

Harriet jacobs and fredrick douglass

Profession, Writer



Harriet Jacobs and Fredrick Douglass have both played a monumental part within slaveculture. During their era (mid-nineteenth century), white Americans had different views and stereotypes of African Americans. Jacobs and Douglass both use their writings to help shed light on how African Americans were viewed during this particular time period. Both of their writings have allowed readers to gain somewhat of an understanding of the ways African Americans were sometimes stereotyped.

Harriet Jacobs has been subject to the utmost savage of acts that are of being enslaved. She was stripped of all rights and freedoms as being a slave and went through hell on earth. She was owned by a white man, forced to make new slaves, not being able to have any rights as a white man, and overall being considered a lesser being because of the color of her skin. Her story describes the horrors that she went through, speaking out by showing others her first-hand experiences based on her time being enslaved.

In her writings, she describes how she was stereotyped as just a piece of property, a method in which to produce more slaves, and as a lesserhuman being. All of which just because of the color of her skin and gender. Jacobs only just realized that she and her other peers were slaves when she was around the age of six years old. She came to that realization when she saw the inhumanity of her father's labor, and how she held such a different status than those of white people.

The worst part was when she found out that her grandmother was involuntary birthing children so that there could be more slaves. Jacobs writes this narrative to show the struggles and hardships that the enslaved

women went through and how her perspective is very different from those of society. As the society at that time viewed and stereotyped African Americans in a way in which that tried to justify the cruel acts of slavery.

Back in this time period women of any race were considered less of a human being, but being black and female was like getting handed the short stick. She tried to reach out to other women in this passage by inspiring them, by encouraging them, and by informing them that change needed to be made. Harriet Jacobs shared her stories, helping her fellow female peers gain respect for one another by evoking true emotion in the readers to shed light on the common views and stereotypes of African Americans.

Fredrick Douglass shed a lot of light on the views and stereotypes of African Americans. In one of his passages, he talked about some of the stereotypes society had about the day of the Fourth of July. One of his main points proceeds to talk about the factual status of how a slave is viewed as a man by the government. Confused as to why the general white population considers a slave to be a man but in reality, they do not have the same rights that the white people think that they do, whether they believe so or not.

This describes a possible stereotype where African Americans were thought to be treated as slaves and that their treatment was of no true concern for the general public. He also talks about the stereotyping of the wrongfulness of slavery. He seemed as if he was blown away at how he would have to even argue the wrongfulness of slavery, and rightfully so. He talks about how the wrongfulness of slavery is so intense that if you were to ask anybody

about it, they would most definitely say that slavery is wrong. This simplified way of thinking shows how the idea of slavery can be broken down from a concept to a bare-bones idea that needs no justification.