



The Complete Antislavery Writings of Anthony Benezet, 1754-1783: An Annotated Critical Edition (Antislavery, Abolition, and the Atlantic World)

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Pennsylvania Quaker Anthony Benezet was one of the most important and prolific abolitionists of the eighteenth century. The first to combine religious and philosophical arguments with extensive documentation of the slave trade based on eyewitness reports from Africa and the colonies, Benezet's antislavery writings served as foundational texts for activists on both sides of the Atlantic. In England, those who incorporated his work into their own writings included Granville Sharp, John Wesley, Thomas Clarkson, and William Dillwyn, while Benjamin Franklin, Benjamin Rush, David Cooper, James Forten, Absalom Jones, and Richard Allen drew inspiration from his essays in America. Despite Benezet's pervasive influence during his lifetime, David L. Crosby's annotated edition represents the first time Benezet's antislavery works are available in one book.

In addition to assembling Benezet's canon, Crosby chronicles the development of Benezet's antislavery philosophy and places the abolitionist's writing in historical context. Each work is preceded by an editor's note that describes the circumstances surrounding its original publication and the significance of the selection.

Benezet's writings included in this edition:

An Epistle of Caution and Advice Concerning the Buying and Keeping of Slaves (1754)

Observations on the Enslaving, Importing, and Purchasing of Negroes (1759 1760)

A Short Account of that Part of Africa Inhabited by the Negroes (1762)

A Caution and Warning to Great Britain and Her Colonies (1766 1767)

Some Historical Account of Guinea (1771)

Benezet's Notes to John Wesley's Thoughts upon Slavery (1774)

Observations on Slavery (1778)

Short Observations on Slavery (1783)

A valuable tool for scholars and students of African American history, slavery studies, and the Revolutionary era, The Complete Antislavery Writings of Anthony Benezet, 1754 1783 demonstrates the prevailing impact of the foremost pioneer in American abolitionism.

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Editorial Review

Review

"This comprehensive collection of Anthony Benezet's antislavery writings is an indispensable resource for anyone interested in abolitionism in the eighteenth century. With concise and accessible introductions to all the essays, Crosby provides a sense of the evolution of Benezet's thought, persuasive skills, strategic thinking, and engagement with British and colonial American politics. Crosby's meticulous footnotes identify virtually all of Benezet's textual sources, highlighting the abolitionist's awareness of literature on Africa and the precision of his references to the cultural and physical geography of the continent. Crosby's measured prose does justice to this extraordinary man. No one after reading this collection should harbor any doubt that Benezet was a central, and perhaps, as Crosby suggests, the pivotal figure in the eighteenth-century campaign against the slave trade." -- Geoffrey Plank, author of *Quakers and Abolition*

(Geoffrey Plank)

From the Author

I first discovered Anthony Benezet in the reading room of the British Museum in 1990. I was there to study Enlightenment rhetoric, a rather dry and forbidding topic. Benezet was there in the pages of a small leather-bound book that looked well-used in the 220 years since its publication in Philadelphia. But the passion of the man, the sheer force of his convictions and his energy in condemning slavery captivated me and made me want to learn much more about him and his urgent project--to end the transatlantic slave trade and free enslaved Africans in the Americas.

In the years since then, I have learned a great deal about Benezet, and he now seems even more remarkable than he did in that first encounter. But many people in the United States still have never heard of him, largely because his writings have not, until now, been collected and published in a format that makes them readily available to people who are curious about America's troubled relationship with slavery and its consequences. He is not difficult to read, but he has been difficult to find outside of rare book rooms and microfilm readers, and more recently, in digital reprint editions that are often plagued by misprints and errors. My critical edition now makes him available to the average reader.

What is so special about Benezet? In an era (the era of the founding of the United States) when slavery was considered benevolent, charitable, and necessary to insure a steady supply of labor; when unloading black slaves in cities like New York and Philadelphia was as unremarkable as unloading hogsheads of Madeira wine or Jamaican rum, one man raised his voice to object and to insist that slavery was unchristian, unjust, unnatural, and founded on violence.

He was not an "important" man as such measures are usually applied; he held no public office, was not a statesman, politician, or military leader. He was a schoolteacher, but he had a sharp pen and an unrelenting devotion to his cause. He not only wrote emotionally compelling arguments against slavery, but he also organized his fellow Quakers and others who would listen into a remarkable lobbying force to put pressure on individual slave owners, the British parliament, and colonial assemblies. By the time of his death in 1784, the Anglo-American world no longer took slavery for granted, but was engaged in a pitched battle between advocates for slavery (who became increasingly isolated) and a growing antislavery movement that enforced a ban on the transatlantic slave trade by 1807.

His achievements and his passion deserve to be remembered by the country he fought so hard to cleanse from the stain of slavery and oppression.

From the Inside Flap

PRAISE FOR *THE COMPLETE ANTISLAVERY WRITINGS OF ANTHONY BENEZET, 1754-1783*

"The Philadelphia Quaker Anthony Benezet perhaps did more than any single person to start the international, ecumenical campaign to end the Atlantic slave trade, but for too long his work has been available only to specialist scholars. David L. Crosby's fine edition brings together Benezet's antislavery writing in one volume for the first time, supported with clear introductions and much valuable reference material. It will immediately become an essential reference point for anyone interested in Benezet, Quakerism, eighteenth century Philadelphia, and the early years of the international antislavery movement."

--BRYCCHAN CAREY, author of *From Peace to Freedom: Quaker Rhetoric and the Birth of American Antislavery, 1657-1761*

"Anthony Benezet, the French-born Huguenot turned Quaker, was the foremost antislavery fighter of the eighteenth century. David L. Crosby has in this volume placed the major antislavery writings of Friend Anthony Benezet before us, and in so doing he provides readers with what Benezet wrote and the sources he used to fight for black freedom. Crosby's annotations help show how Benezet used Quaker ideals, analyzed accounts of early travelers such as Ande Brue, John Atkins, and Wilhelm Bosman, and used ideas from the literary writings of thinkers like Frances Hutcheson and Montesquieu and discussions with black Philadelphians to develop the world's first transatlantic slavery movement.

--MAURICE JACKSON, author of *Let This Voice Be Heard: Anthony Benezet, Father of Atlantic Abolitionism*

"Finally, with this volume, Anthony Benezet's seminal antislavery writings are conveniently made available in a reliable modern edition. David L. Crosby's annotations add real value for scholars and students seeking to understand the Quaker activist, whose publications informed and inspired abolitionists throughout the eighteenth-century Atlantic World."

--JONATHAN D. SASSI, professor of history, College of Staten Island and CUNY Graduate Center

Users Review

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Stacey Smith:

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James Bassler:

As people who live in the actual modest era should be update about what going on or data even knowledge to make these people keep up with the era which can be always change and advance. Some of you maybe may update themselves by looking at books. It is a good choice for you but the problems coming to an individual is you don't know which one you should start with. This The Complete Antislavery Writings of Anthony Benezet, 1754-1783: An Annotated Critical Edition (Antislavery, Abolition, and the Atlantic World) is our

recommendation so you keep up with the world. Why, as this book serves what you want and want in this era.

Mary Kasten:

Reading a guide tends to be new life style on this era globalization. With reading you can get a lot of information that could give you benefit in your life. Along with book everyone in this world can certainly share their idea. Ebooks can also inspire a lot of people. Many author can inspire all their reader with their story or their experience. Not only the storyplot that share in the publications. But also they write about the ability about something that you need example of this. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your sons or daughters, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors in this world always try to improve their expertise in writing, they also doing some investigation before they write with their book. One of them is this The Complete Antislavery Writings of Anthony Benezet, 1754-1783: An Annotated Critical Edition (Antislavery, Abolition, and the Atlantic World).

Mary Adam:

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