

Example of paper option 2 research paper

[Philosophy](#), [Freedom](#)



The word “ slavery” evokes many emotions: shame, anger, empathy, and pride. We have come a long way from slavery; imagine what slaves would think if they found out that America is ruled by a Negro president. They would produce a new Negro spiritual song that no one has ever heard. In that song they would sing about the cruelty, they endured and at the end of the song they would sing with great gusto, Free at last! Free at last!

Slaves faced unusual hunger every day of their lives. They were underfed, and even if they were given adequate food while they were at work, they did not have enough time to eat. Slaves were given a monthly allowance of food which consisted of “ eight pounds of pork or its equivalent in fish, and one bushel of corn meal” (Douglass 1845). It is understandable why the slaves were always hunger. This is not enough food to feed a toddler, maybe the corn would be enough. The slaves would supplement this with whatever wild animal they could find or from their gardens which some of them cultivated during their one free day. Constant hunger was synonymous to slaves.

As far as their masters were concerned, slaves were animals. They barely provided them with clothes or shelter; maybe, the animals fared better. “ The diets of enslaved people were inadequate or barely adequate to meet the demands of their heavy workload. They lived in crude quarters that left them vulnerable to bad weather and disease. Their clothing and bedding were minimal as well” (web n. d.). The slaves were treated so poorly, thinking that the slave owners felt more affinity for their animals more than they is a fair conclusion. “ Their yearly clothing consisted of two coarse linen shirts one pair of linen trousers, like the shirts, one jacket, one pair of

trousers for winter, made of coarse negro cloth, one pair of stockings, and one pair of shoes” (Douglass 1845).

Their shelter was marginal and they slept on on the cold clay earth summer or winter. . Naturally, the domestic slaves were better off than the field slaves at least they were able to get the cast off clothe from their masters’ and mistresses’. Obviously, they had better lodging too since they had to be nearby any time of the day or night awaiting their master’s or mistress’s summons. The fact that they might need sleep, never occur to their masters; they were animals and they were their master’s property. Since the slaves were mere property, separating them was easy. The slaves live in fear of being sold. The family was not recognized; occasionally slaves were privileged to stay with their immediate family, but extended family, almost never. Every experience of the slave was a method to dehumanize them

Worse than whipping, was the maltreatment of the slaves’ health. No one cared that their clothing was inadequate for both summer and winter and this made them susceptible to disease. They had to encounter unsanitary conditions, and they were hardly treated when they were sick; as long as they could move they would work even if they were ill. The rice plantations were entrapments for malaria; daily the slaves would work in stagnated water in the extreme heat. Slaves were not worth much and being ill was not an issue as long as they could work

The atrocious conduct of their masters made freedom the dream of every slave. They were also aware that slaves in the north were freed and even though they were fed the propaganda that the slaves in the north were

destitute, they reasoned that nothing can be worse than what they are experiencing. To express the dissatisfaction of their plight, slaves began to steal property, work slowly, sabotaged their master, killing masters and overseers, burning plantations and buildings, running away, and revolt. Sometimes some of these tactics would fail and if the responsible slaves were caught they would be treated worse than ever. Not only were the slaves punished, but anyone who is found helping them.

Whether or not those helping the slaves were free Negroes or whites they were measured out the same punishment. Unfortunately the same circumstances that the slaves tried to use to awaken their masters to the fact they need freedom as others, were the very reasons why their masters applied excessive punishment to them when they are recaptured. Was it not for the abolitionists who pled the slaves' cause in every possible way including public meeting and distribution of pamphlets, slaves would probably still be resisting their oppression on the plantations of the south. Most slaves, like Fredrick Douglass, were willing to gain freedom at any cost.

The antebellum South brought new and welcoming period for the slaves. Their handling much better, a great contrast to the brutality they were accustomed in Douglass's era. The slave masters wanted to hold on to the southern aristocratic life they have enjoyed and since no more slaves were coming from Africa, they wanted to hold on the slaves they have. The south consisted of plantations whose masters were made rich by over-worked slaves. Practicing their religion was one of the benefits slaves of the antebellum era enjoyed. A culture they did not lose, only they were too tired

to practice it often. “ Though uprooted from their African culture, slaves managed to retain much of their native religion by incorporating it with Christianity—particularly evangelicism [sic]” (web n. d.). The master hoped that happy slaves would remain in their service.

Living conditions for slaves were dilapidated and were not fit for habitation. However, the antebellum slaves experienced much better living conditions. They could fix up their living quarters and their house became homes, they were gaining some dignity. The slaves were able to farm patches of ground for themselves. Of course, this gave the slaves some independence and they were not always hungry. These slaves were allowed a certain amount of freedom and they they were not as over-worked as before the antebellum era. There were times when the slaves were given workloads for the day, and if they finished it the rest of the day was theirs. Also depends on how much work they accomplished in any given day, they would get a day off the next day. Life in the antebellum south was good for both the slaves and the masters.

Separation was an every day occurrence and most dreaded by the slaves before the entrance of the antebellum South. With new homes and more food the slaves were experiencing a sense of stability. Their chances of being sold was unlikely; they could have families and enjoy them. The threat of separation was about over. Gone were the days when the masters bought slave women to satisfy their own sexual desire. Men were almost equal to women on plantations now; the family institution was encouraged; one to make the slaves happy, and two to produce new workers for the plantations.

This was a good time for slaves, they would not be separated and they could remain with their family.

Southerners and northerner were at war the northerners did not want the south to keep slaves. Northerner including religious groups were fighting very hard to abolish slavery in all of the United States. Southerners wanted to continue the life that keeping slaves have afforded them. They were also disgruntled about the tax that was levied on them. They clearly thought that it was unfair. Southerners believed that they should set their own taxes; it seemed that no side was going to relent. Charleston Mercury has this to say about the tax law: “ To plunder the South for the benefit of the North, by a new Protective Tariff, will be one of their first measures of Northern sectional domination; and, on the other hand, to exhaust the treasury by sectional schemes of appropriation, will be a congenial policy” (1860) .

Taxes, abolition, and wealth are strong words especially when two stubborn sides refuse to yield. “ The issues that caused the Civil War had been brewing since the United States was formed. The most important cause Southerners listed for the war were unfair taxation, states' rights, and the slavery issue. ” (web n. d).

I have never really paid attention to the civil war it was just an event of no interest to me now I understand that despite, the fact that the slaves had no part of the civil war, they are partially blamed for it. Depends on how one looks at the war the slaves are indirectly responsible. It was the debate over their freedom that caused the argument between the north and south.

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Of course it is understandable that the southerners will blame the slaves exclusively for the civil war. They did not really think slaves were people and they could not understand the fuss about them. Left to the southerners slavery would still be legal. One cannot live in North America or anywhere in the West Indies and claim that he or she has never heard about or have knowledge of slavery. Understandable, the slaves wanted their freedom, so would you or I if we were in their places. The tactics of the slaves as studied in this course is not new to me; therefore, reviewing it again in this course has not altered my conception of the slaves in any way. I have learned more but not enough to change my mind. This is not the first time I have uncouncted Fredrick Douglass, and after reading it the first time, there is not anything else about slaver than can make me shiver on a hot day. Yes, it might rekindle my anger but as far as understanding the slaves I have truly appreciated the dilemma of the slaves a long time ago.

The word “ slavery” still stirs up emotions, especially if one is an African American. There is no denying the fact that slavery effected both the slaves and their masters. The slaves were stripped of everything that made them human; and the masters became brutes subjecting them to their wills.

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