

Good example of race students name essay

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



Introduction

The phrase race is a socio-cultural concept that is used to classify humans into distinct and larger groups by observing features such as anatomy, ethnicity, culture, history, religion, social affiliation and linguistic background. In this light, it is important to appreciate the close relationship and the distinct relationship among race, racism and racial discrimination. Racism is the belief that generally, members of a specific race have specific abilities, qualities or characteristics and thereby distinguishing it as being either inferior or superior to other races. Conversely, racial discrimination refers to the exacting of the belief of a race being superior or inferior to others and may take several forms.

How the Concept of ‘ Race’ Has Changed From the Sixteenth to the Twenty-First Centuries

Generally, the concept of race has undergone a tremendous shift from the sixteenth to the twenty-first centuries. The sixteenth century and the period before it was characterised by ideas and beliefs that were centered on social atavism (Natural World, 102-7). Cultures in Europe were believed to be the most socio-culturally, intellectually and cognitively developed while those of the black descent were supposed to be the least developed, and thusly, in the bottommost stratum. It is against this backdrop that the ravages that characterised the transatlantic slave trade were exacted without remorse or application of humaneness (LeFevre, 1979, p. 101).

The slave ships were: infested with lies and vermin; never washed; and could thus be smelled hundreds of miles away off the coast. The compartments in which slaves were kept while in transit served as the very toilets. The

surfaces of these compartments were covered in fecal matter and the slave holders could throw down morsels of leftover food for the slaves to pick up and eat. Since the journey took several months, the slaves in transit had no recourse to picking up the morsel of food, picking out the stained parts and eating the remainder (Peabody & Grinberg, 1794, pp. 107-13).

What informed the racist standpoint and oppression above was the need for financial gain. Slave trade and slavery were very lucrative and racism was a strong inducement to both. The appeal that racism had from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century did not fizzle off. This is the case as Darwinism gave racism more impetus. In his book, *The Origin of Species*, Charles Darwin had introduced the theory of evolution of species and life forms. This paved way for social Darwinism (or social evolution) as the white race came to be viewed as the most refined result of the evolutionary processes while his black counterpart, the least refined in the process of evolution (Pearson, 1900, p. 1-3).

According to Darrel (2007, p. 6), the events of the nineteenth century were inspired by the regarding of the black man as pseudo-human. The situation was replicated in the Southern States which did not regard the rights of the African American as legitimate (Natural World, 102-7). The ameliorations that have been realized for the African American came about not by chance, but by concerted efforts by William E. B. Du Bois who championed for abolition of slavery and the global recognition of the rights of the black race. Exploits by people such as Booker T. Washington and the military exploits such as the Haitian Revolution by the black army under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture further spread the need to recognize the black race as

an equal player in man's civilization.

Milestones such as the abolition of slavery in the 19th century, the issuance of Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863 and the passing of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments on April 8, 1864 and July 9, 1868 respectively, helped weaken toxic race relations between whites and blacks (Brian, 2007, 9 & Bolt, 1976, pp. 334-6).

Conclusion

Understanding the long-term history of race can inform policy decisions today by invoking the need to have systems and structures that safeguard equality in the society. In this regard, it is important that affirmative action is appreciated as a boom for cohesive race relations. It is against this backdrop that policies that uphold affirmative action policies such as No Child Left Behind, Equal Employment Opportunity Act and the Universal Healthcare Reform Act are appreciated as a means by which minorities can access social services and public goods such as education, employment and accessibility to healthcare services, regardless of the extent of the individual's financial empowerment.

References

Brian, Dirck, 2007, Changing Perspectives on Lincoln, Race, and Slavery, Magazine of History, 21 (4), p. 9

Bolt, Christine, 1976, Race and Slavery in the Western Hemisphere.

Quantitative Studies, The Economic History Review, 29 (2), pp. 334 - 336

Darrel, E. Bigham, 2007, Lincoln, Race, and Slavery, Magazine of History, 21 (4), p. 6

LeFevre, Richard Gregg, 1979, Race and Slavery in the Western World:

Quantitative Studies, Contemporary Sociology, 8 (1), p. 101

Natural World, n. d. Carolus Linneus, 102-107, Class notes

Peabody, Sue & Grinberg, Keila, 1794, Slavery, Freedom and the Law in the Atlantic World, A Brief History with Documents, Bedford: Boston, 107-113.

Pearson, Karl, 1900, The Standpoint of Science, Class notes