

# Living standard of slaves

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LIVING STANDARD OF SLAVES For a democratic society with its democratic form of government system it is but an obvious choice to opt for a society that is predominantly color blind. The basis norm of a democratic society is to provide its mass with a structural form that offers equality in terms of justice and social characteristic. It is an unwanted phenomenon but it is also extremely true at the same time that racism is a curse that exists among us whether we like it or not. It could be summarized that racism is the result of having negative judgments, beliefs, and feelings towards certain identifiable groups and this certainly reached its menacing abyss during the slave trade and operational slavery in the southern states of USA. The quality of life or living standards of slaves have been a matter of debate and conjecture since the abolitionist era. The focal point of this paper is to discuss the difficulties of measuring the living standards of slaves and explain the contribution that evidence on height or stature has made to the debate.

Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin is such a text that reveals the moral and corporal injury caused due to this racism and it depicts the living standard of slaves during this period. This text along with several other texts would be instrumental in ascertaining the nature of the debate. Stowe's text is multifold and the author juxtaposed various elements into the reading that cannot be ignored. It can well be stated that the book is based on three major matrixes. The first one is the evil of slavery where the black community is a harmless and helpless being in the hands of their master race subjected to occasional pity at times and at the most, the second one is the faith in god or Christianity and the third one is the extremely stereotyped representation of the black community. (Stowe, 37-8) But the problem is that every aspect is viewed from the parameters of the White man and the Black

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man is only the receiver, both in beating and mercy.

Thus it can well be stated that the discussion presented in the text viewed from the parameters of a white person so at least from literary work the evidence becomes inconclusive as much either glorified or subdued. From the point of view of early white writers there are only two alternatives of evaluating a black man. One is to show him pity and the other is to evaluate him as a trade commodity.

This hard pill of 'colonialism with brutality' needed some spooning with sweetness to become a favorable aromatic digestible element for the general people of the imperial states. As a result this phrase 'white man's burden' came into existence as a remedy to the enlightens of the industrial revolution and people were ready to buy this theory as this theory easily softened the guilt feeling of the educated class and apparently justified the brutal acts and decisions taken to control and cover the colonial agitations. Texts like Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin follow the same principal but in a more compassionate manner but ignoring the essence of the rights of a human completely. Even the black writers and former slaves like Abdulrahman Ibrahim Ibn Sori in Prince Among Slaves substantially sweetened their experience while writing and thus it becomes more difficult to ascertain the actual living conditions of the slaves. (Alford, 178)

There is no debate that the conditions of the slaves were extremely bad but to evaluate the degree it is needed to continue further research on the subject. It is necessary to examine more evidences and there is a huge potential that should be analyzed in future by researchers.

References:

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