

Narrative of the life of frederick douglass, an american slave

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Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave

Fredrick Douglas was an American slave just as the title of the book indicates and he lived in Maryland (different parts of it though most of his slave life he spent in Baltimore). He was born as a slave and lived most of his adolescent years and part of young adulthood as a slave undergoing the sufferings that the slaves did undergo under their masters. Later on however, he was able to leave the life of slavery, marry and even start his own business as a free man. After obtaining his emancipation, he started campaigning for the end of slavery and abolition of slavery through different abolition movements. The book is a detailed account of his life as a slave until he was emancipated. As with every other race story and accounts in the different literature books such as Handlin's or even Daniel's, the minority race (in this case the blacks) were always on the receiving end of every evil their white masters and even the rest of the white people subjected them to. Fredrick's case is not different, in chapter 10 when he was working in Mr. Covey's plantation, he was constantly thoroughly whipped and mercilessly for that matter until he ran away because he thought he was going to die after collapsing one day from the beating (Douglass 77). He is also abused by other white men when he goes to work in the shipyard and he has to leave there too. This is an indication of how one race considered them so superior over the other that even people on the same job category still treated the blacks as slaves and with disdain. The worst part is that even with evidence of physical abuse, the police and lawyers cannot come to the rescue of the blacks simply because even the system is wretched and corrupt with racism.

Fredrick may have managed to get slavery abolished but that does not mean

that other forms of modern day slavery do not exist. Issues such as racism as explained by Fredrick are still in existence even to date with some white still feeling superior to the blacks and even people of law (such as police, lawyers, advocates and some judges) still separates these two races to date. Even though the slavery may not be as intense as it used to be when Fredrick was growing up where even the food provided by the master was little and children were separated from their parents at a very tender age so that they cannot know love (Douglass 20), there is still the lack of complete freedom for the immigrants and people of minority race and ethnicity not only in the United States but in other nations of the world as well.

The planning of escape from slavery by Fredrick and his determination at becoming his own successful and free man should act as an encouragement to all people who want to be emancipated in one way or another. This is so especially for the immigrants and other minority groups whose freedom is still being held by other superior groups. The other lesson we learn from Fredrick's narrative is that freedom is not acquired on a silver platter but the fruits of freedom are sweet all the way as is evidenced on the last chapter of the book (Douglass 117).

Work Cited

Douglass, Fredrick. Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass, an American slave. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1851.