

Circular Addressed to Benevolent Ladies of the United States

Ever since the existence of this nation, our general government . . . [has] acknowledged . . . [the Indian] people, as free and independent nations, and has protected them in the quiet possession of their lands. . . .

But the lands of this people are claimed to be embraced within the limits of some of our Southern States, and as they are fertile and valuable, they are demanded by the whites as their own possessions, and efforts are making to dispossess the Indians of their native soil. And such is the singular state of concurring circumstances, that it has become almost a certainty, that these people are to have their lands torn from them, and to be driven into western wilds and to final annihilation, unless the feelings of a humane and Christian nation shall be aroused to prevent the unhallowed sacrifice. . . .

Have not then the females of this country some duties devolving upon them in relation to this helpless race? . . . It may be, that female petitioners can lawfully be heard, even by the highest rulers of our land. . . .

This communication was written and sent abroad solely by the female hand. Let every woman who peruses it . . . endeavor by every suitable expedient to interest the feelings of her friends, relatives and acquaintances, in behalf of this people, that are ready to perish. A few weeks must decide this interesting and important question, and after that time, sympathy and regret will all be in vain.



Attributed to W & F Langenheim, *Catharine Beecher*, 1848. Daguerreotype. Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University, A102-438-1z.



Augustus Washington, *Lydia Sigourney*, 1852. Watkinson Library, Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut.