

## Films or Film Series' About the Abolitionists

Suitable for High School and Adults During Black History Month - February

Here is a list of films, both documentary films and contemporary movies, which can be used to discuss the abolitionist movement and the Underground Railroad. The animated films are especially suitable for children.

### ["American Experience: The Abolitionists"](#)

This is a three hour (3 part) PBS series which can be watched by downloading from its online location. It can also be broken into sections if dealing with particular people or situations. It was first broadcast in 2013 and is available for purchase as a DVD. A teacher's guide can be downloaded from the website and is a valuable resource.

The documentary reveals how Abolitionist allies Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, Harriet Beecher Stowe, John Brown and Angelina Grimké turned a despised fringe movement against chattel slavery into a force that literally changed the nation.

["Amazing Grace" – 2006](#) – "Amazing Grace" is a biographical movie about the Abolitionist [William Wilberforce](#)'s campaign against the slave trade in the British Empire,<sup>[1]</sup> and features the role of [John Newton](#), the writer of the hymn [Amazing Grace](#), in Wilberforce's campaign.

["Amazing Grace"](#) with Bill Moyers. This documentary first released in 1994 on VHS focuses on the popular hymn written by John Newton. It features interviews with Judy Collins, Johnny Cash, Jessye Norman and The Boys Choir of Harlem. In talking about the hymn and what it means to different celebrities, the story of John Newton is told simply and directly.

### [Amistad \(1997\)](#)

Steven Spielberg directs and Morgan Freeman stars in this epic film based on the true story of the 1839 mutiny aboard an African slave ship headed to the United States from Cuba and the abolitionist lawyer—John Quincy Adams—who advocated for the rebels' freedom.

[A Woman Called Moses](#) – This was originally a television mini-series starring Cicely Tyson as Harriet Tubman. Orson Welles narrated and Will Geer played a major character. First shown in 1978, it was released on VHS in 1992 and on DVD in 2001. It is available for purchase or rent on Netflix.

[\*\*Frederick Douglass, When the Lion Wrote History \(1994\)\*\*](#) 

Actress Alfre Woodard narrates this intimate documentary about a man who escaped slavery to become a respected orator, a prolific writer, a leader in the abolitionist movement, and a passionate advocate for women's suffrage.

[\*\*Nat Turner, A Troublesome Property \(2003\)\*\*](#) 

Dramatic reenactments bring to life the story of a slave preacher who planned and executed the largest slave rebellion in American history.

[\*\*The Underground Railroad \(1999\)\*\*](#) 

Alfre Woodard hosts this History Channel documentary about one of the most misunderstood elements of the abolitionist movement, the Underground Railroad. This film focuses on the individuals—white and black—who formed the complex network that helped usher slaves into the free North.

[\*\*Uncle Tom's Cabin \(1927\)\*\*](#) 

Early African-American actor James B. Lowe stars as Uncle Tom in this, one of the most famous screen adaptations of Harriet Beecher Stowe's [1852 abolitionist novel](#). Seven decades after the book's publication, Stowe's tale about the injustices of slavery takes on new meanings.

[\*\*The Life and Legend of Sojourner Truth\*\*](#) – (2000) may be rented from Films Media Group. Contact a media consultant at 800-257-5126 (press option 3) or [sales@films.com](mailto:sales@films.com).

This detailed program traces the lifelong odyssey of a woman who literally walked out of bondage, changed her name in 1843, and traveled the country as an abolitionist and women's rights advocate. Along the way she would meet Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln and be further cast into fable by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Interviews with scholars and dramatic readings from Truth's speeches and autobiography conjure more clearly a picture of this truly heroic woman. (57 minutes)

[\*\*Found on Youtube:\*\*](#)

[\*\*Animated Hero Classics: Harriet Tubman\*\*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gojj7DUYe58) – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gojj7DUYe58>

[\*\*Animated Classics: Abraham Lincoln\*\*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U48fhPFMGDQ) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U48fhPFMGDQ>

[\*\*"Frederick Douglas: From Slave to Abolitionist"\*\*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fj-gz3u-1jM) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fj-gz3u-1jM>

[\*\*"Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad:\*\*](#)

Part 1" - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F54jtNaBK2E>

Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iaBKXsygMv8>

[\*\*Sojourner Truth:\*\*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1o4zkNPSAs) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1o4zkNPSAs>