

Good essay about declaration of independence

[Sociology](#), [Slavery](#)



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Introduction

United States of America gained their independence from Great Britain in June 4 1776. This was a great accomplishment for the people of United States because now they could rule themselves. For most people they were happy but for the black people who were still slaves did not see this independence. This was still being experienced 75 years later after they had gained independence. Fredrick Douglass who was an abolitionist movement leader claimed this injustice on a speech he made at Rochester, New York in 1852 a day, which was after the Independence Day (Asante). In the speech, he claimed that the Fourth of July was meant for the white people and not for him and his people. In that speech he made sure, to tell people who were listening to him that when the declaration of independence was being signed most of the black people in the United States were still slaves. Even today,

most black people in America still remember the speech that was made by Fredrick Douglass.

The speech by Fredrick Douglass

Oration

In the speech, Douglas was thankful that he was given the opportunity to deliver an oration on the 4th of July since not long ago he was a slave on a plantation not far from that platform he was in. When narrating the speech it is clear that he does count himself when celebrating the birthday of United States. This was evident when he uses the words ' your and you' in areas such as it is your national independence, your political freedom, your great deliverance, your national life and reminds you that the nation is 76 years (Douglass). In this speech, he is glad that the nation is independent and that since it is still young it will be able to make reforms that will change the nation for the better.

According to Douglass the fathers of the people who fought for independence persevered allot in order to be free and therefore, they should be honoured and respected (Douglass). According to the speech, the reasons that caused the people to fight for this declaration of independence was that they were treated coldly, there were sovereignty injustices and they were scorned by the British colony (Douglass). The increase of this oppression is what caused their fathers to persevere and have a will to continue fighting for their freedoms. He also firmly states that the people who were involved were some of the bravest people in America and should be proclaimed as heroes (Douglass).

The present

According to the speech, the only business that Douglass had on that particular platform was about the present by putting and accepting God first in what they are doing (Douglass). He says that people should not trust the future no matter how pleasant it seems to be and people should act in the living present while putting God first and whole-heartedly. The past events should only be used if it seems important for the present and possibly in the future. He tells the present generation that now is their turn to make positive changes because their fathers have done their good work and died. This means that the present generations are the ones responsible of how their future is going to be. He states that people should not dwell on the fame of their fathers or enjoy their children's share of what their father had left them. The only exempt in this case is when the share one takes that belongs to the child they should be able to return it.

According to Douglass hundreds of years earlier the descendant of Abraham children of Jacob usually boasted of how they were connected to Abraham and referred to him as father (Douglass). This was wrong because these children did not have the spirit and the faith of Abraham. People used the name of Abraham inappropriate because they were not following his actions that made him famous. In the speech, he compared this to Washington who fought so hard to release people from slavery (Jacobs and Appiah). He claims that the monument of Washington built by slaves and their owners claimed that Washington was their father. He stated that the evil that people usually do keep on living even after their death.

Douglass asked the questions of why he was asked to talk at that occasion

and what his people and he have to do with their national independence (Quarles). He also asked whether in the declaration of independence if the natural justice was extended to them (Douglass). While asking these questions he also wanted to know whether he would get truthful answers (Douglass). He concluded dejectedly that he and the people he represented were not included in the occasion (Flock). He noted that the celebrations brought about the differences between his people and them. In this speech, he made it very clear that the celebration of the Fourth of July was only meant for them and not for him. He even went as far as to ask them if they were mocking him by asking him to speak. He stated that that while they were celebrating so many slaves were mourning. He said that he would always see that occasion only in the slaves point view.

According to him the celebrations of Fourth of July is the darkest day to him because it was supposed to be one of the days when they celebrated the end of injustices (Lawson and Frank, p. 155). He further denounced slavery and claimed that it was one of the sins of America. In the speech, he asked the people in that platform if whether the slaves were not humans. He told them that they should think about this especially when making laws. He reminded them of how they looked for independence and got it so therefore, they should be able to see the injustice of having slavery in the country. This is because by having slavery it goes against the freedom they themselves were looking for from the British colony.

The internal slave trade

Douglass was outraged at how their papers showed how slavery at that time was very prosperous for the people in America. The ex Senator Benton was

the one who told people of how the slaves were more expensive compared to before they got their independence. There were some states in which slave trade was one of their main source of wealth. This is what was referred to as the internal slave trade (Flock). This kind of trade had being denounced by the government and even banned because it was perceived to be very inhuman even in the eyes of God. This may be true but when the people engage in this kind of trade nothing was done to them. Douglass further explained of how when he was a little boy he saw cargoes being brought in the shore containing people as goods. He saw this in the slave market in Pratt Street in Baltimore. He saw how the people claimed their stock (Jacobs and Appiah). This was horrific experience for him as a young man and has left him scarred for life (Douglass).

Religious liberty

According to Douglass, slave trade or plain slavery goes against Christian liberty. He stated of how people rejoiced about getting freedom of religion or the right to worship God and civil rights while they denied the same rights to those who were in slavery (Douglass). He stated that the churches in America took the sides of the oppressors where they tolerated slavery and slave hunting (Miller). They ministers used the bible and God to justify slavery by claiming that God has ordained it by ensuring there is a master and slave relationship. He claimed that they were using religion to be tyrants and barbaric. He said that if religion accepted this then God is the father of race and not of all humankind. He stated that they were told to spare the church in their fight against slavery but he asks the question of how they can spare the church when it is the church that finds ways in which they can

oppress and justify slavery. He believes that it is blasphemy that the ministers of those churches are used to represent Jesus Christ and God.

The constitution

According to Douglass, the constitution has allowed the hunting of slaves and the right to have a slave (Douglass). He also claimed that the fathers who brought about the declaration of independence were imposters because they did not consider them because they also needed to get independence so the only thing they were doing was looking after their own interests and no one else's. He continued to say that the people who made the constitution made sure to support slavery in the country. According to Douglass, he believes that everyone in America have a right to an opinion when it comes to the constitution because the rules used sometimes does not require one to study law. He claims that according to the constitution, the clause regarding slavery sometimes encouraged slavery but it also stated that slavery was hostile (Miller).

In conclusion, according to Douglass all they had was hope for a better future where slavery no longer existed. In most of the speech done by the author especially in the beginning it was obvious that every time he talked about the declaration of independence ceremony or anniversary he claimed that it was theirs and did not put himself in the picture. This is because at that time slavery was being practised and condoned by the government and the churches. According to him, this did not go hand in hand with what their father were doing when they were fighting for their independence. It is a fact that slavery goes against some of the principles in the declaration of independence where they claimed equal rights to everyone.

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