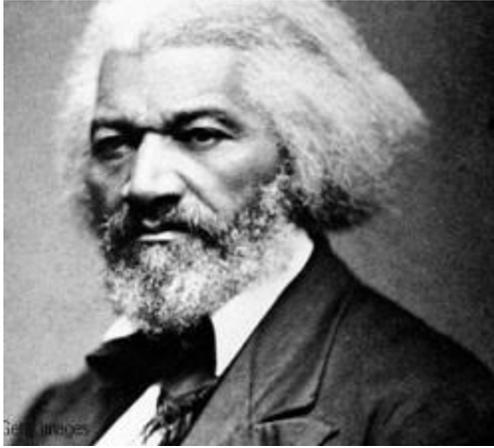


Who was Frederick Douglass?



Frederick Douglass has been called the father of the civil rights movement. He rose through determination, brilliance, and eloquence to shape the American nation. He was an abolitionist, human rights and women's rights activist, orator, author, journalist, publisher, and social reformer.

Committed to freedom, Douglass dedicated his life to achieving justice for all Americans, in

particular African-Americans, women, and minority groups. He envisioned America as an inclusive nation strengthened by diversity and free of discrimination.

Douglass served as advisor to presidents. Abraham Lincoln referred to him as the most meritorious man of the nineteenth century. In his later years Douglass was appointed to several offices. He served as U.S. Marshal of the District of Columbia during Rutherford B. Hayes' administration and President James Garfield appointed him the District of Columbia Recorder of Deeds. In 1889 President Benjamin Harrison appointed him to be the US minister to Haiti. He was later appointed by President Grant to serve as secretary of the commission of Santo Domingo. Douglass had hoped that his appointments would open doors for other African-Americans, but it was many years before they would follow in his footsteps.

Frederick Douglass rose from slavery to become the leading African-American voice of the nineteenth century. At an early age, he realized that his ability to read was the key to freedom. All of his efforts from then on focused on achieving freedom. As a young man, he came into contact with black preachers and taught in the Sabbath School in Baltimore. Here he refined his reading, writing, and speaking skills. At age twenty, Douglass escaped north to freedom. He settled in New Bedford, Massachusetts with his wife Anna Murray Douglass and joined the abolitionist movement.

Frederick Douglass was a compelling force in the anti-slavery movement. A man of moral authority, Douglass developed into a charismatic public speaker. Prominent

abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison recognized his oratory skill and hired him as a speaker for the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society.

Douglass worked with many notable abolitionists of the nineteenth century including Wendell Phillips and Abby Kelley. Douglass also had a close relationship with John Brown and his family but disagreed with Brown's violent tactics, dramatically displayed in Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry in 1859. With the abolishment of slavery at the close of the Civil War, Douglass then turned his attention to the full integration of the African-American into political and economic life of the United States.

Douglass established his own weekly abolitionist newspaper, the North Star, that became a major voice of African-American opinion. Later, through his periodical titled the Douglass Monthly, he recruited black Union soldiers for the African-American Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts Volunteers. His sons Lewis and Charles both served in this regiment and saw combat.

Douglass worked to retain the hard-won advances of African-Americans. However, the progress made during Reconstruction soon eroded as the twentieth century approached. Douglass spent his last years opposing lynching and supporting the rights of women.

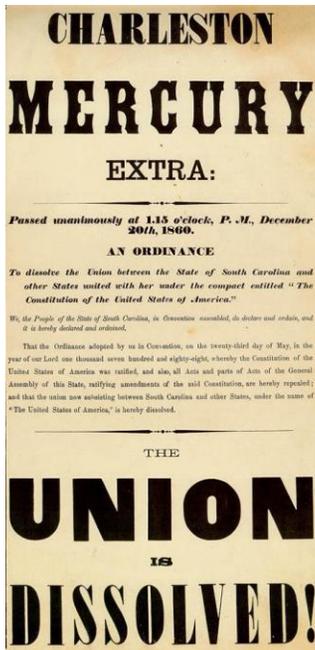
The antislavery crusade of the early nineteenth century served as a training ground for the women's suffrage movement. Douglass actively supported the women's rights movement, yet he believed black men should receive suffrage first. Demonstrating his support for women's rights, Douglass participated in the first feminist convention at Seneca Falls in July of 1848 where he was largely responsible for passage of the motion to support female suffrage.

Together with abolitionist and feminist Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Douglass signed the Declaration of Sentiments that became the movement's manifesto. His masthead of his newspaper, the North Star, once read "Right is of no Sex - Truth is of no Color." A women's rights activist to the end, Douglass died in February 1895, having just attended a Woman's Council meeting.

http://www.digitalhistory2.uh.edu/exhibits/douglass_exhibit/douglass.html

States' Rights

The Rallying Cry of Secession



The appeal to states' rights is one of the most potent symbols of the American Civil War, but confusion abounds as to the historical and present meaning of this federalist principle.

The concept of states' rights had been an old idea by 1860. The original thirteen colonies in America in the 1700s, separated from the mother country in Europe by a vast ocean, were used to making many of their own decisions and ignoring quite a few of the rules imposed on them from abroad. During the American Revolution, the founding fathers were forced to compromise with the states to ensure ratification of the Constitution and the establishment of a united country. In fact, the original Constitution banned slavery, but Virginia would not accept it; and Massachusetts would not ratify the document without a Bill of Rights.

The debate over which powers rightly belonged to the states and which to the Federal Government became heated again in the 1820s and 1830s fueled by the divisive issue of whether slavery would be allowed in the new territories forming as the nation expanded westward.

The Missouri Compromise in 1820 tried to solve the problem but succeeded only temporarily. (It established lands west of the Mississippi and below latitude 36°30' as slave and north of the line—except Missouri—as free.) Abolitionist groups sprang up in the North, making Southerners feel that their way of life was under attack. A violent slave revolt in 1831 in Virginia, Nat Turner's Rebellion, forced the South to close ranks against criticism out of fear for their lives. They began to argue that slavery was not only necessary, but in fact, it was a positive good.

As the North and the South became more and more different, their goals and desires also separated. Arguments over national policy grew even fiercer. The North's economic progress as the Southern economy began to stall fueled the fires of resentment. By the 1840s and 1850s, North and South had each evolved extreme positions that had as much to do with serving their own political interests as with the morality of slavery.

As long as there were an equal number of slave-holding states in the South as non-slave-holding states in the North, the two regions had even representation in the Senate and neither could dictate to the other. However, each new territory that applied for statehood threatened to upset this balance of power. Southerners consistently argued for states' rights and a weak federal government but it was not until the 1850s that they raised the issue of secession. Southerners argued that, having ratified the Constitution and having agreed to join the new nation in the late 1780s, they retained the power to cancel the agreement and they threatened to do just that unless, as South Carolinian John C. Calhoun put it, the Senate passed a constitutional amendment to give back to the South "the power she possessed of protecting herself before the equilibrium of the two sections was destroyed."

Controversial—but peaceful—attempts at a solution included legal compromises, arguments, and debates such as the Wilmot Proviso in 1846, Senator Lewis Cass' idea of popular sovereignty in the late 1840s, [the Compromise of 1850](#), the [Kansas-Nebraska Act](#) in 1854, and the Lincoln-Douglas Debates in 1858. However well-meaning, Southerners felt that the laws favored the Northern economy and were designed to slowly stifle the South out of existence. [The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850](#) was one of the only pieces of legislation clearly in favor of the South. It meant that Northerners in free states were obligated, regardless of their feelings towards slavery, to turn escaped slaves who had made it North back over to their Southern masters. Northerners strongly resented the law and it was one of the inspirations for the publishing of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1852.

Non-violent attempts at resolution culminated in violence in 1859 when Northern abolitionist John Brown abandoned discussion and took direct action in a raid on the arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia. Though unsuccessful, the raid confirmed Southern fears of a Northern conspiracy to end slavery. When anti-slavery Republican [Abraham Lincoln](#) won the presidential election in 1860, Southerners were sure that the North meant to take away their right to govern themselves, abolish slavery, and destroy the Southern economy. Having exhausted their legal and political options, they felt that the only way to protect themselves from this Northern assault was to no longer be a part of the United States of America. Although the Southern states seceded separately, without intending to form a new nation, they soon banded together in a loose coalition. Northerners, however, led by Abraham Lincoln, viewed secession as an illegal act. The Confederate States of America was not a new country, they felt, but a group of treasonous rebels.

[The Civil War Trust](#)

<http://www.civilwar.org/education/history/civil-war-overview/staterights.html>

States' Rights – A Timeline

Colonial America 1700s	New Constitution 1789	Westward Expansion 1820s-30s	Diverging Paths 1840s-50s	The Boiling Point 1859/60	Current Issues? Today

Describe the Northern economy in the decades approaching the Civil War:

Describe the Southern economy in the decades approaching the Civil War:

Explain how a law might at the same time favor the Northern economy while hurting the Southern:

Who was Frederick Douglass?

What honorable title does the article's author say (at the beginning) is often ascribed to Frederick Douglass?

What was Douglass's cause, and for whom did he fight?

What does Douglass describe as his "key to freedom" and why?

Upon the official abolition of slavery at the end of the Civil War, how do Douglass's goals change?

When Reconstruction efforts eventually broke down, how did Douglass respond?

What additional movement grew out of the "antislavery crusade of the early nineteenth century"?

Why do you think Frederick Douglass, a former slave, embraced this additional movement so passionately when it did not directly affect him?

Why might the support of men like Frederick Douglass be so important to achieving the ultimate goal of this additional movement?