

There were other people around, I'm sure, but they didn't dress in 19th-century ink, so I paid them no attention. One morning, though, I noticed Phil Lapsansky flitting about. He stopped by my side and gruffly whispered, "I may have something for you." I looked up to reply, but he was gone. Lunch time came and went. Phil had disappeared.

At three in the afternoon I spotted Phil's signature white mop. Phil's arms carried a large binder filled with clippings he had made of African American images. "Whoa," I thought. "This is going to be a mother lode." Phil opened to a page and pointed. I looked at him waiting for more. "I think this will help," he said, turned and walked away. I considered the one image, "The Hutchinson Family" from *Turner's Comic Almanac*, an 1847 cartoon in which a black couple in the foreground exclaims that they can sing just as well as the Hutchinson Family, who perform in the background. The cartoon had little to do with selling religion or reform and I didn't know what to think.

The next day I started to research why such a cartoon existed. The Hutchinsons, it seemed, had played a performance at Musical Fund Hall to a mixed race audience. Antiabolition forces in Philadelphia had gathered in protest, their violent threats enough to stop the singers after two weeks of sold-out shows. I started working backward. The Hutchinson Family Singers had created public space for interracial interaction as early as their beginnings in Boston, where newspapers applauded their shows but warned listeners of the group's tendency toward "amalgamation." Phil's cartoon had opened the way to seeing the musical troupe in a whole new light. As arbiters of interracial cooperation, the Hutchinsons stood at the cutting edge of American social reform while enjoying a position atop popular culture. I wanted to compare them to a modern-day equivalent, but only a combination of the Jackson Five, for its popularity and "family" style, and the Weavers, for its social activism and group presentation, could even come close. Thank you, Phil, for the binder, foresight, and leadership—you forever changed the story of the Hutchinson Family Singers.

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Jenna M. Gibbs

In 2006 to 2007, I was an Albert M. Greenfield Foundation Dissertation Fellow at the Library Company, an experience made far more productive and stimulating because of Phil Lapsansky's infectious intellectual enthusiasm for and rich knowledge of the collections, especially the Afro-Americana Collection he was so instrumental in cataloging. At the time, I was a Ph.D. student at UCLA working on my dissertation, a transatlantic study of the ways in which theatrical performances and related cultural productions—such as broadsides, ballads, ephemera, and cartoons—contributed to debates over slavery, citizenship, and polity in London and Philadelphia, and of how, through transatlantic exchange, playwrights, performers, and cartoonists in the two cities created a recognizably British-American constellation of perspectives on issues of slav-



Samuel Jennings, *Liberty Displaying the Arts and Sciences*. Oil on canvas, London 1792. Gift of the artist.

ery and race. How lucky I was that my topic was right up Phil's alley! Almost every day, Phil pointed me to an intriguing image, a little-known pamphlet, or relevant secondary source. In our many conversations, he was unstintingly generous in responding to my ideas about sources and sharing his own. There were many, many ways in which Phil's expertise and passion aided my scholarship.

But for me perhaps the *tour de force* was a priceless exchange that re-directed my research and gave me the title of the dissertation (and now book manuscript). One day I commented to Phil that I had encountered plays, poems, and images featuring the Temple of Liberty as a metaphor not only for civic polity but also abolitionism, including a pantomime written to celebrate the British slave-trade abolition bill of 1807, *Furi-bond; or, Harlequin Negro*, in which Britannia descends from the sky into her temple to present a supplicant slave a writ of emancipation. I mused aloud as to whether this motif might have common usage as a transatlantic abolitionist trope, given that the Goddess of Liberty as an anthropomorphic national icon (in the forms of Britannia, Columbia, Hibernia, Marianne, Bavaria, etc.) so clearly had Atlantic reach. Phil's eyes lit up with a mischievous twinkle. He promptly escorted me to John Van Horne's office, where Samuel Jennings's painting *Liberty Displaying the Arts and Sciences; or, The Genius of America Encouraging the Emancipation of the Blacks* (1790–1792) then hung. Jennings painted his abolitionist allegory in London, just as antislavery fervor gained sway, for the Directors of the Library Company. As Phil well knew, many others have seen and written about the painting before me, and my question was not a new one. Perhaps fewer have been treated to Phil's personal file, which he showed me next, of "Temple of Liberty" clippings in a large file of the same name. Some of these images dealt with slavery, others did not. Some dealt with developing notions of femininity and gendered constructions of rights. Some were jingoistic encomiums to nation, others biting critiques of polity. In short, upon perusal and in discussion of the file with Phil, it was apparent that the Temple of Liberty was, on both sides of the Atlantic, a symbol of the contested meaning of polity and citizenship.

As a result of this exchange, I reshaped the first few chapters of the project to incorporate a transatlantic analysis of the shifting meanings over time of the Goddess in her Temple with regard to slavery, citizen-

ship, and polity. And Phil's file also gave me the title of my manuscript: "Performing the Temple of Liberty: Slavery, Theater, and Popular Culture in the British Atlantic." Thank you for this and thank you for everything, Phil, including our more relaxed but no less valuable exchanges over lunches and martinis. You were more helpful and influential on my research than I could possibly say. You will be very sorely missed indeed!

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