



The Thirteenth Amendment

Lauren Reed

Growing machinery, advancing technology, human cattle farming, scientific advancements, experiments in the name of a better society; all of these ideas with the hopes of creating a better world to live. Yet, the data presented isn't so straightforward, an outlier exists. What is meant by the previous statement of "human cattle farming" is exactly how it sounds. Using humans, specifically African Americans, to do manual labor not brought upon by their own will with little to no reward other than pleasing their owner. All humans are human and no one should be bias against anyone or treat anyone lesser than anyone based on the color of their skin. A sentiment that seems like common knowledge to most now would make you sound like a lunatic from the 1700's through even the 1900's. Slavery is a big part of American history that can be a hard topic of discussion; no one wants to remember the wrongs our ancestors did in the past, yet we must also not forget to prevent repetition.

As America moves forward past the American Revolution and begins to breathe what new found freedom its gained, legal foundations and documents are put into place to maintain order such as The Constitution and Government. However, our founding fathers seemed to omit anyone who wasn't a white male. Despite the equal fight from every race for America to become dependent from Britain, it seemed only some received the benefits (1). African Americans specifically were used as slaves because of their man power that came free to those who took advantage of their situation in society. Most were treated worse than live stock and worked long hours with little to no payment. Slaves were not viewed as people; not even animals; more so as profit makers. The forced labor wasn't even the worst part, some of the female slaves were used as means of free sex for their male masters. Sometimes even becoming pregnant with no way of caring for the babies. However, this stuff may seem like common knowledge taught in school now, but upon further research its also said that some slaves were used for consumption(2). Full on cannibalism based upon the color of you skin. The terrible treatment was accepted by society for centuries, until select few finally seemed to recognize the unjust.

Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth president of the United States(1861-1865) and one of the first few people in power who fought for slaves rights. However, he himself had not been an abolitionist (person who thought slavery should be immediately banned) he still saw the practice as against good morals (3). During his presidency, Lincoln faced the problem of the Civil War and the hatred of the southern states. Southern states saw slaves are property and they were too important to agriculture to just give up without a fight. Lincoln struggled to chose between the nations coming together or the rights of those who had been wrongfully done. Ultimately, Lincoln fought for both but put great strived forth for Slaves such as passing the Emancipation Proclamation(1863) which freed slaves in Confederate states and also allowed them to fight in the Union army. Lincoln was also a main reason that the thirteenth amendment(1865) had been passed in the first place. Without his efforts, the United States may still to this day have found itself in a place of discrimination.

Today we find ourselves still fighting the same fight as over one hundred years ago. While days may seem tiresome and arguing grows seemingly pointless, just remember that the union won this fight once before and we can do it again. America represents a place of freedom for all, regardless of any bias or prejudice that may come in the way. Everyone should be free to live and we shouldn't have to repeat history again.

