

Slavery and racism in america through time

Countries



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SLAVERY & RACISM IN AMERICA THROUGH TIME Slavery & Racism In America Through Time AMENDMENT I - to the Bill of Rights, the right to be able to make your own choices about your life... In so many words that is true. The first amendment speaks of freedom of speech, freedom of religion and freedom of petition, but who did this pertain to? Not everyone was privileged to these rights, which is sad when in today's society; we have so much to be thankful for. Our rights are being guarded, fought for by thousands of men and women in the Armed Forces day and night, and have been for years, but since 1865, the fight for equality did not exist.

So today there is a spirit that America has, called Patriotism, which means something different now than it did before 1865. Today we have comfort and a reason to live here; a purpose. Coming into this world as a black, white, brown, green, or orange person, we all have a choice as to who we want to become, and how we want to call the shots, if we want to be lawyers, police officers, judges, waitresses, or run for the president of the United States. Did it ever occur to you, that before you and I and our grandparents were born, not any of this was an option?

People had children for one reason; whites had children to raise and become the owners of their plantations depending on the sex of the child. If you were an African American slave, you were born an African American slave. No choices! We all have choices now. The mess it took to get America to where we are today is an amazing adventure that is going to be and adventure to write about. Before there construction in 1865, African Americans were treated in ways depending on their masters.

The authority the masters had over their slaves, made it easy for them to take advantage of the situation by beating them and being torn up by dogs, which is what one slave said that lived to tell her story during an interview by Ila B. Prine in a Federal Writing Project in 1937. Charity Andersen lived in Mobile Alabama, and was said to be 101 years old. Most of the former slaves during this project were close to a century old if not older. They speak of broken English, but not of a language of a country, but of illiteracy. The slaves were not given education rights, for themselves or children. They were simply put on this earth to work for the white man. There were also the slaves who had a better way of life because their masters felt that mistreating their slaves would not make for a good investment for their future if needed to sell them later. The slaves would need to be healthy and hard working, well mannered, and trusted. To beat, and " feed them to the dogs", as Charity well stated, would not promote more work out of the slaves either. In these interviews the slaves spoke of freedom after the emancipation as if they had never left.

They were set free, but really, were they? They had choices to move on and make more of their lives, but most were oblivious to what was out there. They lived alone, never learned to read or write, but spoke of freedom as it being the best thing that ever happened. Would you agree? Abolishing slavery did not mean the white man accepted the black man into their world. This brought hatred, ugliness into society more than could be imagined. The anti-black riots began the summer of the Elections of 1866. Many were killed and injured.

Still, African Americans did not give up fighting for equal rights from the beginning of the reconstruction. The Fourteenth Amendment was ratified which allowed African American's that were born in America to be called U. S. citizens, but were limited to their constitutional rights. Although they kept getting beat down, they demanded the right to vote, and in 1870, finally, the fifteenth amendment was ratified and gave the right for black males to vote. (Davidson, 481) The fact that the black man was able to vote meant a lot, but what did that mean to to the rest of the African Americans?

To the women? Women were still not considered equal to man. It was not until 50 years later until the nineteenth amendment granted women the right to vote. There were a lot of corks and screws loose in the consitution, and with each state having the ability to change within it's own, made it difficult to play the equality game. No matter where you went Democratic parties were trying to wean out the rights for the African Americans. " Separate but Equal" was the new Democratic running slogan. Today this means nothing. Then it meant seperating the blacks and the whites as long as theywere treated equal.

The fourteenth amendment was limited to protecting citizenscivil rightsby states not by individuals. Segregation was legalized in 1896, but for example, Mississippi's new state constitution required voters to pay a toll and required all voters to pass a literacy test. This eliminated a great majority of black voters. How is this not setting them up forfailure? Entrapment at its best! Then by1908, campaigns that put a to limit voting has one in every southern state. The " color blind" constitution was a part of African American progress

for the next 100 years, which will bring us past to our future amazing life as we are now!

Not only giving African American men the right to vote, but women, made a big impact on the political society. This legitimized women's participation in all area's of society. For example, African Americans were still getting denied services in certain states that was kept underground for a period of time. Reporter Peter Buxton, a PublicHealthInvestigator revealed that 399 African American men were infected with syphilis near Tuskegee, Alabama in 1932. They were being denied medical treatment so that effects of the disease could be studied. This subsequently ended in 1972.

In 1997 President Clinton apologized to some of the American people by stating the some of the studies were not covert, and not only on African Americans. Basically spreading the wealth among the whites, burn victims etc. The families that were there were still unaware of what experient they were getting into. (P*, 1994-1995) There was so much for the black man and woman to give up on. Since slavery the whit man has been trying to run the black man out of the country, out of the business world, out of the housing market, the crop market, the economy, away from voting; has that stopped him or her?

What is next? The Klu Klux Klan has got to be the most dredged alligence that lynched African Americans and they grew all over the United States after World War I. The KKK Lynched over 70 African Americans, leaving 11 burned alive. The mid 50's were times also when men were lynched for "imagined" crimes. Just for possible looking at someone. There is a story

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about a black man in North Carolina plowing a field. He was accused of looking at a white woman walking along side the field, when he was probably just looking at the cows butt. He was found guilty for “ leering” at her.

He was given a long prison sentence. The black men and women still stood for what they believed in. In 1955, Rosa Parks, well, she sat down for what she believed in. She was tired after a long day at work, and refused to give up her seat on a bus in Alabama, which disobeyed a law that required blacks to give up their seats to white people when buses were full. She was arrested, which caused a 381-day boycott, that resulted in the Supreme Court banning segregation on public transportation. Rosa Parks was a seamstress who helped spark the civil rights movement of the 1960's.

(America's Story)

No matter what, African Americans were pushing to be apart of American society, and EQUAL part of American society. Because we are all Americans. By the early 1960's, African Americans were moving to urban centers in the Northeast, the Midwest and the Far West of the United States. Then by the 1970's, the trend was known as the “ Sun Belt” phenomenon. (Davidson, 831) The cities were declining, the whites were moving out and the blacks, and hipics were moving in. There was so much in Americas society that the African American had to offer after we had moved in. In 1967, Thurgood Marshall was the first African American Supreme Court Justice.

He spent many years on the National Association for Colored People, and argued that segregated schools for children was against consittutional rights. The Supreme Court agreed. We still had our bad times, 1968, Springfield

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riots, Martin Luther King assassination, the democratic convention in Chicago, ect. , but will it ever end? We have so much still to fight for and so does the black man. We finally have our first African American President of the United States of America. Does it end here? No! It will not! Because Barak Obama will not. This paper stands behind every black man and woman and what they stand for.

They should never give up for what they believe in. Have faith in our country and where you stand. To come as far as slavery, to be born and know you will be 4 years old and peeling potatoes barefoot and picking corn in the fields without meals for hours, sleeping on hardwood floors and calling that normal, then calling freedom, sitting in your living room afraid to walk outside and cross the street because you can not read the street signs. Their freedom was never given in every sense it could have been like we have it.

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