The Rise of Abolitionism

“I am aware, that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I will be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. On this subject, I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation. No! no! Tell a man whose house is on fire, to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hand of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually extricate her babe from the fire into which it has fallen; -- but urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. I am in earnest -- I will not equivocate -- I will not excuse -- I will not retreat a single inch -- AND I WILL BE HEARD. The apathy of the people is enough to make every statue leap from its pedestal, and to hasten the resurrection of the dead.”

--From the inaugural issue of The Liberator (Boston), January 1, 1831, “To the Public” by William Lloyd Garrison

Early Masthead (Aug. 13, 1831) with motto: “Our Country is the World –Our Countrymen are Mankind”

William Lloyd Garrison   Frederick Douglass   Gerrit Smith   Elizabeth Cady Stanton

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