

African tribes in the new world



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Although their home was once called the “ Dark Continent” by European explorers who cautiously inspected the beautiful land, Africa was actually not as dark and scary as what it seemed to the strangers. While the Europeans viewed Africans as a savage people, they did not understand the unique and exotic things that the rest of the world would receive from this “ Dark Continent” (<http://www.mrdowling.com>).

Most of America’s African-American race can be traced back to a part of Africa called Western Sudan. The area of Western Sudan is equal in size to that of the United States, not including Alaska and Hawaii. Western Sudan was controlled by three very strong and prosperous empires; Ghana, Mali, and Songhai. The empires thrived mostly on trading with Arabs from northern Africa, mining gold and also farming.

The slave trade was also a large industry in Africa. Most of the unfortunate people who were sold as slaves had been abducted in warfare. It wasn’t until the early 1500’s that the European nations began the slave trade as well.

African’s from western Africa were hauled to the European colonies in America (<http://www.worldbook.com>). For over 300 years, millions of enslaved African’s were shipped like cargo across the Atlantic to the new world of America.

America for the African’s was not particularly the “ land of opportunity” that most Europeans considered it to be. It was a place where they were treated as objects instead of people.

The black’s were put on auction boxes and were auctioned off like animals – husbands were separated from wives and children from their families. They

were inspected from head to toe as a horse up for sale might be. Their hair was examined for lice, their teeth and gums for disease, and age was also a factor.

The younger, strapping, African boys were desirable, and women were chosen for reproduction for more hard workers on the plantations and to work for the mistress in the house.

The African slave trade went on from the 1500's until the 1800's. Although nobody knows an exact number of slaves that were brought from Africa and sold, the estimated number is about 10 million. With living conditions for the slaves being so poor, different strong opinions were developed. The south was pro-slavery, the north, was not.

The south believed that they needed their slaves for their plantations and did not want to pay the slaves as hired help. Thus, the Civil War took place, resulting in the freedom of all slaves. President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation that all men are created equal and should have the same rights as each other.

Although the mistreatment of the African-American's did not stop there, the freedom was a large step for the people to begin to enjoy the new world. It took brave people like Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King to pave the road to true equality.

African-American's brought many wonderful things to America such as the first striking clock, peanuts, open heart surgery, blood banks, soap, dry-cleaning and automatic refrigerators, just to name a few of the things that we could not live without, now.

Though their journey was long and haggard, their contribution to America is now recognized in a month dedicated to their valuable contributions, “ Black History Month.”