

Frederick douglass and his incredible life research paper



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It is hard to ignore the fact that most of the historic events that took place in the USA up to the middle of the XX century were carried out by white men; slavery, a monstrous stain on the nation's history, did not allow any of the African American population make the least change to the history of America. Every rule has its exceptions, and here is the one for the rule mentioned above.

Frederick Douglass, a Black man who had the heart to stand his ground in the darkest times of the U. S. history, soon became the symbol of the rebellious American nation – and was forgotten just as quickly. Contributing to the ideas that the modern principles of the American democracy are based on nowadays, Frederick Douglass wrote a number of works on slavery, its dreadful effects and the slavery abolition as the basic principle of humanity.

When speaking of Douglass's key contribution into the development of the abolitionist movement and change of the history of the United States, his numerous autobiographic writings should be mentioned first. One might argue that writing about one's life as a captive could not be that hard a deal; however, taking into account the fact that Douglass's autobiographies and major works came out in 1840s and 1850s , i. e., several decades prior the time when an African American citizen was considered a human being (Berlin, 2003).

As it has been mentioned, biographies made the greatest chunk of Douglass's writing. Telling about the horrors of living as a slave, Frederick

managed to capture time in a bottle – even nowadays, his writing rings of the desire to get rid of the ball and chain.

Again, if narrated from a position of a typical slave whose everyday misery of a life could call for nothing but pity, the writing would have passed unnoticed; however, told from the perspective of a rebel who would not bear to be treated like an animal, it gained weight in a millisecond: “ When a man raises himself from the lowest condition in society to the highest, mankind pay him the tribute of their admiration” (Douglass, 1994, 125).

In his autobiographies, Douglass did not mourn his fate or the fate of any other African American who had been born into slavery; instead, Douglass explained his position on slavery and proved his point by offering graphic examples from his own life. In addition, Douglass made the reader realize how an average American sees the Black community: “ He [the slave boy] is never expected to act like a nice little gentleman, for he is only a rude little slave” (Douglass, 1994, 125). A mix between Douglass’s life story and an interpretation of his political and social convictions, his autobiography offers a lot of food for thoughts.

Apart from Douglass’s extensive descriptions of his life and convictions, there are a number of issues concerning Douglass that make modern public gasp in delight, and Douglass’s amazing courage is one of those things. A quality often found in the people who influenced the world history, being brave could hardly be considered an issue worth bringing up if Frederick Douglass had not been African American. Needless to mention, the traditions

of treating Black people that the South dictated the entire state did not involve allowing slaves to express their concerns about slavery.

What Frederick Douglass wrote in the distant XIX century could be enough for the crowd to lynch him without waiting for the jury to decide, not to mention that the jury would have, probably, been on the side of the white population. However, by a very narrow escape, Douglass managed to let the world know about his opinion on slavery.

The fact that the American society gave Douglass a green light for expressing his opinion could mean either that the society was too busy dealing with the abolitionist movement that was getting out of hand, or that the nation was ready for the major change and the acknowledgement of Black people's rights. Either way, the series of autobiographies that Douglass produced obviously had their effect on the American society and the outcome of the Civil War.

It would be wrong, however, to believe that Douglass's influence on the fight for the abolition of slavery was restricted to writing papers protesting against using Black people as slaves. Though Douglass could be described as a man of thought rather than a man of action, he also accomplished much. There were a lot of instances when Douglass delivered a speech on the significance of abolitionism; however, the pivoting one was definitely the speech that sounded during the meeting of the Bristol Anti-Slavery Society. As the existing records say,

He subscribed to William Lloyd Garrison's weekly journal *The Liberator*, and in 1841 heard Garrison speak at the meeting of Bristol Anti-Slavery Society. <https://assignbuster.com/frederick-douglass-and-his-incredible-life-research-paper/>

At one of these meetings, Douglass was unexpectedly asked to speak. After he told his story, he was encouraged to become an anti-slavery lecturer.

(Douglass, 2009, 118)

Since Frederick Douglass preferred civilized arguments to rough actions, it is clear that most of his deeds concern the realm of discussions and public appearances. Delivering his passionate speeches about equality as the key principle that the American society should be based on, Douglass made it possible for the African Americans to gain their right to be free like any other people. However, there was still a long way of fighting racial prejudices ahead (Shapiro, 2012).

It is worth noticing that Douglass does not spare his time to tell about the agony of being a slave, but starts right from his first attempt to gain his freedom. In the XIX America, such approach had the effect of a bomb, making people discuss the problem and, therefore, bringing it to the national agenda.

One of the few Black people who have become recognized widely not only among fellow African Americans, but also among the representatives of all nations, and not only for the period of the Civil War, but also for as long as history of the humankind will last, Frederick Douglass is definitely person worth remembering about.

His courage was amazing, and his talents as a writer and a speaker for the enslaved nation were truly incredible. It is a shame that nowadays, the name of Frederick Douglass hardly rings any bell for an average American citizen;

remembering about Douglass and his contribution into building the American society as we know it is the least what we can do to honor his memory.

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