

Hear My Voice: Abolition and Women's Rights in Local History

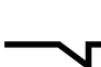
Presented by
the Students of the Writing Center at Hudson High
School



(Above: Students from Hudson Community School's Writing Center at the Harriet Tubman gravesite in Auburn, NY.)

This program is made possible by a New York Humanities Action Grant with matching funds from Hudson Community Schools.

**HUDSON
AREA
LIBRARY**


**HUMANITIES
NEW YORK**

Hudson Community Schools

Bringing Unity to Schools Families and Communities

Through a New York Humanities Action Grant given to the library with matching funds from Hudson Community Schools, high school students at the Writing Center studied primary source documents, photos and places about the abolition and suffrage movements in our local area and New York State.

The Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region and the Hudson Area Library History Room provided primary sources and books for the students on these exciting topics. Mary Liz Stewart of the Underground Railroad History Project along with Gail Wheeler, coordinator of the Writing Center, helped students contextualize these documents in terms of our nation's history and the principles of historic investigation.

The students also took a trip to Auburn and Seneca Falls, NY to visit various sites important in abolition and women's rights.

This exhibition features creative responses to their study and the meaning that history holds for the present day and will remain in the library throughout the summer.

Hudson Community Schools is a grant funded initiative being integrated throughout the Hudson City School District. Our mission is to support and promote student's academic achievement using a holistic, whole child approach. The mission of Hudson Community Schools is to promote the importance of "everyday attendance", support and promote student's social /emotional health and wellbeing, and to engage parents/caregivers and other significant adults in the student's life to promote a collaborative partnership between school, home and community.

The Hudson Community Schools Writing Center is coordinated by Gail Wheeler and supported through funding provided by the Hudson Community Schools grant and the Mental Health Association of Columbia Greene Counties. The Center focuses on writing as a vehicle for thinking and expressing through essays, weekly Poetry Lunch Group and special collaborative community research projects. A primary focus of the Writing Center is assistance in preparing college applications and composing the all-important college essay, as well as finding money for college bound students through scholarship essay writing.

Hudson Area Library is located at 51 North Fifth Street in Hudson, NY. The mission of the library is to enrich the quality of life in the chartered service area by providing educational, recreational, aesthetic, cultural, and informational programs, services, and materials to all our citizens.

Hear My Voice: Abolition & Women's Rights in Local History
A Collaboration of Hudson Area Library & Hudson Community Schools' Writing Center

In school students learn about the people who created our nation and about the people who made our nation a more perfect union, so African Americans, women and others have the same freedoms and equal protections.

We can all recite these names: Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Harriet Tubman, Susan B. Anthony and, as we go further toward the present, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks.

These people inspire awe and respect; and so they should. But, they were not alone. There were also thousands of souls who toiled; risking prosperity, reputation, life to ensure that others had freedom. It has been valuable for the students of the Writing Center to learn about ordinary people from our area and our state who lived extraordinary lives helping others and sacrificing in order to do that.

Many of these people would be confined to history's dusty pages; lost in property rolls, census records, and boxes in attics if no one came looking for them. We were lucky that Paul and Mary Liz Stewart, co-founders of the Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region, did go looking and found some of the extraordinary people of this world, like Stephen A. & Harriet Myers, and brought them, through documents and photos, to the Writing Center.

The study of these individuals taught the students of the Writing Center the importance of civic engagement and looking out for the rights of others. I hope also that the students and others might be inspired to search for persons now lost in history; people of the Underground Railroad, the women's suffrage movement, and bring them to life for us to meet.

I want to express my gratitude to Melanie Miller, director of Hudson Community Schools and Gail Wheeler, coordinator of Community Schools' Writing Center at Hudson High School for their collaboration and partnership in this program. The Writing Center gives students the opportunity to receive one-on-one instruction including with essays and applications for college entrance and scholarships. Through Gail's tireless work the students are walked through the process, checked up on for deadline dates, and shown the value they have through her care for them. "Hear My Voice" was an extracurricular, voluntary activity and the students' attendance shows how deeply, in turn, they value what they learn at the Writing Center. Melanie has collaborated with the library on a number of programs that involve the Hudson City School District including an 8th Grade Tutoring Center and I greatly admire her passion about getting the resources to teachers and students so learning can occur.

I thank and respect the students who participated for volunteering their time to learn, discuss, explore and create. I am indebted to New York Humanities for their generous grant and Mary Liz Stewart of the Underground Railroad History Project of the Capital Region for her instruction, scholarship and generosity. I thank Marie Stark and Joe D'Onofrio from the library's History Room Committee who searched for documents on local Underground Railroad and suffrage activity. I thank AmeriCorps for all of the help the workers gave us. And I acknowledge, in gratitude, all the people who came before us who cared about the rights and lives of others and did something about it.

Brenda Shufelt
Hudson Area Library

The Standard

of

American

Negro

In August 1865,

Who said the free? Not me?

Surely not me? The millions on relief today?

Sir: I got your letter, and was glad to find that you had not forgotten Jourdon, and that you wanted me to come back

Sometimes we overhear others saying, "Them colored people were slaves" down in Tennessee. The children feel hurt when they hear such remarks.

'It's Great to be white.

Blacks here—

Blacks there—

Blacks wherever they may be.
And remember, you Blacks, what they told you—

Say howdy to George Carter, and thank him for taking the pistol from you when you were shooting at me.

From your old servant,

Jourdon Anderson

JOURDAN ANDERSON BY RHELYNE COLEMAN

WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS TO BE SELF EVIDENT, THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL.

That they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights,

Among these- life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,

unless you're loud and black and possess an opinion,

then all you get is a bullet, a bullet that held me at bay, a bullet that can puncture my skin,

A bullet that can silence the words that I speak to my mother just because I'M OTHER.

A bullet held me captive, gun in my face, your hate misplaced.

White skin, light skin, but for me not the right skin.

Judging me with no crime committed Reckless trigger finger itching to prove your worth by disproving mine.

My life in your hands, My life on the line.

Fred Hampton, Tamir Rice.

Rekia Boyd.

REGGIE GREEN?

Spared by a piece of paper,

a student ID that you had to see before you could identify me, and set me supposedly free.

LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS, FOR SOME OF US, MAYBE.

There's nothing self evident about it.

Marque Richardson

There is one sin that slavery committed against me, which I can never forgive. It
robbed me of my education.

James W.C. Pennington

Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced

JAMES Baldwin

Save our children from slavery.....

And they kill their soul.

Those little hands are holding hard tools instead of holding school books.

Mothers are crying for their children and want to save them from their darkness

Let us join together and save our LITTLE CHILDREN FROM THE HELL OF SLAVERY.

RAVI SATHASIVAM

JAMES W.C. PENNINGTON BY CECILLE RUIZ

- Dreams

deliver.

equal rights

suiting the action to the word,

However, I wish for

slavery

battle

I

want

freedom.

if we wait till it is still, it will take a great while to get it going again.

I am here;

start

the

battle

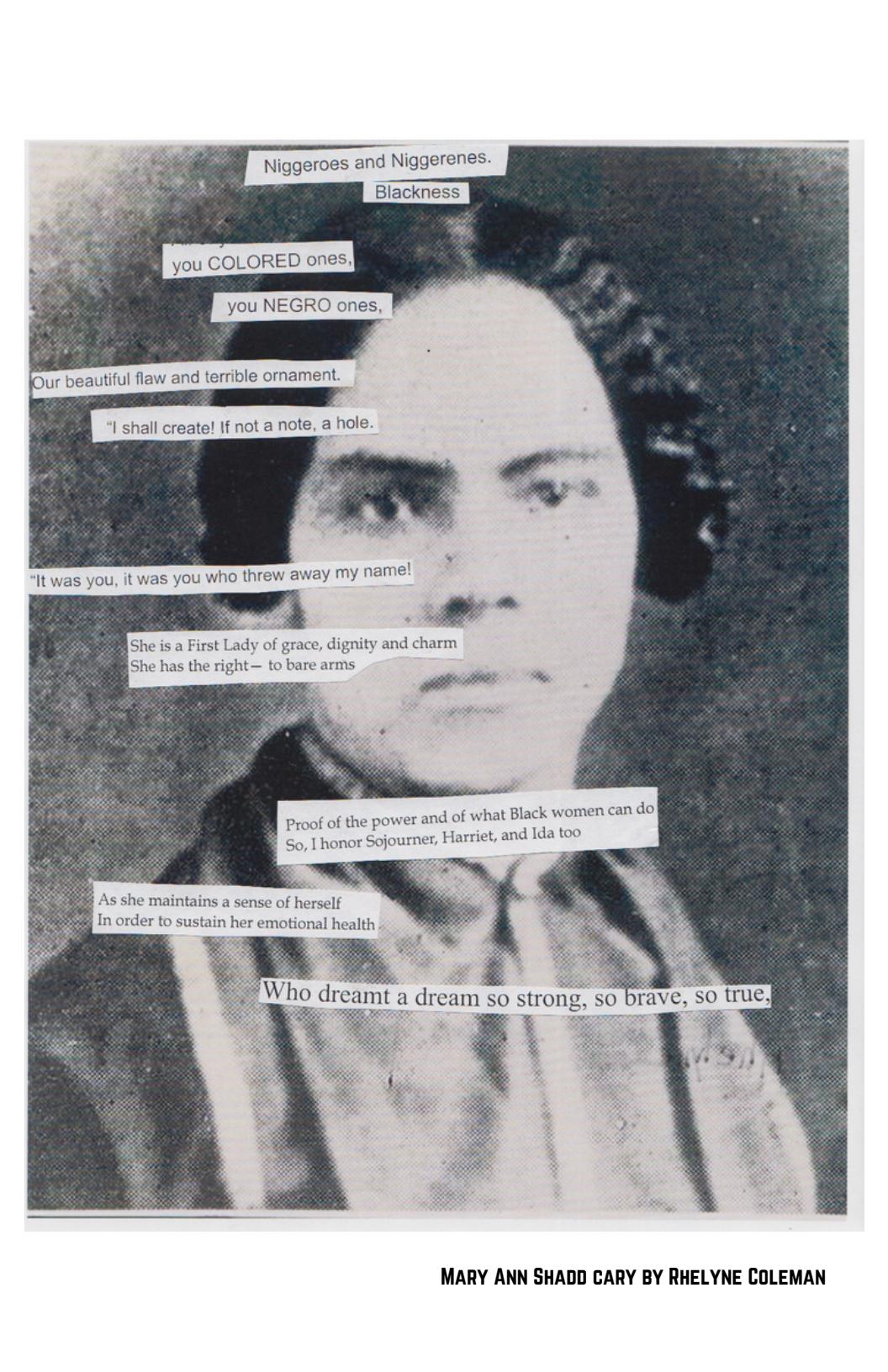
or

remain

here.

OBTAI N

SARAH PARKER REMOND BY TAYLOR SAMPERISI



Niggeroes and Niggerenes.

Blackness

you COLORED ones,

you NEGRO ones,

Our beautiful flaw and terrible ornament.

"I shall create! If not a note, a hole..

"It was you, it was you who threw away my name!

She is a First Lady of grace, dignity and charm
She has the right— to bare arms

Proof of the power and of what Black women can do
So, I honor Sojourner, Harriet, and Ida too

As she maintains a sense of herself
In order to sustain her emotional health

Who dreamt a dream so strong, so brave, so true,

May 9, 1867

I've stayed in the front yard all my life.

I want a peek at the back

Indulge in **the AREA**

I have a right to have just as much as a man.

AS

a NY

SPIRIT

BODY

MIND •

TAKE ME AWAY

a vagrant

Heart

I

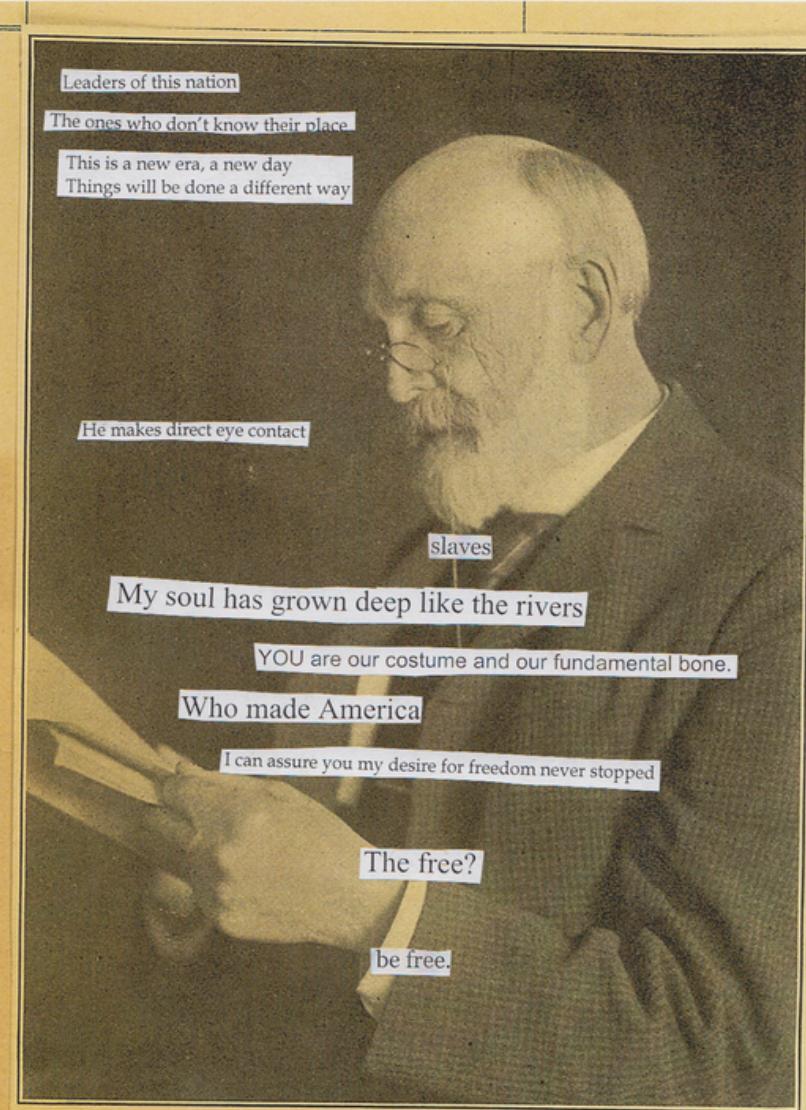
deserve

MORE

to go in the back yard now

And maybe down the alley

DAVID RUGGLES BY INGRID KILDISS



Leaders of this nation

The ones who don't know their place.

This is a new era, a new day
Things will be done a different way

He makes direct eye contact

slaves

My soul has grown deep like the rivers

YOU are our costume and our fundamental bone.

Who made America

I can assure you my desire for freedom never stopped

The free?

be free.

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON

(1838 — 1909)

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON BY CLAIR DJINIE BAZAR

Locked down in my mind again

Please, can you hear me?

Need to overcome

I am history

a wife

a mother

a servant

an old

nobody

Just a sold soul
and a lost voice

poor

helpless

suffering

unfortunate

this
is
my
life

Born to enslaved parents

Purchased at the age six months

Became a victim
lashes and beatings

I asked myself,
Is there a resolution?

If all men are born free
and equal,

then must be blind
because I cannot see it

I sued in
order to
gain my

FREEDOM

black woman to be set free
under the Massachusetts Constitution

Let freedom sing

I am history

HISTORY that lives on

"It was my good fortune to lend a helping hand to the weary travelers flying from the land of bondage."

Remember your Roots

I have to help the slaves

Need attention

With Hardship comes ease

Appreciate your freedom

Wish for your brother what you wish for yourself

Risk your human rights for someone that is treated less than a human

Search great happiness.

WILLIAM STILL BY SIDDIQUE AHMED

Not so terribly pleasant and not so bad,

SCARS - None of consequence.

Slavery
is hell

Better forward than back

Where I came from,
it would make your flesh creep,
and your hair stand on end

keep GOING, if you are tired,
if you are scared, if you are hungry,
if you want to taste freedom,

KEEP GOING

Then we saw the
lightning, and
that was the guns

And then we Heard
the thunder,
and that was the
big guns

And then we heard the rain falling,
and that was the blood falling

United effort:
united we stand, divided we fall

When I found I had
crossed THAT line,
I looked at my hands to see
if I was the same person

I never ran my train off the track,
and I never lost a passenger

Harriet Tubman

HARRIET TUBMAN BY KARIE-ANN SILVERNAIL

Am I Not a Man and a Brother? I Am A Man.



Out of dust I was.
Out of slavery I rose.
A man.

I held my head up
Looked every man in the eye.

Free.
Only as much as others could be.
My life, my pride, was in helping
other souls rise up
and lift their heads high.

To dust I have returned,
A free man, head high.
A man.



STEPHEN A. MYERS BY BRENDA SHUFELT

"What is this but the acknowledgement that the slave is a moral, intellectual, and responsible being."

"Without a struggle, there can be no progress."

"Slaves sing most when they are most unhappy. The songs of the slave represent the sorrows of his heart; and he is relieved by them, only as an aching heart is relieved by its tears."

"I prayed for freedom for twenty years, but received no answer until I prayed with my legs."



"We go farther, and express our conviction that all political rights which is expedient for man to exercise, it is equally so for women."

"Freedom is a road seldom traveled by the multitude."

"Right is of no sex, truth is of no color"

FREDRICK DOUGLASS WITH ORIGINAL ILLUSTRATION BY OMER MUFTI

LOOK AT MY ARM! I HAVE

PLOUGHED AND PLANTED AND GATHERED

AND NO MAN COULD HEAD ME -

AND AIN'T I A WOMAN?

I COULD WORK AS MUCH

AND EAT AS MUCH AS A MAN

- WHEN I COULD GET IT -

AND BEAR THE LASH

AS WELL!

AND AIN'T I A WOMAN?

You will come away bruised but this will give you poetry

Now that I've moved on to the land of the road

It's time to hear the truth about the past

Where I came from, it would make your flesh creep, and your hair
stand on end to know what they do to the slaves

We worked hard at pretending we're slow

We worked hard at keeping our eyes and voices low

We worked even harder at grinning and gritting our teeth

Through it all, we remained part of God's sacred trust

I was always free, even when I could not show

You never owned me and you never owned mine

God was always near

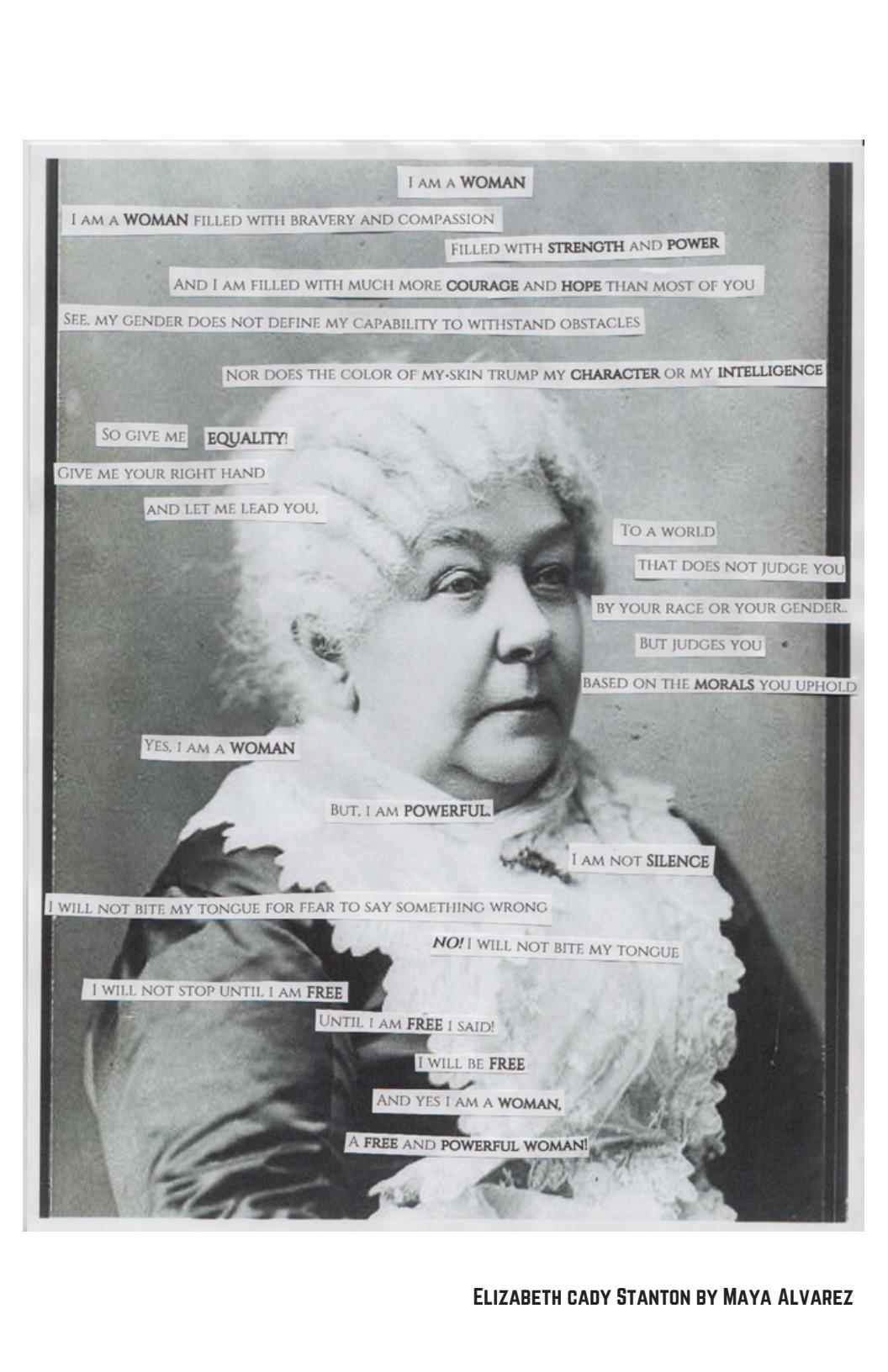
I am the tall dark stranger those warnings prepared you for

I Sell the Shadow to Support the Substance.

SOJOURNER TRUTH.

Love us. Never forget.

SOJOURNER TRUTH BY CLAIR DJINIE BAZAR



I AM A WOMAN

I AM A WOMAN FILLED WITH BRAVERY AND COMPASSION

FILLED WITH STRENGTH AND POWER

AND I AM FILLED WITH MUCH MORE COURAGE AND HOPE THAN MOST OF YOU

SEE, MY GENDER DOES NOT DEFINE MY CAPABILITY TO WITHSTAND OBSTACLES

NOR DOES THE COLOR OF MY SKIN TRUMP MY CHARACTER OR MY INTELLIGENCE

SO GIVE ME EQUALITY!

GIVE ME YOUR RIGHT HAND

AND LET ME LEAD YOU.

TO A WORLD

THAT DOES NOT JUDGE YOU

BY YOUR RACE OR YOUR GENDER..

BUT JUDGES YOU

BASED ON THE MORALS YOU UPHOLD

YES, I AM A WOMAN

BUT, I AM POWERFUL.

I AM NOT SILENCE

I WILL NOT BITE MY TONGUE FOR FEAR TO SAY SOMETHING WRONG

NO! I WILL NOT BITE MY TONGUE

I WILL NOT STOP UNTIL I AM FREE

UNTIL I AM FREE I SAID!

I WILL BE FREE

AND YES I AM A WOMAN,

A FREE AND POWERFUL WOMAN!

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON BY MAYA ALVAREZ

endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights;

these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary

We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men and women are created equal;

A tiny figure in Quaker garb spoke on and on about peace, the sin
of slavers and woman's rights.

going, gone!

Who bids for God's own image?

They put me in the Closet –
Because they liked me "still"

My God!
can such things be?

the Spirit moved her

He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.

The one first duty of all human life
Is to promote the progress of the world
In righteousness, in wisdom, truth and love;

Hoarse, horrible, and strong,
Rises to Heaven that agonizing cry,

God of all right! how long

How long, O God, how long?

Lucretia Mott.

The audience rose. Frederick Douglass, abolitionist,
called out,
"Goodbye, dear Lucretia."

F. Gutekunst,

Philadelphia

We all affix our signatures to this

Declaration

LUCRETIA MOTTO BY GAIL WHEELER

Rhelyne Coleman

Attending SUNY Adirondack, Majoring in LiberalArts

Jourdan Anderson.....p. 4

Jourdan Anderson, an escaped enslaved person, is known because of a bold and humorous letter he wrote in response to his former enslaver's request that he return to the plantation.

Mary Ann Shadd Cary....p. 7

Mary Ann Shadd Cary was an African American teacher, journalist, lawyer, suffragist and first woman student at Howard University Law School.

Cecille Ruiz

Attending SUNY Oneonta, Majoring in Psychology

James W.C. Pennington.....p. 5

James William Charles Pennington escaped slavery and became an orator, minister, writer, and abolitionist.

Creative Piece Works Cited:

“Untitled poem” Marque Richardson

Quotes by James W.C. Pennington and Amiri Baraka

“Save our children from slavery...” Ravi Sathasivam

Taylor Samperisi

Attending SUNY Potsdam, Majoring in Psychology

Sarah Parker Remond....p. 6

Sarah Parker Remond was an African-American abolitionist, an eloquent orator, and inspiring leader.

Ingrid Kildiss

Attending Purchase College, Majoring in Journalism

David Ruggles....p. 8

David Ruggles was an African-American abolitionist, printer, and journalist who spent his life resisting slavery and aiding escaped enslaved persons.

Clair Djinie Bazar

Attending Siena College, Majoring in Biochemistry

William Lloyd Garrison....p. 9

William Lloyd Garrison was publisher of the anti-slavery newspaper, The Liberator, and an activist in the women's rights and other reform movements.

Sojourner Truth....p. 15

Sojourner Truth, born an enslaved person in New York, was a prominent abolitionist and women's rights activist who traveled the country speaking out against slavery and the unequal treatment of women.

Jenna Gregory

AmeriCorps, Sophomore at The College of St. Rose, majoring in Social Work

Elizabeth Freeman....p. 10

Elizabeth Freeman was born an enslaved person in Massachusetts, sued for her freedom and won, which resulted in the abolition of slavery in the state in 1783.

Creative Piece Works Cited:

“A Slave” Gregory Ramos

Siddique Ahmed

Junior HHS

William Still....p. 11

William Still, born free, was a black abolitionist, writer, historian and is often called “The Father of the Underground Railroad”.

Karrie Ann Silvernail

Attending Hartwick College, Majoring in Biology

Harriet Tubman....p. 12

Harriet Tubman, the most famous “conductor” on the Underground Railroad after escaping herself, also helped the Union Army and after the Civil War ended, established a Home for the Aged for former enslaved persons.

Creative Piece Works Cited:

All Quotes Used From Harriet Tubman

Brenda Shufelt

Program Director, Hudson Area Library

***Stephen A. Myers*....p. 13**

Stephen A. Myers was born an enslaved person in New York State and was freed at 18. He worked as a grocer and steamboat steward and was known as one of the most important figures in the Underground Railroad movement in the capital area along with his wife Harriet Myers.

Omer Mufti

AmeriCorps, Sophomore at SUNY New Paltz,
majoring in Art and Biology

***Frederick Douglass*....p. 14**

Frederick Douglass escaped from slavery and spent the rest of his life writing speak and fighting for the cause of abolition and then, subsequently, women's rights.

Creative Piece Works Cited:

All quotes attributed to Frederick Douglass

Gail Wheeler

Coordinator, Community Schools' Writing Center

***Lucretia Coffin Mott*....p. 16**

Lucretia Mott was an abolitionist and suffragette and was co-organizer of the Seneca Falls Women's Rights Convention in 1848.

Creative Piece Works Cited:

"They Shut Me Up In Prose" #445 Emily Dickinson

"The Christian Slave" John Greenleaf Whittier

"To The Indifferent Women" Charlotte Anna Perkins Gilman

Maya Alvarez

Junior HHS

***Elizabeth Cady Stanton*....p. 17**

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was an abolitionist and leading figure of the early women's movement.

Creative Piece Works Cited:

"Read All About It, Pt III" Emeli Sande

Litany of Remembrance

The women and men referenced here were critical parts of the story of the rights of women and the struggle for freedom expressed in the Underground Railroad. We identify and name them here to honor their memory and the memory of the work they did for freedom. We recall their names so that they are not nameless, faceless people of the past but real people with personal stories known to us in the present.

Lucretia Coffin Mott, Jourdan Anderson, William Lloyd Garrison, you spoke out against injustice on behalf of those whose voices were silenced. For this, ...

★ *We recognize your courage, we look to you as an example to follow, we receive hope from your story.*

Sarah Parker Remond, William Still, Mary Ann Shadd Cary, Elizabeth Freeman, you dedicated your lives to working to insure the rights of Americans. For this, ...

★ *We recognize your courage, we look to you as an example to follow, we receive hope from your story.*

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, David Ruggles, you remained strong in the face of adversity. For this, ...

★ *We recognize your courage, we look to you as an example to follow, we receive hope from your story.*

Frederick Douglass, Stephen Myers, James W.C. Pennington, Samuel Ringgold Ward, you offer us inspiration to carry on in your footsteps today. For this, ...

★ *We recognize your courage, we look to you as an example to follow, we receive hope from your story.*

May these people of the past speak to us in the present. May we be mindful of and responsive to their call to us to continue to work together for the liberty and justice as named for all in our nation's founding document, the Declaration of Independence. May we take on the mantle of civic responsibility and meaningfully participate in our communities as we engage the present and look to the future with justice as our standard.