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The Literary Corner: Introduction to Afro-American Essays with Sarah Fabio and Thomas Schick (side a)

Extracted on Jan-26-2022 12:17:27

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<i>Thomas Schick</i>: And it was within this community of people that, uh, the uh, the first essays were written and published. Uh, there were essays that were, uh, designed to address the problems of the race.

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<i>Sarah Fabio</i>: Tom, I can, I can think of, uh, one of those like, a narrative of the proceedings of the black people during the late, awful calamity in Philadelphia, and a reputation of some censors thrown upon them in some late publications. This was done in 1794, and this pamphlet was written by Absalom Jones and Richard Allen, organizers of the Free African Society, and he praised the negroes for helping during an epidemic of Yellow Fever. And of course, other people like James Thornton in 1818, Lydia Child, 1833, and Robert Purvis also did this kind of defense pamphlet, right.

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<i>Thomas Schick</i>: Yes, and uh, that particular one is important because, uh, in the, uh, Philadelphia Yellow Fever epidemic, black people served the city in general by helping to, uh, to aid those ill and to remove the bodies of those(--)

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<i>Sarah Fabio</i>: Corpses, righty

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<i>Thomas Schick</i>: (--the corpses of those who had died. And yet in spite of that service, the general press had given them a very negative, uh, um, publicity during that time, and this pamphlet, which really was an essay, was an attempt to deal with that. There were also others that were, uh, that grew out of ideology, uh, questions within the Afro-American community. Uh, there were those in the society among free Afro-Americans who thought that the solution to problems of, um, of Afro-Americans would be found in immigration outside of the United States.

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<i>Sarah Fabio</i>: Right

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<i>Thomas Schick</i>: So that you find, uh, that there are people who write, uh...



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