

Free critical thinking about afro-american studies

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



Introduction

The era of 1940s and 1950s is marked by sheer resistance from the Black Americans for their equal rights. During the course of history, the Black Americans have faced open discrimination in political, social, and economic landscape of United States. The Black became part of the American society in a slavery role few centuries ago primarily from West Africa and Caribbean territory. While they were part of the new country, but they were never legal residents of the land. They were landless community, which got their first American dream fulfilled through the Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln. While they became the legal part of the land through the Emancipation Proclamation but they still faced immense discrimination and their position was like second-citizens. Major breakthroughs occurred in 1940s and 1950s that gave that brought the issue in mainstream, which resulted in the foundation of Civil Rights Act in the later decade. The foundation of African American Studies is based on the study of the non-violent struggle of the black community.

Political, Social, and Economic Conditions that led to the Birth of African American Studies

Historically, the Black Americans have faced immense discrimination in public and private space. Before the era of Abraham Lincoln, negation of political, social, and economic rights for Black was not even considered discriminatory. The Blacks were usually considered like a commodity that can be traded. Even the advocates of human rights at that time had a multitude of Black slaves with them. There were a number of small groups in

that era that worked for the social, political, and economic inclusion of the Black Africans. While the Emancipation Proclamation gave the Black a basic right of being considered equal human beings, but still they faced immense discrimination for more than hundred years after it.

The doctrine of “ Separate but Equal” that emerged from Plessy v. Ferguson was a major setback to the black community (Hall, 1996). This made the open discrimination of the black as part of the law. The basic idea behind this law was notion that all Americans are equal citizens but they are separate. This means there were separate facilities for Black and Whites, separate schools, separate working places, separate religious institutions, and a lot more. Since majority of the White Americans ruled the political and legal system, this was another blow to the black because the facilities for the black were somewhat like second-class citizens. The Black had the lowest educational outcome and less economic and social freedom.

The open the discrimination against the black community gave birth to organizations like Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League, Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, and the Nation of Islam. The major incident that united different Black organizations was the incident when a woman was jailed for not surrendering her seat in to white in a bus. This led to massive protests from the black and it resulted that resulted in the historic Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955. This was like a triumph for the black as they realized their power if they are united under one platform. The major breakthrough that inspired the Afro-American study was the Brown v. Board of Education Case, where the judge pronounced the

Doctrine of Equal but Separate as unconstitutional in 1954. The acts of non-violent resistance became the foundation of the African American Studies.

References

Hall, Perry. (1996). Introducing African American Studies: Systematic and Thematic Principles. *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 26(6), pp. 713-734