

Rules and Principles of the New-York Manumission Society, February 4, 1785

[Excerpt]

Chairman. A Chairman being proposed, the Hon^t. John Jay Esquire was unanimously appointed—

Rules. M^t. Troup, from the Committee, appointed at the former meeting to draw up Rules for the Government of the Society: reported that they had prepared them and desired Leave to read the same. which being read, and others added, the whole, after Debate thereon were agreed to— Which said Rules, with the Reasons for instituting the said Society prefixed thereto; are as follows.

Principles. The benevolent Creator and Father of Men having given to them all, an equal Right to Life, Liberty and Property; no Sovereign Power, on Earth, can justly deprive them of either, but in Conformity to impartial Government and Laws to which they have expressly or tacitly consented—

It is our Duty therefore, both as free Citizens and Christians, not only to regard, with Compassion, the Injustice done to those, among us who are held as Slaves, but to endeavour, by lawful Ways and Means, to enable them to Share, equally with us, in that civil and religious Liberty with which an indulgent Providence has blessed these States; and to which these, our Brethren, are by Nature, as much entitled as ourselves...

Motives. These Considerations induce us to form ourselves into a Society to be Stiled

Name. A Society for promoting the Manumission of Slaves and protecting such of them as have been or may be Liberated.

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