or beneficial to animal advocacy in the long-run, see section "Momentum vs. Complacency From Welfare Reforms" of "Summary of Evidence."

⁶⁹⁶ James Hansen and Fred Gale, "China in the Next Decade: Rising Meat Demand and Growing Imports of Feed", *USDA Economic Research Service*, April 7, 2014, figure "Continued growth projected in China's per capita meat consumption," <https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2014/april/china-in-the-next-decade-rising-meat-demand-and-growing-imports-of-feed>.

⁶⁹⁷ Craig W.J. and Mangels A.R., "Position of the American Dietetic Association: vegetarian diets."

intervention,⁶⁹⁸ suggesting a relative advantage to advocates. It may be, though, that these technologies mostly affect the timeline of modern movements and have little effect on the likelihood of their eventual success. Alternatively, these technologies may deprive advocates of the more considerable opportunities to build community and commitment that slower and more demanding communications processes probably provided.⁶⁹⁹ They may also enable stronger echo chambers, making it harder to reach new audiences, or make some actions such as sharing articles or attending protests so easy that they give people *moral licenses* excusing them from the more onerous and critical work of policy change.

Society

Free society even among adult white British men in the late 1700s and early 1800s was a place of more suffering, cruelty, and oppression than human society today. For example: employer-employee relationships were based on traditional master-servant relationships, and allowed severe punishment⁷⁰⁰; laborers in new industrial cities had virtually none of the labor rights we do now; indentured servitude was common; people could be drafted into the navy with more force, less warning, and less ability to abstain than they have today; crew in the transatlantic Slave trade faced significant violence and other injustice the likes of which are now entirely illegal and almost unheard of in high-income Western nations; and punishments for petty crimes were far more severe. That today's society is less cruel may indicate that we have a greater general concern for others' wellbeing, but may also indicate merely greater concern for humans' wellbeing and not extend to concern for nonhuman animals. That the vast majority of humans in the West face significantly less cruelty and injustice than they did at the time of Slavery may also mean people have greater opportunity to care for others, their own oppression lessened and their needs more met, but may alternatively mean they are less able to empathize with individuals experiencing severe oppression and suffering and as such that they feel less motivation to help them.

⁶⁹⁸ Consider, for instance, the largely supportive positions of public intellectuals who have said something on the subject.

⁶⁹⁹ See Zeynep Tufekci, "Online social change: easy to organize, hard to win," *TED* video, October 2014, http://ted.com/talks/zeynep_tufekci_how_the_internet_has_made_social_change_easy_to_organize_hard_to_win.

⁷⁰⁰ Rosemary Craig, "The History of Employment Law in England and Northern Ireland," *Cengage Learning*, 2007, 7, http://cws.cengage.co.uk/abbott8/students/ni_supp/employ_law/hist_of_employ_law.pdf.

Owning Slaves was a status symbol, something the wealthy enjoyed and the less wealthy aspired to,⁷⁰¹ whereas neither farming nor eating nonhuman animals is a symbol of wealth in most of the West, excepting to some degree among some recent immigrants to the West and in regions with more recently industrialized economies. While some animal-based foods are associated with wealth, like lobster, caviar, and steak, those comprise a very small part of the animal farming industry and also seem less important to younger generations than they did to previous generations as status symbols. While the widespread use of animal products and lack of the prestige associated with owning Slaves may mean people are less personally invested in animal farming, it has also enabled more people in the oppressing group to participate in the oppression, as the vast majority are.

Today's capitalist economies are much more consumer-oriented — more advertisements, more product labels, more brands, and more consumption — which could suggest that consumer action is more impactful today, but could also make it easy for people to dismiss consumer-focused movements as being merely matters of consumer preference and no more important or politically serious than other consumer trends. Either way, this applies both to campaigns for individual consumer change — e.g. veganism, vegetarianism, reducetarianism — and to campaigns pressuring corporations to change their practices.

Since people today are inundated with advertisements and other provocative images and video, today's advocacy groups are under pressure to use these or risk being unseen and/or regarded as abnormal. This means for instance that groups who campaign for reforms cannot just talk about reforms but have to show images, for instance of animals in their current circumstances like a battery cage, in the circumstances the reform would take their successors to like a cage-free barn, or in ideal circumstances like a sanctuary. This allows advocates to share more information with their audience than text alone, but it also generally compels them to make a choice between putting their audience off with unpleasant realistic images or contributing to misperceptions about farmed animals' circumstances by using unrealistically pleasant images. One alternative that may avoid both downsides is images that focus on living animals' faces and leave their circumstances ambiguous.

Today's Western governments are dramatically more representative. At the time of the first petition for abolition, only 5% of citizens could vote for the members of the House of

⁷⁰¹ Hochschild, 67.

Commons, and MPs often bought their seats like Wilberforce did.⁷⁰² Increased democratization is good news if, as in the antislavery movement, the public is more on board with the abolition of the institution than the elite classes who previously had more influence, but is unfortunate if we expect politicians to be easier to influence than the general public. It also means that politicians today are doing less to limit the power of lower classes, who now have votes, and are not fearful of the lower classes revolting to get more representation, at least not to so significant a degree, which disadvantages modern advocates to the extent we think abolition and/or emancipation garnered support in Parliament for their value as tolerable capitulations to the lower classes. That the elected House of Commons was more supportive of abolition and emancipation than the appointed and more elite House of Lords and that electoral expansion increased the number of emancipation supporters in Parliament suggests that greater representation in government is an advantage, but elections for the Commons were still far less representative so this is a tenuous suggestion.

Strategic Implications

As noted in the “Summary of Key Implications,” there are many challenges in integrating evidence from historical social movements into modern advocacy decision-making.⁷⁰³ This section lists a number of strategic claims supported by the evidence in this report. Of course, one’s view of the strength of these claims should depend on all available evidence, not just the evidence provided by this case study.

Implications for Advocacy Circumstances

- **Advocates can start advocating for a massive change to the institution even when that change sounds unthinkable to the general public and laughable to many politicians. Success may be more likely with widespread public disapproval of institution, but it does not necessarily require majority disapproval before the campaign starts.**

At the time the Abolition Committee was established in 1787, the idea that Slavery could be ended was fanciful and rarely discussed. However, there was sufficiently widespread discomfort

⁷⁰² Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 220.

⁷⁰³ For a more detailed discussion of the pros and cons of different sources of evidence, see the section [“Social movements vs. EAA randomized controlled trials \(RCTs\) vs. intuition/speculation/anecdotes vs. external findings”](#) of “Summary of Evidence.”

with Slavery — or at least with the transatlantic Slave trade — that in the town of Manchester probably around two-fifths of the adult population signed a petition for abolition. Abolitionists successfully rallied roughly 1% of men to sign petitions over the next year and 7% four years later.⁷⁰⁴

While only around 3-5% of the US population is vegetarian,⁷⁰⁵ according to a nationally representative survey run by Sentience Institute this year, 70% of US adults have “some discomfort with the way animals are used in the food industry,” 67% agree that the “factory farming of animals is one of the most important social issues in the world today,” 49% support a ban on factory farming, 47% support a ban on slaughterhouses, and 33% support a ban on animal farming altogether.⁷⁰⁶ A survey by Faunalytics indicates that 80% of people believe farmed animals’ welfare is important and 50% believe farmed animals should be given the same consideration as companion animals.⁷⁰⁷ A Gallup survey found that a majority of the public is at least “somewhat concerned” for farmed animals’ welfare and that a third of the public believes nonhuman animals should have the “same rights as people,” while only 3% believe they “don’t need much protection.”⁷⁰⁸ All of these results should be taken with a grain of salt because they may be affected by social desirability bias, publication bias, and disconnect between attitudes and actions, but they nonetheless indicate that support for the movement against factory and all animal farming is much higher than advocates might assume based on consumer behavior.

These rates of concern for farmed animals and support for strong interventions against animal farming may be similar to or exceed the support the antislavery movement had when its advocates launched their first petition drive and parliamentary measure against the transatlantic Slave trade, a mere 20 years before that measure succeeded and less than 50 years before emancipation was legislated.

⁷⁰⁴ These estimates are based on an 1801 count of the whole male population of England, Scotland, and Wales, including children. See “Enumeration abstract, 1801.”

⁷⁰⁵ See Newport, “In U.S., 5% Consider Themselves Vegetarians”; “How many adults in the U.S. are vegetarian and vegan?” *The Vegetarian Resource Group*, 2016, http://www.vrg.org/nutshell/Polls/2016_adults_veg.htm.

⁷⁰⁶ Reese, “Survey of US Attitudes Towards Animal Farming and Animal-Free Food October 2017.”

⁷⁰⁷ “Farmed Animal Fundamentals,” *Faunalytics*, accessed November 28, 2017, <https://faunalytics.org/fundamentals-farmed-animals/>.

⁷⁰⁸ Riffkin, “In U.S., More Say Animals Should Have Same Rights as People.”

The number of people who are vegetarian today out of a concern for the animals' welfare⁷⁰⁹ is around half of the 4-6% of people who boycotted West Indian sugar after abolitionist campaigning started, which might suggest today's public is presently less supportive of today's movement. However, if a major political campaign to abolish factory farming, slaughterhouses, or animal farming started and consumer abstinence were encouraged as an act of political support rather than as an end goal, that number would probably increase. Keep in mind that before there was a campaign for abolition in Great Britain, presumably virtually no one was boycotting sugar, so current rates of vegetarianism may suggest greater support for anti-animal-farming advocacy than antislavery advocates initially had.

• People can support a ban on the institution even if they do not understand or oppose the prejudice that enables it; even if they harbor that prejudice to a significant degree themselves; and even if they personally participate in the industry.

Antislavery advocates discussed racism little and almost universally avoided discussing racial equality. For example, even Wilberforce, the parliamentary leader of the movement to abolish the transatlantic Slave trade, harbored such substantial racism that he made black guests sit across a screen from white guests at his dining room table.

The town of Manchester was particularly friendly to abolition despite its economy's reliance on receiving cotton picked by Slaves and selling cloth made of that cotton to Slave ships. Most petitioners' wages relied on the trade, and as poor laborers they were in no position to discontinue their personal involvement in it, yet they were heavily opposed to it and readily politically mobilized against it.

This suggests that advocates do not need to turn a majority of population antispeciesist and/or vegan or vegetarian before campaigning for major policy change such as a ban on factory farming or even a ban on animal farming.

⁷⁰⁹ As noted above, 3-5% of US adults are vegetarian. 68% cite a motivation of animal protection, according to "A Summary Of Faunalytics' Study Of Current And Former Vegetarians And Vegans," *Faunalytics*, February 24, 2016, <https://faunalytics.org/a-summary-of-faunalytics-study-of-current-and-former-vegetarians-and-vegans/>.

Implications for Advocacy Strategies and Tactics

Consumer Action

- **Focus more on political campaigns for institutional change than on individual consumer change.**

The sugar boycott that peaked in 1792 seems to have been a cost-effective way for women to contribute to the antislavery movement, both because of its potential economic cost to the Slave industry and because of the movement-building effects it seems to have had among the British populace. It does appear, however, that the economic harm to the West Indian sugar trade was not sustained and the boycott at its peaks only ever reached around 4-6% of the population and reduced sugar sales by $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$. Its primary participants were probably usually not spending time on it that they could have put into political advocacy instead, as they were not able to participate in politics. The boycott may simply have been among the best actions women at the time were able to take.

The nature of this seemingly successful consumer campaign seems to be quite different from the modern anti-animal-farming advocacy focus on individual consumer change. The sugar boycott didn't displace much if any political activism; it was brief; it was specific to the top West Indian export, sugar, rather than to all Slave-made goods; it was seen as a tool in advocates' diverse toolbelt, not as the central goal of the movement; and it was able to do significant economic damage to the target industry, cutting off up to $\frac{1}{2}$ of sugar sales at one point because it was a luxury good with concentrated consumption among the wealthy.

A better comparison for anti-animal-farming advocates' approach to consumer action is the American "free produce" movement and the abstinence from Slave-made goods among some Quakers and a rare few other individuals. Though the failure of Quaker abstinence may have had more to do with their limited influence in society than with the strategy itself, American advocates' efforts to convince consumers to abstain from purchasing the products of the target industry were considered relatively ineffective by the advocates themselves after two decades of limited success.

Ultimately, the British, American, and other antislavery movements found success when they focused their resources almost entirely on political goals to restrict, reform, and eventually eliminate the institution. This suggests that anti-animal-farming advocates should focus less on changing consumer behavior and more on a political movement to restrict, reform, and eliminate the institution.

Some “Differences” discussed earlier could be reasons anti-animal-farming advocates might find more success with consumer campaigns than antislavery advocates did. For instance, the average Western consumer today has a closer connection to the institution in question through their consumption of animals and clearly animal-based foods several times a day. All things considered, the strategy and outcomes of the British antislavery movement seem like relatively strong evidence against an emphasis on consumer change.

• If advocating for consumer action, focus on a specific symbol of the problem and clearly contextualize the action as supporting the political campaign.

While a few people made an effort to abstain from purchasing any Slave-made goods, the consumer movement supporting abolition focused specifically on West Indian sugar. This avoidance of one major symbol of the institution gained substantially more traction than the avoidance of all the institution’s products.

This suggests that in consumer advocacy used to support the political movement anti-animal-farming advocates should focus on convincing people to specifically stop eating animals, rather than to go vegan, which is a stronger ask, or to reduce their consumption of all animal products across the board, which does not offer as clear a symbol and meme.

Institutional Reform

• Run a major legislative campaign that is more agreeable to the public than eliminating the whole industry, but which will still significantly curtail it.

Antislavery advocates first focused on and achieved the abolition of the transatlantic Slave trade (1787-1807), then after a lull in activity briefly worked on several moderate welfare reforms in the explicit interest of gradual emancipation (1823-1824), then seeing those fail to help the Slaves quickly shifted focus to and achieved emancipation (women started driving immediate

emancipationism in 1826, young advocates took it up in 1830, and emancipation with a four-year deadline was achieved in 1833). This suggests that at this stage anti-animal-farming advocates should deprioritize minor and moderate welfare reforms and focus on specific major reforms.

The question is what constitutes a large reform, on par with the ban on the transatlantic Slave trade. Whereas the supply of Slaves in the colonies relied partly on the trade and partly on the reproduction of Slaves — “natural” or compelled — animal farming relies virtually entirely on reproduction, so a trade ban is likely not an appropriate analogy.

To match the ban on the transatlantic Slave trade, an ideal major reform would be specific, highly agreeable to the public, and a very large but not immediately damning cost to the industry. These implications apply to regulatory reforms imposed across the industry, and not necessarily to reforms individual corporations commit to under advocate pressure with no legal enforcement.

Cage-free reforms may be within this space of goals, at least for the egg industry. One possibility that could encompass fish and chickens raised for meat — who constitute the vast majority of farmed animals⁷¹⁰ — is a minimum space requirement relative to body size for all farmed animals, at a size that strikes a balance between being so small that it’s hard to oppose and so large that it will cost the industry substantially. Other potentially suitable reforms may include size limits for slaughterhouses, bans on the construction of new slaughterhouses, or size limits for animal farms that would eliminate “large” Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs)⁷¹¹ and large fish farms.

A ban on all CAFOs would presumably be significantly bigger hit to the industry than the transatlantic Slave trade ban was to Slavery because, by the Environmental Protection Agency’s standards, CAFOs in the US represent roughly 50-67% of farmed cows, 96-98% of farmed pigs, and 99% of farmed birds, and presumably all farmed fish,⁷¹² but this may make it harder to achieve.

⁷¹⁰ Sentience Institute, “Sentience Institute Global Farmed & Factory Farmed Animals Estimates,” sheet “60% Chickens and Fish.”

⁷¹¹ See “Regulatory Definitions for Large CAFOs, Medium CAFOs, and Small CAFOs,” *Environmental Protection Agency*, accessed November 24, 2017, https://www3.epa.gov/npdes/pubs/sector_table.pdf.

⁷¹² Sentience Institute, “Sentience Institute US Factory Farming Estimates,” accessed November 28, 2017, https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1iUpRFOPmAE5IO4hO4PyS4MP_kHzkuM_-soqAyVNQcJc.

It's possible that a key feature of the ban on the transatlantic Slave trade was that it directly eliminated a limb of the industry, rather than reduce its size or severity across the board. This could for instance make a ban on cages or egg farming superior to legislation that does as much damage to the industry directly but is seen more as an improvement than a removal or ban. Improvements can probably generally be expressed as a kind of ban — for instance a maximum population density could be expressed as a ban on overcrowding, or daily outdoor access for all animals as a ban on indoor confinement — but advocates only have so much control over media presentation so this is not a full mitigation of the difference.

A ban on slaughterhouses — but not necessarily slaughter itself — may meet the Slave trade criteria. That may sound like too massive an intermediate goal, as it would eliminate the vast majority of the meat, egg, and dairy industries and dramatically raise prices on the remainder, but bear in mind that people thought the ban on the transatlantic Slave trade would lead, if gradually, to the elimination of most Slavery because death rates in the West Indies exceeded birth rates.

Advocates should be cautious about campaigning for minor and imprecise reforms like increased light in sheds housing chickens raised for meat or the breeding of slower-growth chickens, which would increase individual animals' welfare but probably increase the number of animals.

It's worth noting that the Abolition Committee decided to first campaign for a trade ban instead of a ban on the whole institution of Slavery because of two legal barriers that would make the latter more challenging: colonial autonomy and property law. The latter seems relatively unimportant to the question at hand today, and while the US may have a barrier of state autonomy, US states themselves do not, nor do the UK or other Western nations. If the Committee was accurate in their belief that those legal circumstances were major barriers, advocates may be in a better position today to campaign for more radical intervention, like a ban on CAFOs or the whole animal farming industry.

• Focus resources on pushing for that major reform and then for the elimination of the institution. If the industry initiates or if advocates push for any smaller reforms, advocates should frame them as steps towards the gradual elimination of the institution.

Antislavery advocates primarily pushed for one substantial change and then the elimination of the whole industry. Lesser reforms advocates had a hand in, which happened after abolition, were

explicitly framed as “mitigation” in the interest of the “gradual abolition of slavery” and were not presented as advocates’ primary goals.

Their success suggests anti-animal-farming advocates should do the same.

• Push for smaller reforms after the major legislative change is won, but make them stronger demands than the industry will fully accept, and publicize when the industry pushes back, cut corners, and takes advantage of limited legal enforcement

The apparent failure of abolition to lead to emancipation disappointed many politicians, and industry pushback against and failure to comply with ensuing reforms presumably contributed to public and parliamentary frustration with the Slave industry. As discussed, this seems to have been important to the tide of impatience that secured emancipation.

Presently, many efforts to reform animal farming rely on corporate commitments, which for the most part have a deadline years in the future, so assessing their compliance is challenging. However, federal regulations, even though currently extremely limited, are often evaded and violated and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has acknowledged that they cannot enforce them well.⁷¹³ Animal industries also successfully lobbied for the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act and the animal farming industry has successfully lobbied for several state “ag-gag” laws to hide what they are doing from the public. This inability — and overt refusal — to reform should be more widely publicized as a reason that the industry cannot be trusted to treat animals well and as such should be eliminated. Advocates should also consider prioritizing more immediate commitments and regulations that the industry therefore has less opportunity to evade while saving face.

• Smaller reforms to the industry — whether industry- or advocate-initiated — are likely to cause more momentum than complacency, at least if (1) advocates frame them as a step towards an end goal of eliminating the institution, (2) advocates do not present them as more directly impactful for the victims than they are, and (3) the industry fails to fully implement them.

⁷¹³ See footnote 663.

Reforms to Slavery were pursued and achieved, yet in hindsight they accomplished very little directly, and they seem quite clearly not to have made the public more complacent. Like many anti-animal-farming advocates today, the Abolition Committee worried that the first reform of the trade would reduce momentum against it, but the abolition campaign did not slow down, nor does the reform appear to have been cited as a reason that the trade was sufficiently benevolent. After abolition, it took only a decade for emancipation to win after a suite of reforms to Slavery was imposed on the West Indian colonies.

It may be very important, however, that the context of these reforms differed significantly from the context of current reforms to animal farms. Abolition was already explicitly in the public spotlight at the time of the first reform, and though abolitionists rarely mentioned their end goal of emancipation before they achieved abolition, the goal appears to have been widely understood. By the later reforms, abolition had long since been achieved, and the goal of emancipation, if a smooth and gradual one, was expressed explicitly. The later reforms may also have been important specifically because the industry, even after weakening the measures, failed to enforce them, which seemed to shift moderates to support a hard deadline for emancipation.

Presently, it does not appear that ending animal farming, any time soon at least, is a real possibility in the public's mind. Even the abolition of factory farming is not currently a major political issue, so reforms are probably easy to interpret as end goals. Farmed animal advocates' asks as well as media coverage of investigations and reforms typically either offers a consumer-oriented solution of buying better, fewer, or no animal-based foods, or focus on a particular reform in isolation. That antislavery advocates had such different context for their reforms suggests that anti-animal-farming advocates should adopt the corresponding context, and that reform advocacy may pose greater risks of inducing complacency without that context of a bigger goal.

Antislavery advocates also do not appear to have presented any mitigation of cruelty and suffering as an end to it, as farmed animal advocates often do. Citizens for Farm Animal Protection, for instance, which campaigned for the 2016 Massachusetts state bill to ban the production and sale of animal products that used battery cages, veal crates, or gestation crates, showed images of healthy animals in sunny, picturesque fields, and their logo said "Prevent Animal Cruelty." A similar campaign just started in California, with similar images and messaging,

including a video showing the words “Want to end animal cruelty?”⁷¹⁴ While attractive, such messaging could mislead consumers into thinking these bill will end all cruelty on the animal farms in their reach and ensure the animals are raised in good health in spacious sunny pastures, which is a far cry from their actual impact. Antislavery advocates, on the other hand, presented the reforms they had a hand in as the compromises they were, and were clear that their goal was a gradual transition to emancipation.

Relatedly, since the major value of Slaves’ resistance seems to have been the economic cost it incurred on the industry, but farmed animals cannot comparably rebel, small reforms that raise costs for the animal farming industry may be advocates’ best analogue.

Indirect Strategy

• If moral advocacy seems insufficient, look for ways to significantly reduce the size of the industry through indirect means.

The Foreign Slave Trade Act may have substantially reduced the British transatlantic Slave trade, though this motive of the impact on the trade was downplayed. The bill, which ratified and expanded a decree Prime Minister Pitt had made several months earlier, was pushed through as a wartime measure meant to impede the UK’s enemies. Both its actual and perceived impacts on the trade are unclear, however, as the trade was sufficiently volatile that the decline in the trade in the year following the act could have been normal variation.

For anti-animal-farming advocates, this could suggest working on bills regarding environmental, public health, consumer safety, and labor issues in the industry, which would have the effect of reducing its scale. Examples might include caps on emissions or water use; the elimination of feed crop subsidies; requirements for animal farms and slaughterhouses to treat waste⁷¹⁵; mandatory health care benefits for animal farm and slaughterhouse workers; and taxes on the industry to fund a greater budget for the enforcement of existing welfare, environmental, public health, consumer safety, labor, and other laws.

⁷¹⁴ The audio over this visual more accurately says “Want to help end some of the worst forms of factory farm cruelty?” Prevent Cruelty California, “Volunteer for Prevent Cruelty California,” *YouTube* video, 1:07, November 21, 2017, <http://preventcrueltyca.com>.

⁷¹⁵ Lewis Bollard, “We’re Going Beyond Coal. Could We Go Beyond Factory Farming?” *Open Philanthropy Project Farm Animal Welfare Newsletter*, accessed November 25, 2017, <http://mailchi.mp/3bdc58236098/could-we-go-beyond-factory-farming>.

Abolition also happened only a few years after the Slaves of St. Domingue, which was more productive than all the British West Indian colonies combined, had freed themselves through a long and violent rebellion. In response to France's loss of Haiti British planters had also made investments in sugar production that put them into debt because Napoleon prevented them from taking over the European sugar market.

For anti-animal-farming advocates, this also suggests focusing on developing the technology and market for cellular agriculture and/or plant-based alternatives to animal-based products before pushing for a major political goal.

Movement Composition

- **Recruit elite leadership to organize the public and represent the cause, and mobilize the public to pressure the government.**

The Quakers' careful targeting of MPs, justices, and other elites before the formation of the Abolition Committee appears to have failed, though it may have sown seeds. Insofar as it did fail, though, that may have owed more to the limited influence of Quakers in society than to the strategy of privately targeting elites.

Ultimately the antislavery movement used a small handful of committed elites to lead and represent the movement while mobilizing public support to pressure the government. Both the abolition and emancipation campaigns involved significant grassroots organizing and the establishment of numerous local chapters around the nation. Both also succeeded after a round of elections for which they were a major issue for voters. This also seemed clear to people at the time — the *Edinburgh Review* commented that “the sense of the nation has pressed abolition upon our rulers.”⁷¹⁶

At this time leadership in the anti-animal-farming movement is less elite relative to the antislavery movement, and advocates may want to consider focusing their efforts to recruit public intellectuals, prominent politicians, and other public figures to take stronger positions and play a more active and leading role in the movement.

⁷¹⁶ Hochschild, 307.

- **Prioritize a diverse and complementary set of talents in movement leadership.**

The antislavery movement had several arms that worked well together: A respectable parliamentary spokesperson (Wilberforce), a dedicated and inspiring grassroots organizer (Clarkson), an intellectual authority (Sharp), and a public intellectual who advised MPs (Stephen).

- **In their alliances, advocates should focus narrowly on their shared goals rather than try to agree on all social issues or even the other issues that are most important to them.**

Wilberforce was highly conservative in most issues while Clarkson wholeheartedly supported French Jacobins and believed women should be able to take a role in public affairs⁷¹⁷; Quakers and Anglicans were strongly socially divided; Sharp was hostile towards his Quaker and Catholic allies' faiths; and antislavery leaders' views even on the role of race in social order varied substantially. These critical players would have been lost to the movement if they insisted on only working towards their shared goal with people who shared their other priorities and views.

- **Move the public spotlight onto a few individual liberated victims so they and their stories become common knowledge.**

Though there was limited collaboration between Equiano, Cugoano, or other freed Slaves and the white Abolitionist Committee, Equiano and Cugoano were public figures who could directly represent and speak for the victims. Equiano's autobiography was a bestseller, and because of his speaking tour many people were able to put a specific face to the victims of Slavery.

This suggests the importance of rescuing and publicizing the stories of a few farmed animals. Though they cannot write books or articles or give speaking tours themselves, advocates can share their stories to make them into public figures through those means, as well as other, newer means like social media.

Since so few Slaves or stories of Slaves ever had a spotlight, most of the value is probably in a very few individual victims becoming public figures and/or in a very few bestselling true stories about liberated victims.

⁷¹⁷ Hochschild, *Bury the Chains*, 327.

Audience

- **Target people who are more removed from the institution.**

While the supportive town of Manchester was heavily involved in the cotton industry, it was still in Great Britain, and the mainland British public was highly removed from the sight of Slavery, as were many of its politicians. Even Manchester citizens whose livelihoods legitimately depended on Slavery probably did not *feel* like Slavery was as integral to their lives as did people in the colonies, who had more direct exposure to and interaction with the institution. Similarly, the vast majority of both the public and politicians today are removed from animal farms and slaughterhouses. However, people in high-income countries today are much closer to the institution's products, which most of them consume several times every day.

This suggests that advocates should campaign more against animal farming than animal eating, since people are more removed from the former, and that advocates should focus on the communities and locations least culturally and economically tied to animal farming — and, secondarily, eating — such as, in the US, Northeastern and West Coast cities, as opposed to rural towns in the Midwest and South. It also suggests that increasing the public's distance from animal farming and sources of dissonance, such as through institutional campaigns and market efforts that increase the proportion of animal-free foods people eat and have access to, are beneficial.

- **Focus on regions whose investment in the institution has recently been dramatically reduced.**

Great Britain lost half of its Slaves when it lost thirteen colonies to America, and the abolitionist movement took flight a few years after it accepted this defeat, even though it was still one of the biggest stakeholders in Slavery. This suggests that a dramatic reduction of the industry makes people more comfortable with further reduction.

If one nation suddenly reduces its consumption or production of animal-based foods, intentionally or unintentionally, perhaps for economic, public health, or environmentalist reasons, its public may more readily support a ban on factory farming or all animal farming.

- **Focus on nations with exceptionally strong cultures of both political participation and fundamentally aligned or favorable values.**

British antislavery succeeded in a society that was highly democratic for its time, and in a climate of republican revolutions and keen interest in human rights.

- **Focus on populations who have their own experiences with oppression.**

There are two intuitive stories that can be told about how likely oppressed people are to support social movements for other oppressed people: Either oppressed people are so consumed with their own problems that they have less ability and inclination to help others, or they can more easily take the perspective of other oppressed people and are therefore more interested in helping them. Antislavery's most supportive white populations appear to have been Quakers, Methodists, Baptists, women, working class men, and the Irish, who all experienced persecution and prejudice from the wealthy Anglican English men who ran Parliament. Its chief adversaries were from among the latter group, and particularly the nobility within that group.

Keep in mind too that oppressed human groups were significantly more disadvantaged in the time of the Industrial Revolution than they are today. For example, only one in twenty men could vote, and the working class had far fewer labor protections and an overall lower quality of life than they do today,⁷¹⁸ yet still around one in five men in Manchester signed a petition to abolish Slavery.

Bear in mind too that many of the movements carrying on today, including labor rights, black rights, women's rights, and animal rights, started in this era and arose together. In the two centuries since people have been fighting for these and other movements more or less simultaneously, even if with oscillating emphasis, and often with support from allies in other groups.

There are possible cases of the public being so preoccupied with an issue that they are unwilling to work on others, as suggested by French abolitionism failing to take flight amidst the French

⁷¹⁸ See History.com Staff, "Industrial Revolution," *History.com*, 2009, <http://www.history.com/topics/industrial-revolution>, section "Quality of Life During the Industrial Revolution" for a summary. See also C.W., "Did living standards improve during the Industrial Revolution?" *The Economist*, September 13, 2013, <https://www.economist.com/blogs/freeexchange/2013/09/economic-history-0>.

Revolution, but such struggles seem exceptional and nothing is currently monopolizing the public interest in any Western nation to the degree that the French Revolution seems to have occupied France's attention.

- **Take a non-partisan approach.**

Wilberforce was a Tory, and while it seems more liberal politicians were more supportive, the movement was not taken up as part of the Whig identity nor did campaigns try to tie it to one or the party.

Timing

- **Act when seats in government are held by sympathizers — and mobilize the public to put sympathizers in office.**

In 1832, antislavery advocates publicized the positions on emancipation of all politicians vying for a seat, and worked hard to make emancipation a voter priority. The emancipation bill they immediately pushed with the new government succeeded.

- **Act when the most popular arguments supporting the institution are weak.**

The economic value of the trade was its key defense, and abolition finally succeeded in a period of decline in the volume of the trade and shortly after a major blow to the international industry. The Haitian Slaves liberated themselves from France 1804, severely reducing not only enemy France's trade but the entire international trade as the colony had produced a third of the world's sugar and had been the international trade's largest market. At this time, the Commons became substantially more supportive of abolition than they had been the last time a motion for it was made in 1799 or any year prior, and they passed immediate abolition for the first time that year. After the Foreign Slave Trade Act passed two years later, possibly reducing half or so of the British trade, it took only a year for abolition to be passed "without a division" in the Commons and overwhelmingly in the Lords.

A major outbreak of foodborne illness in animal-based foods could be a good time to press the issue as the industry's products should be less appealing to consumers in these moments. Arguments of consumer preference should also become weaker as plant-based and cell-based

alternatives become more similar to and cost-competitive with animal-based foods. Campaigns may also be more successful as more people turn away from the industry's products.

- **Act when self-interested arguments against the institution are strong.**

When emancipation was brought to Parliament in 1833, several authorities expressed urgent concern that Slaves would violently liberate themselves if they were not given emancipation. What increased their concern at or by this point is unclear as the Hatians had liberated themselves decades before and rebellions had happened through all of Slavery's history. Perhaps the recent martyrdoms of Christian missionaries, even if blamed on planters and not Slaves, had increased the whole salience of rebellions in people's minds, but further research is required to determine whether Slaves were explicitly saying they would liberate themselves, or were rebelling more frequently, violently, or successfully, or if there was another reason for this increased concern that Slaves would liberate themselves.

This suggests that advocates should increase activity in moments of increased concern for the major human risks of animal farming, such as foodborne illness, bird and swine flu outbreaks, climate change, resource depletion, and pollution.

Messaging

- **Be clear that the industry is inherently cruel.**

Antislavery advocates discussed the whole of the transatlantic Slave trade, and then Slavery, as evil, not just particular practices used in either. It may be because of abolitionists' focus on inherent cruelties and poor enforcement that the early wave of planter-initiated amelioration, according to one historian, "did little to quell discussions of the cruelties and abuses inherent to the system of slavery,"⁷¹⁹ and emancipation was finally won when legislators were convinced that the institution of Slavery was incorrigible.

Engendering an understanding of inevitable cruelty in animal farming could mean focusing on slaughter, ailments caused by breeding, and the separation of mothers and children, as opposed to emphasizing particular slaughter methods, cages, mutilation, or other practices that are less inherent to the industry and can be changed.

⁷¹⁹ Spence, 61.

That antislavery advocates attacked the trade and then industry as a whole also suggests that when advocates discuss specific and not-necessarily-inherent cruelties they should still emphasize how ubiquitous cruelty is in the industry. It may also be useful to explicitly emphasize that a satisfactorily “humane” system of animal farming would be difficult to enforce and as such is probably an unpragmatic aspiration.

Advocates for animal farming abolition or reform typically refer to the standard animal farming practices that apply to the vast majority of farmed animals⁷²⁰ as “factory farming,” a specification which implies that it is not the default, standard, or majority method of animal farming. That cruelty to farmed animals is almost always associated with “factory” farms also implies that non-factory methods are humane or benevolent and generally or necessarily good for the animals. Since antislavery advocates made no such distinction among plantation practices, anti-animal-farming advocates may not want to either. That said, since antislavery advocates did initially distinguish between the transatlantic trade in Slaves and the use of Slaves in the colonies, if anti-animal-farming advocates decide that “factory farming” is a suitable major target to campaign against en route to the abolition of animal farming then the distinction is more appropriate.

- **Adopt widespread use of one or two symbolic images.**

The emblem of the kneeling Slave with the words “Am I Not a Man and a Brother?” — also adapted to the image of a Slave woman with the words “Am I Not a Woman and a Sister?” — was not associated with any one organization and was used widely to signal one’s support for abolition. Similarly, posters of the *Brookes* were reproduced for anyone to hang in their homes or establishments. These images were simple but had clear meaning and were widely reproduced.

The more radical wings of the broader animal rights movement commonly use an image of a raised fist and paw, and the vegan consumer movement uses the letter “v” ubiquitously, but the movement against animal farming specifically does not have an emblem at this time.

- **Do not exaggerate the facts. Maintain a high standard of credibility.**

⁷²⁰ See Sentience Institute, [“Sentience Institute Global Farmed & Factory Farmed Animals Estimates”](#) and [“Sentience Institute US Factory Farming Estimates.”](#)

Antislavery advocates do not appear to have exaggerated their claims like some anti-animal-farming advocates do with health and environmental claims, which is perhaps why attempts to discredit antislavery advocates appear to have been highly if not entirely rhetorical and easy to combat.

- **Preserve the seriousness of the issue.**

Towards emancipation and well after abolition, some advocates dramatized the issue, for instance with street theatre. It is unclear whether those dramatizations were perceived more as serious dramatizations or cheap gimmicks, but in either case, the public perception of the movement at least up until that time seems to have come entirely from serious publications and conversations. If there were gimmicks and trivializing grabs for attention, they did not get nearly as much attention as they do in the animal movement today. This implication is mitigated if one thinks politics in general is more responsive to gimmicks today.

- **Emphasize the respectable and relatable qualities in the victims.**

It may have meant a lot that people were able to see Equiano, a freed Slave, as a respectable, conversable, educated, Christian Englishman, in contrast to common notions of black humans as essentially unintelligent heathen brutes. Similarly, advocates can show the cleverness, braveness, altruism, love, and emotional complexity of individual nonhuman animals, presenting them as “someones” in contrast to the common presentation and perception of nonhumans as “somethings.”

- **Tap into the public’s fundamental values.**

Antislavery advocates appealed to liberty, Christian compassion, and Christian evangelism.

- **Instead of demonizing the people involved with the industry, speak of them as merely unfortunate people who made what we can now see is a bad investment.**

Instead of positioning the people involved in the business of Slavery as the enemy, parliamentary leader Thomas Fowell Buxton offered them an olive branch by describing them as ordinary people who simply made the mistake everyone had of believing the institution was morally just,

and welcomed them to the other side by expressing that everyone was only recently coming to discover that they, as a people, were wrong.

- **Put the blame on society as a whole.**

Antislavery advocates in Parliament consistently expressed that the British government or society was to blame, not planters or consumers. Anti-animal-farming advocates can say “we” — including the speaker — are to blame for the atrocity of animal farming, so as to not compel others to build defensive walls where one could instead build bridges.

- **Use secondary self-interested arguments if they are sound, but only as support for the moral argument.**

Economic arguments may have made sympathetic politicians more able to support abolition and emancipation, particularly as the primary arguments in favor of the Slave trade and Slavery were economic. The failure of Slavery to Christianize Slaves was also a criticism of it.

Note though that moral arguments heavily and consistently dominated both petitions and antislavery advocates’ speeches in Parliament. Even when using economic arguments, advocates were explicit that if Britain did stand to lose something by giving up Slavery, it bore the responsibility for the debt, not slaves.⁷²¹

- **Express the urgency of eliminating the institution.**

Substantial credible testimony in the year leading up to emancipation expressed fears of unmanageable Slave revolts that would cost the empire its colonies. This may have pushed politicians over the edge and brought on emancipation earlier than it otherwise would have happened.

It’s possible that a hard deadline for emancipation would not have been legislated at all without this urgency, but with growing opposition at home and internationally and with dramatically shifting social, political, and economic circumstances, it presumably still would have happened

⁷²¹ Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery, *Substance of the Debates* xxii-xxiii.

eventually. The difference of a few years or decades is still significant to the sum of suffering prevented.

Specific Strategy Implementations

- **Synchronize petitions, literature distribution, books, op-eds, publications by famous people, wearable imagery, etc.**

Slavery was launched into public debate within the span of a few months after the Abolition Committee started running its petitions and distributing literature at the same time as a former Slave published a book about Slavery and a famous artist developed an image that people could sport on their person to express their support. The same former Slave and another also published letters in London newspapers about Slavery, and a renowned preacher and hymn writer published a pamphlet opposing Slavery which was immediately popular. Debate societies rapidly adopted Slavery as a major topic and press mentions of the issue skyrocketed at this time and stayed high thereafter. Petitions that year for either the abolition or reform of the transatlantic Slave trade outnumbered all other petitions.

This suggests that when anti-animal-farming advocates launch a major and specific political campaign they should coordinate it with the release of books and movies about the issue, op-eds, and endorsement from celebrated authorities, and should try to recruit a renowned artist like Shepard Fairey to design a powerful emblematic image.

- **Send letters and informative materials to politicians and influencers.**

This tactic was part of the grassroots antislavery effort.

- **Recruit politicians and people revered by politicians to give first-hand testimony against the industry.**

In Parliament's sitting in 1807, when both houses finally abolished the Slave trade, both a general and new MPs who had served in the war in the colonies spoke against slavery.

The testimony and support of USDA officials, revered journalists, former directors or executives of major companies in the industry, or incumbent politicians who have witnessed the conditions

on farms or in slaughterhouses could go a long way in convincing politicians to vote against the industry or for a major reform to it.

- **Share information aggressively, but do not expect information alone to be sufficient to convince legislators or rally the public to pressure them.**

Antislavery advocates gathered substantial information about the trade, and shared it widely, but if information were sufficient the trade would have ended with the first round of hearings the first year a bill for abolition was proposed in Parliament in 1789, when most of the information was first gathered and shared with Parliament.

- **Advocates should not conduct dramatic protests and other public demonstrations before there is broad public support of the specific goal, if at all.**

Rare proto-movement Quaker efforts at dramatic demonstrations, like Benjamin Lay's, appear to have failed and resulted in ostracization, suggesting that advocates should not use dramatization when there is only limited public support for the goal expressed by the dramatization. Abolition succeeded apparently without public demonstrations, and street theatre demonstrations only happened well after, at the height of support for emancipation, suggesting that advocates do not need or even should not use dramatic demonstrations before there is widespread public support and success appears to be imminent.

- **Empower people in target communities to reach out to and lead people in those communities.**

The Quakers' long-unsuccessful attempts at influencing wealthy Anglican elites became rapidly more successful when they recruited wealthy Anglicans — Clarkson and Sharp — to represent the cause.

- **Publicize exceptional events to turn them into triggering events.**

Some events like the *Zong* massacre, Somerset's case, the Haitian Revolution, and the death of the missionary who was blamed for a Slave revolt in Demerara, became common knowledge and appear to have triggered increased momentum against Slavery.

Everyday cruelty does not capture media attention as much as exceptional events like these. One kind of exceptional event anti-animal-farming advocates can try to elevate to a triggering event is when local news media covers a totalled truck that was carrying chickens to slaughter or a cow who escaped a slaughterhouse. Advocates can organize rescues of those animals to demonstrate an alternative for farmed animals' fates and write op-eds publicizing the incident and tying it to the broader problem of animal farming. Advocates can similarly amplify, for instance, media attention on disease outbreaks and environmental disasters that are traceable to animal farming or lawsuits about misleading labelling on the industry's products.

- **Once the movement is in the public spotlight, publicize situations where the industry treats movement supporters from the oppressing group horribly, to make them martyrs.**

When emancipationism started gaining steam, after abolition, Britons were outraged when missionaries were violently attacked and in one case effectively killed by planters who blamed them for Slave revolts.

If someone else is prosecuted under the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, or faces consequences for violating an ag-gag law that the public would agree are excessive, or if an investigation determines that an advocate has been slandered or physically attacked at the hands of the industry, or when the industry tries to illegally, maliciously, or hypocritically undercut plant-based competitors, that should be publicized widely.

- **Do due diligence before making investments, and cut losses on bad investments.**

The Sierra Leone company failed repeatedly and wasted a substantial amount of movement resources. Sometimes advocates' ideas simply won't work out and they should be willing to abandon them in order to shift their resources to more effective pursuits.

Unclear Implications

- **Portray victims' resistance or helplessness?**

Antislavery advocates heavily portrayed Slaves as helpless pitiable victims, even downplaying and avoiding the topic of their resistance, presumably out of fear that their violent disobedience would make them look more like barbarians than pitiable victims. It is unclear to what degree

knowledge of Slave revolts and their suppression made the public more or less concerned for Slaves or more or less supportive of abolition and emancipation, though a deeper analysis of press around revolts may shed some light on this. At any rate, abolition and emancipation seem to have passed with virtually no public expression of support of Slaves' resistance, even from leading antislavery advocates.

However, that today's cultural context emphasizes social justice and lauds rebellions society considers just may favor greater emphasis on victims' resistance and agency. Additionally, nonhumans will not be integrated into human society like freed human slaves were — ideally they will merely stop coming into existence — so the risk that they will look uncivilized and too dangerous to integrate into society is probably less important.

- **Work on enforcement following reforms?**

If the industry fails to comply with reform legislation on its own, and it resists enforcement, that could powerfully demonstrate that it cannot be trusted to treat the animals well. However, if enforcement is successful, while that could weaken the industry, it could also make people trust that the industry can and will treat the animals well.

- **Build coalitions with other movements?**

While antislavery drew substantial support from supporters of other movements, it was generally not explicitly tied to other causes — including the cause of the poor or impressed white sailors who were treated poorly in the industry — but advocated for on its own. Clarkson even distanced himself from the French revolutionaries he supported for fear that his involvement with them would harm his abolitionist campaigning.

However, animal farming is of greater concern for movements that don't care primarily about the institution's direct victims, nonhuman or human, such as the movements for climate protection, resource sustainability, and public health. Coalitions come with risks of alienating supporters who agree with the aims of one's own group but not with the aims of another, but this may be of limited concern if a coalition focuses on a specific shared goal and not on tying the entire movements together.

This may mean anti-animal-farming campaigns should build coalitions among groups who share or can be influenced to share a primary goal of ending animal farming, but that farmed animal advocacy organizations in general should not build broad alliances with other movements.

That today's society has broader concern for discrimination, however, suggests that the risks of openly associating with other discrimination-focused movements are limited and even that such association may be beneficial, at least to the extent that those movements are popularly supported.

Potential Items for Further Study

How did the actual and perceived economic value to the British empire of the transatlantic Slave trade and of Slavery change over time? It seems there were several declines along the way to abolition and emancipation, which may have been significant.

How fundamental, strong, and widespread was the nascent discomfort with Slavery before Clarkson started the petition campaign? This is potentially a critical factor to compare with the movement against factory and/or all animal farming.

How much parliamentary support for abolition and emancipation can be attributed to its role as an intended concession to the public in the interest of reducing republican momentum?

How polarized are our political landscapes today relative to the political landscape in the UK in the time of abolition and emancipation? This affects whether advocates should take a liberal or bipartisan approach.

It seems there was more violence against Slavery's opponents in the US than there had been in the UK, particularly after the UK legislated emancipation and before the US did. Why was this, and what difference did it make?

Was the relative influence of lobbies on government higher or lower in Great Britain/the UK in the time of the antislavery movement than in the UK and US today?

How much longer did politicians stay in Parliament then than they do today in the UK Parliament or US Congress?

In greater detail, what was happening in other countries before the UK abolished the trade? The events and circumstances leading to emancipation in some American colonies and later US states and then in the whole of the US North are of particular interest as they happened before the UK even abolished the trade. The US also legislated their international ban on the trade essentially simultaneously with the UK, though this may mean little as US Slave populations were not only self-sustaining but increasing, in contrast with the Slaves of the British West Indies whose mortality rates outpaced their fertility. Spain's emancipation is of similar interest as it happened before British emancipation, though both regions seem to have faced enforcement issues.

How did abolition and emancipation come about in other Western nations?

What tactics have succeeded and failed in non-Western movements against human slavery, and what implications does this have for non-Western animal advocacy movements?

What were social movements like prior to the modern era of republicanism and human rights? How much did antislavery advocates benefit from a green space of advocacy, i.e. not having to compete with other movements?

Additionally, a full review of all debates on the Slave trade and Slavery in Cobbett's Parliamentary History and the Parliamentary Debates could more precisely inform our understanding of the arguments employed and favored by either side, and which arguments were most persuasive to moderates.

There are also numerous books on the topic of the British antislavery movement which have not been included in this report and which may contain additional important information, such as:

- Seymour Drescher's books *Capitalism and Antislavery: British Mobilization in Comparative Perspective* and *The Mighty Experiment: Free Labor Versus Slavery in British Emancipation*
- J.R. Ward's *The Amelioration of British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1834: Technical Change and the Plough*
- J. R. Oldfield's *Transatlantic Abolitionism in the Age of Revolution: An International History of Anti-slavery, c.1787-1820*
- Claudius K. Fergus's *Revolutionary Emancipation: Slavery and Abolitionism in the British West Indies*.

Appendix

Table of British Parliament Antislavery Legislation Dates & Vote Counts 1775-1833:

Data cited in main report.		1775	...	1781	...	1784	...	1787	1788	1789	1790	1791
Reform	Details	Package of items for the pacification of rebellious American colonies, which included a provision that slaves have access to trial by jury. First time emancipation was brought up in Parliament, by MP David Hartley, who commented that slavery was "contrary to the laws of God and the rights of man."		Jamaica restricted Slaves' work days to 11 hours and mandated a day off every other week. To take effect for three years.		Planter-endorsed law in Grenada provided "guardians" to enforce Slave welfare; provided some protections for the old and infirm including standard clothing, food, and shelter requirements; prohibited planters from working Slaves at night with some exceptions; imposed fines for mutilation; gave labor exemptions to female Slaves who bore six or more children; gave tax rebates to planters whose plantations saw such "natural increase."		Planter-initiated consolidated Slave code adopted in Jamaica provided Slaves an acre to grow their own food, some protections for the old and the infirm, and Christian instruction; limited corporal punishment to ten lashes; provided that every ship to have a doctor; required every ship to record the deaths of Slaves and crew.	Limited the number of Slaves a ship could transport; required every ship to have a doctor; required every ship to record the deaths of Slaves and crew.			
	For	21							56			
	Against	123							5			
	Percentage of voters in favor in the Commons	15%		(Colony legislation)		(Colony legislation)		(Colony legislation)	92% (Opposition consisted of MPs from Liverpool, England's major port for Slave-trading voyages.)			
	Percentage of voters in favor in the Lords								Vote count does not appear to be in the Hansard. See Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England Vol. 27 Col. 652.			
	Outcome			Dominica followed suit in 1788; Antigua and Grenada "soon" after that; and Jamaica "extended" these laws in a Consolidated Slave Act in 1792. See Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England Vol. 33 Col. 287.		Guardians were planters; commissioners of enquiry later found law entirely unenforced.		Would be updated occasionally over the next 20 years.	Passed. First regulation of the trade. Was subsequently weakened, and often evaded.			
Abolition of the trade in Slaves to both British territories and foreign powers	Details								Wilberforce got sick, did not bring bill to Commons as anticipated. More petitions for abolition than all other issues that year.			
	For										88	
	Against										103	
	Percentage of voters in favor in the Commons										35%	
	Percentage of voters in favor in the Lords											
Outcome									Proslavery lobby convinced Lords to push bill back in order to hold hearings		Failed	
Abolition of the trade in Slaves to foreign powers	Details											
	For											
	Against											
	Percentage of voters in favor in the Commons											
	Percentage of voters in favor in the Lords											
Outcome												
Abolition of Slavery (emancipation)	Details											
	For											
	Against											
	Percentage of voters in favor in the Commons											
	Percentage of voters in favor in the Lords											
Outcome												

1791	1792	1793	1794	1795	1796	1797	1798	1799	...	1804	11
						Recommendation of weak ameliorations like those Jamaica and Grenada had passed.	Legislation similar to that passed in Jamaica and Grenada adopted in Leeward Islands.	Limited trade from certain regions in Africa in order to support the Sierra Leone colony of freed Slaves and encourage English industry.			
						99		25			
						63		32			
						61%	(Colony legislation)	44%			
						Discussion and vote count do not appear to be in the Hansard. May not have been necessary for such action.					
						Passed		Failed			
	To start in 4 years										
88	151	53			70	74	83	54		124	
163	132	61			74	82	87	84		49	
35%	53%	46%			49%	47%	40%	38%		72%	
Failed	Postponed by Lords	Failed		Postponed	Failed	Failed	Failed	Failed		Postponed by Lords	P
		To foreign powers	To foreign powers								
		29	56								
		31	38								
		48%	60%								
		Failed	Postponed by Lords								

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