

Oppression and slavery

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Oppression and Slavery

All the documents may be called bright, illustrative examples of the oppression of black people, revealing atrocities of the Antebellum South. First of all, both of them abound with the word ' Negro', which is known to be rude and impolite at the moment. It implies contempt towards a person it is referred to. Secondly, as it is encouraged in the documents, Afro-Americans are to be treated like children ' He the Negro is but a grown up child, and must be governed as a child... The master occupies toward him the place of parent or guardian' (Fishel et al, 1976, 1970). Mental abilities of slaves are thought to be unequal to those of their white masters. What is worse, methods of dealing with them could sometimes resemble animal training ' They are very grateful for good treatment, if proper discipline and authority is kept up over them' (The Farmers' Register, 1837). Cruel punishments were regarded one of the most effective methods to maintain obedience ' A powerful blacksmith named Hewes laid on the stripes. Fifty were given, during which the cries of my father might be heard a mile' (Henson, 1877). As it is stated in the documents, slaves should be properly clothed, fed, and housed. Thus, slaves were not considered to be human beings. These were working units which required proper treatment and usage. What is more, slave-trade used to be a common thing in the Antebellum South. It could be used as an instrument of discipline which enabled slaveholders to manipulate Afro-Americans. ' There was the fear that I might be sold from those who were dear to me', writes Lunsford Lane, a former slave (Lane, 1842).

The main principle of attitude towards Afro-Americans may be summarized within the next sentence ' the negro race is inferior to the white race' (Fishel <https://assignbuster.com/oppression-and-slavery/>

et al, 1976, 1970). What is more, the institution of slavery is posed as a remedy for black people. As stated by Fitzhugh, Christians are supposed to protect, support, and civilize black population. The author insists that to be a slave in the South is much better than to be a free laborer in the North. Finally, one of his statements seems to be a quintessence of cynicism and absurdity ' The negro slaves of the South are the happiest, and, in some sense, the freest people in the world'. These words illustrate how wild and inhuman customs of the southern slaveholders were.

Works Cited

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