

Evolution of Anti-Slavery Sentiments From 1776 to 1865 & a Critique of Reparations

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Slavery existed in pre-modern societies throughout the world. While enslaving other peoples in most civilizations was legal, only Western civilization developed a moral revulsion against it. Therefore, the United States dialogue about slavery and reparations should focus on recognizing the 4000 years of slavery that ended through the efforts of abolitionists and their allies. The American abolitionist movement was fueled by a diverse group of individuals, including Quaker abolitionists, women's rights activists, and influential figures like Olaudah Equiano, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, and Martin Delany. The moral and political philosophies of Kant, Mill, Nietzsche, and Hegel also influenced the abolitionist movement with ideas about the inherent worth and dignity of human beings, individual liberty, and freedom, shaping the abolitionist movement's vision of a future without slavery. This led to a Civil War which was the catalyst for ratifying a U.S. Constitutional Amendment in 1865 that eliminated slavery nationwide. In 2019, discussions resurfaced about reparations for slavery, raising questions about justice, individual responsibility, and the potential impact on social cohesion.

Keywords: slavery, emancipation, abolitionists, reparations, human rights, propaganda, 1619 Project

INTRODUCTION

During his appearance at Cornell College in October 1962, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "They fear each other because they don't know each other, and they don't know each other because they don't communicate with each other, and they don't communicate with each other because they are separated from each other." Hence, this paper is intended to correct misconceptions of and shed light on a topic that many are afraid to address due to widespread propaganda and the persistent threat of cancel culture.

Slavery is an ancient practice that dates to many ancient civilizations; and it was found in pre-modern societies across the world, from Africa to Asia and the Americas. Except for the following seven states, slavery existed throughout the world: Iceland outlawed slavery in 1117. The Venetian Republic passed laws against the sale of its citizens as slaves in the 1200s and 1300s, but not for non-citizens. Bohemia was protected against slavery by Emperor Charles IV's Golden Bull of 1356. Poland passed laws against enslaving Christians in the 15th century. Genoa abolished the trade of Christian slaves in 1548. Slavery was outlawed in England after the verdict in *Somerset vs. Stewart* (1772), but it was not completely abolished until the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833. And although Scotland never legalized slavery, it was also outlawed in 1833 (Davidson, 2019).

It was legal to enslave other people throughout the world because the victorious Emperors, Kings, and Monarchs decreed all laws; and after wars, the victors wrote the history as well. Slavery was common to

all civilizations, as well as to peoples considered uncivilized, yet only one civilization developed a moral revulsion against it – the Western civilization (Sowell, 2005). So, the dialogue in the United States about slavery, as well as reparations, should not narrowly focus on a false supposition of 400 years of slavery in the New World (1619 – 2019) – but must recognize 4,000 to 5,000 years of human slavery that ended largely through the efforts of Christian abolitionists in Great Britain, France, and the United States (Eltis, et.al., 2011).

As per the Hammurabi Code of 1754 BCE, the oldest known slave society was the Mesopotamian and Sumerian civilizations in the Iran/Iraq region between 6000-2000 BC. (THP, 2023). The earliest recorded slave uprising occurred in ancient Samaria (southern Iraq) estimated to be from 2400 BCE. Known as the Revolt of the Zaghawa, a group of enslaved people rebelled against their Sumerian overlords. While the details of the revolt are not well documented, it is known that the rebellion was ultimately unsuccessful, and the Zaghawa were brutally suppressed by the Sumerian military (Heuman, 2013). As the following paragraphs show there was slavery in all four corners of the world, while noting that these examples are not all-inclusive.

Europe

The Roman Empire enslaved Jews following the Roman conquest of Judea in 63 BCE, which spelled the end of Jewish independence. The Jewish Wars of 66-73 CE and 132-136 CE resulted in further Jewish enslavement. In 70 AD during the Siege of Jerusalem, Romans breached the city's walls, burned the Second Temple, and destroyed much of the city as predicted by Jesus in Mathew 24:1. Jews were either killed or taken as slaves, and the remaining population was dispersed throughout the Roman Empire in what became known as the beginning of the Jewish Diaspora. The Roman general Titus reportedly enslaved and sold thousands of Jews into slavery, and during the Bar Kokhba revolt, many more were enslaved and dispersed throughout the Roman Empire (Goldenberg, 2003).

Asia

The Mongol Empire emerged from the unification of several nomadic tribes in the Mongol homeland under the leadership of Temüjin (a.k.a. Genghis Khan). During Mongol conquests in the 13th and 14th centuries, the Mongol Empire enslaved large numbers of people, from the Sea of Japan to Eastern Europe and portions of India. Captives were taken as spoils of war, and many were sold as slaves (Weatherford, 2004). By 1800 AD, the world's slave population reached about 45 million and in terms of absolute numbers were most numerous in China and India (Eltis & Engerman, 2011, p. 487).

North & South America

The Inca Empire would enslave people from conquered territories. The Incas preferred to extract tribute and require labor from their subjects, however, there were some situations where the Incas would use forced labor, including the construction of public works and military campaigns (Salomon, 1991). There is evidence that the Mayan civilization had a system of slavery; captives of war were enslaved and used for labor in the fields or in households (López Austin, et.al, 1997; Sowell, 2005). Aztecs also enslaved people from conquered territories and/or captured in war, and slaves were used for various purposes such as domestic work, agricultural labor, and human sacrifice. Some slaves were used as sacrifices to the Aztec gods, while others were sold in markets or traded for goods (Smith, 2003). Sacrifices were carried out on a large scale with thousands of victims often sacrificed in a single ceremony. The Aztecs believed that the sun required human blood to rise each day and that sacrificing many people could ensure the sun's continued ascent (Furst, 1980). The importation of enslaved Africans into Mexico began in the early 16th century, shortly after the Spanish conquest of the Aztec Empire in 1521. The Portuguese colonization of Brazil officially started in 1500 when Pedro Álvares Cabral arrived in the region, and slavery continued throughout the colonial period until it capitulated to British demands to end its slave trade after being publicly humiliated by British warships (Sowell, 2005).

Africa

Most of the African kingdoms practiced slavery – it was a common feature of many pre-colonial African societies and was typically used as a means of social, economic, and political control. The Kingdom of Benin, which was one of the largest and most powerful states in West Africa from the 15th to the 19th century, practiced slavery as a means of punishing criminals and debtors, and as a way of acquiring labor for farming and other activities (Egharevba, 2016). Similarly, the Kingdom of Dahomey, which was in what is now modern-day Benin, was known for its slave trade, and it is estimated that as many as 1.5 million people were sold into slavery by the kingdom between the 17th and 19th centuries (Bosman, 2003). The economy of the Ashanti Empire was mainly based on the trade of gold, slaves, and agriculture, as well as craft work, often with markets further north (Arhin, 1990). Notable African kingdoms that practiced mass enslavement include the Sokoto Caliphate, the Kingdom of Kongo, the Songhai Empire, and the Mali Empire (and subsequently the Fula, Mandé, and Tuareg communities) (Gomez, 2019).

The Middle East

Slavery was present in pre-Islamic Arabia and continued to exist before, during, and after the time of the Prophet Muhammad; and like many individuals of his time, he owned slaves (Ibn Ishaq, 2003). So, slavery continued as a common practice during the time of the Islamic Caliphates, 632 to 1924 CE. Per Islamic history, slavery was a complex and multifaceted institution, with slaves serving in a wide range of roles in society, including domestic servants, agricultural laborers, soldiers, and administrators. Many slaves were prisoners of war who were captured during raids and expeditions, while others were purchased or inherited. Castration of male slaves was practiced in many Islamic societies to serve as eunuchs in the households of wealthy individuals or to work in certain professions such as guarding a harem or working in court (Smith, 2021). Castration is one reason that there are no large Black populations in former Caliphates, as compared to the New World. As abolition grew in the West, abolition attempts provoked armed uprisings within the Ottoman Empire (Sowell, 2005, p. 132).

Worldwide

Empires and Kingdoms throughout the world had slaves from approximately 4000 BC until the mid-1900s CE. Slavery was not unique to the European colonies, but the anti-slavery abolitionist movement was unique to the West! The abolitionist movement was a broad and diverse social and political movement that aimed to end slavery in the Western world, including the United States, Europe, and any colonies. The movement coincided with the growth of democracy and capitalism; as it began to gain momentum in the late 18th century and continued throughout the 19th century, culminating in the abolition of slavery in Europe and European colonies during the 19th and early 20th centuries, including the United States in 1807, with full abolition in 1865 (Smith, 2022).

To understand the complexities of slavery and its impact on United States society, it is essential to delve into the historical context of slavery, the conditions endured by enslaved individuals, and the abolition movement. Hence, the following literature review provides an overview of the philosophical underpinnings of the abolitionist movement in the United States in four parts (1) the early abolitionist sentiment, (2) women and abolition, (3) slave narratives, and (4) Western philosophical contributions. This research concludes with a critique of the 1619 Project and its call for reparations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Part 1: Early Abolitionist Sentiments

Anthony Benezet was a Society of Friends (a.k.a. Quaker) teacher and abolitionist who founded the first antislavery society in the United States in 1775. He wrote and published extensively on the issue of slavery, including the influential book *Some Historical Account of Guinea*, published in 1774. Benezet's (1774) argument against slavery was based on both moral and practical considerations. He argued that slavery was morally wrong because it violated the fundamental principles of Christianity, including the idea that all humans were created equal in the eyes of God. He also argued that slavery was economically

inefficient, as it prevented enslaved people from contributing fully to the economy and society. His goal was to raise awareness of the horrors of slavery and to encourage people to take action to end it.

John Woolman was a Society of Friends minister and writer who argued against slavery in his essay *Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes*. Woolman (1774) believed that slavery was fundamentally incompatible with the Quaker values of equality, compassion, and justice. He argued that slaves were human beings with souls and dignity and that it was wrong to treat them as mere property. Woolman believed that slave owners had a moral duty to treat their slaves with kindness and respect and to provide them with education and religious instruction. He also argued that the slave trade was a corrupt and inhumane business that exploited vulnerable people for profit. Overall, Woolman believed that slavery was a moral wrong that should be abolished, and he worked tirelessly throughout his life to promote abolitionist ideals and practices.

William Lloyd Garrison is remembered for *The Liberator*, which was a newspaper founded in 1831. Garrison used *The Liberator* to advocate for the immediate abolition of slavery, and he was known for his fiery and uncompromising rhetoric. Although not a Quaker himself, Garrison was heavily influenced by Quaker ideals and worked closely with Quaker abolitionists such as Lucretia Mott and John Greenleaf Whittier. Garrison was the founder of the American Anti-Slavery Society; he argued that slavery was a moral evil that needed to be eradicated from American society, and he was willing to take extreme positions to achieve that goal. Garrison's newspaper helped to galvanize the abolitionist movement and to bring the issue of slavery to the forefront of American politics (Phipps, 2023).

Levi Coffin (1798-1877) was a Quaker businessman and abolitionist who played a significant role in the Underground Railroad, a network of secret routes and safe houses used by slaves in the United States to escape to freedom in the North and Canada. Over the years, Coffin and his wife helped more than 3,000 slaves escape to freedom, so he is often referred to as the "President of the Underground Railroad" for his prominent role in aiding escaped slaves. Coffin's home in Newport, Indiana became a station on the Underground Railroad, and he and his wife provided food, clothing, shelter, and transportation to escaped slaves on their journey to freedom (Coffin, 1876).

The drive toward immediate emancipation by the abolitionists of the 18th and 19th centuries, especially during the 1820s and 1830s, owes much to evangelical Protestant fervor (Mackaman, 2019); Quakers, Moravians, and Pietists all spoke against slavery and the slave trade (Strachan, 2021). The first significant artifact was the *Germantown Quaker Petition Against Slavery* of 1688, which was the first religious petition against African slavery in what became the United States. All these abolitionists believed that slavery was morally wrong and incompatible with their values of equality, justice, and compassion. They believed in the fundamental idea that all human beings are created equal and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect; they recognized the economic inefficiencies and inhumane treatment of individuals that slavery caused.

White Christians used their voices, writings, and actions to advocate for the abolition of slavery: prominent evangelical figures, such as William Wilberforce in Britain and Presbyterian Minister Charles G. Finney in the United States, were leading voices in the abolitionist movement. They raised awareness about the horrors of slavery and encouraged people to take action to end it; they worked tirelessly to promote abolitionist ideals and practices. At times, the underground railroad failed, and white abolitionists like Seth Concklin were murdered while trying to rescue blacks (Rudisel, et.al., 2014). These unsung heroes were all deeply committed to their beliefs, despite the risk of personal harm and/or death; they were willing to speak and act out against slavery to end it, even in the face of opposition from powerful individuals and institutions.

Part 2: Women and Abolitionism

Lucretia Mott was a Quaker abolitionist and women's rights activist who played a significant role in both movements. She played a key role in the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention in London, where she was a leader in the fight for women's rights. In her *Discourse on Women*, Mott (1850) argued that women are equal to men in intelligence, ability, and worth and that they deserve the same rights and opportunities as men. She criticized the prevailing patriarchal society of the 1800s and arguing that it oppressed and

restricted women, which prevented them from fulfilling their potential and contributing to society. Mott also highlighted the interconnectedness, or intersectionality of various forms of oppression, including slavery and women's oppression, calling for a society that values equality, justice, and human dignity for all.

Angelina Grimké Weld's (1836) *An Appeal to the Christian Women of the South* was a passionate argument against slavery and an appeal to women of the South to join the abolitionist movement. In her letter, Weld argued that slavery was a sin and violated Christian principles of equality and love. She criticized Southern Christian leaders for justifying slavery through selective readings of the Bible and argued that true Christianity demands the abolition of slavery. Weld also appealed to Southern women's sense of motherhood and nurturing, arguing that they should not participate in or condone the inhumane treatment of enslaved people. She urged them to act by boycotting goods produced by slaves, educating themselves about the horrors of slavery, and advocating for its abolition. Overall, Weld's *Appeal* was a powerful call to action for Southern women to join the abolitionists and work toward a more just and equitable society.

Similarly, Sarah M. Grimké's (1838) *An Epistle to the Clergy of the Southern States* was a passionate plea for the abolition of slavery. In her epistle, Grimké addresses the southern clergy and argues that slavery is incompatible with Christianity. She emphasizes that every human being has a natural right to liberty and that the enslavement of Africans is an affront to this right. Grimké challenges the southern clergy to speak out against slavery and to take action to end it. She also highlights the cruelty and inhumanity of slavery, pointing out the many ways in which enslaved Africans are treated as property rather than human beings. Overall, Grimké's argument is a powerful and eloquent denunciation of slavery and a call to action for all those who believe in justice and equality.

Lucretia Mott, Angelina Grimké Weld, and Sarah M. Grimké were all influential activists in the abolitionist movement and advocates for women's rights. Their writings and speeches helped to raise awareness about the injustices of slavery and the need for equal rights for all. Mott's *Discourse on Women* challenged the patriarchal society of the 1800s and argued for equality and justice for women, while Weld's *Appeal to the Christian Women of the South* and Grimké's *Epistle to the Clergy of the Southern States* were powerful calls to action for the abolition of slavery. Together, these authors helped to inspire a movement toward a more just and equitable society, emphasizing the interconnectedness of various forms of oppression and the need to work together for positive change.

Part 3: Slave Narratives

Ukawsaw Gronniosaw's (1772) narrative provided valuable insight into the experiences of an enslaved person during the 18th century. Born in what is now present-day Nigeria, he was captured and sold into slavery at a young age; his narrative not only details the physical hardships and dehumanizing treatment he endured as an enslaved person but also highlights the psychological and emotional toll of his enslavement. One notable aspect of his narrative is his recognition of Quaker abolitionists, credits his conversion to Christianity as a turning point in his life and attributes his survival and eventual freedom to divine intervention. This memoir played a crucial role in humanizing enslaved people, challenging the pro-slavery arguments of the time, and advocating for the abolition of slavery.

Olaudah Equiano was an African from village of Essaka in present-day southern Nigeria; he was sold into slavery and transported to America. He later gained his freedom and wrote a popular book called *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* which described his experiences as a slave and his eventual freedom. Equiano (1789) made a powerful case against the institution of slavery, arguing that it was cruel and inhumane to treat people as property and that it was a violation of natural law to deny individuals their freedom. He described the ways in which slavery was harmful to both slaves and slave owners and that the only way to truly eradicate slavery was to eliminate the demand for slave labor. Overall, Equiano's work was an important contribution to the abolitionist movement, as it helped to raise awareness about the horrors of slavery and played a significant role in the British abolitionist movement (Stanton, 2011).

David Walker was an African American abolitionist born in North Carolina around 1796. He moved to Boston in the early 1820s – then in 1829, Walker published a famous pamphlet called an *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World*, which called for the immediate abolition of slavery and the overthrow of the entire system of racial oppression in the United States. Walker (1829) used Biblical and Enlightenment ideas to argue that all human beings were created equal, and that slavery was a moral evil that violated the basic principles of justice and humanity. He argued that free Blacks had a right to resist slavery and fight for their freedom by any means necessary, including violent revolution if necessary (Powell, 2023).

Frederick Douglass (1818-1895) was a former enslaved African who became a prominent abolitionist, orator, and writer. He wrote several autobiographies that played a significant role in the abolitionist movement. Douglass' (1855) *My Bondage and My Freedom* was a powerful narrative that tells the story of his life as a slave and his eventual escape to freedom. Douglass (1845) argued passionately against the institution of slavery and the dehumanizing effects it has on both the slave and the slaveholder. He exposed the hypocrisy of slaveholders who claim to be Christian and moral while simultaneously perpetrating the most heinous acts of cruelty against their fellow human beings. Douglass (1855) argued that slavery is not only morally wrong but also economically inefficient, as it prevents the development of productive labor and technological innovation. He also criticizes the legal system for upholding the slave system and denying slaves the basic human rights and protections that should be afforded to all people. Douglass also called for the full equality and empowerment of black people in American society, arguing that black people are just as capable as white people and deserve the same opportunities to pursue education, careers, and other forms of personal and social development. Overall, his work was a powerful indictment of slavery and a call to action for all those who believe in human dignity and freedom.

Sojourner Truth, a former slave and prominent abolitionist and women's rights activist wrote *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth*, which recounts her experiences as a slave, including the abuse she endured and her escape to freedom. Truth (1850) presented a powerful argument against slavery, drawing on her own experiences and observations of the inhumane treatment of slaves. She expressed gratitude to Levi Rowe, a Quaker, but critiqued the hypocrisy of others who claim to be Christian while owning slaves. She called for the abolition of slavery based on the principle that all people are created equal and deserve to be treated as such. Truth argued for the importance of education and the need for women's rights, comparing the oppression of women with the oppression of slaves (Rudisel, et.al., 2014).

Delany (1852) argued for the abolition of slavery and equal rights for African Americans, while also promoting the idea of emigration to Africa as a means of escaping discrimination and oppression. Delany saw Liberia as a potential homeland, and he visited the country in 1859 to explore the possibility of emigration. Delany believed that African Americans had a distinct cultural identity and history that should be celebrated and promoted, calling for the establishment of black-owned businesses and institutions. He advocated for the education and self-improvement of African Americans, arguing that they could achieve social and economic success through their own efforts. Delany's work was an important contribution to the American anti-slavery movement and the fight for racial equality.

Phillis Wheatley was an enslaved African brought to Boston at the age of seven in 1761. Her owner, John Wheatley, taught her to read and write, and she quickly demonstrated an exceptional talent for poetry. Her first poem was published in a local newspaper in 1767, and her first collection, "Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral," was published in 1773. Wheatley's work addressed issues of slavery and race and was celebrated by abolitionists in the United States and England; her poetry often explored the contradictions of being a slave who was taught to read and write, as seen in her famous poem, 'On Being Brought from Africa to America.' Wheatley died at the age of 31 in 1784, but her legacy as the first published African American poet has endured (Michals, 2015).

Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, Olaudah Equiano, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Martin Delany, and later Phillis Wheatley were influential figures in the anti-slavery movement of the 19th century. Their writings and activism helped to raise awareness about the horrors of slavery, helping to promote the idea of human equality and dignity. Their contributions played a major role in the abolitionists' fight for racial equality and the eventual elimination of slavery in the United States.

Part 4: Western Philosophical Contributions

Immanuel Kant (1795; 1797) argued that slavery was morally wrong because it violated the inherent dignity and autonomy of human beings. According to Kant, every individual has an inherent worth or dignity that cannot be taken away or diminished, and this worth is based on their ability to reason and make rational choices. Slavery, on the other hand, involves treating human beings as mere things or property to be bought, sold, and used for the benefit of others; this is incompatible with the idea of inherent worth and dignity and is therefore morally wrong. Kant argued that the institution of slavery was inherently unstable due to a system of unequal power relations that can lead to conflict and violence. While seemingly racist in his early years (based on modern norms), his late-in-life arguments against colonization and slavery were based on his idea that every human being is an end in themselves, and each person should be treated with respect and dignity as a rational and autonomous being (Kant, 1795; Kant, 1797; Kleingeld, 2007; Zorn, 2020).

John Stuart Mill (1869) argued that slavery, including the subordination and oppression of women, was morally wrong because it violated the principle of individual liberty and freedom. Mill believed that every individual had a right to live their life as they saw fit, as long as they did not harm others. Whereas slavery, as well as the subordination of women, prevented individuals from exercising their freedom and living fulfilling lives. Mill's argument against slavery was based on the principle of individual liberty and freedom, and the idea that every individual, regardless of race or gender, should be able to live a self-determined life free from oppression and subordination (Mill, 1850; Mill, 1869).

Friedrich Nietzsche did not write extensively on slavery, but he did criticize the morality of his time for its tendency to justify forms of oppression and exploitation, which included slavery. Nietzsche (1887) argued that traditional morality was used to justify forms of oppression and exploitation and to uphold the power of those in positions of authority. He believed that this morality had become a kind of "slave morality," which encouraged individuals to accept their own subordination and suppress their own desires and instincts. Nietzsche believed that individuals should reject this slave morality and embrace a "master morality," which would allow them to pursue their own goals and desires without being constrained by the values of the dominant culture. Overall, Nietzsche's argument against slavery was based on his rejection of the morality that supported it, and his call for individuals to embrace a new kind of morality that would allow them to assert their own power and freedom (Nietzsche, 1887).

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1807) argued that slavery was incompatible with the principles of freedom and equality. He believed that individuals should have the right to pursue their own goals and desires without being subject to the arbitrary will of others: the institution of slavery violated this fundamental right and was therefore morally wrong. Hegel also argued that the relationship between the slave and the master was inherently unstable because it was based on coercion and not on mutual respect; he believed that the institution of slavery would be overcome through historical progress, as human societies evolved towards greater levels of freedom and equality. Hegel was clear that there is an unconditional moral demand to reject the institution of slavery as it is incompatible with the rational state and the essential freedom of every individual (Hegel, 1807, 1991a 1991b, 2011, 1975b; Houlgate, 2005). Therefore, his anti-slavery argument was based on the principles of freedom, equality, and historical progress.

Kant, Mill, Nietzsche, and Hegel all argued that slavery is morally wrong because it violates fundamental principles such as human dignity, individual liberty and freedom, and equality. Kant and Mill argued that slavery is incompatible with the inherent worth and dignity of human beings, while Nietzsche criticized the morality of his time for justifying forms of oppression and exploitation, including slavery. Hegel argued that slavery violates the principles of freedom and equality and that the relationship between slave and master is inherently unstable. In summary, these four authors share the belief that slavery is a violation of fundamental moral principles and is therefore morally wrong, albeit with differences in their specific arguments.

OBSERVATIONS

The American abolitionist movement was fueled by a diverse group of individuals, from Quaker abolitionists like Anthony Benezet and John Woolman to activists for women's rights like Lucretia Mott, Angelina Grimké Weld, and Sarah M. Grimké. Their writings and speeches played a significant role in raising awareness about the injustices of slavery and promoting the idea of human equality and dignity. Other influential figures in the movement included Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, Olaudah Equiano, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Martin Delany, and later Phillis Wheatley, whose activism and writings also helped to promote the fight for racial equality and the abolition of slavery.

The moral and political philosophies of Kant, Mill, Nietzsche, and Hegel also impacted the abolitionist movement. Their ideas about the inherent worth and dignity of human beings, individual liberty and freedom, and historical progress toward greater levels of freedom and equality were influential in shaping the abolitionist movement's vision of a future without slavery. The movement emphasized the interconnectedness of various forms of oppression and the need to work together for positive change. Ultimately, the contributions of these individuals helped to inspire a movement toward a more just and equitable society, leading to the eventual abolition of slavery in the United States and the ongoing fight for social justice.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was known to have quoted several of these authors in his speeches and writings. For example, he referenced the works of Kant, Mill, and Hegel in his writings, particularly in his famous "Letter from Birmingham Jail," in which he argued that unjust laws are not truly laws at all because they violate the principles of morality and natural law. King's philosophy of nonviolent resistance was influenced by many of the same ideas about human dignity and freedom that were articulated by these authors, and his leadership played a key role in the Civil Rights Movement, which aimed to end segregation and promote equality for African Americans in the United States.

Economics and Government

Adam Smith and John Locke were both influential philosophers whose ideas on economics and government had a major impact on the development of American political thought. The principles of individual freedom, property rights, and limited government that were central to their works helped shape the American ideals of democracy and capitalism (Butler, 2011; Hayes, 2022; Smith, 1776; Baker, 2023).

John Locke (1689) is often considered a forerunner of modern liberal and democratic thought, and his philosophy played a significant role in the development of political liberalism, which emphasizes individual rights, freedoms, and equality before the law. While Locke advocated for private property rights, he also believed that the government had a role in protecting the property rights of all individuals, including the poor and vulnerable. In his view, government should be limited and serve only to protect the natural rights of individuals, which included property rights. Locke believed that labor was the source of all value in property and that individuals had the right to the fruits of their labor. Locke's ideas include elements that are compatible with capitalism, such as private property rights and a limited government role; and his ideas about natural rights and freedom influenced the development of the 'enlightenment' and the later abolitionist movement.

Adam Smith (1776) argued that a country's wealth and prosperity are determined by the productivity and efficiency of its economy. He emphasized the importance of the division of labor, free trade, and competition in promoting economic growth. Smith advocated for the free market system, with minimal government intervention in the economy. He believed that government regulations and monopolies hindered economic growth and innovation. In addition, he argued that individuals acting in their self-interest could lead to benefits for society as a whole. Smith famously referred to the "invisible hand" of the market, where individuals pursuing their own interests could inadvertently promote the greater good of society. Overall, Smith's work emphasized the importance of economic freedom and efficiency and argued against government intervention in the economy. Smith believed that economic growth was driven by individuals pursuing their own self-interest and that this was best accomplished through voluntary exchange in a

competitive marketplace. In Smith's view, slavery was a violation of these principles and was ultimately detrimental to economic progress.

The United States was founded upon the principles of individual freedom and property rights. The concept of individual freedom was central to the American Revolution, and it is reflected in the country's founding documents, such as the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution. These documents emphasized the importance of individual liberties and rights, such as freedom of speech, religion, and the press. At the same time, property rights were also a key concern of the American Founding Fathers. Many of them were wealthy landowners and merchants who believed in the importance of protecting private property. The Constitution and other founding documents established a system of property rights that protected individual landowners and allowed for the development of a capitalist economy. Thus, the United States can be seen as a country founded upon both the principles of individual freedom and property rights, which have been central to its political and economic development.

The concepts of individual rights and property rights were in conflict due to slavery in the United States. For instance, Anthony Johnson was an indentured servant in 1621, who became a Free Man of Color (FMC) and became a wealthy landowner and slaveholder. Johnson's court case was the first to retain ownership of a slave in the British Colonies, thereby establishing a precedent in common law. In 1855, the Northampton Court made the first-ever judicial determination in the Thirteen Colonies holding that a person who had committed no crime could be held in servitude for life (Sweet, 2005).

On the one hand, slave owners of all hues claimed property rights over the people they enslaved, treating them as a form of property that could be bought, sold, and inherited. On the other hand, abolitionists argued that slavery was a violation of the individual rights of enslaved people, who were denied their freedom and treated as property rather than as human beings with inherent rights. In addition, non-slave-owning citizens were unwilling to pay taxes to reimburse the slaveholding minority (Eltis, et.al., 2011). This conflict ultimately led to the American Civil War, whereby the abolitionist causes prevailed, and slavery was abolished via the 13th Amendment to the US Constitution. There were numerous incremental steps toward the abolition of slavery as in the following paragraphs and Table 1.

**TABLE 1
U.S. CHRONOLOGY OF ANTI-SLAVERY SENTIMENTS**

DEMOCRATS, SLAVERY, JIM CROW & KKK		REPUBLICANS & ABOLITIONISTS	
United States Independence - 1776	1776 - 1780	United States Independence - 1776	
NOTE: Slavery existed continuously for 5000 years before the United States was created; almost every nation-state in the world had legalized slavery in 1776	1781 - 1785	Vermont (1777), Pennsylvania (1780), Massachusetts (1783), New Hampshire (1783), Connecticut (1784), Rhode Island (1784), New York (1799), New Jersey (1804), and Maine (1820) abolish slavery	
	1786 - 1790		
	1791 - 1795		
	1796 - 1800		
	1801 - 1805	1801-First Barbary War to free enslaved US sailors	
	1806 - 1810		
	1811 - 1815	United States, England, & France implement naval blockades & enforce laws against transatlantic slave trade	
	1816 - 1820		
	1821 - 1825		
1828 - Democratic Party founded by future Presidents Andrew Jackson & Martin Van Buren with a focus on individual States' Rights and Slavery	1826 - 1830		
	1831 - 1835	1833 - American Anti-Slavery Society founded	
	1836 - 1840		
	1841 - 1845		
	1846 - 1850		
In Dred Scott v. Sandford (1857)-Supreme Court held that Blacks were not U.S. citizens & had no rights	1851 - 1855	Republican Party created by abolitionists; Republican Platforms of 1856 & 1860 were Anti-Slavery	
Southern States' secession prompted the North versus South U.S. CIVIL WAR 1861-1865 (600,000 dead)	1856 - 1860	The 13th Amendment to Constitution ratified in 1865; Ratified 14th Amendment-1868; 15th Amendment-1870	
Ku Klux Klan emerged in the South in 1865	1861 - 1865		
1883 - Democrat dominated US Supreme Court ruled <i>Civil Rights Act of 1875</i> unconstitutional	1866 - 1870	Civil Rights Act of 1871 (aka Anti-KKK Act); Sen Revels(R)-1st Black Senator; Rep Rainey(R)-1st Black Congressman; <i>Civil Rights Act of 1875</i> ; and 1877 Henry Flipper was 1st Black graduate at USMA, West Point	
1896-Plessy v. Ferguson case, the Supreme Court decided for "separate but equal" racial segregation	1871 - 1875		
	1876 - 1880		
	1881 - 1885		
	1886 - 1890		
	1891 - 1895		
Starting in the 1870s, Democratic Party in the Southern states adopted racially discriminatory policies & implemented Jim Crow laws to enforce racial segregation & suppressed Black voting rights	1896 - 1900	In 1909, Republicans Mary White Ovington and Moorfield Storey help start/organize NAACP	
	1901 - 1905		
	1906 - 1910	In the Great Migration, rural southern blacks moved to Northern, Western, & Southern cities between 1915 & 1920, 500,000 to 1 million moved to the North.	
1915 - Pres Wilson (D) viewed 'The Birth of a Nation' a racist film that glorified the Ku Klux Klan	1911 - 1915		
	1916 - 1920	All of the Black US Congress Representatives were Republicans from 1865 to the 1930s	
	1921 - 1925		
	1926 - 1930		
1930s - FDR's New Deal social & economic programs during the Great Depression started the shift of U.S. Black voters from the Republican to the Democrat Party	1931 - 1935		
	1936 - 1940		
	1941 - 1945	Supreme Court case of <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> in 1954 overturned <i>Plessy v. Ferguson</i> segregation	
1948 - President Truman's Executive Order 9981, ended racial segregation in the military	1946 - 1950		
	1951 - 1955	Civil Rights Act of 1957 created the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights; Civil Rights Act of 1960 protect voting rights.	
1957-Democrats filibuster the Civil Rights Act of 1957; then filibuster the Civil Rights Act of 1964	1956 - 1960		
	1961 - 1965	The Equal Pay Act of 1963; The Civil Rights Act of 1964;	
Between 1882 and 968 the KKK lynched a total of 4,743 victims (3,446 Blacks & 1,297 white abolitionists)	1966 - 1970	The Voting Rights Act 1965; The Fair Housing Act 1968	
	1971 - 1975	eliminated vestiges of Southern State's Jim Crow bigotry	
For 60 years after the Civil Rights Era, Democrats would claim that systemic racism was embedded in the fiber of the USA; while Republicans, who championed every Civil Rights Act from 1865 to 1964 believed the U.S. achieved a post-racial society			

Abolitionist Values Became Laws

The US Anti-Slave Trade Act of 1808, also known as the “*Act Prohibiting Importation of Slaves*,” was a federal law that banned the importation of enslaved Africans into the United States. The Act was passed by the US Congress on March 2, 1807, and took effect on January 1, 1808. It was one of the first acts of the newly formed US government to address the issue of slavery, making it illegal to import enslaved Africans into the US, as well as to participate in the international slave trade. The penalties for violating the

Act were severe, including fines and imprisonment for those convicted of importing or exporting enslaved people. The Act was the result of years of lobbying by abolitionist groups in the US and Europe, as well as by formerly enslaved people who had escaped from slavery and become vocal opponents of the slave trade.

The 3/5th Compromise was reached during the drafting of the US Constitution in 1787, regarding how enslaved people would be counted for the purposes of determining a state's representation in the House of Representatives and the distribution of taxes. Free men of color (FMC) lived in the United States long before the U.S. Constitution existed, so FMC counted the same as whites (Sowell, 2005, p. 155). The southern states wanted all blacks (including slaves, not just FMC) to count toward Congressional representation; but the northern states did not. The compromise between North and South was the apportionment of one congressional member for every thousand inhabitants, with 3/5ths of the slaves included. This ingenious compromise provided an advantage to the abolitionists as the slave states would have had more Congressional seats if 100% of all slaves had been counted. The 3/5th compromise helped the U.S. move one step closer to the abolition of slavery (Williams, 2017).

Between 1776 and 1860, most Northern states in the United States abolished slavery. These states included Vermont (1777), Pennsylvania (1780), Massachusetts (1783), New Hampshire (1783), Connecticut (1784), Rhode Island (1784), New York (1799), New Jersey (1804), and Maine (1820). Most of these states passed gradual abolition laws, which provided for the gradual emancipation of enslaved people over a period of years. The reasons for the abolition of slavery in the Northern states included moral and religious objections to slavery. In addition, the growth of the abolitionist movement in the North helped to bring attention to the evils of slavery and to push for its eventual abolition in the United States as a whole (Eltis, et.al., 2011, p. 625). Without slavery, the Northern States produced cities, factories, infrastructure, and a tide of industrial invention (Wood, 2020).

FIGURE 1
SECESSION OF CONFEDERATE STATES



History on the Net. (2023, May 13). Confederate States of America and the Legal Right To Secede. Retrieved from <https://www.historyonthenet.com/confederate-states-america-2>

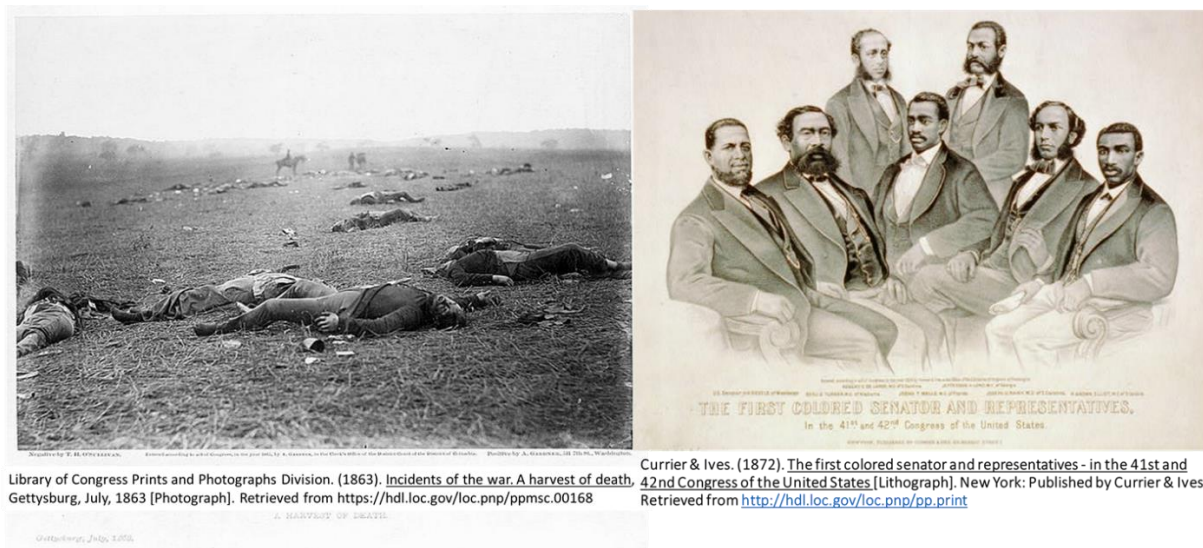
The Republican Party Platform of 1856 was against the expansion of slavery into the western territories. It argued that slavery was morally and politically wrong, hence it should not be allowed to spread into new states and territories. The platform also called for the repeal of the Fugitive Slave Act, which required the return of escaped slaves to their owners. The Republican Party Platform of 1860 was even more explicitly

anti-slavery. It argued that slavery was a “great moral, social, and political evil” and called for its abolition. The platform also rejected the idea of popular sovereignty, which allowed territories to decide for themselves whether to allow slavery. Instead, it argued that Congress had the power to regulate slavery in the territories. The Republican Party’s position on slavery was a major reason for its rapid rise to political prominence in the late 1850s. The party’s strong anti-slavery stance was popular in the North, where many people opposed the expansion of slavery and believed that it was a threat to their own economic and political interests (Peters, et.al., 2022; Peters, et.al., 2023).

Today, some activists blame all white people for slavery yet according to the 1860 census only 1.26% of Americans owned slaves— a classic generalization fallacy: more than 98.7% of Americans never owned a slave in 1860 (Census Bureau, 1860; Baker, 2022). In addition, 13.7 percent of the black population was free, and FMC owned thousands of slaves as well (Koger, 1985); and 3550 FMC each owned between 1 and 9 slaves – some of those slaves were white (Rogers, 1995; Gates, 2017; Bell, 2020). The Republican Party Platform of 1856 and 1860 and their anti-slavery stance were popular in the North, where many people opposed expansion, believing it was a threat to their economic, political, and religious interests. The Republican Party was founded as an anti-slavery party, and its core principles opposed the institution of slavery – there are no historical citations that prove any Republicans owned slaves when slavery was legal in the United States.

The predominantly Democratic Southern states depended on slavery for their economy so they feared the election of Republican Abraham Lincoln, who opposed slavery and would threaten the plantation’s way of life. This led to the secession of several Southern states and the eventual outbreak of the Civil War, which was fought in part over the future of slavery in the United States. As the war progressed, Northern leaders increasingly emphasized the importance of emancipation as a strategic and moral imperative, which led to the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863. The U.S. Civil War resulted in an eventual Union victory and the subsequent freedom of almost four million former Black slaves. The deaths of over 600,000 soldiers during the U.S. Civil War played a pivotal role in the pursuit of freedom for individuals of African descent – an event unequaled in human history.

FIGURE 2 SOLDIERS SACRIFICED IN PURSUIT OF FREEDOM



Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division. (1863). *Incidents of the war. A harvest of death. Gettysburg, July, 1863* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsc.00168>

Currier & Ives. (1872). *The first colored senator and representatives - in the 41st and 42nd Congress of the United States* [Lithograph]. New York: Published by Currier & Ives. Retrieved from <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/pp.print>

The Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 marked a significant turning point that set the stage for further legislative changes. The subsequent ratification of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the US Constitution granted freedom, citizenship, and voting rights to formerly enslaved individuals. Ratified in

1865, the 13th Amendment to the US Constitution abolished slavery and involuntary servitude in the United States, except as a punishment for a crime. On March 4, 1865, President Lincoln stated during his second inaugural address that the Thirteenth Amendment offered redemption for what many believed was the original sin of slavery: it is the only Amendment ratified with a president's signature on it (Gates Jr., 2017).

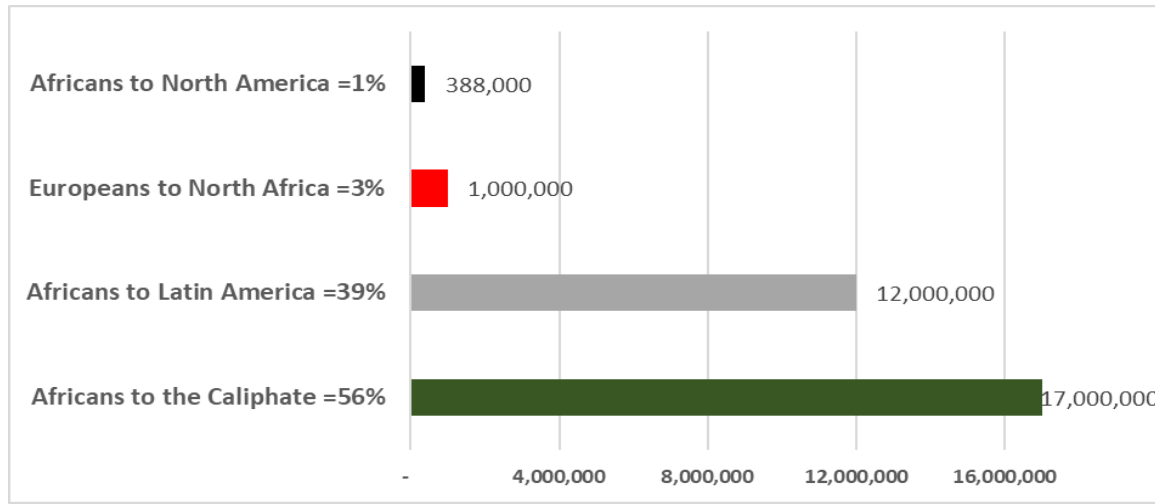
The 14th Amendment, ratified in 1868, granted citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States, including former slaves, and provided them with equal protection under the law. The 15th Amendment, ratified in 1870, prohibited the denial of voting rights to any citizen based on race, color, or previous condition of servitude, which aimed to ensure that African American men could exercise their right to vote. Almost every country in the entire world had slaves prior to and during the 1700s, but the United States was one of the first to end it (Sowell, 1994, p. 189). In fact, some "European slaves were still being sold on the auction block in Egypt, years after the Emancipation Proclamation freed blacks in the United States" (Sowell, 2005, page 112).

CHALLENGING FALSE NARRATIVES

Philosopher George Santayana (1905) wrote that "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Hence, information on worldwide slavery, not just slavery in North America, must be taught in every American High School. Understanding the magnitude of worldwide slavery permits a greater understanding of that peculiar institution in the United States. Academics should focus on the good and bad of history, not just the lopsided political diatribes as in the 1619 Project.

The suffering and exploitation of any group of people is a tragedy that deserves our attention and efforts to address. According to the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, which is considered the most comprehensive analysis of shipping records over the course of the slave trade, between 1525 and 1866, approximately 12.5 million Africans were shipped to the New World, but only about 388,000 of those were brought to North America and 12 million went to Latin America. In addition, the Islamic slave trade in the Sahara, the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean areas began in the seventh century and lasted into the nineteenth, and involved 14-17 million slaves (Sowell, 1994; Spencer, 2006; Spencer, 2008; Gates, 2017; Wood, 2020). The Barbary Pirates' Marine Jihad enslaved and shipped one million European people to North Africa (Davis, 2003; Eltis, 2011; Webb, 2020) – over 250% more than the number of Black slaves sent to North America. Baepler (1999) provides great insights into the overlooked history and experiences of white individuals enslaved in North Africa. The transatlantic slave trade was only one part of a much larger system of forced labor that targeted Europeans, Africans, and Indians. It is important to recognize and condemn all forms of slavery and forced labor throughout history, including the Islamic slave trade and the enslavement of Africans, Europeans, and Indians by the Islamic Caliphates. From 1619 to 1865, enslavement in North America (1%) was tragic, but neither unique, nor massive in comparison to regional slavery in North Africa (3%), Latin America (39%), or the Islamic Caliphates (56%) per Figure 3.

FIGURE 3
ENSLAVED HUMANS



Many people are selectively indignant about the immorality of slavery in American society or in Western civilization because they choose to ignore the significantly larger-scale slavery across the rest of the world – as shown in the figure only 1% of slaves worldwide went to North America. Hence, overtly political publications such as the 1619 Project should be rejected by academics since slavery was not unique to the United States, nor was the ‘American Experiment’ uniquely rooted in slavery, after all, the entire world had slaves for millennia. Shortly after independence, U.S. and British abolitionists launched a movement that eventually spread throughout the world. In contrast to the dystopia painted by the 1619 Project, Richard Carwardine, professor emeritus at Oxford University, identified that “although there were a number of important and brave black abolitionists, taken as a whole the abolitionist movement of the 1820s and 1830s was largely white reformers who were moved by a powerful sense of the equal humanity of blacks, by the idea of a single Creation, and by the doctrine of disinterested benevolence, the outworking of faith through charitable action” (Mackaman, 2019).

Journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones has advocated for a reparations bill that would provide cash payments to Black Americans who are descendants of slaves (Hannah-Jones, 2019; Gross, et.al., 2020; Wood, 2020). Hypothetically, the logic laid out in the 1619 Project would propagate support for her goal. However, the 1619 Project, which Hannah-Jones helped lead, has been criticized for numerous inaccuracies and flawed interpretations of U.S. history. Hannah-Jones (2019) has shown a tendency to exaggerate, or outright lie in her essay while stating her opinions as if they were facts. Her first lie is the 1619 importation of slaves – the twenty Africans shipped into Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619 became indentured servants who eventually gained their freedom, and then owned slaves themselves (NJSL, 2023). In an Orwellian fashion, Hannah-Jones and the 1619 Project uses a written sleight of hand, airbrushing white abolitionists and their significant achievements out of history.

Quote 1: “The efforts of Black Americans to seek freedom through resistance and rebellion against violations of their rights have always been one of this nation’s defining traditions” (p. 452). Fact Check 1: This statement is merely a hyperbolic opinion. The 13th Amendment was passed by the United States Congress on January 31st and was ratified on December 6, 1865, which was the outcome of a combination of factors, including the political climate, the military successes of the Union during the Civil War, and the activism of Christian abolitionists as outlined in this paper, who contributed to the growing momentum for abolition. In 1822, Denmark Vesey planned a slave revolt to kill all whites, men, women, and children, in Charleston, but was caught and hanged; the Nat Turner Rebellion resulted in the deaths of around 55-65 white people. Both revolts were thereafter invoked by pro-slavery proponents as an argument *against*

emancipation, leading to stricter laws and further restrictions on enslaved people, thereby harming the abolitionists' long-term goals of ending slavery (Koger, 1985; Gates, 2017).

Quote 2: “While unchecked discrimination still plays a significant role in circumscribing opportunities for Black Americans, it is white Americans’ centuries-long economic head start that most effectively maintains racial caste today” (p. 457) and that “black median household income in 1950 was about half that of white Americans, and today it remains so” (p. 470). Fact Check 2: “Caste” is a social system that divides society into hereditary, endogamous, and occupation-based groups with distinct hierarchical positions; but poverty and socioeconomic struggles can affect individuals of every racial and ethnic group. There are over 25 million impoverished Whites, and 8 million impoverished Blacks in the United States; but there are also 1.7 million Black millionaires. If the United States had a racial caste system, then there would be substantially more impoverished Blacks and no Black millionaires. Although Black income was half of Whites in the 1950s, today that is not true (Baker, 2022; Baker, 2023a/b/c; Bell, 2023; McCain, 2023).

Quote 3: “Blacks became the only race in the U.S. ever to start out, as an entire people, with close to zero capital” (p. 464). Fact Check 3: More hyperbole. By focusing solely on Blacks as the ‘only race’ to experience such economic circumstances, the statement disregards the diverse experiences of other groups who faced similar challenges and perpetuates a limited perspective on the economic history of various racial and ethnic communities in the United States. Other immigrant groups, such as the Chinese, Irish, Italian, and Eastern European immigrants, also encountered economic hardships and faced discrimination. Early in US history Irish, Jews, and Italians were considered nonwhite on a par with African Americans (Delgado, 2017, p. 88); and in colonial America, white indentured servants were a major part of the population, who “were auctioned off just like black slaves” (Sowell, 2005, p. 170). Over 52,000 Irish people were sold to Barbados and Virginia alone, and from 1600 to 1699, far more Irish were sold as slaves than Africans (Donnchad, 2006; Jordan, et.al., 2007; Akamatsu, 2010). Hannah-Jones would benefit from exploring a wider range of perspectives and conducting research that is less biased.

Quote 4: White people regularly deployed lynchings, massacres, and generalized racial terrorism against Black people “According to a 2020 report by the Equal Justice Initiative, white Americans lynched at least 6,500 Black people from the end of the Civil War to 1950, an average of three every two weeks for eight and a half decades ... Since 2015, law enforcement has killed, on average, nearly five Black people a week” (p. 465). Fact Check 4: This is an example of the generalization fallacy, which is assuming something is true for all based on limited evidence. Survey data indicated that 54% of very liberal Americans thought that more than 1,000 unarmed Black men were killed by police in 2019; but during 2019, police shot and killed a total of 12 unarmed Black men and 26 unarmed White men (Baker, 2003a). Blacks are over-represented among offenders in each category of aggressive crime: in homicide at a level 315% greater than their representation in the general population, in sexual assault at a level 404% as great, in aggravated assault at 274% greater than their representation in the general population. In addition, Black-on-Black violent incidents are 120% higher than White-on-White violent incidents; and Black-on-White violent incidents are 3449% higher than White-on-Black violent incidents (Baker, 2003a,b,c). According to the Tuskegee Institute, over a period of 80 years the Ku Klux Klan lynched 4,743 victims consisting of 3,446 Blacks and 1,297 white abolitionists; but using 10-year averages ending in 2019, Black perps kill more than 3,446 Blacks every 17 months and more than 1,297 Whites every 32 months! In 2023, Black perps are the hunters, not the hunted (Baker, 2003a/b/c; Jackson, 2009, p. 85; Tullier, et al., 2020).

Quote 5: “As part of the New Deal programs, the federal government created redlining maps, marking neighborhoods where Black people lived in red ink to denote that they were uninsurable for federally backed mortgages” (Hannah-Jones, 2019, p. 466). Fact Check 5: Myopic! Redlining affected all racial and ethnic communities, including impoverished white individuals who lived in redlined areas; since there are 25 million impoverished Whites and only 8 million impoverished Blacks, there was an impact on the poor in both races. The practice of redlining had negative consequences for both communities as well, limiting access to affordable housing, loans, and other resources. The Fair Housing Act (1968) prohibited discrimination in housing based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, and familial status. Hardy and Logan (2019) conducted a study on the disparities in homeownership and housing wealth in the United States from 1970 to 2015; while the rate of homeownership has remained relatively stable since

1970, there have been significant shifts in the racial and ethnic composition of homeowners, with the proportion of White homeowners declining and the proportion of Black and Hispanic homeowners increasing!

Quote 6: “Brown v. Board of Education did not end segregated and unequal schools; it just ended segregation under the law ... Black children remain as segregated from white kids as they were in the early 1970s” (p. 467). Fact Check 6: Biased nonsense! As a result of Green v. County School Board of New Kent County, the government became stricter on schools’ plans to combat segregation; but *voluntary segregation* appears to have increased since 1990 based on the black-white exposure index (Reardon, et.al., 2014). The overall college enrollment rate for 18- to 24-year-olds increased from 35 percent in 2000 to 41 percent in 2018. In 2018, the college enrollment rate was higher for 18- to 24-year-olds who were Asian (59 %) than for Blacks (37%) and Hispanics (36%) – all are significantly higher than in 1970 (NCES, 2023).

Nicole Hannah-Jones demonstrates an extremely biased understanding of World History and has propagated a dystopian political message, without regard to facts: A Big Lie. The United States underwent a significant transformation from an early British colonial period that was characterized by a monarchy and mercantilism, to becoming a democratic republic with a capitalist economy. The transformation from monarchy/mercantilism with slavery, to a democratic republic with capitalism but without slavery, was rapid in comparison to the prior 4000 to 5000 years of enslavement and authoritarian rule throughout the entire world.

A letter signed by five distinguished academic historians identified that many essays in the 1619 Project mischaracterized significant elements of U.S. history, including the false claim that the Revolutionary War was primarily fought to preserve slavery (Harris, 2020). Dr. Allen Guelzo is one of the most highly respected Lincoln scholars in the world, who pointed out many errors with the 1619 Project; he wrote that “*the 1619 Project is not history; it is ignorance*” (Guelzo, 2019; Guelzo, 2020; Wood, 2020, p. 160). Professor Emeritus Richard Carwardine determined that the 1619 Project’s “idea that the central, fundamental story of the United States is one of white racism and that black protest and rejection of white superiority has been the essential, indispensable driving force for change – *seems to me to be a preposterous and one-dimensional reading of the American past*” (Mackaman, 2019). Hannah-Jones’s opinions do not survive the most rudimentary fact checks (Carden, 2020); her essays rely less on facts, evidence, or critical thinking, and more on subjective opinion to elicit emotional responses from her readers.

Some Black and White slaveowners received wealth from the unpaid labor of slaves, which is very different from saying that American society ended up wealthier than it would have been in the absence of slavery (Sowell, 2005). Yet, reparation advocates falsely claim that the entire United States became rich on the backs of free slave labor. Buying into the reparation argument suggests that the antebellum South was rich, and the slavery-free North was poor, but the truth is just the opposite (Williams, 2019). These criticisms, among others, undermine the legitimacy of demands for reparations based on the poorly researched and biased 1619 Project. There is a misguided belief that the USA is rich today, according to reparations advocates line of reasoning, because of slavery. Hannah-Jones and other 1619 authors mishandle historical evidence and mischaracterize important events in ways that affect their key interpretations of the nature of slavery, the workings of plantations, the importance of cotton and slavery in the broader economy, and the sources of the Industrial Revolution and world development. Slavery and the war that ended it led to an impoverished American South. Similarly, in Baptist’s oft-quoted book *The Half Has Never Been Told*, the economic analysis is so flawed that it undermines the credibility of the book. Like the extremely biased 1619 Project, it is best understood as ‘history as rhetoric’ – not scholarship (Carden, 2020; Engerman, 2017; Hilt, 2017; Olmstead & Rhode, 2018; Margo, 2018; Wright, 2020).

Pew Research (2022) found that 77% of Black adults believe the descendants of slaves in the U.S. should be repaid in some way, but only 18% of White Americans agree (Blazina & Cox, 2022). Why the difference? Blacks would receive reparations monies, and whites would be taxed to fund these transfer payments. Darity (2008) recommended an allocation of \$400,000 per Black recipient, which would cost every White citizen \$80,000 each, even though only 1.26% of Americans were slave owners in 1860, that 90% of European immigrants arrived after 1870, and Black immigrants after 1865 were never slaves in America. Yet, Darity, et.al. (2022) proposes a minimum of \$14.3 trillion to close the Black-White wealth

gap conflating the individual guilt of former slave owners by imagining a collective guilt of all whites today – an overgeneralization fallacy. California’s Task Force proposed as much as \$1.2 million in reparations to each Black, which is specious since slavery was never legal in California (Daniels, 2023; RTF, 2023). In contrast to the sophistry about reparations, Bell (2023) determined that there are 1.6 million Black millionaires in the United States, 500% more than the entire continent of Africa, which questions the false narrative of systemic racism and the inability of Blacks to get ahead (Baker, 2023; Bell, 2023).

Wood (2020) identified that the 1619 Project promotes bitterness and anger instead of gratitude; and that the 1619 Project valorizes the concepts of ‘envy and resentment’ as both righteous and justified – leading to a sense of perpetual victimization among Blacks. In addition, from an epistemological and deontological standpoint, the current hyperbole for reparations violates Abrahamic law: “Yet you say, ‘Why should not the son suffer for the iniquity of the father?’ When the son has done what is just and right, and has been careful to observe all my statutes, he shall surely live. The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself” (Ezekiel 18:19-20).

Similarly, under American law, an offspring cannot be charged with a crime that his or her parents have committed. Each person is responsible for their own actions and criminal liability is individualized. In general, criminal liability is based on the behavior of the individual accused of the crime, and not on the actions of their family, friends, or neighbors. In addition, laws in the United States are not retroactive, which means they cannot be applied to actions that occurred before a law was enacted – a law can only apply to actions that occur after it has been enacted. As part of the United States Constitution, this is known as the *ex post facto* clause. The ancestors of more than 98.7% of the American population did not own slaves, many fought in the Civil War, and many were abolitionists. Perhaps the faux civil rights leaders of 2023 can learn from FMC and freed slaves in 1865 who wrote: “But now that we are free, now that we have been lifted up by the providence of God ... we have resolved to come forward, and ... speak and act for ourselves ... As the old institution of slavery has passed away ... we cherish in our hearts no hatred or malice toward those who have held our brethren as slaves, but we extend the right hand of fellowship to all and make it our special aim to establish unity, peace, and love amongst all men” (Ruane, 2021). Activists’ and anarchists’ demand that innocent people pay reparations for crimes that were not committed by themselves, or their ancestors, is unjust and will therefore foster greater racial strife and social unrest for decades to come. Current demands for reparations are not social justice, but merely greed.

CONCLUSIONS

This research encompassed ten key concepts, shedding light on the extensive global history of slavery and its end in the United States:

1. Throughout the recorded history of humanity, the institution of slavery was present in every country across the world.
2. The Islamic Caliphates engaged in the importation of an estimated 17 million African slaves, which underscores the global scale of the slave trade.
3. Latin America, as a region, imported approximately 12 million African slaves during the era of transatlantic slavery, with Brazil alone receiving a comparatively large portion of around 5 million.
4. The North African regions participated in the importation of approximately 1 million European slaves, revealing a significant historical context beyond the boundaries of the transatlantic slave trade.
5. In the context of North America, approximately 388,000 African slaves were brought to the continent, reflecting a relatively smaller proportion compared to all other regions involved in the slave trade.

6. According to 1860 census data, only a small percentage of Americans, approximately 1.26%, were documented as slave owners during that period – yet reparations demands are focused against all whites.
7. The United States took legislative action in 1807 to outlaw the transatlantic slave trade, reflecting a recognition of the need to address the moral and humanitarian concerns associated with the trafficking of enslaved individuals.
8. In a joint effort, the United States, France, and Great Britain implemented an embargo on slave ships following the outlawing of the transatlantic slave trade, signaling an international commitment to suppressing this inhumane practice.
9. The United States experienced a Civil War from 1861 to 1865, with one of the central issues being the institution of slavery. The conflict resulted in the devastating loss of approximately 600,000 lives.
10. The abolition of slavery in the United States was ultimately achieved through the relentless efforts of Christian Abolitionists and the adoption of the 13th Amendment, highlighting the importance of legal measures in bringing an end to this institution. The Emancipation Proclamation and Juneteenth played roles in the history of slavery but were not the legal mechanisms that formally abolished it.

Recognizing the significance of slavery beyond North America allows for a broader perspective, enabling students to grasp the complexities of the institution. This research calls for a balanced curriculum that focuses on facts, moving away from lopsided political narratives. In presenting historical evidence, this paper sheds light on the extensive scale of slavery across the entire world, dispelling the notion that it was unique to the United States.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Slavery was an ancient practice that existed in pre-modern societies across the entire world, so the topics of American slavery and abolition should not be overly complex or contentious. However, U.S. reparations advocates have differing perspectives and arguments largely rooted in emotions, not facts. Critics argue that the claims made by reparations advocates, particularly those presented in the 1619 Project, are flawed, lacking proper research and historical accuracy. They contend that attributing the wealth of the entire United States solely to slavery oversimplifies the complexities of historical events that ended 4000 to 5000 years of authoritarian rule and slavery in human history. One cannot have an honest conversation about reparations when you start with a false narrative about slavery. Future research should acknowledge the contributions of all who were involved in the fight against slavery, regardless of race – as such the 1619 Project fails.

Critics have also raised concerns about the practicality and fairness of reparations, questioning the feasibility of determining who should receive reparations and who should pay. The financial burden of reparations taxes would fall on the current generation of taxpayers even though more than 99% of Americans do not have any direct ancestral connection to slave owners. Views on reparations are reflected in public opinion, as highlighted by Pew Research, with stark differences between the perspectives of Black and White Americans. One hundred and sixty years after the Emancipation Proclamation, the debate surrounding reparations has been resurrected raising questions about justice, individual responsibility, and the impact on social cohesion (*potential extortion, riots, violence, and mayhem*). In contrast to the 1619 Project, future research should approach the topic with sensitivity, engage in candid discussions, and publish fact-based research, not hyperbole – but the common ground remains a significant challenge for academics, citizens, politicians, and pseudo-journalists of all hues.

EPILOGUE

On June 29, 2023, the SCOTUS ruled in favor of the Students for Fair Admissions (6-3 against the University of North Carolina & 6-2 against Harvard) writing that “eliminating racial discrimination means

eliminating all of it...the guarantee of equal protection cannot mean one thing when applied to one individual and something else when applied to a person of another color” (SCOTUS, 2023, p. 4). Therefore, it is crucial to examine the relationship between affirmative action and reparations.

Affirmative action was implemented with the intention of promoting equal opportunities and addressing historical discrimination: it was intended as a form of reparations. The end of affirmative action signifies a belief in the power of individual ability, fostering a society where everyone is judged on their merits and not their race or ethnicity. By ending affirmative action, SCOTUS affirms the principles of equality and fairness, as individuals will now be evaluated based on their qualifications, skills, and achievements rather than their racial background. This shift aligns with the notion that every person, regardless of their race or ethnicity, should be treated equally. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas wrote:

“In the wake of the Civil War, the Framers of the Fourteenth Amendment charted a way out: a colorblind Constitution that requires the government to, at long last, put aside its citizens’ skin color and focus on their individual achievements.” – Justice Clarence Thomas, 2023

Demands for reparations rely on the idea of ‘collective guilt’, holding individuals responsible for the actions of their ancestors, yet less than 1% of Americans have any ancestral ties to slaveholders. So, as we progress toward a more inclusive society, we must emphasize individual responsibility and the importance of judging individuals based on their own actions and choices, rather than the actions of their predecessors. By focusing on policies that benefit everyone, regardless of their racial or ethnic background, we can ensure a level playing field for all citizens.

In conclusion, the end of affirmative action quotas presents us with an opportunity to reevaluate unconstitutional demands for reparations as well. As we strive for a society that judges individuals based on their merits, talents, and hard work, it is time to move away from divisive measures that emphasize collective guilt and instead focus on fostering equality and equal opportunities for all.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Thomas Sowell and Dr. Reginald Bell for their invaluable contributions to research and their unwavering dedication to speaking truth to power. Their groundbreaking research and insightful perspectives have influenced my understanding and shaped my intellectual journey. I am deeply grateful for their profound impact on my work and personal growth.

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