

Appendix A-1: Give Me Liberty

“Give me liberty or give me death”

“Mr. President...This is no time for ceremony. The question before the House is one of awful moment to this country. For my own part, I consider it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery...

“There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free...we must fight!

“...They tell us, sir, that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard is stationed in every house?... The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable--and let it come! I repeat, sir, let it come!

“...Gentlemen may cry, ‘Peace, Peace’—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear or peace so sweet to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!”

Appendix A-2: Give Me Liberty

“Ain’t I A Woman?”

Well, children, there is so much racket there must be something out of kilter. I think that ‘twixt the Negroes of the South and the women of the North, all talking about rights, the white men will be in a fix pretty soon. But what’s all this talking about?

That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me the best place! And ain’t I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, 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? I have borne thirteen children and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain’t I a woman?

Then they talk about this thing in my head: what’s that they call it? [Intellect, someone whispers.] That’s it, honey. What’s that got to do with women’s rights or Negro’s rights? If my cup won’t hold but a pint, and yours holds a quart, wouldn’t you be mean not to let me have my half-measure full?

Then that little black man there, he says women can’t have as much rights as men, ‘cause Christ wasn’t a woman! Where did your Christ come from? From God and woman! Man had nothing to do with him!

If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back, and get it right side up again! And now they is asking to do it, the men better let them.

Obliged to you for hearing me, and now old Sojourner Truth ain't got more to say.