Narrative Section of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the grant narrative and selected portions of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the Education Programs application guidelines at http://www.neh.gov/grants/education/summer-seminars-and-institutes for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Education Programs staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative and selected portions, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

Project Title: The Abolitionist Movement: Fighting Slavery and Racial Injustice from the American Revolution to the Civil War

Institution: Library Company of Philadelphia

Project Director: Richard Newman

Grant Program: Summer Seminars and Institutes for School Teachers
“The Abolitionist Movement: Fighting Against Slavery and Racial Injustice from the American Revolution to the Civil War”

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“The Abolitionist Movement: Fighting Against Slavery and Racial Injustice from the American Revolution to the Civil War”

Proposed NEH Summer Seminar for School Teachers, June 16-July 12, 2013
Host Institution: The Library Company of Philadelphia
Director: Richard Newman, Rochester Institute of Technology

Narrative

Introduction:

This four-week seminar will bring together fourteen school teachers and two graduate students for close study of primary source documents and key secondary works on the abolitionist movement between the American Revolution and the Civil War. Participants will examine the evolution of the abolitionist movement, from its beginnings in Philadelphia during the Revolutionary era through its radicalization in the years leading to the Civil War. Teachers will focus on several sub-themes in abolitionist scholarship (including African American involvement in the movement, the expanding role of female reformers, and the early struggle against slavery in Northern states) and discuss the pedagogical effectiveness of using primary sources in high school classrooms. Visits to some of the abolitionist movement’s most significant sites in the Philadelphia area will enrich participants’ understanding of abolitionism as a lived experience rooted in a particular place. Previous versions of the seminar have been popular among teachers interested in African American history, American reform, and the coming of the Civil War; in 2010, 55 applicants vied for 16 seminar slots. In addition, the seminar theme – the abolitionist movement – has a rich historiography and a compelling collection of printed and web-based primary documents. The diversity and depth of both primary and secondary sources will enhance participants’ understanding of the abolitionist movement’s history and impact. These readings will also create a wonderful seminar environment, facilitating open-ended discussions, debates, and the writing of journal entries.

The seminar will be held in a city that served as one of the abolition movement’s main theaters of operation between the Revolution and the Civil War. Moreover, seminar meetings will take place at the Library Company of Philadelphia, the nation’s oldest public library and a leading repository of abolitionist documents. Established by Benjamin Franklin in 1731, the Library Company is now an independent
research library used by teachers and scholars from around the country. The proposed NEH seminar will be directed by Richard S. Newman, Professor of History at Rochester Institute of Technology, who specializes in the study of the abolitionist movement and is the author of *Freedom’s Prophet: Bishop Richard Allen, the AME Church, and the Black Founding Fathers* and *The Transformation of American Abolitionism: Fighting Slavery in the Early Republic*.

In addition to his scholarly endeavors, Professor Newman serves on the advisory board of institutions dedicated to educational outreach, including the Gilder Lehrman Center at Yale University. He has also worked with high school students and teachers in a variety of institutional settings, including serving as director of three successful NEH seminars for school teachers at the Library Company in 2006, 2008, 2010; he will be directing the seminar again in 2012. As an educator and scholar, Professor Newman views the proposed NEH seminar as an important part of his own professional outreach objectives.

**Intellectual Rationale:**

In 1893, Frederick Douglass predicted that only in the distant future would historians write the definitive history of the abolitionist movement. While scholars have been responding to Douglass’s challenge since the modern Civil Rights movement in the 1960s, the last several years have been particularly productive ones for the study of abolitionism in the North between the Revolution and the Civil War. Building on the careful work of previous generations of historians, recent scholarship – which distinguished scholar James Brewer Stewart has described as an “avalanche” – has considerably expanded our understanding of abolitionists’ tactics, personnel, and impact. Where once scholars focused on abolitionists as a relatively small and homogeneous entity often at the religious and cultural margins (and active only in the decades before the Civil War), now they view the movement as composed of diverse communities of reformers, active from the American Revolution onward, and focused on Northern race relations as much as on Southern slavery. In addition, the publication of several new collections of primary sources, particularly those written by black abolitionists, has yielded rich insights into the diversity of the abolitionist experience.
The main goal of this seminar for school teachers is to integrate new scholarly perspectives on abolitionism into classic interpretations of the movement, with a central focus on the use of original documents in the classroom. The abolitionist movement remains an important topic of study in many high school curricula, informing modules on the coming of the Civil War, American reformers, and African Americans’ struggle for justice both in and beyond slavery. More generally, as the success of recent television documentaries such as PBS’s “Slavery and the Making of America” and “The Underground Railroad: The William Still Story” have illustrated, Americans appear more interested than ever in re-examining not just Southern bondage but Northern freedom movements. The range of scholarly and documentary material now available makes abolitionism a vibrant topic of historical inquiry for high school teachers and students. Much-debated questions abound: Why did abolition succeed in Northern states following the American Revolution but fail in Southern states? How did black protest shape the antislavery movement? Why did abolitionists divide over women’s role in the movement? Was Abraham Lincoln an abolitionist – and did his call for a “new birth of freedom” apply to Northern as well as Southern states? Just as these and other questions continue to animate abolitionist scholarship, so too they will form a consistent thread in our seminar.

To make the topic manageable, our seminar will examine four main themes in abolitionist history, each with readings from both classic and recent studies of the movement, as well as a rich array of primary documents: (1) the early abolitionist movement in Revolutionary America, with a focus on first-generation abolitionists’ tactics and efforts to rout Northern bondage (which remained economically important in many Northern states into the early nineteenth century); (2) the impact of African American reformers on abolitionism between the Revolution and the Civil War; (3) the radicalization of the abolition movement in antebellum America, particularly debates over violent tactics to defend fugitive slaves and the expanding role of female reformers after 1830; and (4) Abolitionists during the Civil War era, including struggles for justice in Northern as well as Southern states. Throughout, we will look at the abolitionist movement beyond well-known people (such as William Lloyd Garrison) and places (such as Philadelphia or Boston), touching on abolitionist activism and debates in such places as Indiana, western
New York, and Washington, D.C.

Philadelphia serves as an ideal place for studying abolitionism as a multifaceted movement between the Revolution and the Civil War. It served as gradual abolitionism’s birthplace in the 1770s and 1780s (home to the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, which remains in existence and is the world’s oldest abolition group) as well as the headquarters of the more militant American Anti-Slavery Society, which, though associated with Bostonian William Lloyd Garrison, was based in the City of Brotherly Love between the 1830s and the Civil War. Philadelphia also contained the largest concentration of free black activists during the antebellum era, and it became a key stop on the Underground Railroad during the 1840s and 1850s. This rich abolitionist tradition has made Philadelphia’s archives a treasure trove of abolitionist documents, with the large collections of primary sources in the Library Company and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (its next-door neighbor) illuminating abolitionism from a variety of political persuasions and religious, geographical, and personal backgrounds, including Quaker activists, African American reformers, female abolitionists, and antislavery politicians.

The director hopes that by examining a range of primary source documents in conjunction with ongoing scholarly debates and site visits, school teachers will come away from the seminar with exciting pedagogical models for bringing abolitionism to life in their own classrooms.

**Content and Implementation of the Project:**

Seminar participants will assemble the Sunday evening before our first formal day session for a welcome, social hour, and informal dinner. In addition to the director, this introductory session will include members of the Library Company staff and guests from participating institutions in the Philadelphia area (such as educators from Independence National Historical Park). We will ask seminar participants to share experiences about teaching history in school classrooms generally, and teaching about the abolitionist movement, African American history, and the Civil War in particular.

As a scholar who has often worked with K-12 school teachers and students, the director believes that emphasizing primary source documents and holding lively, open-ended discussion sessions provides
the most stimulating environment for studying abolitionism. During the first week, we will consider the rise of early abolitionist movements following the American Revolution, with a focus on the gradual abolition strategies that appear quite distinct from the fiery antislavery appeals of the pre-Civil War years.

How and why did gradual abolitionism – the belief that slavery must be ended over several decades – take root in Northern states following American independence? Why did gradual abolition fail in the South? After an introductory session on the religious and political background of the earliest antislavery movements (with selections from David Brion Davis’s classic study of early abolitionist philosophy and Gary Nash and Jean Soderlund’s book on slavery’s demise in Pennsylvania), we will focus on the non-violent tactics and gradualist strategies employed by first-generation abolitionists. Our secondary readings will include selections from Richard Newman’s book on the Pennsylvania Abolition Society (PAS) and Joseph Ellis’s work on George Washington’s shifting views on emancipation in Virginia (Washington was one of the only major Virginia politicians to leave an abolitionist will). We will also read from Douglas Egerton’s book, *Gabriel’s Rebellion*, which focuses on the way a famed Virginia slave revolt in 1800 influenced early abolitionism. Though unsuccessful, Gabriel’s Rebellion was one of several revolts that occurred at the close of the eighteenth century. While many abolitionists were alarmed by slave insurrections, fearing that they would undermine the non-violent cause, others were inspired by them. Here we will ask participants why most abolitionists remained committed to gradual abolitionism and how they dealt with charges that even non-violent antislavery movements encouraged black uprisings.

Professor Maurice Jackson, who teaches at Georgetown University, will visit the seminar to discuss the activist life of Anthony Benezet, a famed 18th-century abolitionist who resided in Philadelphia. As a Quaker, Benezet viewed slavery as a religious sin and he spent much of his life attacking bondage in both word and deed. Professor Jackson, author of the *Let This Voice Be Heard* (the definitive biography of Benezet) will highlight Benezet’s literacy activism during the American Revolutionary Era, when he wrote several pamphlets attacking slavery and led efforts to establish the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, one of the most important early abolitionist organizations in the world. Indeed, because 2013 will mark the 300th anniversary of Benezet’s birth, Professor Jackson will discuss Benezet’s impact upon European
as well as American reformers (Benezet was born in France and remained popular there), allowing teachers to think about ways to globalize the early abolitionist story.

To enrich the study of early abolitionism, our seminar will also examine documents from perhaps the two leading collections on the subject: the Library Company’s Afro-Americana Collection, which contains pamphlets by white and black abolitionists from the 1770s to the 1830s, and the records of the PAS in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The Historical Society has created an online compendium of early abolitionist primary sources for educators, including original material from Anthony Benezet’s Philadelphia school for African Americans, allowing seminar participants to examine these little-known documents for future classroom use. In particular, we will read Pennsylvania’s gradual abolition act of 1780, the PAS’s first petition to Congress in 1790 on ending the slave trade (signed by Benjamin Franklin, yet opposed by President George Washington), and several brief essays from the PAS to fellow abolitionists in the 1790s encouraging them to work moderately for slavery’s end. From the Library Company, we will read portions of former slaveholder St. George Tucker’s proposal for a gradual abolition plan in Virginia.

At the end of our first week, we will visit the old state capitol at Independence National Historical Park, which served not only as the birthplace of the Declaration of Independence and Constitution but also of America’s first abolition act. In 1780, Pennsylvania legislators met in this building to pass America’s inaugural gradual emancipation law (which liberated enslaved people at the age of 28). By juxtaposing the Declaration and the abolition act in a single site visit, seminar participants will be able to reflect on gradual abolitionism’s chances for success in early America.

In week two, we will examine more closely African American struggles for justice between the Revolution and the Civil War. Although this is a large timeframe, our aim is to illuminate the longstanding presence and significance of black abolitionists in American culture. Indeed, our framing questions ask: What tactical roles did African Americans play between the Revolution and the Civil War? How did black protest influence the rise of a more aggressive abolitionist movement after 1830, one which rejected gradualist tactics and strategies? Here, participants will focus on pamphlets as a key vehicle for Northern
black protest. While scholars have long known about the significance of slave narratives, they have traditionally placed less emphasis on pamphlets of protest. Yet because black pamphleteers remained more independent of white editors than many slave narrators, their documents illuminate a much wider range of issues, from justifications of physically defending fugitive slaves to anti-discrimination efforts in Northern communities. The recent publication of many of these pamphlets makes them wonderful tools for classroom discussions about black abolitionists. We will read selections from several pamphlets: James Forten’s *Letters from a Man of Color* (1813), which reproached Pennsylvania legislators for considering a law preventing free black migration into the Quaker State; David Walker’s 1829 *Appeal*, a militant attack on both Southern slavery and Northern racism; and Martin Delany’s 1852 work, *The Condition, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States*, which many scholars consider the first black nationalist document. We will also read from William Still’s *The Underground Railroad* (1871), which contains several gripping accounts of fugitive slave escapes during the nineteenth century, particularly in the Philadelphia area.

Several secondary readings will contextualize the world in which these black pamphleteers operated. Excerpts from Shane White’s *Stories of Freedom in Black New York* will highlight black legal challenges to segregation in post-Revolution New York City, while chapters from Julie Winch’s prize-winning biography of James Forten, one of Philadelphia’s wealthiest men of color and an inspiration to William Lloyd Garrison, and Gary Nash’s much-praised group portrait of Afro-Philadelphians, *Forging Freedom*, will illuminate the making of a black abolitionist community in Philadelphia. We will delve into the evolving national political goals of black leaders by examining Patrick Rael’s book, *Black Identity and Black Protest in the Antebellum North*.

Professor Erica Armstrong Dunbar, who teaches at the University of Delaware, will visit our seminar in the second week to discuss African American women’s antislavery activism during the early national period. Author of *A Fragile Freedom*, a well-regarded book on African American women’s protest in and beyond Philadelphia, Professor Dunbar will help seminar participants understand black women’s impact on abolitionist movements in the United States. From Oney Judge, an enslaved women who be-
came an icon of black resistance when she fled George Washington in Philadelphia in the 1790s (when
the city served as the temporary capital of the new republic) to Maria Stewart, a Boston educator who au-
thored one of the most important antebellum pamphlets attacking racial prejudice in the North as well as
the South, African American women played key roles in an ever-expanding antislavery struggle. Profes-
sor Dunbar will illuminate the varieties of black women’s abolitionism, including their work as educators,
orators, fundraisers, and pamphleteers. As the new Director of the Library Company’s Program in African
American history, Professor Dunbar will also provide broader insight to teachers interested in in utilizing
primary sources from black abolitionists between the American Revolution and Civil War.

At the end of week two, seminar participants will also take a National Park Service field trip of
Underground Railroad sites in Philadelphia. They will visit the location of the Philadelphia Anti-Slavery
Society Offices across from the Independence Park, where famed Underground Railroad operative Wil-
liam Still worked with hundreds of fugitive slaves, and see a special broadcast of the PBS documentary
“The Underground Railroad: The William Still Story.” Participants will also visit Mother Bethel African
Methodist Episcopal Church, an Underground Railroad station that Frederick Douglass once hailed as
perhaps the most important site of Northern black protest. Founded by Philadelphian Richard Allen in the
1790s after segregated seating policies had been instituted at a white Methodist church, Mother Bethel
hosted white abolitionists, staged free black conventions, and stood as a monument to black abolitionism
through the Civil War.

In week three, the seminar will turn to the theme of abolitionist transformations before the Civil
War. By this time, seminar participants will have learned of abolition’s roots in Northern states and Afri-
can Americans’ longstanding presence in the movement, both as non-violent activists and fugitive slaves.
Now they will explore the radicalization and fragmentation of antebellum abolitionism. Although never a
monolithic movement, abolitionism by the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s changed as never before. Here we
will ask questions common to virtually all social movements: How can reformers sustain a protest move-
ment that has not reached its main goal – ending Southern slavery? Are confrontational tactics justified if
moderate aims fail? And how do reformers integrate new activists and ideologies into their movement
over time? After reading book excerpts on the abolition movement’s radicalization after 1830 (James Stewart’s *Holy Warriors*) and the spread of antislavery organizations into small towns of the Midwest (Frederick Blue’s *No Taint of Compromise*), our seminar will focus on two important sub-themes: the rise of abolitionist political parties and female abolitionists’ expanding role in the movement. Arguments about political action divided antebellum abolitionists, many of whom believed in moral suasion tactics alone. Did forming political parties compromise abolitionist objectives? The literature – both primary sources and secondary accounts – is particularly rich on all sides of this question. We will read from Frederick Douglass’ *Life and Times* (1883 edition) for this famous reformer’s alternating perspective on political abolitionism, which he opposed during the 1840s and supported in the 1850s. We will also read from John Stauffer’s *The Black Hearts of Men*, which examines the 1855 formation of the Radical Abolition Party, a group dedicated to immediate abolitionism in the Southern states.

Regarding female abolitionists, we will examine how women became a core constituency of the movement between the 1830s and 1860s (contrary to abolition’s earliest years, when female members could not join the PAS). Women were a vibrant presence in antebellum abolitionism – they procured the majority of signatures to the antislavery petitions that so divided the American Congress during the 1830s and 1840s. While their activism advanced the cause, women’s prominence helped split the antislavery movement. How did American women (both in the abolitionist movement and in American society at large) envision the issue? What was the evolving relationship between abolitionism and women’s rights? Our readings will include selections from Susan Zaeske’s *Signatures of Citizenship*, which details women’s incredible petition-gathering work in several Northern communities, and William Lee Miller’s *Arguing About Slavery*, which shows the impact these petitions had in Congress. We will also discuss documents written by both black and white female abolitionists, including transcriptions of Sojourner Truth’s famous speech on black women’s double bind – that of fighting racial as well as gender stereotypes – and Lydia Maria Child’s essay, *An Appeal in Favor of . . . Africans*.

Professor Elizabeth Varon, who teaches at the University of Virginia and is the author of *Disunion*, a prize winning book on debates over slavery and emancipation before the Civil War, will visit the semi-
Professor Varon will highlight the antislavery movement’s emphasis on more confrontational tactics and strategies. Eschewing gradualism, antebellum activists sought to make slavery a national crusade – one that attacked slaveholders and their northern allies in harsh tones. By the 1850s, abolitionists helped make slavery a significant issue on the national political stage by opposing its extension in the west, supporting antislavery candidates for state as well as federal offices, and trumpeting slave escapes on the Underground Railroad. In particular, Professor Varon will illuminate southern reactions to abolitionist defenses of fugitive slaves in Boston, Philadelphia, and Cincinnati, among other places, showing how they influenced slaveholders’ increasing threats of disunion. Indeed, by focusing on southern slaveholders’ discussion of abolitionist activism in these years, Professor Varon will provide teachers with a much wider context for understanding the impact of the antislavery movement on American politics and culture before the Civil War.

During the seminar’s final week, we will examine the impact of the abolitionist movement on emancipation politics during the Civil War. Once again, this is a broad topic of consideration. We will narrow our focus by juxtaposing two abolitionist objectives: the effort to use the Civil War as a way to destroy Southern slavery and the simultaneous attempt to destroy racial prejudice in Northern states. On the first matter, seminar participants will re-examine one of the classic debates about the Civil War: Did abolitionists – including African American reformers – influence the Union’s emancipation policies? Or was Abraham Lincoln primarily responsible for putting Southern emancipation on the Union’s agenda? We will frame discussion of these questions with readings from Ira Berlin’s *Slaves No More*, which embraces the former position, and Allen Guelzo’s award-winning book *Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation* (which takes the latter position). To enliven our consideration of the topic, we will take a field trip to Gettysburg on the Saturday before the final week of sessions, where participants will consider Abraham Lincoln’s role as an abolitionist statesman during the Civil War. As he has done in previous seminars, Professor Scott Hancock will join participants once again on the Gettysburg field trip, taking teachers on
a tour of famous sites associated with emancipation (including the location of the Gettysburg Address) as well as less well-known yet important places outside the Civil War park proper (such as Lincoln Cemetery, which was dedicated to black soldiers who fought in the Civil War).

Back in Philadelphia during week four, Professor James Oakes of the CUNY Graduate Center in New York and a distinguished author and editor of several important books on abolitionism and the Civil War, will visit the seminar to consider Abraham Lincoln’s evolving views of abolitionism during 1860s. Focusing on antislavery discussions in both the Republican Party and Lincoln’s administration, Professor Oakes will examine Lincoln’s eventual embrace of emancipation as a key outcome of the Civil War. Though initially wary of abolitionism, Lincoln and many members of the Republican Party came to see federal antislavery policy as part and parcel of a winning war strategy. By focusing on Lincoln’s personal and political evolution as an abolitionist policy-maker, Professor Oakes will give K-12 teachers a more sophisticated way to think about emancipation during the Civil War. During the first half of the Civil War, Lincoln listened to abolitionist critiques of his administration. By the last three years of the battle, however, when Lincoln supported abolitionist action, even antislavery reformers like Frederick Douglass hailed his leadership. By taking teachers through primary sources illuminating Lincoln’s dealings with abolitionists and vice versa, Professor Oakes’ session also aims to give participants an overview of the impressive array of documents available for their own classroom use on this key topic.

In addition to Lincoln’s and abolitionists’ writings on slavery, emancipation, and the broader meaning of the Civil War, we will examine the works of black newspaper correspondent George Stephens, who covered the 54th Massachusetts Regiment – one of the first all-black units in the Civil War. Stephens was born to free black parents in Virginia and lived in Philadelphia before writing military dispatches from the southern front for the Weekly Anglo African newspaper (based in New York). His little-known observations of black troops’ struggle for equality in the Union army, as well as their desire to fight Southern bondage, provide a stirring documentary counterpart to the movie “Glory,” a popular film about the 54th Massachusetts Regiment that is still used in many classrooms around the country to commemorate the struggles of the roughly 180,000 black troops who fought in the Union army. We will watch portions of
the film and compare them to Stephens’ writings about black soldiers in the Civil War.

On the Northern struggle against racial injustice, we will examine two documents. From the Library Company’s Afro-Americana Collection, we will read William Still’s recollections of fighting streetcar segregation in Philadelphia after the Civil War. And from Donald Yacovone’s Freedom’s Journey, a collection of black writings from the 1860s, we will read an essay by African American activists in Detroit decrying the rise of the anti-black sentiment in the Midwest even as Abraham Lincoln supported emancipation in rebelling Southern states. We will ask participants if the themes and tactics of black activists protesting Northern race prejudice were the same as those fighting for Southern emancipation. Did abolitionists agree that Northern race prejudice required as much attention as Southern bondage?

This discussion will allow the seminar to segue into a final topic: the precedents set by the abolitionist movement, particularly its influence on Civil Rights struggles during the twentieth century. We will read two documents on the universal importance of the abolition movement, Frederick Douglass’s famous Fifth of July speech, wondering if America can be an African-American homeland, and Philadelphia reformer Sarah Forten Grimke’s meditations on the meaning of freedom to white as well as black Americans. A selection from Stephen Hahn’s Pulitzer Prize-winning book, A Nation Under Our Feet, will provide the intellectual parameters for our final discussion on the broader relevance of the abolition movement in American history. Were abolitionists the true precursors to the NAACP and Martin Luther King? Should gradual abolitionists and antislavery statesmen receive more extensive scholarly treatment? How best to teach abolitionism to today’s students?

Seminar participants will meet Monday through Thursday mornings for three hours of debate and discussion. Afternoons will be dedicated to preparation for future sessions and the discovery of documents relating to abolitionism at the Library Company. Fridays will be reserved for site visits (with the exception of week four). Participants will be asked to read roughly 250 pages per week, a third of which will be composed of primary sources. They will also be asked to keep a portfolio of informal journal entries on readings and site visits. Portfolios are used by many writing seminars around the country as a way to stimulate discussion and allow participants to leave a seminar with a collection of materials for future
use. The director successfully used this method during the summers of 2006, 2008, and 2010. Participants will also prepare a short document presentation of roughly 20 minutes, contextualizing a primary source of their choosing from the Library Company’s extensive collection of abolitionist materials. A popular assignment in the 2008 and 2010 seminars on abolitionism, this requirement also allows teachers to conceptualize a lesson plan at their home institutions.

**The Seminar Director:**

The director of four previous NEH Summer Seminars on the abolitionist movement (2006, 2008, 2010, 2012), Richard Newman has most recently served as a co-director of an NEH Landmarks Workshop for school teachers in 2011 on antebellum American reformers. (Participant evaluations of the 2010 NEH summer seminar on the abolitionist movement appear in Appendix A to this application). As a scholar, Professor Newman has been engaged in the study of abolitionism for nearly fifteen years. He has published several books on both the antislavery movement and black activism. Professor Newman’s first book, *The Transformation of American Abolitionism*, examined the evolving tactics of abolitionists in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts between the 1770s and 1830s. The book was a finalist for the Organization of American Historians’ Avery Craven Prize for the most innovative manuscript in Civil War Era studies. He is also the author of *Freedom’s Prophet: Bishop Richard Allen, the AME Church, and the Black Founding Fathers* (NYU Press), and co-editor of *Pamphlets of Protest* (Routledge), a book of primary source documents written by black abolitionists before the Civil War. Most recently, he served as co-editor of *Antislavery and Abolition in Philadelphia* (LSU Press), a book of scholarly essays on the antislavery struggle in the City of Brotherly Love. He also serves as general co-editor of the book series “Race in the Atlantic World, 1700-1900,” published by the University of Georgia Press.

As an educator, Professor Newman has taught classes on the abolitionist movement and Civil War at several universities. Since 1999, he has also participated in several educational outreach programs in the Rochester area, offering workshops on the abolitionism movement and African American history to Advanced Placement high school students at the Strong National Museum of Play. He also worked on
teaching workshops with K-12 teachers and students in Ohio, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New York City. He currently serves on the advisory boards of several organizations dedicated to public understanding of slavery and abolition, including the PAS Educational Project at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania; The Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Abolition and Resistance at Yale University; and the Black Anti-Slavery Writings Project at the University of Detroit-Mercy.

**Invited Guests:**

Several guest historians will visit the seminar to enhance participants’ understanding of key themes in abolitionist scholarship and documents. These scholars will lead discussions during morning sessions and remain with participants for a working lunch that will serve as a roundtable of innovative teaching methods in high school classrooms. Our first guest scholar is Maurice Jackson, Associate Professor of History at Georgetown University and author of *Let This Voice Be Heard, Anthony Benezet, Father of Atlantic Abolitionism*, a key examination of an antislavery icon. Professor Jackson has worked on several projects relating to both antislavery movements and African American history, including programs at the Library of Congress and Smithsonian. Our second guest is Erica Armstrong Dunbar, Associate Professor of History at the University of Delaware and author of an important book on black female abolitionists in Philadelphia entitled *A Fragile Freedom*. Professor Dunbar also serves as the incoming director of the Program in African-American Studies at the Library Company, where she will work on projects ranging from public programming on black history to teacher outreach. Our third guest is Elizabeth Varon, Professor of History at the University of Virginia and author of several key books on antebellum sectionalism and slavery, including *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy* and *Disunion*, both of which examine southern reactions to antislavery movements in America. For several years, Professor Varon helped run the annual program in Civil War Studies at Temple University, which brought together teachers, students, and scholars for an annual conference on new work in the field of emancipation. Our final guest is James Oakes, Professor of History at the CUNY Graduate Center in New York, and author of several groundbreaking books on slavery and emancipation in the Civil War, most notably *The Ruling Race* and *The Radical and the Republican*.
can (a dual biography of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass). In addition to his scholarship, Professor Oakes has also been involved in several projects of public outreach, including conferences on slavery and emancipation in the Civil War era.

Recognizing the importance of place to historical study, we will take participants on several field trips to well-known abolitionist sites in the Philadelphia area. During the first week of study on early abolitionism, the seminar will visit Independence Hall at Independence National Historical Park. While most famous as the home of the Declaration of Independence, Independence Hall also served as the state capitol building where Pennsylvania legislators passed the world’s first gradual abolition law in 1780. This tour will be led by National Park Service rangers, who will illuminate the many connections between slavery and freedom in Revolutionary Philadelphia. Teachers will also tour the President’s House – adjacent to the Liberty Bell pavilion – where President George Washington lived with nine enslaved Africans when Philadelphia served as the U.S. capital between 1790 and 1800. The site now houses a commemorative exhibition entitled “The President’s House: Freedom and Slavery in the Making of a New Nation.”

During our second week’s examination of black abolitionists, National Park Service historians will lead a tour of Underground Railroad sites in Philadelphia, including the original site of the Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Office where William Still aided hundreds of fugitive slaves (as documented in his famous 1872 book The Underground Railroad). We will also visit Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church. Founded by former slave Richard Allen, Mother Bethel was one of the most important autonomous organizations created by free black activists in post-Revolutionary America. The church held abolitionist meetings, protected runaway slaves, and served as an icon of black independence for most of the nineteenth century. These two tours have been very popular in the past and will help bring to life the often abstract study of black abolitionism and the Underground Railroad.

The final field trip will take participants to Gettysburg, site of Abraham Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address” calling for “a new birth of freedom” in American society. Located roughly eighty miles from Philadelphia, Gettysburg remains one of the most popular Civil War battlefields. Participants will take a field trip to the area’s many landmarks – including monuments to emancipation within the Park proper and a
cemetery dedicated to black Civil War soldiers outside of it – and meet with National Park Service officials to consider ways to re-examine abolitionism in the context of both the Gettysburg battle and the Civil War.

**Selection of Participants:**

The selection committee that will review applications and choose final participants will comprise Abigail Brazina, a local secondary school teacher; James Green, a senior staff member of the Library Company; and Richard Newman, the seminar director. The committee will make every effort to select a well-rounded, talented, and diverse group of seminar participants (including both K-12 teachers and up to two graduate students), looking favorably upon applicants with backgrounds not only in history and the social sciences but also in literature. As in previous seminars, the selection committee will consider such factors as applicants’ geographical location, teaching experiences (in private, public, urban, suburban and rural districts), and interest in the seminar topic. Once participants have been selected, we will develop regular communication about travel, arrival and departure times, reading materials, special needs of individuals, and housing. Lauren Propst, the Library Company’s program administrator, will help order and organize readings, secure living accommodations for participants, arrange transportation for site visits, and provide daily support throughout the seminar to deal with any issues that might arise.

**Institutional Context and Arrangements for Site Visits:**

Seminar meetings will be held at the Cassatt House, the Library Company’s recently renovated 19th-century townhouse, which is connected to the main building at 1314 Locust St. in Center City Philadelphia. This facility contains a seminar room and is fitted with high-speed internet access for both individual research and group activity. Since the Library Company schedules all meetings in the Cassatt House, we will be assured of use of the seminar room for four weeks.

To create a stimulating intellectual environment for seminar participants, securing comfortable housing and meal arrangements will be a priority of the director and those involved in fulfilling the terms
of an NEH grant. As in previous years, the Library Company has reserved rooms at Drexel University’s new student housing complex, situated near downtown Philadelphia. Securing affordable and comfortable housing in a major city like Philadelphia is often a challenge but the Director has found that Drexel dorms offer the best deal in terms of price and location. The cost for Drexel dorm rooms in 2013 will be $42 per night, or about $300 per week (a letter confirming this rate is appended). Operated by Drexel Summer Conference Services, Drexel University Housing provides a professional environment for visiting scholars, including 24-hour onsite assistance. Located in University City, a vibrant area of West Philadelphia dense with coffee houses, restaurants, movie theaters, bookstores, and markets, Drexel’s housing complex is easily accessible from the Library Company’s Cassatt House, where seminar meetings will take place. Drexel University housing offers individual bedrooms, with communal living rooms, kitchen/dining facilities, and bathrooms. Participants will have the option of using Drexel food services, which remain open during summer months. The bathrooms are cleaned daily, and linen sets (including pillows and blankets) can be rented for $15 to $25 per week depending on the package. Each participant will have an access key that works around the clock and a library card for admission to the main University library. The University library is open from early in the morning until late at night, seven days a week, which will permit extended time for study and access to computers. Participants will also have access to the Drexel fitness facilities at a cost of $63 for the duration of their stay. As in previous years, the Seminar Director will work with Drexel officials to make sure that participants will have a comfortable experience in summer housing.

Access to the collections at the Library Company will be free to seminar participants during the afternoon hours after the discussions. If an individual develops a special need for sources at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, arrangements can be made for access there as well; HSP is adjacent to the Library Company (and two doors down from the Cassatt House). To enhance summer living in Philadelphia, participants will be provided with maps of the city’s many cultural institutions and tourist attractions, as well as restaurant guides, public transportation options, and lists of free events occurring in the city.

Prior arrangements for site visits will be made with Gettysburg, Independence National Historical
Park, and Mother Bethel Church to ensure successful field trips. We will discuss our seminar’s goals with officials at each location, making sure that both the tours and the accompanying instruction meet the needs of seminar participants. We will also ask that time be made available for interaction between guides and teachers.

All books will be ordered in advance of the seminar, with additional reading materials made available on the website or photocopied for prior study, if participants choose. Primary and secondary sources will amount to no more than 250 pages per week and cost roughly $150 for each seminar participant.

**Dissemination and Evaluation:**

Prior to the seminar meetings, a website will be set up to post the syllabus, bibliography, additional readings, primary documents, a list of web links, and other pertinent material. We will use this website and many others during the seminar. The website will also feature access to a chatroom, which will allow participants to communicate while in Philadelphia and after they have returned to their home institutions. As our experience following the 2006, 2008, and 2010 seminars showed, participants continued to email one another about pedagogical techniques, new resources and ideas, and other curricular matters relating to abolitionist studies. Regarding evaluation, on the last day of the seminar, the director will lead an open discussion of our accomplishments and distribute evaluation forms that will be submitted to NEH directly. In addition, the director will ask all participants to comment directly on the content of the seminar by providing brief narrative evaluations of the readings, the visits, the facilities, and suggestions for the future.
NEH SUMMER SEMINAR 2013: THE ABOLITIONIST MOVEMENT

Director: Richard Newman, Rochester Institute of Technology.

Calendar of Meetings at The Library Company and Readings, June 16th-July 12, 2013

NB: UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ALL SEMINAR SESSIONS ARE AT THE CASSATT HOUSE, NEXT TO THE LIBRARY COMPANY @ 1314 LOCUST ST., CENTER CITY PHILADELPHIA.

To provide us all ample time to read, meditate and utilize the Library Company’s wonderful archives, we will generally meet on the following schedule:

*Morning sessions, Mon-Thurs, 9:00am-11:45am
*Afternoon “document” discussions, 1:30-2:30pm.

All readings will be provided in a SEMINAR packets or online.

Week 1: “The Rise of the Abolitionist Movement in the 18th Century Atlantic World”

Sunday 6/16: 6pm Welcome and Dinner, Cassatt House, next to The Library Company

Monday 6/17: MORNING: Ending Slavery In the Atlantic World: Was Abolition Possible?


Visit The Library Company’s LOGAN ROOM for staff presentations on researching the Afro-Americana collection and other archives.

AFTERNOON: Document Discussion: Germantown Protest (1688); Joseph Parrish, “Notes on Abolition” (draft of antislavery published as “Remarks on the Slavery of the Black People,” published in 1806); Richard Allen, “Eulogy of Washington,” available at:

http://www.ushistory.org/presidentshouse/history/alleneulogy.htm

Tuesday 6/18: MORNING: Gradual Abolitionism in Post-Revolutionary America: Pennsylvania as a Test Case.

Read Nash and Soderlund, “Slavery’s End in Pennsylvania,” from Freedom By Degrees; Jackson, Benezet, Ch. 1

Guest Visit # 1: Maurice Jackson, Georgetown University, on Anthony Benezet

AFTERNOON Discussion: Visit Historical Society of Pa. for Pennsylvania Abolition Society Education Project, including Benezet School documents. Preview at:
Wednesday 6/19: Gradual Abolitionism in the American North and South


AFTERNOON: St. George Tucker, “Dissertation on Slavery” (1796); French National Assembly Abolition Decree, 1794.

Thursday 6/20: Slave Rebellion and Early American Abolitionism.

MORNING: Read, Douglas Egerton, Gabriel’s Rebellion.

AFTERNOON: Documents: Newspaper reports on slave restiveness, from slave rebellion in St. Domingue to Gabriel’s Rebellion in Virginia.

Friday 6/21: Site Visit #1: Pennsylvania’s old state capitol building at Independence National Historical Park, where both the Declaration of Independence and Pennsylvania Gradual Abolition Act of 1780 were passed and the first African American petitions to Congress were presented.

Background: James Dexter’s Abolitionist Petition to Congress, circa 1792. See:

http://www.nps.gov/inde/the-life-of-james-dexter.htm

Week 2: “African Americans and the Abolitionist Movement”

Monday 6/24: Black Founders

MORNING: Read: Newman et al, “Black Founders,” William and Mary Quarterly, January 2007 (Copies sent in the mail before seminar)

AFTERNOON: Documents: Belinda’s “Appeal” (1783, 1787); Adam Carmen, Slave Trade Oration, 1811; Forten, Letters from a Man of Color “ (1813). Documents online at:

http://oieahc.wm.edu/wmq/Jan07/supplement.html


MORNING: Read: White, Stories of Freedom in Black New York, Julie Winch, James Forten (assorted selections from both books).

AFTERNOON: Documents: Richard Allen “An Address To Those Who Keep Slaves and Approve the Practice” (1794); David Ruggles Report of the “The New York Committee of Vigilance” (1837); “Address” of Troy African Female Benevolent Society (1834).
Wednesday 6/26: African American Women and Abolitionist Activism:


*Guest Visit # 2: Erica Armstrong Dunbar, University of Delaware, on Black Women’s Abolitionist activism in Philadelphia.*

AFTERNOON: Documents, Mariah Stewart, “Productions” (1835).

Thursday 6/27: Black Pamphleteers and Black Protest in the early 1800s


See also supplementary material on Fugitive Slave Activity in Pennsylvania at:


And Black Activist William Still’s Journal:

http://www.hsp.org/default.aspx?id=751

Friday 6/28: Site Visit #2: Black Abolitionist Sites in Philadelphia and Mother Bethel AME Church, formed by former slave Richard Allen during the 1790s.

Background: Richard Allen’s autobiography,

http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/allen/menu.html

**Week 3: The Transformation of American Abolitionism Before the Civil War**

Monday 7/1: The Abolitionist Crusade

MORNING: Read selections from Stewart, *Holy Warriors*; Frederick Blue’s *No Taint of Compromise*;

**Bonus Reading: John D’Entremont, Southern Emancipator: Moncur Conway.**

AFTERNOON: Documents: American Anti-Slavery Society, “Declaration of Sentiments” (1833); Garnet “Address to the Slaves” (1843), 1849 Women’s Antislavery Fair (Pa.) at:

http://www.hsp.org/default.aspx?id=836

And Douglass, “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July” (1852)
Tuesday 7/2: Radical Abolitionism, Part 1: Politics.

MORNING: Read, John Stauffer, *The Black Hearts of Men*;

AFTERNOON: Documents: John Brown, “Provisional Constitution”; Platform, Radical Abolitionist Party; and “The Case of Jane Johnson”:

http://www.librarycompany.org/janejohnson/

Wednesday 7/3: Radical Abolitionism, Part 2: Fugitive Slave Rescues in the 1850s.


Guest Lecture #3 by Elizabeth Varon on abolitionist defense of fugitive slaves.

Document: James W.C. Pennington, “The Fugitive Blacksmith”:
http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/penning/penning.html

Thursday 7/4: Antislavery Women Before The Civil War:

MORNING: Read: Zaeske’s *Signatures of Citizenship*; Jean Fagin Yellin and John Van Horne, eds., *The Abolitionist Sisterhood*.


**Independence Day Group Activity, TBA**

Friday 7/5: Study Time in the Library Archives; teacher-led document presentations.

**Week 4:** Abolitionists in the Civil War Era…and Beyond.

Monday 7/8: Antislavery Politics and the Civil War Era:


AFTERNOON: Garrison and Douglass, editorials on Lincoln Election (1860-1); William Freehling, ed., *Showdown in Virginia* (Virginia Secession Debates)

Tuesday 7/9: Site Visit #3: Gettysburg, including Black Soldiers’ Cemetery.

Emancipation and The Civil War, Part 1: The Abolitionist as Hero.

MORNING: Read, Donald Yacovone, *A Voice of Thunder*; Henry Meyer, *All on Fire* (Garrison)
Wednesday 7/10: Emancipation and The Civil War, Part 2: Lincoln as Abolitionist Icon.


*Guest Lecture #4, James Oakes, CUNY Graduate Center, on Lincoln and Emancipation.*

AFTERNOON: Lincoln, Emancipation Proclamation, Gettysburg Address, Second Inaugural.

Thursday 7/11: Abolitionism in Reconstruction.


Bonus Reading: Carl Faulkner, *Women’s Radical Reconstruction*.


Friday 7/12 Farewell Lunch: Teaching the Abolitionist Movement in the 21st Century?

John Cumbler, *From Abolition to Rights for All*
Primary Sources Available to Seminar Participants

Printed Collections:


Antislavery Newspapers:

The Abolitionist

The Anti-Slavery Almanac

Freedom's Journal

The Emancipator

The Genius of Universal Emancipation

The Liberator

The Pennsylvania Freeman

Select Manuscript Collections:

*The Antislavery Collection, Boston Public Library.


*Records of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society.
Pamphlets and Books:


David Lee Child, "The Despotism of Freedom" (Boston, 1833).

Lydia Maria Child, "Authentic Anecdotes of American Slavery" (Boston, 1837).

____. "Anti-Slavery Catechism" (Boston, 1837 edition).

____. "An Appeal in Favor of the Colored Race" (Boston, 1833 edition).

Daniel Coker, “Dialogue Between Virginian and an African Minister” (Baltimore, 1810).

Frederick Douglass, “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July” (Rochester 1852).

____. My Bondage and My Freedom (1855 edition, Stauffer ed.).


William Lloyd Garrison, "Thoughts on African Colonization" (Boston, 1832).


Prince Hall, “A Charge” (Boston, 1797).


Lemuel Haynes, "The Nature and Importance of True Republicanism" (Boston, 1801).

Harriet Jacobs, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (1861).

Absalom Jones, "A Sermon...on the Abolition of the Slave Trade" (Philadelphia, 1808).


____. "An Address on the Abolition of the Slave Trade" (Philadelphia, 1816).

Pennsylvania Abolition Society, “Address to the Abolition Societies of America” (Philadelphia 1791, 1795, 1797).

____. “Address to the People of Color” (Philadelphia, 1800).

____. "The Present State and Condition of the Free People of Color of the City of Philadelphia" (Philadelphia, 1838).

Amos A. Phelps, "Lectures on Slavery and Its Remedy" (Boston, 1834).

Prince Saunders, "Memoir presented to The American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery" (Philadelphia, 1818).

Maria W. Stewart, "Lecture Delivered at the Franklin Hall" and "Religion and the Pure Principles of Morality," both in Productions of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart (Boston, 1835).


William Whipper, "An Address delivered in Wesley Church...Before the Colored Reading Society of Philadelphia" (Philadelphia, 1828).

Peter Williams, Jr., "An Oration on the Abolition of the Slave Trade" (N.Y., 1808).

Robert Alexander Young, "The Ethiopian Manifesto, Issued in Defence of the Blackman's Rights, in the scale of Universal Freedom" (N.Y., 1829).

David Walker, "Appeal in Four Articles: Together with a Preamble to the Colored Citizens of the World" (Boston, 1829).

William Watkins, “The Right of Colored Men to Bear Arms” (Boston, 1855).

**Secondary Sources (for seminar participants):**


——*Freedom’s Prophet* (NYU Press, 2008).


