

Evaluating the plot in the book the white man's burden by d jordan

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



THE WHITE MANS BURDEN

The origins of slavery can be said to have come from economic need, however according to Winthrop D. Jordans *The White Mans Burden*, this only constituted for part of the reason. Slavery began solely as an economic necessity in British America in the 1600 and 1700s. Over time however, the reason for human oppression became hatred toward men of different beliefs, appearance and practices.

In Jordans book, he explains Europeans first encounters with the Africans. They were described at first with words associated with black. Dirty, soiled, foul and with malignant purposes. The man of Africa was seen as very peculiar to the white man and due to the mindset of the time, they were seen as dark or evil, simply because the color of their skin. At first, the difference was seen as just that, a difference. However, as Jordan explains, this changes over time. As more and more encounters with the Africans occurred, the English began to view the Black men with hatred. Their apelike appearance and savage behavior seemed to convince the British that the Africans were more like animals than humans, like animals, some Europeans felt that the Africans should be captured and exploited. The enslavement of the Negroes in the West Indies was the reason slavery was brought into New England.

The need for slavery in British America was due in part, to economic survival the labor shortage in the colonies, many different people. Because of the economic need for work in British America, many peoples were utilized. The

tobacco problem that occurred during the 1600s brought Indians and Whites to be used as servants. From at least the 1530s the countryside swarmed with vagrants, sturdy beggars, rogues, and vagabonds, with men who could but would not work. (Pg. 30) Many people were readily accessible farm work, however the indentured servitude idea was not working out as the colonists wished it to. Revolts and chaos had broken out many times in the colonies because of this, and the settlers needed a new means of labor. Sights were soon set on the Black men of Africa. They were sturdy, strong, and most of all expendable. Slavery, in the beginning, was not intended to be the cruel institution it would later become. It began with the use of Negroes as workers, not without rules naturally, but of course less stringent expectations of life and liberty. This initial situation did not last long however. Later on in the 1600s the Slave Codes came about. These set of rules labeled Black slavery as inheritable and life-long. Because of the prior threat of rebellion, even the poorest of whites were not used for slavery. The codes made the Africans more like property and the whites more like owners. These codes were mainly constructed to ensure that the whites kept a closer eye on the slaves. They wanted to make absolutely sure that the slaves did not revolt like the indentured servants did. By the early 1700s America was firmly set in place and slaves were defined as property and part of an extraordinarily oppressive system. Slaves were the best economic answer to a problem presented by the lack of hard working individuals that did not have a firm knowledge of farming.

Although the initial need for slavery was due to economic reasons, the harsh conditions forced on the Africans in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were not however. The Great Chain of Being was one of the many reasons that show the utilization of Black slaves was not exclusively for economic reasons. On the same note, it was perceived throughout the colonies that the African males had a certain sexual difference that made the Anglo men feel inferior Africans, would demean the White men and present a huge problem in their need for control. The fact that some would castrate male slaves as a means of punishment gave the whites over nearly every aspect of the lives of the Blacks. They were treated like livestock and stripped of any dignity or any manhood that may have been translated into authority over the White men. This act gave the colonist complete control over every action, desire or fulfillment of human desire that the slaves may have had left. The slaves were not castrated because it would make them work better and help ensure economic success, but were castrated in order to make them the most humanlike animal. Also, the spread of Christianity was not shown to the Africans. The colonists simply refused to do so, not because the Africans would harvest more tobacco, or work more productively, but to once again strip their humanity and, not give them a reason to become more human. The spread of Christianity in the Black community would defeat the purpose of enslaving them. The Africans would, when presented with religion, would be seen as equal to the White men.

Economically, the need for slavery was present in the early colonization of America. Tobacco farming was a very stringent, labor-intensive business and

the need for high numbers of workers presented itself early in Americas history. However, the oppression of the Negro slaves in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was due to the lack of the White mens acceptance of Africans. Their many differences seemed to convince the colonists of the lack of humanity in the slaves. In conclusion, the need for slavery in the early British-American colonies and the oppression of the Black people was not solely an economic outcome, yet there would not be one without the other