

# Essay on rights of african americans in united states before 1929

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African Americans used to enjoy minimal rights compared to the White Americans. This was a case attributed by many factors. White Americans viewed the Africans as inferior beings. Race and skin color was among the main contributories to this aspect. The whites occupied the highest positions in all pivotal institutions, in the country. They used this as a way of preventing the Africans from ascending the ladders in occupations. This was by way of instituting rules and regulations that would deter them from experiencing maximum freedom. Formation of various organizations like KKK was amongst the order of the day. However, this trend has kept on changing with time. Before 1929, African Americans had several rights attached to them. This has continued to change with various revelations surfacing (Henretta, Brody, Dumenil & Fernlund, 2008).

The 14th amendment and the women's suffrage document that went until 1875, tried to enhance the rights of the African American women. They had the right to get married. No one was entitled to get married against her will. This gave the African American women an opportunity of choosing their spouse. At the time, marriage was very significant in the society. This is because it enhanced the desired growth. Black women also had the right to take custody of their children. This was usually a contentious issue once there rift in the family. Initially men were seen as the utmost individuals, to keep the children. Ownership of property for the African American women was somewhat complicated. Only single women had autonomous rights on ownership of property.

The 13th Amendment on its part played a significant role in the eradication of slavery. Importation of slaves in the country was banned. This was arrived at after an amendment to the country's constitution was passed. African Americans had struggled to see this through. With the abolition of this activity, they had the ability to live as free agents. The right granted them the ability of doing what they felt best suited them without being ordered around. However, it took some time before slavery would be abolished completely (Henretta, Brody, Dumenil & Fernlund, 2008). Various obstacles were being created by the individuals benefiting from the activity. Among the obstacles is the creation of the Mississippi black codes. This document was used so as to bring slavery through the back door.

In 1868, the Fourteenth Amendment was constituted. The amendment was brought in light, to determine the country's citizens. It stipulated that all individuals naturalized or born in the country are citizens regardless of their race or ethnicity. Citizenship Clause overruled an earlier decision by the Supreme Court stating that black people did not have the right of becoming citizens. Passing of this amendment also allowed black Americans to enjoy the right of equal protection. The law is required to protect all individuals within its jurisdiction. Due Process Clause contained in the 14th amendment, gives African Americans the right to life, property and liberty. Initially, only White Americans enjoyed these rights.

1870 saw the African American men attain the right to vote in the country's elections. Initially voting was done by the people that were earning income and paying taxes. Black Americans were not included in this bracket under

any circumstance. In 1870, the 15th amendment was instituted to permit equal voting rights to all individuals regardless of their color, previous condition of servitude or race (Henretta, Brody, Dumenil & Fernlund, 2008). However, this did not apply to women. Even the White American women did not have this right during the time. The 15th amendment prohibited the government from preventing any citizen in exercising his voting rights. During the same year, African Americans were handed the right of gaining membership to the senate. Hiram Rhodes Revels was the first Black to become the member of the senate in, 1870. Right to form religion affiliations had also gained momentum. African Americans had the right to form their own religious affiliations. During this year, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church was founded.

African Americans had the right of obtaining civil remedies from abuses they received. This followed the enactment of the Civil Rights Act, in 1871. With the emergence of the right of obtaining remedy, abuse would diminish substantially. The murder of Octavius Catto had greatly influenced the enactment of the act. He was a civil rights activist that was murdered during an election in Philadelphia. In 1880, Black Americans were given the right to be involved in juries. The Supreme Court had passed this ruling based on the Strauder v. West Virginia Case. This move was essential in ensuring that justice is saved to all (Henretta, Brody, Dumenil & Fernlund, 2008).

The 15th and 14th Amendment documents extended the rights of the African American by inclusion of various clauses. In 1887, Black Americans were handed the right to establish school for their children. This followed since

most white dominated schools did not accept them. The State Normal School was the first one to be established during this period. Later it came to be recognized as Florida A&M University. Black women were given the right to form associations, in 1896. The national Association of colored women was formed. It resulted from a merger of small groups that existed before. Some of these groups did not publicize their affairs due to the fear of the unknown.

In 1900, the right to become teachers was officially bestowed to African-Americans. This took place after undergoing several training. During this year, African Americans had become literate in different areas. The aspect was enabled by the institutions formed to help African Americans have access to education. More than 30, 000 African Americans had had trained in this field in the south. As time passed by, the right to participate in national sports was granted. Jack Johnson won the World Heavy Weight Title, in 1908. Such activities only involved the whites. There was lots biasness in the selection activities dominating the field. Jack Johnson had brought a great opening to his compatriots. During the same year, the first African American college for women was formed (Henretta, Brody, Dumenil & Fernlund, 2008). Howard University gave women the right to pursue high education in light of the male dominated society. Educating African women was viewed as a way of enabling the race to fight for their general rights as time passed by. All the above status was enabled by the virtue of the 15th Amendment based on the fact that African Americans were also citizens of United States.

African Americans were granted the right to form their own league, in 1920. The Negro National League was among the leagues formed during this

period. The leagues were formed on the basis of participating in various sports. Baseball was among them. It was a way of enabling Africans to realize their talents. This would be used as a way of earning income. Various tournaments were being organized to help realize this objective.

Employment would be created under this aspect. In 1925, the Negro Labor Congress was instituted. The party recruited many interested parties. The sole purpose of the organization was to fight against the segregationists. Many practices that were associated with the labor unions were not favorable to African Americans during this time. The party enabled the Africans to acquire diversified rights in the unions.

## **Work Cited**

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