

# Slavery north vs south



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Slavery has long been a topic of discussion among Americans. The South has notoriously been a supporter of slavery, while the North stands in opposition of the topic. The South used slaves in the 1800's to be more efficient with their farming duties. This allowed the farming industry to prosper and the white men, who owned the slaves, to reap the most economic benefit.

Governor James Henry Hammond of South Carolina was an avid supporter of slavery. He believed cotton was king, that farming cotton would lead to very prosperous men. Governor Hammond did not see the down side to slavery. He once stated “ I strongly believe that American slavery is not only NOT a sin, but ... commanded by God...” This quote shows no remorse. Slave owners and elders in the community did not feel sorrow for the way the slaves were treated. Governor Hammond also compared slaves in the South to the said poorly compensated, skilled, workers in the North. Governor James Henry Hammond did not show any repentance of the way slaves in his community were treated, not the lack of education provided for them. It was like this across the South in the 1800's.

Chancellor William Joseph Harper of Missouri had a slightly different story; however was still an enormous supporter of slaves. Chancellor Harper did acknowledge that slavery was not completely moral, but only would admit a slight immorality to the idea. He saw some evil in slavery, but believed that it was necessary evil for the good of the community. When Chancellor Harper looked at the situation of slavery, he saw that the benefits slavery provided for the community, and for slave holders, out weighted the evil in the treatment of slaves and lack of education provided to them.

Professor Thomas Roderick Dew was also an enthusiastic supporter of not only slavery, but also the mistreatment of slaves. Professor Dew supported the idea of white, male, slave holders beating their slaves if they did not do what asked. Dr. William Gilmore Simms also supported slavery. He wrote a famous book titled “ The Sword and the Distaff”. This book was a pro slavery response to the book “ Uncle Tom’s Cabin”.

There are many supporters of slavery, but there are also an abundance of people who do oppose it, too. One of the reasons for such opposition to slavery is the treatment of slaves. While laws did allow for punishment of a man who murdered a slave, there was a very peculiar clause to this law. It stated “ Except when said slave died of moderate punishment.” This is a very controversial clause. If the said slave perished because of moderate punishment, was it really very moderate? Many of those who oppose slavery believe that if the slave died due to the punishment, then it is not possible for the punishment to have been moderate.

Not only are the severe beatings and brutal reprimands concerning to the North, but they are also troubled by the slaves’ lack of learning and schooling and lack of payment for their work. It distressed those opposing slavery that such an extraordinary percentage of the working population in America was not even being compensated for their hard work and manual labor. It was also very concerning to the North that slaves were not taught whatsoever. They were not taught to read or write. Most troubling, was that in the South, you would be fined if you were found to be teaching a slave to read or write; And even more severely penalized if you were to sell a book to

a slave. Northerners believed that everyone should have the opportunity for schooling, that no one should be denied the right to education.

The North was very hopeful about the ending of slavery. Many who so avidly opposed the thought of slavery held the belief that all prejudices can be overcome. They believed that not only should the slaves be prayed for, but the masters should be too. The masters would need to be prayed for in order to overcome their sins. Northerners did not believe that southern white men who owned slaves were bad people. They believed that the slavery system turned these men into wicked beasts who only cared about money, that it was not their fault and that is why they needed prayers.

While the North and the South both had very distinct views on slavery, the slaves themselves held their own views on the situation they were placed in. Recounting circumstances, in which whippings were witnessed, seemed painful. Being whipped for not working because the slave was sick was one of the many horrid occasions of said whippings. It was also recalled they slaves were only allowed to eat twice per day. Conditions were not favorable for slaves.

The slaves remembered how the wives of the owners loved to watch the slaves get whipped, it delighted them. They also recounted having to work even when the weather was not favorable. One slave was out in the field working during a lightning storm. He was struck dead by the lightning. Slaves also recall slave-owners teaching their young boys the “right” way to punish a slave. A slave out past curfew (typically 9: 00 pm) was subject to

thirty nine lashes of a whip if they were caught. Slaves had almost impossible quotas to meet, and were whipped if they did not meet them.

Slaves did engage in relationships with one another. They did partake in marriage, however there was no ceremony. The slaves were not allowed to have marriage ceremonies. No man can be prevented from seeing his wife; however, slaves received many lashings for attempting to. Marriage enraged the slave owner because that means that the slave's children would not belong to the slave owner.

Many men and women were slaves in America in the 1800's. One may hold belief that there were more male slaves than female. However the 1850 census shows differently.

## **State**

### **TOTAL**

### **MALE SLAVES 1850**

### **TOTAL**

### **FEMALE SLAVES 1850**

ALABAMA

171, 804

171, 040

ARKANSAS

23, 658

23, 442

DELAWARE

1, 174

1, 116

FLORIDA

19, 804

19, 506

GEORGIA

188, 857

192, 825

KENTUCKY

105, 063

105, 918

LOUISIANA

125, 874

118, 935

MARYLAND

45, 944

44, 424

MISSISSIPPI

154, 674

154, 626

MISSOURI

43, 484

43, 938

NEW JERSEY

96

140

NORTH CAROLINA

144, 581

143, 967

SOUTH CAROLINA

187, 756

197, 228

## TENNESSEE

118, 780

120, 679

## TEXAS

28, 700

29, 461

## VIRGINIA

240, 562

231, 966

In 1850, the number of male and female slaves only differed by 800 slaves. When taking into account that there were over 3 million slaves in America in the 1850's, a difference of 800 is not a significant difference. There were 1, 600, 811 male slaves, and 1, 599, 211 female slaves. Virginia was home to the greatest number of both male and female slaves in the 1850's. Georgia had the second most male slaves, while South Carolina had the second most female slaves.

The top map shows the number of female slaves in America in the 1850's. The darker shades have the most female slaves. As the number of female slaves lowers, the shade of green gets lighter. The bottom map shows the number of male slaves in America in the 1850's with the same color/number of slaves concept.

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