



**A STATE-BY-STATE HISTORY OF  
RACE AND RACISM**

**IN THE  
UNITED STATES**

**PATRICIA REID-MERRITT, EDITOR**

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# A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States

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# A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States

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VOLUME I: Alabama–Missouri

Patricia Reid-Merritt, Editor



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*To those who have suffered the most.*

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# Preface

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“Mr. President, are you a racist?”

This seemingly unimaginable question was posed, quite often, to the president of the United States in the very first year of his administration. In 2017, issues surrounding race and racism appeared to boil to the surface. Among one of the most shocking events to occur was the torch-carrying, white, neo-Nazi nationalist rally that took place on the campus of the University of Virginia in Charlottesville during the month of August. Chanting, “You will not replace us,” the far-right group was met by counter-protestors who objected to the racist message and language used to draw their supporters. The protest turned deadly, when a car driven by a white nationalist supporter rammed into the peaceful counter protestors, killing 32-year-old Heather Heyer, a white counter-protestor, and critically injuring many more. Condemned by politicians and civil rights and religious leaders as a march “inspired by hatred,” the president of the United States drew condemnation from leaders across the nation when he proclaimed that there was “hatred, bigotry and violence on many sides.” These are just a few of the race-related issues confronting twenty-first-century America.

*A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States* examines the history of race and racism in every state in the United States and the District of Columbia. Its contents are disturbing. Since the founding of our nation, race has played an essential role in the way citizens are granted opportunities for freedom, equality, social justice, and the pursuit of the American Dream. A history of European expansion and capitalist exploitation, wrapped around the ideology of white supremacy, resulted in racial prejudice and acts of racial discrimination that hindered the moral and social development of the nation for many centuries. People of color have disproportionately shouldered the social burdens caused by racism and discrimination.

The collection of essays in this two-volume set provide an overview, as well as in-depth discussion, on how the concept of race evolved in America and the implementation of racist policies and practices in each state. Each state chapter provides a chronology of important events, a historical narrative, and sidebars highlighting a significant event that occurred in the state, as well as a brief biographical account of one or more individuals intimately involved in the race/racism question during their historical era. The encyclopedia is written to provide high school students, college undergraduates, and interested nonspecial readers

with accurate descriptions of the history of race and racism in each of the states and the District of Columbia.

Many different perspectives are reflected in this work. The disciplines are as diverse as the writers who are the contributors. The contributors are racially and ethnically diverse—African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Caucasian Americans, Native Americans, and Asian Americans—men and women residing in different regions throughout the country. They utilize different perspectives and focus areas to describe the activities in each state, but generally emphasize the history of segregation and racial discrimination in major organized structures and institutions, including education, religion, housing, employment, government, the judiciary, public service, marriage, and the family.

There are many troubling issues facing the American populace; none seems as intractable as those involving questions about race and racism and the ways these concepts and practices have affected the United States of America's social system. America is in dire need of an open and honest discourse on questions surrounding race and racism. There are many thought-provoking issues raised in this work. It is our hope that this fact-filled, historical account offers some understanding of the pervasiveness of these racial issues throughout the nation by showing that every state must confront its past and address the contemporary manifestations of these concerns.

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It is with deep appreciation and sincere gratitude that I thank all of those who contributed to the completion of this project. It has been a long, difficult, and challenging journey. Thank you to the more than 50 writers who so graciously worked on the individual chapters that completed this two-volume set. They are writers and scholars from around the nation, a few very seasoned professionals and others marking their first publication. I am particularly grateful to those who contributed to *Race in America: How a Pseudoscientific Concept Shaped Human Interaction* and were willing to work on this project as well, including Donnetrice Allison, Erica Cooper, Laurence French, Ying Yang, Barbara Alice Mann, DeMond Shondell Miller, John Thomas Mills, Jon Allan Reyhner, and JeffriAnne Wilder.

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Patricia Reid-Merritt

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# Introduction

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In *Race in America: How a Pseudoscientific Concept Shaped Human Interaction*, race is described as “a pseudo-scientific concept developed in the middle of the 18th century to justify the dehumanization of various globally unique categories of the human population” (Reid-Merritt 2017, 3). Furthermore, race, defined as a socially constructed concept, is “a system of human classifications based on skin color, hair type, body proportions and other observable physical characteristics. These characteristics are genetically transmitted and occur with great frequency among various people in the same geographic, or even continental, locations” (ibid., 3). Racism, an extension of the concept, is the belief in the inherent superiority or inferiority of various racial groups. Membership in the group is by birth-right, and the perceived innate characteristics of superiority or inferiority are unalterable. Racism produces social structures that privilege one group over another; society’s most valuable resources—wealth, income, education, power, and so on—are unequally distributed to members of the group who claim racial superiority. America was built on the concept of race, its history replete with examples of how racial divisions were created among the people as each group struggled to find their place in the developing nation.

This introduction provides an overview of race, racism, and related concepts. It examines the variety of ways in which race and racism manifest in every aspect of American society. It is important to note that historical or contemporary acts of racism cannot be localized to specific regions of the country, or to specific ethnic populations. Rather, racism is an unescapable aspect of American history and culture, premised on one unifying tenet: the belief of the white majority that they were superior to all people of color. In reviewing the history of race and racism of every state in the United States, one will discover many commonalities; however, one will also discover the variety of ways each state uniquely individualized racist social practices to restrict full and equal participation of populations of color. One can only hope that in the very near future, the ongoing investigation and understanding of issues surrounding race and racism will lead to a more progressively enlightened American public.

## **CONCEPTUALIZING RACE**

Since its early introduction, race has proven to be both an evolving and elusive concept. The notion of race, most likely, emerged as a result of physical variations

in the human species observable to the naked eye. There were differences in skin color, from light to dark hues, and other physical characteristics that separated one group from another. But what, if any, were the significance of these differences?

The limited contact between continentally unique populations, prior to the period of European exploration, offered little reason to question the possibility of separate human species. However, with rapid European expansion, white explorers encountered populations with unique physical features and social characteristics. These variations led some to question monogenetic or polygenetic theories of human development. Did the human species emerge from one (monogenetic) or multiple (polygenetic) sources? While biblical references cited a single source (Adam and Eve), scientists set on different investigatory paths to prove otherwise. More importantly, the exploration of the New World coincided with the rise of capitalism and the need to exploit human beings and all of their natural and social resources for profit. As Europeans began to conquer, destroy, and colonize the indigenous cultures and populations in the New World, a scientific, if not moral, justification was needed to defend their acts of greed and brutality.

Swedish-born zoologist and physician Carolus Linnaeus's 1758 publication of *Systema Naturae* (10th edition) was as an important starting point in the scientific study of race. "While the focus on Linnaeus' work was on understanding the difference and hierarchical placement of the animal, plant and mineral kingdoms, it wasn't long before the politically powerful, slave-holding leaders in America began to marry the idea of race to a biological and human hierarchy" (2017, 5).

European scientists may have led the way in the scientific exploration of the origins of the species, but the idea of separate human species was already popular in America. Columbus's "discovery" of America in 1492 opened the doors to European exploration, and over the next several hundred years, Europeans would travel to the New World in search of trade, wealth, and new adventures. The first were explorers, not colonists; many would return to their native lands. However, American colonization rapidly unfolded during the seventeenth century as the British established permanent colonies on the eastern shore. These Europeans were here to stay, and many sought to re-create the new world in their own image.

During the very early, formative years of our nation's development, three major groups populated America: the European, the African, and the Native American. European immigrants came to America from many different nations, including Spain, France, Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Germany, and Great Britain (the dominant force during the colonial era). They were in search of new social and economic opportunities and freedom from social, political, and religious oppression. However, the European colonization of the Americas was also coupled with the destruction of native populations, as the desire for land and natural resources superseded all human rights. Native Americans first faced a systematic form of discrimination and social oppression and later became the first group forced into a "minority" status in their own land. Steady encroachment of the burgeoning colonies not only resulted in the loss of native lands, but threatened the very survival of Native American communities. Moreover, with the overwhelming need for labor in the developing New World, colonists focused on the native as a potential workforce. However, after many failed efforts to force the Native people into slave

labor, the international slave trade emerged, targeting those on the continent of Africa as the newest victims of capitalist exploitation. This immoral act of human bondage removed millions of Africans from their homeland, all transported to the New World for the sole purpose of exploitation of their labor. What separated the Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans was the color of their skin, and by the end of the century, the descendants of Europe would emerge as the new powerful group of “white Americans.” Was this the natural order and rule of God or the beginning of manifest destiny? Proclaiming that Africans and Native Americans were a subcategory of human beings provided a convenient rationale for cultural domination and all resulting forms of social oppression and human humiliation that followed. The ideology of race, and the superiority of the white majority, began to take hold, serving as a founding principle for the new American culture.

## **SEPARATING THE RACES**

Once the idea of race and white supremacy was planted, America faced a new challenge: How best to separate the races? A pattern of social separation emerged from the very beginning. New generations of Americans were socialized to believe that racial differences, resulting in the separation of the races in living arrangements, employment, politics, power, and all forms of social interaction, were the new social norm. In a very brief period, these patterns of social living were embedded in the American psyche. However, it was not long before Americans turned to the newly established system of jurisprudence to legislate the interactions between the races and to implement laws that reinforced their beliefs in white supremacy.

## **SLAVE LAWS**

The arrival of 21 Africans in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619, is often referenced as the starting point of African enslavement in America. Historians later argued the point, noting that the newly arrived immigrants were most likely indentured servants, given that no slave laws existed in the colonies during that period. Indentured servitude was different from enslavement. During the colonial period, tens of thousands of Europeans flooded the American shores seeking opportunity in the New World. Impoverished and lacking resources, many sold their labor to plantation owners, offering to work for a period of four to seven years, in exchange for room and board and as partial payment for their European voyage. The Africans may have experienced the life of an indentured servant, but only for a brief period. In a little over two decades after their arrival, Massachusetts, in 1641, became the first colony to pass slave laws, permanently altering the status of Africans from servants to a lifetime of servitude.

Slave laws or slave codes would later flourish throughout the colonies in both the North and the South and would be used to determine the status of Africans, African Americans, Native Americans, and children born of mixed parentage. While slave laws proclaimed that all Africans and their descendants were slaves,

others born of mixed heritage were also included. More specifically, the Virginia Act of 1662 stated:

Whereas some doubts have arisen whether children got by any Englishmen upon a Negro shall be slave or Free, Be it therefore enacted and declared by this present Grand assembly, that all children born in this country shall be held bond or free only according to the condition of the mother.

In English law, “birthrights” passed on to the child through the father. The passage of the Virginia law removed all options of freedom for children of white male Europeans and enslaved African and Native American women. In 1705, the codes were further clarified adding, “All servants imported and brought into the Country . . . shall be accounted as slaves. . . . All Negro, mulatto and Indian slaves within this dominion . . . shall be held to be real estate.” This law made it clear that the African, African American, mulatto (mixed race), and Indian slaves would be viewed as property. Chattel slavery marked the system of enslavement in America.

In 1712, a South Carolina law declared that “all negros, mulattoes, mestizos or Indians, which at any time heretofore have been sold, or now are held or taken to be, or hereafter shall be bought and sold for slaves, are hereby declared slaves; and they, and their children, are hereby made and declared slaves. . . .” Slave laws focused on the need to classify the African, Native American, and the children of mixed racial heritage as “other,” separate from the superior white population. Yet, Maryland, in 1664, passed a law that made it possible to enslave white women as well. As a warning to those who engaged in social and sexual intercourse with an African male, the colony declared: “That whatsoever free-born [English] woman shall intermarry with any slave . . . shall serve the master of such slave during the life of her husband; and that all the issue of such free-born women, so married shall be slaves as their fathers were.”

Slave laws placed numerous restrictions on the enslaved populations. As indicated earlier, the form of chattel slavery that emerged in America required human beings to be viewed and treated as property. Slaves were stripped of all basic human rights, including the right of self-determination; specifically, they lacked freedom of choice and decision-making ability. For example, slaves were not permitted to move about freely, pursue intimate relationships, mate, marry, and produce offspring that they could claim as their own. Children of slaves were property of the “master,” sold away from their parents at the master’s discretion. In most colonies, slaves were not permitted to carry firearms, travel without a pass, enter into a contract or testify in court against a white person. Punishment for those who broke the law was harsh and included whippings, mutilations, imprisonment, and death. The way in which “justice” would be meted out by the courts would be based on the color of one’s skin—a foundation of our jurisprudence system.

As the indigenous people of America, one could easily argue that the Native Americans were the very first victims of enslavement and American racism. This is true. The “red” man was considered a savage, incapable of the same level of social progress and intellectual achievement as the white. Many of the tribal groups were hunters and gathers, freely roaming the land without establishing

permanent residences; however, others cultivated the land and developed advanced systems of social organization. Furthermore, some Native American tribes had practiced a form of slavery prior to the arrival of the Europeans and had a rudimentary understanding of a system of human bondage. As was the case in the earlier history of some Western and African nations, enslavement among Natives resulted from tribal warfare. Captured “prisoners of war” were forced into service for the victors. However, it was not a system of chattel slavery, which eliminated all human rights. The prisoners could regain their freedom and even, through marriage, become a member of the new tribal group. In addition, some tribal groups sold their prisoners into captivity to the colonists, while others enslaved Africans, supporting the system of chattel slavery.

The perceived weaknesses of the Native Americans led some to believe that they, too, could be forced into labor through a system of enslavement. Fortunately, the enslavement of Native Americans proved to be an impractical venture. In addition to the devastation caused to Native populations with the spread of “white man’s diseases,” the Native’s familiarity with the land resulted in frequent opportunities to escape. For more than 200 years, the descendants of Africa would carry the burden of enslavement, their labor used to build the economy of the new nation. The Native Americans, many of whom had been engaged in tribal warfare before and after the arrival of the Europeans, would need to focus their attention on the increasing conflict with the colonists. These conflicts resulted in the many Indian wars that occurred throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries.

## **MORAL JUSTIFICATIONS**

The establishment of slave laws was only one aspect of America’s justification for racist and discriminatory practices. With “the law” firmly on the side of the emerging white majority, Americans turned to another major social institution to provide moral justification for its actions: the Church.

The new settlers would proclaim that America was a Christian nation, where all could practice freedom of religion. The Protestant-dominated followers would use their faith to justify their superior position in the new land. The Creationists, who believed in God as the absolute creator of heaven and earth, were much more likely to embrace the monogenic approach to human development. God created Adam and Eve, the first human beings, who sinned in the Garden of Eden and, as a result, were forced out of paradise. Adam and Eve (and later Jesus and all of his disciples) were, undoubtedly, white people destined to assume a leadership role in the world. Furthermore, the Bible, Christianity’s sacred text, offered at least one explanation for the enslavement of blacks.

The very first book of the Bible, Genesis, Chapter 9, tells the story of the Curse of Ham, a reference to a curse placed on one of Ham’s four sons, Canaan. Genesis 9:25–27 specifically states:

And Noah said “Cursed be Canaan! A slave of slaves, a slave to his brothers! Blessed be God, the God of Shem, but Canaan shall be his slave. God prosper Japheth. . . . But Canaan shall be his slave.”

The curse carried the mark of blackness, a biblical reference frequently cited by the slaveholding Christians in America to justify the perpetual enslavement of Africans, presumed to be the descendants of Canaan and Ham. According to this biblical interpretation, the African was predestined to a life of forced servitude in the New World. The Protestant nation, which would declare its independence and freedom from the British Crown in 1776, utilized the scriptures in the Bible to explain their dehumanizing actions toward its African-descendant citizens.

Others, who deviated from the white norm with different colors and physical features, could also be explained utilizing biblical text. In Genesis 11:1–9, the story of the Tower of Babel explains the reasons why humans were scattered across the earth. This, we surmise, was an intentional action by God to disrupt any unified efforts to build a stairway to Heaven that would bypass the power and authority of the almighty. The people were divided: each given a different tongue and forced onto a new land. The European descendants were able to develop to their fullest potential; the Natives were not.

## THE MISCEGENOUS NATION

Miller and Mills's (2017) analysis of American history concludes that America is a miscegenous nation. Racial mixing has been an integral part of the American heritage since its early inception. However, numerous states made many attempts to prohibit racial intermingling with the passage of anti-miscegenation laws.

In the early 1600s, the record of Hugh Davis may provide the earliest indication of efforts to restrict interracial intercourse. Mixing Church (Christian values) and political beliefs, Davis was sentenced to be "soundly whipt before an assembly of negroes for abusing himself to the dishonor of God and the shame of Christianity by defiling his body in lying with a negro" (Jordan 1968, 78). In 1640, Robert Sweet of Virginia was ordered to do penance in church for getting a Negro woman with child; the woman was to be whipped. This, it was argued, was sanctioned according to the laws of England. In 1643, the Virginia Colonial Assembly codified into law the punishment for any white found guilty of fornication with a non-European and, by extension, a non-Christian. Finally, in 1691, a Virginia statute "banished and removed forever" any English manor woman who married a Negro, Indian, or mulatto, slave or free.

During the early colonial period, white indentured servants, enslaved Africans, and free blacks were placed in subordinate positions; their work for powerful masters resulted in frequent contact. Attempting to prohibit social and sexual intercourse among those who experienced oppression by the wealthy and powerful majority proved challenging. Sexual liaisons may have been a natural by-product of these close personal contacts, for both males and females. While the laws restricted interracial marriages for all, punishment for violations may have been particularly harsh for white women, expected to uphold the racial purity of the new society, and for black men who were their sexual partners. It was a difficult challenge. Moreover, it was evident that white women, and men, pursued sexual relations with members of different racial groups. In the state of Louisiana, for example, where the black population nearly doubled that of whites, the mixing of

the racial groups became part of the social norm. However, the French-controlled colony also enacted the “Code Noir,” banning interracial marriage in 1724. Unable to control the interracial liaisons, the French introduced the system of placage, sanctioning intimate, extramarital relationships between privileged white men and the more vulnerable free women of color.

Throughout the period of enslavement, sexual intercourse between masters, overseers, and slaves was common, producing a sizable mixed-race or mulatto population. In this social setting, the black female was the most victimized, lacking the power or ability to control her own body and reproductive process. While some would argue that relationships between master and slave evolved to the level of consensual sexual encounters (as with the long-term affair between Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemmings), this was unlikely the case for enslaved black women; rather, the raping of black women was a frequent occurrence during the period of enslavement.

Efforts to prohibit interracial unions occurred in all regions of the country. As the country expanded, new territories and states were concerned about the unions between blacks and whites, Native Americans and whites, Mexicans (Indian) and whites, and, finally, Asians and whites. In states where anti-miscegenation laws did not exist, the courts were forced to recognize the legitimacy of interracial marriages, which were viewed as a threat to white supremacy. However, in time, the anti-miscegenation laws, which first emerged in the South—Alabama, Florida, Virginia, and Maryland—and the North—Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island—emerged in new territories as well, including California, Idaho, Illinois, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Washington State. While some states did repeal these laws, it was the Supreme Court decision in *Loving v. Virginia* in 1967 that finally declared such laws unconstitutional.

## **RACIAL SEGREGATION**

Each state developed methods to enforce racial segregation, by law (*de jure*) or social customs (*de facto*). Residential segregation was a common practice in housing, education, employment, military service, transportation, public accommodations, and religious services.

European settlement in America focused on the takeover of prime land, specifically that which could be used for development. Farming communities and large plantations emerged in all of the 13 colonies, forcing Native populations to move further westward. The loss of Native American lands began during the colonial era, with the many resulting wars and conflicts ending in favor of the new colonists. Government endorsed and signed treaties, failing to protect the Native Americans in their new habitats. The addition of more white immigrants with the desire to claim a piece of America further worsened their position. From the post-American Revolutionary period to the beginning of the twentieth century, Native Americans resisted the ongoing land theft; however, the descendants of Europe emerged victorious. Native Americans were forced onto reservations. The Indian Removal Act of 1830, followed by the Trail of Tears, forced Native tribes out of the South, relocating them hundreds of miles away to the state of Oklahoma. The

pattern of Indian relocation to reservations was repeated: in the North, in Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania; in the Midwest, in Ohio, Indiana, Nebraska, Montana, South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, and Wisconsin; in the Southwest, in Arizona, New Mexico, Kentucky, and Texas; and in the West and Northwest, in California, Oregon, and Washington state. At the dawn of the twentieth century, the segregation of the Native Americans from the American mainstream was complete.

After more than 300 years of forced segregation, Native American communities have paid a heavy price. As Reid-Merritt notes:

A cursory view of the status of today's Native American communities offers a chilling story of the social and economic conditions as well. Native Americans continue to shoulder a heavier social burden than their white American counterparts. They live, disproportionately, below the poverty line and have higher rates of infant mortality and morbidity. They have a higher rate of heart disease, diabetes, tuberculosis, suicide, cancer and shorter life spans than do white Americans. There is a gap in educational achievement, with Native Americans underachieving in all areas: high school graduation, college and graduate degrees. These conditions are even worse for those who remain on the reservations, where they are plagued by substandard housing, limited employment opportunities and a "toxic" social environment. (2017, 16)

## **AFRICAN AMERICANS AND JIM CROW**

The historical narrative is somewhat different for African Americans, but a very rigid system of racial segregation resulted. During the colonial and post-American Revolutionary War period, separate slave quarters were created for the African populations; freedmen lived in racially segregated residential communities. Following the period of emancipation, blacks traveled near and far in search of housing and employment opportunities. In the South, in particular, efforts by black Americans to establish themselves as productive American citizens were hampered by the passage of Jim Crow laws, or Black Codes, restricting black freedoms and civil rights. Publicly enacted state and local laws in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Texas, and Louisiana forced segregation in the use of public accommodations, including education, transportation, hotels, restaurants, restrooms, swimming pools, beaches, and drinking fountains. Private businesses and employers also engaged in racial segregation practices, forcing employees to use separate dining halls, restrooms, and stairwells.

In small and large communities, once the black population reached a "critical mass," a black section of town emerged, or was forcibly created. Real estate developers and homeowners abided by "covenants" prohibiting the sale of homes to nonwhite families. "Sundown" towns not only prohibited blacks from purchasing homes, but threatened bodily harm if African Americans were caught in town after the sunset.

The Great Migration of the twentieth century resulted in the movement of hundreds of thousands of black families out of the South and into urban enclaves



further north and west. While all who fled the harsh social conditions of the South were seeking improved living conditions, the heavy influx of these Southern migrants led to the creation of “ghetto” communities in the North and west. Black ghetto communities flourished in places like Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Newark, New Jersey; Brooklyn, New York; Chicago, Illinois; Detroit, Michigan; St. Louis, Missouri; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Oakland, California. Many of these communities existed in close proximity to de facto white, ethnic enclaves, where second- and third-generations of Europeans immigrants, building on the concept of “ethnic succession,” struggled to be accepted as “white” Americans. After decades of overcrowding, underfunding, and physical deterioration, the racially segregated and increasingly isolated black ghettos served as breeding grounds for social problems related to poverty, discrimination, and social oppression.

While there are more than a few incidents of African Americans creating their own successful communities, which provided positive and supportive environments, the overall effect of racial segregation proved to be devastating. Racial segregation in housing resulted in the lack of availability of affordable and high-quality homes; banking and financial institutions failed to support black neighborhoods; “redlining” emerged as a common practice; and public services were curtailed or not readily available in all-black communities. Residential segregation also served to exasperate the existing de jure and de facto systems of racial segregation in the public schools. Black schools, often victims of underfunding with limited resources, were known for the poor quality of education offered to its students, trapping many in an ongoing cycle of poverty and despair.

Racial discrimination in employment and job opportunities meant that, for most of the twentieth century, black men and women were overrepresented in domestic, service, and low-skill occupations and underrepresented in skilled, managerial, and professional occupations. This “dual labor market” resulted in a preponderance of low-paying, undesirable jobs for members of the black communities, while reserving high-paying, desirable positions for members of the white community. The impact of centuries-old patterns of racial discrimination in the employment sector continues to be felt today. For example, data from the 2010 Census Report indicate that for households with \$100,000 incomes, whites represent 21.6 percent, while blacks represent only 9.7 percent. (It is important to note that Asian Americans had the highest percentage of 31.7%.) Employment conditions for black men and women have certainly improved, but after several centuries of discrimination, they continue to lag behind the norm and are not on equal standing with their counterparts. Moreover, the Census Report also indicates that on all key measures of social achievement—education, income, wealth, home ownership, longevity—blacks continue to lag behind their white counterparts.

## **MIXED-RACE AND OTHER**

The indigenous “brown” people, especially those from Mexico, faced similar hurdles. Hispanic, or the more popular term of Latino, refers to ethnic, not racial populations. Hispanics are Mexicans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Costa Ricans,

Dominicans, Colombians, Salvadorians, Argentinians, Peruvians, and others. As aptly noted by Garcia:

Latinos are not a “racial” group. Not all Latinos have jet-black hair or olive skin, just as not all Mexicans are short, dark-skinned, and “Indian-looking.” Latinos include persons with fair skin, blonde hair, and blue or green eyes, as well as persons who are typically misperceived as African American in New York or Philadelphia due to their phenotype. Other Latinos display more pronounced indigenous/Amerindian physical features. . . . The vast physical diversity found among Latinos derives from the colonial history of Latin America, in which male European conquistadors engaged in sexual and martial unions with indigenous and African females on a scale that far exceeded that which occurred in British colonial North America. Over the centuries, this amalgamation produced physically blended and phenotypic diverse populations throughout the Spanish-speaking empire. . . . Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and other Latinos whose ancestry consists of significant admixture between Europeans, Amerindians, and Africans—to varying degrees, depending on which nation or region of Latin America one’s heritage derives from—pose a major conceptual challenge to an American society that thinks of race in terms of concrete, clearly discernible categories. (2017, 160)

It is this amalgam of “European, Amerindian, and African” ancestry that we now identify as “miscegan”—the multiracially blended, brown people of the world. As indicated earlier, this population has emerged after generations of racial intermingling and, when asked to identify themselves on census forms, they are far more likely to select the category of “other,” given their discomfort in proclaiming their racial group to be white, black, or Native.

The experience of the Mexican, the largest (69%) Spanish-speaking population in America, is clearly one that has been racialized throughout U.S. history. During the period of early frontier expansion, many Mexicans who never traveled beyond the confines of their homesteads awakened to the reality of their new status as a citizen of the United States. Neither immigrants nor migrants, the Mexican Americans were victims of repeated waves of European and U.S. aggression. Invaded by the Europeans (Spaniards) in the sixteenth century, the area that we now call Texas was part of Mexico. Like all of the Americas, indigenous peoples occupied the land. In 1836, the white majority–controlled Republic of Texas declared its independence from the Republic of Mexico (which was also dominated by the Spanish-speaking European). The 1845 “Texas Annexation” incorporated the Republic of Texas into the United States of America. Texas was later admitted to the Union as the 28th state. Three years later, in the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the Mexican-American War, Mexico ceded a large section of the southwestern region to the United States, which included parts of California, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Wyoming, and Colorado. Once citizens of Mexico, those who decided to stay were now citizens of the United States, with the guarantee that they would be granted the rights and privileges of U.S. (white) citizenship. Unfortunately, American racism produced a different result.

Mexican Americans, different from the Africans and Native Americans, were legally classified as white by state and federal courts. But as noted by Fox and Guglielmo (2012, 328) “it was clearly a subordinate form of whiteness.” Mexican Americans, many recognizable because of their darker hue, but distinctively marked by the Spanish language, were placed in the category of other and faced

discrimination. And once joined by waves of immigrants from Mexico, they too faced segregation in education, employment, housing (barrios), and public facilities, created by de facto rules and customs rather than codified in law. Many of the southwestern states, including California, Arizona, and Texas, once home to the Mexican, now created separate schools for Mexican and Mexican American children. Like blacks, Mexican Americans were refused or granted limited access to restaurants, movie theaters, swimming pools, and other public facilities. The experience of the Mendez family provides a case in point. In 1945, the Mendez children were prohibited from enrolling in the local school in Orange County, California, due to their Mexican heritage. The father, Gonzalo Mendez, took the issue to court. In 1947, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Mendez family, ordering the Orange County school district to desegregate. *Mendez v. Westminster* became the first case in U.S. Supreme Court history to rule on school desegregation, occurring seven years prior to the landmark 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education, Topeka, Kansas*.

Since its founding, the United States has experienced four major immigration waves. The British, Germans, and the Scotch Irish dominated the first wave in the colonial era. The second wave during the post-American Revolutionary War and pre-Civil War era sent millions of Germans, Irish, and Scandinavians to our shores. At the turn of the twentieth century, the third wave resulted in 10 million new immigrants dominated by those coming from Italy, Poland, and Greece. However, it is the fourth, contemporary wave of immigration, the largest in our nation's history, which has resulted in millions of future U.S. citizens coming not from Europe like the first three waves, but from the Caribbean, Central America, and South America. These Spanish-speaking populations from south of our border often describe themselves as "people of color," but depending on the place of origin, they may also classify themselves as white or Afro-Latinos.

As with the Mexican American experience, it is the language, as well as the immigrant status, that has become racialized. The repeated experiences of the Spanish-speaking population with segregation and discrimination have resulted in many concluding that they are victims of American racism. The Hispanics, not a single ethnic nor racial group, are consistently identified as the fastest-growing minority group in America—a misnomer that adds to confusion about their racial and ethnic identity. In addition, issues around racism and colorism within the Hispanic community are too often overlooked. However, while the socioeconomic status varies within the group (Cuban Americans, for example, have achieved higher socioeconomic status than Mexicans and Puerto Ricans), overall, and by most measures, life experiences for the Hispanic community are comparable to that of African Americans. They, too, have higher rates of poverty, lower rates of educational achievement, lower income, less wealth, and the likelihood of being marginalized in low-skill, low-status occupations.

## THE DIVERSITY OF ASIAN AMERICANS

The Asian American population is a racial group consisting of many ethnic subgroups. They are as ethnically diverse as the Latino population and include the Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Filipino, Korean, Asian Indian, Native Hawaiian,

and other Pacific Islanders. Often described as the “model minority group,” their experiences are varied, marked by different periods of entry in America’s immigration history. They were not white, and in every state they landed, fell victim to American racism.

While Chinese immigration to America began as early as the seventeenth century, large numbers of immigrants descended on the West Coast during the mid-to late nineteenth century, who were viewed as the “yellow peril”—a racist epithet directed at Asia. In California, which served as the port of entry for Asian countries, social restrictions in employment, housing, education, marriage, and citizenship were placed on Chinese and Chinese American citizens. The Chinese were victimized by racial discrimination at the local, state, and federal levels; the impact proved devastating. First encouraged to come to the United States to fulfill the need for cheap labor when the demand for manual labor was high in the railroad and gold mining industries, the Chinese were viewed as hard-working, productive laborers. This cheap “coolie labor” was exploited until there was no further need for their services; resistance to Chinese immigration grew.

The Chinese community was socially isolated; they lived in segregated communities (Chinatowns), and their opportunities to participate in the American mainstream were limited. An unwelcome, alien culture with strange customs, a language that was difficult to understand, and a foreign religion, they were distained. More specifically, “the Chinese were victims of mob violence and murder; they served as scapegoats in labor conflicts; their businesses attacked and boycotted; and their children racially segregated in the public schools” (Reid-Merritt 2017, 13). Under the Naturalization Act of 1790, hundreds of thousands of Chinese who made America their home were denied U.S. citizenship. Rather, citizenship through the process of naturalization was reserved for white people. In the late nineteenth century, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 barred Chinese immigration to America for 10 years. And in 1892, it was extended for another 10 years, marking the first time in U.S. history that Congress acted to bar an entire group from entering the country.

Similar forms of racial discrimination and social humiliation were also directed at the Japanese. They, too, began a process of immigration to America in large numbers in the late nineteenth century. The Japanese worked as “laborers at low wages and under poor working conditions. Their industriousness in such circumstances made them popular with employers but unpopular with unions and other employees” (Schaefer 2011, 315). Labeled as dishonest, untrustworthy, “shifty-eyed” invaders, efforts were made to restrict Japanese immigration, bar them from landownership, limit their business opportunities, and segregate their children in the public school system. Immigration restrictions were not placed, specifically, on Japan; however, the Immigration Act of 1924 excluded nearly all Asians from the United States.

Discrimination against Japanese Americans intensified during World War II. Following the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, anti-Japanese sentiment flourished. It was not long before President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued an Executive Order forcing the evacuation of Japanese Americans to internment camps. The forced relocation resulted in the loss of their homes, material possessions, employment,

and community. Government detention centers and internment camps were located in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming, creating segregated communities, limited to Japanese detainees. These were wrongful acts of racism and discrimination, cloaked under the false pretense of “national security.” The U.S. government attempted to rectify this dark period in history with restitution payments to Japanese American families. However, government “reparations” to families of internment camp survivors can never fully compensate for the loss of social resources experienced by the Japanese American community.

Large numbers of Filipinos began migrating to the United States at the start of the twentieth century. The first wave followed the U.S. annexation of the Philippines in 1899, the second following World War II, and the third following the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act. Their immigration status differed from other Asian groups due to their status as U.S. nationals. Filipinos came as students, war brides, and skilled and unskilled laborers. In the west, Filipino migrants were needed to fill the agricultural labor shortage left by Chinese and Japanese laborers. While the women, who arrived in very small numbers, were stereotyped as “brides for hire,” the presence of a disproportionately larger male population was far more menacing. Labeled as “zoot-suiters,” a characteristic attached to young Mexican, African American, and Filipino men who wore flamboyant clothes, they were publically perceived as thugs and hoodlums, in hot pursuit of young white women. Conflict was inevitable. Such was the case with the infamous Zoot Suit Riots, in Los Angeles in 1943, a clash between white servicemen and police officers against men of color, including the Filipinos. A community dominated by men, the Filipinos faced many social pressures. They worked for low wages, in undesirable jobs, and occupied substandard housing. They were the target of anti-miscegenation laws. And at the beginning of World War II, they were prohibited from joining the army, a restriction later lifted by President Roosevelt.

It was the third wave of immigration that substantially increased the numbers of Filipinos in the United States. Nurses, health care workers, and higher-educated professionals would dominate this group, a pattern first established in the second wave. As their numbers increased, they gained greater acceptance into the American culture. The Filipino American population is disproportionately concentrated in the west, with smaller communities in the East Coast like New York, New Jersey, and Washington, D.C. And while the myth of the “model minority” continues to impact America’s perception of the assimilability of Asian Americans, Filipinos have achieved higher levels of education and higher incomes and experience lower levels of poverty than their white counterparts and members of other racial minority groups. Much the same could be said for the latest arrival of Asian immigrants, part of America’s fourth wave.

The immigration of large numbers of Koreans to America is a mid- to late twentieth-century phenomenon. Initially populated by low-skilled workers, the immigrant population was later dominated by skilled, managerial, and professional workers and are generally considered among the most successful of the Asian immigrant groups. They have higher incomes and levels of educational

achievement than native or foreign-born Americans. The same would be true for several other groups, more specifically those coming from India. For the most part, they too are likely to be highly skilled workers, concentrated in the professions and health science areas. However, the Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Laotians are also part of the mid-twentieth-century Asian immigration. Less-skilled and fleeing turmoil in their homeland, many were not well received in the United States and treated as undesirables.

There is much diversity within the Asian American community; not all are living the American Dream. As part of the nonwhite minority, Asian Americans continue to be victims of prejudice and discrimination. Successful Asian businesses in predominantly racial minority enclaves have faced criticism and hostility from the members of the local community. Moreover, conflicts have risen about the perception that Asians are competing with white Americans for jobs. Such was the case in the 1982 murder of Vincent Chin, beaten to death by two white men in Detroit. Chinese American Chin was thought to be a “jap,” tied to the Japanese automaking industry, making headway in the United States. Feeling threatened by the possible loss of their local jobs, the two white men bludgeoned him to death with a baseball bat.

## CONCLUSIONS

The history of race, racism, and race relations vary state by state. The Jim Crow South has a bloodied and torrid history of prejudice, discrimination, and violence against African Americans; but they are not alone. From the North to the South, and from the East to the West, the ideology of race and racial supremacy has negatively impacted the lives of all Americans—Caucasian, African, miscegen, Native, and Asian. The nation’s social indicators reveal the continuous presence of racial disparities in educational achievement, longevity, mortality, morbidity, housing, health care, occupational status, income, and wealth for many of America’s racial minorities. Throughout the country’s 250-year history, some progress has been achieved, but there remains a long path toward social equality that has yet to be traveled.

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# Alabama

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Robert Felgar

## CHRONOLOGY

**1539**

Hernando de Soto explores part of modern-day Alabama; the arrival of Europeans means the eventual destruction of the Native Americans in Alabama

**1704**

The first Africans imported into modern-day Alabama arrive at the site where Mobile now stands; they are regarded by the whites as human chattel

**1721**

The ship *Africane* sails into Mobile harbor and lands a cargo of over 100 slaves

**1763**

France cedes present-day Alabama to Great Britain

**1783**

Great Britain cedes the northern and central regions of present-day Alabama to the United States; Britain cedes the Mobile region to Spain

**1798**

Congress organizes the Mississippi Territory, which includes present-day Alabama

**1813**

The United States takes control of the Mobile area from Spain

**1817**

Congress establishes the Alabama Territory

**1818**

A slave named Rozetta becomes the first slave to be manumitted in the Alabama Territory

## **2 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1819**

Alabama enters the Union as the 22nd state on December 14

### **1819**

The first state constitution denies black people the franchise, even if they are free, although some Alabamians argue that free African American men should have the right to vote

### **1820**

According to the census, over 47,000 black slaves and 633 free blacks reside in Alabama

### **1830**

According to the census, Alabama's slave population has more than doubled in a decade, with over 117,000 black slaves now resident in the state, as well as almost 1,600 free blacks

### **1850s**

Because of Northern agitation over the question of slavery expansion into the territories, William Lowndes Yancey (1814–1863) of Alabama advocates “states’ rights” and urges the Southern slave states to secede from the Union

### **1860**

Alabama prohibits the manumission of slaves

### **1861**

Alabama secedes from the United States on January 11, becoming the fourth Southern state to do so

### **1861–1865**

An estimated 10,000 black Alabamians fight for the Union during the Civil War

### **1861**

Representatives from Alabama and five other seceded states meet in Montgomery on February 4 to form the Confederate States of America; Jefferson Davis of Mississippi is sworn in as president of the Confederacy on February 18 on the steps of the Alabama capitol in Montgomery

### **1863**

President Abraham Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, thereby freeing slaves in states, like Alabama, that are in rebellion against the United States

### **1865**

Congress establishes the Freedmen's Bureau

### **1865**

On December 2, Alabama ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

### **1866**

The Alabama legislature passes the state's Black Code, which tightly and cruelly controls black workers in the state

**1866**

Lincoln Normal School, a private education institution for African Americans, is established in Marion; the school relocates to Montgomery in 1887 and eventually becomes Alabama State University

**1868**

On July 13, Alabama formally rejoins the Union after adopting a new state constitution that allows African Americans to vote; on the same day, Alabama ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which extends citizenship to African Americans

**1868**

Willard Warner and George E. Spencer, both Republicans and both Union Army veterans, become Alabama's senators in Washington, D.C.

**1869**

Alabama ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in November; the amendment extends the vote to African American men

**1870**

According to the census, African Americans comprise almost 48 percent of the state's population

**1870**

Republican Benjamin S. Turner is the first African American elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Alabama

**1872**

Republican James T. Rapier, a black man from Lauderdale County, is elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Alabama

**1874**

Jeremiah Haralson, born a slave on a plantation near Columbus, is elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Alabama

**1877–1950**

An estimated 326 African Americans are lynched in Alabama during this 73-year period

**1880**

The African American National Baptist Convention is organized in Montgomery

**1881**

On February 10, the Alabama legislature establishes Tuskegee Institute as a normal school for the education of African American teachers; graduates of the Institute must agree to teach two years within the state; Booker T. Washington arrives in June to be principal of the Institute

**1890s**

More lynchings of blacks occur in Alabama during this decade than in any other state

## **4 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1896**

George Washington Carver arrives in Alabama on October 8 to direct the Agricultural School of the Tuskegee Institute

### **1896**

Margaret Murray Washington, the wife of Booker T. Washington, and others establish the National Association of Colored Women

### **1896**

The U.S. Supreme Court affirms the constitutionality of the “separate but equal” doctrine as related to race relations in its *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision

### **1900**

The U.S. Census finds that blacks comprise about 45 percent of the state’s population

### **1901**

A new state constitution disenfranchises black Alabamians; Booker T. Washington and other black leaders protest, but to no avail

### **1903**

On September 3, social worker Carrie Tuggle founds the Tuggle Institute in Birmingham to provide safe housing and a good education for orphaned African American children

### **1913**

The first Alabama chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is established

### **1916**

The Robert E. Lee Klaven in Birmingham becomes the first local Ku Klux Klan group to be organized in the state since the 1870s

### **1920**

The United Mine Workers, of which many members are black, strikes in Birmingham

### **1920**

An estimated 39 percent of black Alabamians are illiterate

### **1921**

Plans for the establishment of an all-black hospital for black veterans take shape in Tuskegee

### **1927**

Governor Bibb Graves establishes the state’s Division of Negro Education

### **1930**

About 5,000 workers, many of them black, demonstrate for jobs in Birmingham at the start of the Great Depression

**1931**

Nine black youths are arrested in Paint Rock and accused of raping two white women on a freight train; held in jail in Scottsboro, the youths, who are soon known as the “Scottsboro Boys,” are convicted by all-white juries and sentenced to death, though the questionable evidence produced at trial leads to public outrage and to the U.S. Supreme Court twice overturning the convictions

**1932**

The Tuskegee syphilis experiment, a clinical study conducted between 1932 and 1972 by the U.S. Public Health Service, saw poor African Americans go untreated for syphilis to observe the natural progression of the disease; the patients entered the program under the guise of receiving free health care from the U.S. government

**1936**

Jesse Owens, who was born in Oakville, Alabama, stars in the Olympics in Berlin, winning four gold medals.

**1937**

Hugo Black, a former Alabama Klansman, is appointed to U.S. Supreme Court by President Franklin D. Roosevelt

**1938**

Alabama native Joe Louis, the “Brown Bomber,” becomes the heavyweight boxing champion

**1941**

A squadron of African American fighter pilots begins training at Tuskegee and at Maxwell Army Airfield in Montgomery; eventually known as the “Tuskegee Airmen,” these pilots distinguish themselves in air combat during World War II

**1946**

“Big Jim” Folsom, a Democrat, is elected governor of Alabama; Folsom was among the first Southern governors to advocate a moderate position on integration and to speak for civil rights for African Americans

**1946**

Passage of the Boswell Amendment makes it more difficult for blacks in Alabama to register to vote

**1947**

George Wallace is elected to the Alabama State House of Representatives

**1948**

George Wallace and other Alabama delegates walk out of the Democratic Convention in protest of President Harry Truman’s support of civil rights for black Americans

## **6 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1948**

The Dixiecrat Party, comprising Democrats dissatisfied with the national Democratic Party's stand on racial issues, meets in Birmingham and nominates South Carolina governor Strom Thurmond for president; Thurmond easily carries Alabama in November

### **1954**

The U.S. Supreme Court rules against segregated public schools in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*.

### **1954**

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. becomes pastor of Montgomery's Dexter Avenue Baptist Church on October 31

### **1955–1956**

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. leads the Montgomery bus boycott; the boycott begins on December 1, 1955, when Rosa Parks, an African American woman, refuses to give up her seat to a white passenger as required by a Montgomery city ordinance

### **1956**

During the bus boycott, Dr. King's Montgomery home is bombed on January 30—the house is damaged, but no one is hurt; the boycott ends on December 21, when the U.S. Supreme Court orders the desegregation of Montgomery's buses

### **1956**

Autherine Lucy tries unsuccessfully to desegregate the University of Alabama

### **1958**

John Patterson, running with the support of the Ku Klux Klan, defeats George Wallace, who is endorsed by the NAACP, for governor of Alabama; Wallace declares that he will never be “out-niggered” again

### **1958**

In its June 30 decision in *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) v. Alabama*, the U.S. Supreme Court ends Alabama's attempts to prevent the NAACP from operating in the state

### **1961**

On May 1, Harper Lee of Monroeville wins the Pulitzer Prize for her novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, which portrays race relations in Alabama in the 1930s

### **1961**

The Freedom Riders bus is set on fire in Anniston; the Freedom Riders, who are attempting to test the 1960 U.S. Supreme Court decision desegregating bus and train terminals, receive similar hostile receptions in Birmingham and in Montgomery, where their bus is attacked on May 20

### **1962**

George Wallace is elected governor of Alabama, largely by using race-baiting

**1963**

On May 19, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail," where King is being held for participation in Birmingham civil rights demonstrations, is issued; the letter becomes a seminal text of the civil rights movement

**1963**

Governor George Wallace "stands in the schoolhouse door" in an unsuccessful attempt to prevent the University of Alabama from being integrated

**1963**

On September 15, the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham is bombed, killing four African American girls—11-year-old Denise McNair and 14-year-olds Carole Robertson, Cynthia Wesley, and Addie Mae Collins

**1963**

Segregationists bomb the offices of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in Birmingham and the Birmingham home of A.D. King, the brother of Martin Luther King

**1965**

On March 21, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. leads over 3,000 civil rights demonstrators on a march from Selma to Montgomery after the failure of two previous attempts

**1965**

On May 7, civil rights demonstrators attempting to march from Selma to Montgomery to demand the end of voting restrictions on blacks are attacked by state and local law enforcement officers as they cross Selma's Edmund Pettus Bridge; the scene is broadcast on national television, winning the demonstrators much support

**1965**

President Lyndon Johnson signs the Voting Rights Act

**1973**

Chris McNair, father of one of the girls killed in the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church bombing in 1963, is elected to Alabama state legislature

**1979**

Richard Arrington is inaugurated as the first black mayor of Birmingham

**1982**

Oscar Adams wins election to the Alabama Supreme Court, becoming the first African American elected to statewide office in Alabama

**1992**

Astronaut Mae Jemison of Decatur becomes the first African American woman in space

**1992**

The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute opens

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### **1998**

President Bill Clinton appoints Dr. David Satcher of Anniston as U.S. Surgeon General

### **2000**

The U.S. Census finds over 1.1 million African Americans living in Alabama, comprising about 25 percent of the state's population

### **2002**

Alabama ratifies the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which abolishes the poll tax; the amendment had gone into effect 38 years earlier in 1964

### **2002**

On May 22, Bobby Frank Cherry, the last living suspect, is convicted of murder in the 1963 bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, which killed four black girls

### **2002**

Vonetta Flowers of Birmingham wins a gold medal in bobsledding at the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics, thus becoming the first African American to win gold at a winter Olympics

### **2005**

President George W. Bush names Condoleezza Rice, an Alabama native, as secretary of state, making her the first African American woman to hold the office

### **2008**

Barack Obama, the Democratic presidential candidate, wins the White House, but loses Alabama, receiving only 10 percent of the white vote in the state

### **2010**

The number of undocumented immigrants in Alabama is estimated at 120,000, up from an estimated 25,000 in 2000; the promise of jobs in the agricultural, meat-packing, and construction industries is thought to drive the increase of illegal immigration to the state

### **2011**

The Alabama legislature passes and the governor signs Alabama HB 56, titled the Beason-Hammon Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act, an anti-illegal immigration measure that seeks to make life in Alabama so difficult for undocumented immigrants that they choose to self-deport

### **2012**

President Barack Obama receives only 15 percent of the white vote in Alabama in the 2012 presidential election

### **2015**

The Huntsville chapter of the NAACP advocates for the removal of the Confederate battle flag from the uniforms and cruisers of the Alabama Highway Patrol

### **2016**

Republican Donald Trump, running on an anti-illegal immigration platform, carries Alabama with over 62 percent of the vote



**2017**

The state legislature enacts and the governor signs the Alabama Memorial Preservation Act, which bars local governments from removing, renaming, or altering monuments, memorial streets, memorial buildings, and architecturally significant buildings located on public property for 40 or more years; the act also creates the Committee on Alabama Monument Protection

**NARRATIVE**

Prior to statehood in 1819, the Native peoples of the area were killed, decimated by disease, or forced to leave by whites, thus ensuring that the story of race and racism in Alabama would be mainly about blacks and whites, at least until the issue of unauthorized immigration into Alabama, mainly from Mexico and Latin America, arose in the twenty-first century.

One of Alabama's more progressive governors, Bibb Graves (1873–1942), liked to tell the story of how little mules pulled wagons laden with corn, but the big mules tied to the back of the wagons ate it at their leisure. In other words, a wealthy, powerful handful of white men have traditionally fed off the work of the masses of poor black and white men and women of Alabama, and, many would argue, they still do. To maintain their privileged position, they have used the divide and conquer strategy; that is, they have encouraged poor whites and blacks to fight each other, rather than work together for a better life. Poor whites were told that they were at least better than blacks, something that would change if blacks become their social equals. However crude and obvious, this thinking has been effective in preventing social equality and democracy from realizing their potential in Alabama, as well as keeping change for the better at a snail's pace. However, it is important to emphasize that throughout the last 200 years, numerous black and white women and men in Alabama have challenged such concepts.

**The Civil War and Reconstruction**

About 435,000 African American slaves lived in Alabama in 1860; they comprised about 45 percent of the state's total population. Following the lead of South Carolina, which left the Union on December 20, 1860, Alabama seceded on January 11, 1861. It did so for a number of reasons, including the perpetuation of slavery. Probably somewhere between 30,000 and 40,000 white Alabama men died during the Civil War to protect the institution of slavery. Since the surviving white soldiers were unlikely to acknowledge that they were wrong in fighting the war, most black Alabamians understood, as the war ended, that they were going to be blamed by many white Alabamians for the devastating defeat of the Confederacy. Alabama's surrender took place near Mobile on April 29, 1865, 20 days after Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox courthouse in Virginia on April 9, 1865. Black Alabamians also soon learned that although white Alabamians lost the war on the battlefield, they would prevail in a racial war in the state for over a hundred years after the Civil War ended. They also learned that their position in the socio-economic hierarchy would remain the same as it had been before 1861—at the

very bottom. It was much easier for whites to use blacks as the reason for their defeat than to admit that they were wrong about slavery and secession. Blacks were a convenient way for whites to avoid responsibility and guilt for the war and its aftermath.

Some black Alabamians fought for the Union, so not all of them tolerated white racial prejudice passively. Historians estimate that approximately 7,300 black Alabamians, mostly former slaves, fought for the Union. Although led by white officers, they fought bravely against Confederate troops, especially in a battle at Athens, Alabama, in late September 1864. African American troops gained self-respect and respect from white soldiers in the Union Army, who were impressed by their courage under fire. Black soldiers in regiments from Alabama and other states played a vital role in winning the war and overthrowing the Confederacy.

But it also needs to be noted that not all white Alabamians supported secession or slavery. A substantial number fought for the Union. Close to 3,000 white Alabamians enlisted in the Union Army, most of them in the 1st Alabama Cavalry Regiment. One county in northern Alabama, Winston, was opposed to secession and the Confederacy, and legend states that Winston County seceded from Alabama when Alabama seceded from the Union. A statue dressed half as a Confederate soldier and half as a Union soldier was erected at Double Springs, the Winston County seat.

Most unfortunately, the equality, at least in the legal sense, that African American Union soldiers from Alabama won for themselves and other black male Alabamians eroded after federal troops left the state in 1874, three years earlier than in the rest of the South. President Abraham Lincoln's successor, Andrew Johnson, was no friend of the freedmen; he allowed ex-Confederates in Alabama and other states that had been in rebellion against the United States to reestablish racial relations as they had existed before the Civil War. In 1867, the Radical Republicans tried to protect the civil rights of black Alabamians, but by 1874, ex-Confederates were largely in control of the state, while the myth that blacks and the federal government had taken over Alabama after the war grew. Black Alabamians were not to be fully emancipated for another century.

### **The “Scottsboro Boys” and the Tuskegee Syphilis Study**

In 1931, nine young black men on a freight train in northeast Alabama got into a fight with some white men; after the latter were driven off the train, they notified white authorities. Arrested and held in Scottsboro jail, the nine soon became known as the “Scottsboro boys.” Police also questioned two white women, Ruby Bates and Victoria Price, who were on the train. Fearing charges of immorality and vagrancy, the women accused the nine men of rape. Both women knew that such a charge would result in turning legal (and social and political) attention away from them and toward the blacks; such a charge, however untrue, was often made to get black men lynched. Even though medical examiners indicated neither woman had been raped, all of the accused were judged guilty by all-white juries in trial after trial. With the possible exception of the Emmett Till case in Mississippi



These nine African American youths, known as the Scottsboro Boys, were imprisoned in Scottsboro, Alabama, after being falsely accused of raping two white women in a freight car. Here, the young men are pictured conferring with civil rights activist Juanita Jackson Mitchell in 1937. The boys' convictions were overturned when the U.S. Supreme Court declared that the defendants were denied due process. (Library of Congress)

in 1955, the Scottsboro case is the most famous and outrageous example of how the American legal system has suppressed black men in the twentieth century. One of the two women even admitted that there was no merit whatsoever to the charge of rape, but her admission had no immediate effect (she later even joined protests against their conviction). But as in the case of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, a strategy whites thought would “keep blacks in their place” backfired as the various unfair trials and convictions resulted in national and international condemnations of Alabama’s injustices against African Americans. Two U.S. Supreme Court rulings on the Scottsboro trials were crucial in increasing justice for black Americans and also explain why this notorious case helped prepare the way for the modern civil rights movement. In *Powell v. Alabama* (1932), the court established a precedent guaranteeing African Americans the right to competent counsel, while *Patterson v. Alabama* (1935) and *Norris v. Alabama* (1935) helped ensure that juries would no longer be all-white. Alabama governor Robert Bentley exonerated all nine men in 2013, but the incident continues to tarnish the state’s image more than 80 years after it occurred.

The year after the Scottsboro incident, the state’s racial image was further tarnished. Resembling Nazi medical experiments in Hitler’s Germany, the Tuskegee Syphilis Study, which began in 1932 and continued until 1972, further tarnished the state’s racial image. Poor, black male Alabamians, in return for free burial insurance and medical “care,” were used, without their knowledge, as subjects for medical experimentation on syphilis, a venereal disease that can be fatal. Managed through the auspices of the U.S. Public Health Service, the experiment was based on the intentional concealment from the men that they were not being

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### ***Lynching of Michael Donald***

The last recorded lynching in the United States occurred in Mobile, Alabama, on March 21, 1981. On that evening, the local Ku Klux Klan, angered by the failure of a mixed race jury to convict a black man charged with killing a white police officer, burned a cross on the lawn of the Mobile County courthouse. One speaker at this rally declared: "If a black man can get away with killing a white man, we ought to be able to get away with killing a black man" (Kornbluth 1987). Armed with a gun and rope, two men left the meeting to drive around Mobile looking for an African American to attack. Coming upon 19-year-old Michael Donald (1961–1981), the Klansmen lured him to their car by asking directions to a local club. They then seized Donald and drove him out to the countryside at gunpoint. When they stopped, Donald tried to escape, but the men pursued and caught him. They beat him with a tree branch and strangled him with the rope until he stopped moving. The men then cut his throat and drove into a mixed-race neighborhood, where they left Donald's body hanging from a tree.

One of the attackers, Henry Hays, was convicted of murder, sentenced to death, and executed in 1997. He was the first white man executed for the murder of a black man in Alabama since 1913. The other attacker, James Knowles, received life in prison. Donald's mother filed a civil suit for wrongful death against the United Klans of America (UKA), the group to which Hays and Knowles belonged. The award of \$7 million that Mrs. Donald won in 1987 bankrupted the UKA and set a precedent for civil legal action against other racist groups.

treated for syphilis. When it was learned that penicillin could help cure syphilis, they were not given the necessary shots. To this day, the African American community in Alabama and the country is leery of the American medical establishment because of this study, knowing that whites in the medical field have had no problem in not treating black men for syphilis even when those men thought they were being so treated.

### **George Wallace and Segregation**

In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that segregated public schools were unconstitutional, a decision that overturned the court's 1896 ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. *Plessy* had stated that segregated public schools were constitutional so long as they were "separate but equal" to white schools, a decision that in fact meant that white and black schools would be separate but hardly equal. Predictably, white Alabamians resisted this change in a number of ways, even though Chief Justice Earl Warren's logic was irrefutable: "We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." Perhaps the main resistance strategy was the establishment of so-called seg (segregation) academies throughout the state to which white parents could send their children instead of the public schools. Some black people were not enthusiastic about the Supreme Court's decision, either. The celebrated author of *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Zora Neale Hurston, said, "How much satisfaction can I get from a court order for

somebody to associate with me who does not wish me near them?" In Alabama, progress toward integrating the public schools has been very slow. In 1956, Autherine Lucy, an African American woman, was expelled and subjected to racist taunts when she tried to register for classes at the University of Alabama, which remained segregated until the early 1960s.

In 1962, Alabama's most famous native son, George Wallace, was elected governor for the first of three times. In some ways a disaster for black Alabamians, he in other ways inadvertently helped them considerably by creating a racial atmosphere conducive to white violence against black Alabamians; this violence was so horrific that it focused national and international attention on the state to the extent that legislation was passed at the federal level that supported the civil rights movement.

Wallace was a born politician. He was much more interested in running for governor than he was in serving as governor. He used the office of governor as a base from which he could make ultimately unsuccessful runs for the presidency in 1968 and 1972. After serving as a page in the state senate in 1933 and serving the country in World War II, he was a member of the state legislature for six years; he made his first run for governor in 1958. He criticized his opponent, John Patterson, for his connection to the Ku Klux Klan, which resulted in the support of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), support Wallace did not want. Vowing to never be defeated by the racial issue again, he won in 1962 through racist appeals for support. He used pro-segregation stands and empty posturing against the federal government as the basis of his political strategy from then on, most famously in his "stand in the schoolhouse door" at the University of Alabama in 1963. The empty gesture of futilely trying to hold back the integration of the university was very effective as a symbol of the state of Alabama's white citizens' resistance to the federal government and integration.

After surviving an assassination attempt in 1972, he modified his racial views, realizing he would need black votes to be elected governor again. Wallace was, in other words, an expedient politician who would use race baiting when it served his interests and drop it when it did not. He believed in running for office above everything else.

### **Martin Luther King and the "Letter from Birmingham Jail"**

Two years after Wallace was first elected governor in 1962, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote his famous "Letter from Birmingham Jail" (King 2014, 594–607), a title that echoed St. Paul's numerous incarcerations as recorded in the New Testament. King was responding to a letter from white ministers who cautioned him to consider that nonviolent demonstrations could lead to violence. His brilliant strategy was, in part, to ask them why they, who professed Christianity, were not in jail with him (if they had been, they would have been in separate cells because black and white prisoners were segregated from each other in Birmingham's jails in 1964). King begins the letter with a quiet irony by addressing the white pastors

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as his “dear fellow clergymen,” which of course they were not, although he hopes they will become so. Noting that “Birmingham is probably the most thoroughly segregated city in the United States,” he explains to the white ministers that black people are demonstrating in that city to challenge the evils of racism through non-violence. The response to those demonstrations was Sheriff “Bull” Connor’s ordering the use of police dogs and high-pressure water hoses against black demonstrators.

Cleverly mentioning the father of Western philosophy, Socrates, a philosopher he thinks his white readers would presumably be proud of, Dr. King points out that the philosopher encouraged the ancient Greeks to challenge society’s lies. This is just one of King’s numerous references to Western ideas and thinkers that white pastors admired, so they cannot claim King is judging them or white Birmingham in general by alien standards; he is judging them by their own heritage, particularly Christianity, which they profess but do not practice. King also cites Reinhold Niebuhr, a twentieth-century white theologian, who opposed racism and supported nonviolent resistance to it. King also mentions *Brown v. Board of Education* and St. Augustine, the first a condemnation of segregated public schools, like the ones in Birmingham, and the second a Western Christian theologian who believed that “an unjust law is no law at all.” King then argues that segregation statutes are unjust because they damage the soul and the personality, and they must be resisted openly, with love, and with a willingness to accept the consequences.

He then changes direction and looks directly at “white moderates,” as he terms them; he confesses that he has almost concluded that they are a greater obstacle to freedom for black people than the Klan or the white Citizen’s Council (an organization opposed to the integration of public schools): “Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection.” This brilliant and rousing letter was a key element in helping to create an atmosphere conducive to allowing African Americans to finally obtain a substantial measure of their rights as U.S. citizens.

### **Civil Rights Movement in Alabama**

In early May 1963, when support for demonstrations was losing its momentum in Birmingham, Martin Luther King Jr. and other black civil rights leaders decided to encourage black school children to march for their rights. This was a risky strategy (Malcolm X, a more outspoken black leader at the time, said real men do not use children like this), but it worked because police commissioner “Bull” Connor ordered the Birmingham police to use high-pressure water hoses and German shepherds to intimidate the young black demonstrators. The water hoses blasted clothes off children and tore their skin, as well as knocking them down and causing great pain. Journalists reported what they observed in local, national, and international newspapers; television broadcasted brutal images of this police violence to millions of homes across the United States. Within a few days, white

leaders in Birmingham agreed to desegregate businesses in the city and release the black children from jail. King's nonviolent tactics were extremely successful in this instance. The Birmingham Board of Education was forced to withdraw its decision that black children who participated in this crusade be expelled from their schools.

Later in 1963, one of the most shocking, outrageous, and infamous crimes ever committed by white racists against black Americans occurred at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham. On a Sunday morning, a bomb that four members of the Ku Klux Klan had planted in the church exploded, resulting in the murder of four African American girls. So, evil was this event that the consciences of many whites in and out of Alabama prompted the unavoidable realization that segregation had to end. National and international exposure of the racial hatred in Birmingham helped pave the way for the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The Selma to Montgomery march in 1965 also figures prominently in Alabama's racial history. The marchers were determined to bring about voting rights for black Alabamians. Of the various marches, the one across the Edmund Pettus Bridge on "Bloody Sunday," March 7, 1965, was the most consequential. The bridge was named after a former Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan, Edmund Pettus; as the marchers crossed it, they were attacked by Alabama state troopers and sheriff's deputies, some on horseback. Subjected to beatings and tear gas, the marchers were forced back across the bridge. The images of this brutality and injustice quickly became among the most reprinted in the civil rights movement. The country and

### ***Alabama Chapter of the NAACP***

The Alabama chapter of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the first one in the South, was founded in 1913. The Alabama chapter opened branches throughout the state after World War I. Black veterans returned from the war with heightened expectations about civil rights for black Americans. World War II had an even stronger effect on Alabama's black soldiers, who after fighting and dying for the United States overseas could still not vote when they returned home. Understandably, the number of branches and membership of NAACP surged in the 1940s, when more black Alabamians from the working class and more black women began to join. Rosa Parks, for instance, became secretary of the Montgomery chapter.

In 1956, the attorney general of Alabama, John Patterson, filed a lawsuit against the Alabama NAACP based on the idea that it was illegal for out-of-state companies to do business in Alabama without following proper bureaucratic procedures. His suit also alleged that the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955–1956 hurt the state's national image, although the racial bigotry exposed by resistance to the boycott probably caused far more damage to the state's image. In the 1958 Supreme Court decision in *NAACP v. Alabama*, Justice John Marshall Harlan ruled in favor of the NAACP.

In 2015, the Huntsville NAACP chapter advocated for the removal of the Confederate battle flag from the uniforms and cruisers of Alabama state troopers. In 2017, the Alabama NAACP held a sit-in in Senator Jeff Sessions's office in Mobile to protest the senator's nomination as attorney general by President Donald Trump.

the world saw what racism in Alabama looked like and were appalled. These images helped to move Congress to pass the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which was designed to stop the use of literacy tests during voter registration.

### **The Twenty-First Century**

According to the 2000 census, undocumented immigrants in Alabama, mainly from Mexico and Latin America, numbered about 25,000 individuals. By the 2010 census, the number of undocumented immigrants in the state had risen dramatically to about 120,000 individuals. The abundance of jobs in the state's agricultural, meatpacking, and construction industries was the magnet attracting illegal immigration to Alabama. In response to this trend, the Alabama legislature enacted Alabama HB 56, titled the Beason-Hammon Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act, which was signed into law by Governor Robert J. Bentley on June 9, 2011. The measure required the police, if they had "reasonable suspicion" that someone whom they had legally stopped, detained, or arrested might be an undocumented immigrant, to make a reasonable attempt to determine that person's legal status.

The law prohibited illegal immigrants from receiving any public benefits at either the state or local level and from attending any public colleges or universities. The law also required school officials at the public high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools to ascertain whether students were illegal immigrants. Although such students were not banned from attendance, school districts were ordered to submit annual tallies of the suspected number of illegal immigrants in their schools to state education officials.

With the aim of encouraging undocumented immigrants in Alabama to self-deport, HB 56 prohibited the transporting or harboring of illegal immigrants, the renting of property to illegal immigrants, and knowingly hiring illegal immigrants for any job within the state. The measure considered refusing to hire a legal resident when an illegal one was already employed to be a discriminatory practice. The law banned illegal immigrants from applying for employment, and it required businesses of all sizes to validate the immigration status of employees using the U.S. E-Verify program. Finally, the law required voters to provide proof of citizenship when registering to vote.

Legal actions undertaken by the Obama administration and by various religious, student, and immigrant rights groups, which contended that the law was unconstitutional, led to the courts backing various provisions of the measure, such as the ban on attending public colleges and the prohibition against harboring or transporting undocumented immigrants. On September 29, 2011, a federal court upheld most of the law, allowing it to go into effect. Several Alabama school districts subsequently reported a significant drop in the number of Hispanic children attending their schools, even though school officials urged immigrants to keep their children in the school because the law did not bar them from attending.

The impact of the law has been much debated. Industries dependent on migrant labor soon reported a shortage of workers because American citizens proved



unwilling to work under the conditions or for the low pay that undocumented workers accepted. The law also led to several high-profile embarrassments. In 2011, a German Mercedes-Benz executive was arrested for not having proper documentation when he left his passport in his hotel room, and a Japanese Honda executive was stopped by a police checkpoint to catch unlicensed drivers and ticketed even though he had a valid passport and a U.S. work permit.

In December 2011, the state reported that its unemployment rate had fallen from 9.2 percent to 8.7 percent. Supporters credited the immigration law for the decrease, though opponents claimed that most of the state's job growth in 2011 was in the automotive sector, where undocumented workers were uncommon. Sectors where Latinos typically worked—construction, agriculture, and poultry processing—showed little job growth.

In 2017, Alabama became caught up in the growing debates over removing Confederate monuments from public spaces. In 2015, the Huntsville chapter of the NAACP called for the removal of the Confederate battle flag from the uniforms and cruisers of the Alabama Highway Patrol. In 2017, the Alabama legislature enacted the Alabama Memorial Preservation Act, which bars local governments from removing, renaming, or altering monuments, memorial streets, memorial buildings, and architecturally significant buildings located on public property for 40 or more years. The act also created the Committee on Alabama Monument Protection to oversee such monuments. White Alabamians, who overwhelmingly voted for Donald Trump and his anti-illegal immigration platform in 2016, tended to support the president's calls for preserving some such monuments as part of the country's national heritage.

## NOTABLE FIGURES

### **Parks, Rosa (1913–2005)**

Rosa Parks, “the mother of the civil rights movement,” was born in Tuskegee on February 4, 1913. She became one of the key figures in the modern civil rights movement, as well as an enduring symbol of resisting racial bias, but she did more than this. She was, for example, one of the few black Alabamians of her generation to graduate from high school. She was also a generous financial supporter of civil rights causes and organizations, as well as someone who encouraged younger African Americans in their quests for social justice.

Parks was not the first black bus rider who challenged Alabama's Jim Crow laws regarding where its black citizens could sit on a public bus. Claudette Colvin, for instance, defied the law earlier in 1955, but black leaders decided to concentrate on Parks because she was older and she was considered less outspoken than Colvin. The law behind the segregation on Alabama's public transit system was established by *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), a U.S. Supreme Court decision that required black passengers, during train travel within former Confederate states, to travel in cars separate from those reserved for whites.

After Rosa Parks left work on December 1, 1955, she boarded a bus to go home. During the ride, she refused to give up her seat to a white passenger when told to

do so, and thereby initiated the Montgomery bus boycott. The boycott ended a little over a year later when the U.S. Supreme Court ordered the desegregation of the Montgomery bus system, which was used much more by black passengers than white ones. Whenever Rosa Parks heard that she did not give her seat only because she was tired from working, she corrected that claim, saying that she was tired of being told where she could sit on a bus even though she had paid the 10-cent fare like everyone else. And sometimes, black passengers, after paying at the front of the bus, were ordered to get off and reenter at the back, allowing some bus drivers to drive away before black bus riders could reenter.

African American activists in Montgomery understood that Rosa Parks gave them a strong basis upon which to challenge one aspect of Alabama's racism. Combining passive resistance with litigation, these leaders organized a boycott of Montgomery's buses that hurt the pocketbooks of white people, convincing them to give ground on this issue. Thousands of the city's black citizens walked many miles, in all sorts of weather, instead of taking the bus. And although it was actually another case, *Browder v. Gayle*, that changed the law regarding black people giving up their seats, Rosa Parks remained a key symbol of the modern civil rights movement.

Parks also deserves credit for her support for black civil rights before the Montgomery bus boycott, particularly in the case of a black woman named Recy Taylor. As secretary of the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP, Parks helped organize protests against the outrageous treatment Recy Taylor was subjected to after she was kidnapped by six white men. Forced into a car at gunpoint, Taylor was taken to a patch of trees, where she was forced to undress and gang-raped. Two all-white juries took the position that the men were innocent. The black community was furious, and news of the case spread, but no one was ever found guilty. Recy Taylor was subjected to numerous death threats and was afraid to go out at night.

After the success of the Montgomery boycott, Parks and her husband left Montgomery for Hampton, Virginia, and then for Detroit, where she worked for Congressman John Conyers for 30 years. She also took part in the Selma to Montgomery marches in 1963 and praised Malcolm X, the firebrand speaker for black people's right to self-defense. She was particularly interested in ending housing segregation in Detroit.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Parks had health and financial problems, but she remained active in the cause of black civil rights. In 1994, Parks's home was broken into by a black man who robbed and assaulted her. When she died in 2005, Parks was honored in numerous ways that indicated her exalted status as a key civil rights figure who had helped change the direction of the United States. Condoleezza Rice, who grew up in Birmingham and became secretary of state under President George W. Bush, said at a memorial service for Parks in Montgomery that she would probably not have achieved such status except for Parks.

### **Washington, Booker T. (1856–1915)**

Booker T. Washington founded Tuskegee Institute, now the University of Tuskegee, in Tuskegee, Alabama, on July 4, 1881, by the authority of the Alabama legislature. From then on, he began to play an increasingly important role in the history

of race and racism in Alabama and the United States. A statue of him at the University of Tuskegee ambiguously represents this role. At the base of the statue appear the words “He lifted the veil of ignorance from his people and pointed the way to progress through education and industry!” Many have asked whether the figure of Washington is removing the veil of ignorance from the former slave’s eyes or placing it there: in other words, was Washington leading black people or misleading them? The answers have been mixed and controversial because he was anything but the simpleminded person he depicts himself as in his autobiography, *Up from Slavery* (1901). Washington opens his autobiography by declaring that he has no idea as to when or where he was born, “but at any rate I suspect I must have been born somewhere and at some time” (Washington 2014, 550).

The simple vocabulary and syntax suggest an unsophisticated writer, or a writer who wants his readers to think he can be taken this way. In 1901, the year *Up from Slavery* was published, the racial situation in Alabama from the point of view of white Alabamians was more reassuring because a new state constitution that denied black Alabamians the franchise had just taken effect. Washington’s autobiography does not suggest he is an adamant supporter of black civil rights; it instead suggests a non-uppity black man of humble origins. However, *Up from Slavery* does hint at Washington’s Americanness. Like Lincoln, Booker T. Washington was born in a log cabin; he was also born in a county named after Benjamin Franklin, and, as the reader will learn throughout *Up from Slavery*, he fulfills the American dream of success by overcoming an unpromising beginning to become a spokesman for black people, one who will dine at the White House with President Theodore Roosevelt.

But white Alabamians and whites in general may well have confused his means with his ends. In 1901, demands for blacks to be given the right to vote, to run for office, and to serve on juries would not have produced financial support for Tuskegee Institute. They would have caused racial fears and worse in the white community, especially in Alabama, the state that led the United States in lynchings in the 1890s. In other words, in the racial climate of 1901, reassuring whites that the right to vote could be postponed might be considered a realistic approach. His most famous speech, on which he spent considerable time in *Up from Slavery*, was also designed to flatter and reassure whites, businessmen in particular. Delivered at the Cotton States and International Exposition in Atlanta in 1895, the speech is especially famous for two sentences: “Cast down your bucket where you are” and “for all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress.” That is exactly what the largely white audience wanted to hear because they were reassured that black Alabamians and black Southerners in general would maintain the status quo in the workplace and not seek social equality in any place. That is to say, neither black Alabamians nor black people in any other part of the former Confederacy sought what white Southerners feared, a rocking of the racial boat. To some critics, this has meant that Washington sold out African Americans; to others, it has meant he was just being realistic.

In any case, there is little debate that what he overcame, at least in *his* particular case, was deeply impressive. Born a slave in 1856, he and his mother and siblings

left Virginia in 1865 when the Civil War ended, for a small town in West Virginia. There he worked in a salt furnace and coal mines, while attending night school. Eleven years later, he graduated from Hampton Institute in Virginia. After the founding of Tuskegee Institute, he worked tirelessly to cultivate good relations with wealthy and powerful whites, including presidents, to increase his influence and acquire funding for Tuskegee Institute. He turned Tuskegee Institute into a “machine” for his goals, keeping very close tabs on its students and employees. He likely never doubted that he was *the* spokesman for African Americans or that virtue and his self-interest were necessarily one and the same. Although some black thinkers challenged him, most notably W.E.B. Du Bois in one of his chapters in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), Washington was not deterred. Du Bois felt that Washington put too much emphasis on vocational training for blacks and not enough on liberal arts, pointing to Washington’s criticism of a black child studying French outside the unpainted shack where he lived. However, Du Bois overlooked the fact that he, like most other black and white intellectuals of the time, saw and judged African American culture from a Eurocentric perspective, not from an Afrocentric one. Du Bois was writing for readers like himself; Washington was writing for nonintellectual white and black readers whose main concerns were economic.

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# 2

## Alaska

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Tom Lansford

### **CHRONOLOGY**

**1867**

The United States agrees to purchase Alaska from Russia for \$7.2 million

**1896**

Gold is discovered in the Klondike region, prompting the migration of more than 100,000 people to Alaska and northwest Canada

**1899**

Gold is found near Nome, Alaska, initiating a new gold rush to the region

**1905**

The Nelson Act segregates schools in Alaska; only Alaska Natives who are judged to be “civilized” by speaking English and abandoning their indigenous culture can attend schools with white children

**1912**

Alaska becomes a formal territory of the United States, and a territorial legislature is created

**1912**

The Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB) is formed by 11 men and 1 woman, becoming the first major civil rights organization for indigenous Alaskans

**1913**

The Alaska Native Sisterhood (ANS) is established

**1915**

The Alaska Territorial Act limits voting rights of Alaska Natives, requiring indigenous people to prove they have adopted the main elements of white culture before they could cast ballots

**1924**

Native Americans, including indigenous Alaskans, are granted U.S. citizenship; William Paul (1885–1977) becomes the first Native Alaskan elected to the territorial legislature

**1925**

The Alaska legislature enacts a literacy law requiring all voters to prove they can read and write in English before they can cast a ballot

**1934**

The U.S. Congress enacts the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) to make indigenous communities more autonomous in economic and political terms; the provisions of the IRA are extended to Alaska in 1936

**1939**

Ernest Gruening (1887–1974) is appointed governor of Alaska; he launches a broad effort to end segregation against Alaska Natives

**1942**

Nine hundred Aleuts are forced to relocate from their homes after the Aleutian Islands are attacked by the Japanese; the Aleuts are interned in substandard facilities, and approximately 80 die before their release in 1945

**1942**

The U.S. Army sends segregated African American engineer units to Alaska to work on the 1,500-mile-long Alaska Highway

**1943**

With Governor Gruening's support, a bill to outlaw discrimination based on ethnicity is introduced into the territorial legislature, but it is defeated

**1944**

Alberta Schenck (1928–2009), an Alaskan Native, is arrested for sitting in the “white-only” section of a theater in Nome Alaska, sparking protests and demonstrations against segregation

**1945**

The Alaska legislature adopts the country's most far-reaching civil rights measure at the time following an impassioned speech by native rights activist Elizabeth Peratrovich (1911–1958)

**1959**

Alaska becomes the 49th state to enter the Union on January 3

**1959**

Blanche McSmith (1920–2006) becomes the first African American to serve in the Alaska legislature

**1968**

The Indian Civil Rights Act expands legal protections both on and off of reservations and tribal lands throughout the United States, including Alaska

## **24 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1970s**

Construction of the trans-Alaska oil pipeline (completed in 1977) brings many African American workers into the state

### **1971**

The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act transfers 44 million acres from federal control to indigenous peoples and provides almost \$1 billion to Alaska Natives

### **1980**

Congress enacts the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act, which adds an additional 43.6 million acres of national parks and forests and establishes hunting and fishing rights for Alaska Natives on federal lands

### **1984**

Maryline Blackburn, an African American singer born in Europe, represents Alaska in the Miss America pageant

### **1988**

The Aleut Restitution Act provided restitution to Aleuts and their families who were interned during World War II; the act is amended in 1993 to provide additional compensation

### **1991**

James C. Hayes is elected mayor of Fairbanks, becoming the state's first African American mayor

### **1993**

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) investigates complaints of racial discrimination at military bases in Alaska

### **1993**

On March 26, the Alaska legislature approves the naming of the bridge over the Gerstle River as the "Black Veterans Recognition Bridge" to honor the service of almost 3,700 African Americans who helped build the Alaska Highway

### **1994**

The African American Historical Society of Alaska is founded

### **1995**

The Blacks in Alaska History Project is initiated

### **2000**

African Americans make up 3.5 percent of the state's population

### **2008**

Governor Sarah Palin's failure to recognize the state's Juneteenth celebration causes controversy within Alaska's African American community

### **2010**

African Americans comprise about 4 percent of the state's population

### **2015**

There are an estimated 10,000 illegal immigrants in Alaska, comprising about 1.4 percent of the state's population



**2016**

A study finds that most of the illegal immigrants in Alaska are from the Philippines

**2017**

The U.S. Mint announces that it will feature Elizabeth Peratrovich on the \$1 coin beginning in 2020 in recognition of her advocacy on behalf of Alaska Natives

**NARRATIVE**

When the United States purchased Alaska from Russia for \$7.2 million in 1867, there was already a long history of racial discrimination against indigenous peoples in the territory. The patterns of racism and segregation continued once the United States took control of Alaska. However, in 1945, Alaska adopted a civil rights law to end segregation that preceded similar national measures by almost 20 years. Despite this and other progressive measures, de facto racism toward Native people and African Americans continued through the twentieth century and into the twenty-first.

**The Institutionalization of Segregation**

The acquisition of Alaska occurred more or less simultaneously with two broad discriminatory patterns in the continental United States. The first was the settlement of the West and the concurrent displacement of indigenous people. Throughout the 1800s, most Native Americans were not U.S. citizens under contemporary law. The 1867 treaty whereby the United States acquired Alaska specifically excluded members of “uncivilized native tribes” from citizenship, a status that was conferred on other residents of the territory at the time (Russia Treaty 1867, 542). This status was confirmed by the 1884 Supreme Court decision *Elk v. Wilkins*, which held that even though they were born within the territory of the United States, Native peoples were instead members of their recognized tribes and could gain citizenship only when conferred by Congress through activities such as service in the military. As a result, Native Americans lacked the range of constitutional protections afforded to the migrants moving into the interior and western areas of the country. Native Americans could not vote and were often banned from public establishments, and their right to own property was limited.

The second pattern of discrimination was the rise of the Jim Crow laws in the aftermath of the Civil War (1861–1865). The Fourteenth Amendment mandated that all citizens enjoy “equal protection” under the law and forbade states from enacting any laws that would “abridge the privileges and immunities of citizens.” The Jim Crow laws were a series of measures that effectively stripped African Americans and other minority groups of their rights while appearing to conform to the language of the Fourteenth Amendment. For instance, many states required voters to pay a poll tax or to pass a literacy test to prove they could read and write. Since the laws were applied to all citizens, they were deemed at the time to not violate the Fourteenth Amendment. As a result, in Alabama alone, out of the

181,000 African Americans who were eligible to vote in 1900, only 3,000 were eligible in 1902. Meanwhile, the 1896 Supreme Court decision *Plessy v. Ferguson* formally legalized segregation if communities established separate but equal facilities for different races.

Alaska Natives were the most frequent victims of racism in the territory, but African Americans and other minority groups also faced discrimination. However, these groups comprised only a small percentage of the population. For instance, in 1870, there were only six African Americans recorded among the territory's non-native population, and the African American population in the 1940 census was only 141 (Overstreet 1994). Like many other newcomers, Africans Americans went to Alaska seeking opportunity and new places of residence free of the Jim Crow segregation in the South and the de facto segregation that occurred in the North.

### **The Rise of Segregation in Alaska**

Alaska Natives, including the Aleut, Inuit, and Tlingit tribes, faced informal segregation throughout the early decades of U.S. rule. The discovery of gold in 1896 and the resultant flood of migrants into the region exacerbated racial tensions. Stores, hotels, theaters, and other public facilities often banned racial minorities or established separate entrances or areas for nonwhites. Communities often forced minorities to live on segregated areas or outside the settled areas.

#### ***African American Soldiers in Early Alaska History***

Jim Crow laws in the South prompted the migration of African Americans to other areas of the country, including a small number to Alaska, where they faced many of the same forms of discrimination encountered elsewhere. However, the largest movement of African Americans into the territory was the result of a military deployment.

In 1899, in an effort to maintain law and order in the region, the segregated African American 24th Infantry, one of the regiments nicknamed the "buffalo soldiers," was transferred first to Dyea, Alaska, and then Skagway, for a total of three years. Many of the troops were veterans of the Spanish-American War (1898). Once in Alaska, the soldiers supported local law enforcements officials and provided patrols for convoys. They were also used when disputes arose between white settlers and Alaska Natives.

The soldiers had some success integrating with the local community. They formed a baseball team that played against local white teams. Troopers also attended a local Baptist church and participated in a range of community activities. However, the African American soldiers faced a range of discrimination. Some businesses were segregated, including restaurants, theaters, and hotels. There were also altercations between African Americans and whites. Community members opposed the efforts of 30 soldiers to join the local YMCA, although the secretary of the organization refused to segregate the facility.

In 1902, the unit was transferred out of Alaska, leaving the territory with only a small African American population. The next significant increase in the territory's African American community came in 1942, when segregated engineering units were deployed to construct the Alaska Highway.



Indian dancers during a potlatch at Chilkat, Alaska, in 1895. Many factors led to the decimation of Alaskan Native cultures, including gold rush prospectors and the early Russian fur trade, which depleted the seal population that Native Alaskans relied upon. (Library of Congress)

Schools were informally segregated until the passage of the Nelson Act in 1905, which formally divided the educational system between the races. White schools were funded by local communities and the territorial government, while native education was left in the hands of the underfunded federal authorities. Some mixed-blood Native Alaskans were allowed to attend white schools if they were deemed to have become “civilized”—if they and their parents adopted Christianity, spoke English, and abandoned other aspects of their indigenous culture. These restrictions paralleled broader efforts to erode native cultures in other areas of the United States, including the forcible transfer of children from their families to boarding schools in order to promote assimilation.

Alaska became a formal territory of the United States in 1912; a territorial legislature was established. At the time, most Alaska Natives were denied the right to vote in territorial and local elections. The Alaska Territorial Act of 1915 granted the franchise only to Alaska Natives who could read and write and were considered “civilized.” In other words, they had to prove they had abandoned their tribal culture and had adopted the language, religion, and social norms of the dominant white society. This proof was provided through a certificate obtained after an Alaska Native had been examined by a panel of local school teachers and gained endorsements from five local U.S. citizens and presented the evidence to a district court for validation (Alaska Humanities Forum 2017).

### **Native Activism, Citizenship, and the Right to Vote**

The Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB) was formed in 1912 to secure the rights of indigenous peoples. The initial leaders of the group had been educated in

missionary schools and were among the intellectual and economic elites of the tribes. Although founded primarily as a self-help organization, among the first goals of the ANB were full citizenship for Alaska Natives and an end to the segregated educational system. In 1913, the Alaska Native Sisterhood (ANS) was established as the sister organization of the all-male ANB.

Tlingit attorney William Paul (1885–1977) became the ANB’s grand secretary in 1919. At the organization’s 1920 convention, Paul and his brother Louis Paul (1887–1956) led a new generation of activists who sought to more aggressively challenge discriminatory local and territorial measures. In 1924, Congress granted full citizenship to Native Americans. The Pauls and other Native leaders hoped that the new law would allow Alaska Natives to vote. In 1924, William Paul became the first Alaska Native elected to the territorial legislature.

Paul’s election prompted a backlash among segregationists who sought to prevent Alaska Natives and other disadvantaged groups from securing more political and economic power. Opponents of indigenous rights highlighted the fact that Alaska Natives outnumbered whites at the time and raised fears about reparations for lost tribal lands. In 1925, the territorial legislature passed a literacy law, requiring all potential voters to prove they could read and write in English. The bill was a thinly disguised effort to disenfranchise Alaska Natives and ushered in an era of corruption and suppression. White voting officials often used the law to deny the franchise even to qualified Alaska Natives. Meanwhile, Alaska Natives and other disadvantaged groups continued to face de facto discrimination in areas ranging from housing to education.

The ANB and ANS endeavored to use collective action to overcome discrimination. The organizations launched a series of boycotts of segregated businesses in the southeastern areas of the territory, including Juneau, in the 1920s and 1930s. The action had some impact and prompted a number of companies and firms to end discriminatory practices, such as separate entrances or services for indigenous peoples and minorities or outright prohibitions on business with Alaska Natives and other minority groups.

### **A New Deal for Alaska Natives**

In June 1934, Congress enacted the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). The measure was broadly designed to be a “New Deal” for Native Americans and broadly paralleled other efforts by the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt to improve relations with minority groups. Also known as the Wheeler-Howards Act, the law had two major objectives: first, to restore political and economic control of land and resources to Native Americans; and, second, to end the federal emphasis on the assimilation of indigenous peoples into the broader population. The act did not initially apply to Alaska, but revisions in 1936 extended its provisions to the territory.

To accomplish the goals of the IRA, the federal government encouraged native villages to incorporate and establish self-governing constitutions. This effort to create reservations in Alaska had only limited success at the time. It did transfer

significant amounts of territory to indigenous control, including the 1.4-million-acre Venetie Reserve (Alaska Humanities Forum 2017). However, it failed to reallocate resources in an equitable manner, and the issue remained contentious into the 1960s. In addition, efforts to create self-governing reservations were opposed by commercial interests in the state that sought to ensure that natural resources would remain open to exploitation. It was also opposed by some Alaska Native leaders who feared that the establishment of reservations would increase segregation and undermine the efforts of indigenous peoples to integrate into the broader society of the territory.

Roosevelt may have had an even larger impact on the rights of Alaska Natives through the appointment of Ernest Gruening (1887–1974) as territorial governor of Alaska in 1939. A New Deal, progressive Democrat, the new governor was acutely distressed at the depth of segregation in Alaska. He endeavored, with some success, to use his office to convince business owners to end de facto segregation (Cole 1992, 435). The governor also endeavored to introduce legislation to formally ban separation of the races in education and public accommodations. Gruening remained governor of the territory until 1959.

### **World War II, Equal Rights, and Statehood**

When the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor brought the United States into World War II in December 1941, Gruening, indigenous leaders, and progressives increased their criticism of discrimination against Native peoples and other disadvantaged groups. Critics argued that segregation mirrored the policies of the fascist powers against whom the United States found itself at war. They also derided discriminatory policies as harmful to morale on the home front.

Unfortunately, the war initially led to an increase in discrimination. As more military personnel were transferred to Alaska, local army posts issued regulations forbidding fraternization between soldiers and Alaska Natives. Alaska Native women were not even allowed to join the United Service Organization (USO), the main auxiliary organization created to support the military. The prohibition on USO membership was eventually overridden by the War Department.

Further exacerbating tensions was the forced relocation of approximately 900 Aleuts following the Japanese invasion of the Aleutian Islands. The Aleuts were given no time to prepare to evacuate their residences and were forcibly relocated to centers elsewhere in the territory. Conditions in the camps were atrocious, and dozens died of disease brought about by poor sanitation and nutrition. Meanwhile, whites in the Aleutian Islands were generally allowed to remain on their properties.

The war resulted in the deployment of three regiments of African American engineer units in 1942. The soldiers were transferred to Alaska to work on the 1,500-mile Alaska Highway, one of the most difficult construction projects of the war. The segregated units faced discrimination from both the military and local civilian communities. The African American units were often provided inferior equipment and clothing that was not suitable for the brutally cold Alaska winters. They were housed in segregated barracks. The soldiers were forbidden from

visiting native villages and often faced discrimination at white-owned businesses. However, the units performed their duties at an exceptional level and were able to complete the project in October 1942. Their success was not only instrumental in promoting civil rights for African Americans in Alaska but was also an important factor in the eventual desegregation of the military in 1948.

### **The 1945 Anti-Discrimination Act**

In 1943, Gruening introduced a measure in the territorial legislature to ban discrimination and end segregation. The measure failed to advance from the House of Representatives following an 8–8 tie vote. The following year, the legislature was expanded in size, and two new Alaska Natives members were elected in balloting that year.

The governor reintroduced the antidiscrimination measure in January 1945. During the debate on the proposed legislation on February 5, a succession of speakers, including the contemporary ANB president Roy Peratrovich and his wife Elizabeth, labeled segregation as un-American and contrary to democracy. Elizabeth Peratrovich was the final speaker before the vote. She gave a passionate and compelling speech that was generally credited with silencing opponents of the measure. On February 8, the bill passed the House 19–5, while the Senate approved it on a vote of 11–5, sending it to Gruening, who signed the measure on February 16. The new law outlawed segregation in schools and public businesses. It predated the 1954 *Brown v. Board* U.S. Supreme Court decision, which overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Although de facto discrimination continued in many areas, especially in housing, the institutionalized framework of Jim Crow became illegal.

One continuing problem after the passage of the 1945 act was that the federal government continued to be formally responsible for schools on federal lands. The result was continuing disparities between the state-run educational systems and schools under the auspices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). These differences resulted in inequalities in funding and curriculum that continued for decades.

The 1964 federal Civil Rights Act made discrimination in education, employment, and public accommodations illegal throughout the United States. The measure strengthened the protections that existed for disadvantaged ethnic and racial groups in Alaska and made these civil rights applicable at the national level, as did subsequent amendments to the act, and later laws, including the 1968 Civil Rights Act, which forbade discrimination in housing. Concurrently, the 1968 Indian Civil Rights Act mandated that individual rights were protected both on and off the tribal lands. Other laws of the 1970s increased the autonomy and authority of tribal governments. During this period, the focus of advocacy groups for Alaska Natives increasingly became economic justice.

### **Statehood**

Alaska became a state in 1959. During the 1950s, a growing number of African Americans and other minority groups moved to Alaska as the state's economy

grew. The newcomers often faced various forms of tacit discrimination in jobs and housing. Blanche McSmith (1920–2006), who was instrumental in organizing the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in Anchorage in 1951, became the first African American to serve in the Alaska legislature, following her appointment to the House in 1959.

At that time of statehood, the federal government agreed to transfer the control of BIA schools to the state. Following legal action and advocacy by Alaska Native groups, the state agreed to increase funding for the former federal schools. The increased support was manifested through the construction of new schools in native areas and additional resources for curriculum and instruction. Nonetheless, Alaska Natives continued to underperform in comparison with other students in the state, prompting repeated, but unsuccessful, efforts by individual tribes to take control of their educational systems.

Alaska Natives were significantly economically disadvantaged compared with other groups as the territory became a state. In 1959, 71.9 percent of Alaska Native families lived in poverty, compared with 22.8 percent of their white counterparts, while unemployment among Alaska Natives was 21.9 percent, compared with 11.9 percent among whites in 1960 (Rogers 1965, 7). Indigenous people faced greater social and health challenges than did the non-native population. Alaska's 1960 census found that 68.9 percent of Alaska Natives under the age of 25 had not completed elementary school, compared with just 5.8 percent of the white population, while the infant mortality rate for Alaska Natives was 74.8 per 1,000 births, compared with a rate of 27.8 for non-natives (Rogers 1965, 7–8).

Many Alaska Native leaders argued that the economic disadvantages of their communities were tied to the loss of native lands to the federal government, non-native-owned businesses, and migrants to the territory. The federal legislation that acknowledged statehood attempted to address the contentious issue of native land claims by requiring that the government initiate negotiations with Alaska Natives over all existing disputed claims. Meanwhile, the state was authorized to claim more than 103 million acres of land that was under federal oversight at the time. Alaska Native leaders asserted that the state was encroaching on lands that had traditionally been used for hunting and fishing. Native leaders were willing to transfer large areas of land but wanted to maintain control over large tracts of traditional lands. The chieftains also sought a significant payment to be used to improve infrastructure, schools, and hospitals on tribal lands. They also endeavored to secure a percentage of the profits from mineral extraction or oil production.

With William Paul as one of the main Alaska Native negotiators, a settlement was finally reached in December 1971. Under the terms of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA), the federal government transferred control of 44 million acres of land to indigenous peoples and paid a settlement of almost \$1 billion. The act divided the funds among 12 newly created regional corporations whose stockholders were the Alaska Natives of the particular area. The native corporations were allowed to select lands as part of the 44-million-acre grant. The process of land transfer proved slow and cumbersome. Only about half of the allocated lands had been transferred back to indigenous ownership by 1981. The status of some disputed territory remained unresolved through 2016.

The ANCSA initially restricted ownership of the indigenous lands to Alaska Natives but had a provision that would allow anyone to buy shares in the regional corporations after 20 years (in 1991). This raised the specter that outside interests would be able to buy majority stakes in the corporations. In 1988, the ANCSA was amended to extend the prohibitions on the sale of regional corporation stock to non-natives.

In 1980, the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act prioritized indigenous subsistence hunting and fishing over commercial exploitation on 157 million acres of federal lands, including 43.6 million acres of newly created national parks and forests. This meant that the state and federal governments had the power to intervene to suspend commercial harvests of various plant and animal species if such activity threatened the use of the resources by Alaska Natives. Indigenous people were also granted hunting and fishing rights in protected areas, as long as the wildlife populations were not threatened or endangered. Nonetheless, Alaska Natives found it increasingly difficult to maintain traditional subsistence hunting and fishing lifestyles, as they faced declining animal and fish populations and growing competition from recreational hunters in other areas of the state.

### **Twenty-First Century**

The percentage of indigenous peoples is higher in Alaska than in any other state. Alaska Natives remained the largest minority group in the state. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2016, Alaska's population was 741,894, of which 66.1 percent were white, 15.2 percent were Alaska Native or Native American, 7 percent were Hispanic, 6.3 percent were Asian, 3.8 percent were African American, and 1.3 percent were Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (U.S. Census Bureau 2016).

Research in 2009 found that Alaska Natives continued to lag behind other groups in key economic areas. For instance, between 2005 and 2007, 27 percent of Alaska Natives lived below the poverty line, compared with 13 percent of all Americans, while the unemployment rate for indigenous Alaskans was 21 percent, compared with the 6.6 percent of the general population. The labor participation rate of Alaskan Natives was 63 percent, compared with a rate of 74 percent for the general population (Martin and Hill 2009). Alaska Natives also had lower educational rates. The high school dropout rate for the population was 11.7 percent, compared with an overall rate of 8 percent for the state and 3.9 percent for the rest of the country, and only 8 percent of Native Alaskans had a college degree, compared with 27 percent of the rest of the country (Martin and Hill 2009). Poverty in rural native communities has resulted in less-efficient school systems with outdated equipment and teaching resources, including texts and computers. Deficiencies in educational attainment make many Alaska Natives less competitive in the job market and reinforce cycles of poverty.

Alaska Natives and other disadvantaged groups continue to report racism in the workplace, health care, and housing. A 2009 survey of minority groups in the Anchorage metropolitan area, home to almost 300,000 people, found that sizable



numbers experienced racism, with African Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, and Alaska Natives being the most likely targets. For instance, the survey found that 69.1 percent of African Americans, 51.4 percent of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, and 40.9 percent of Alaska Natives experienced racism at their place of employment, while 36.8 percent of Alaska Natives, 34.6 percent of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, and 27.8 percent of African Americans faced discrimination at school (Green and Chamard 2013).

Disadvantaged groups in Alaska also share a range of other challenges that minority groups throughout the United States often encounter. The difficulties Alaska Natives confront are exacerbated by the trials that emerge when trying to balance traditional cultures and lifestyles with fairly dramatic economic and technological shifts in society. Despite significant advancements in civil rights through legislation, Alaska Natives and other minority groups continue to face a variety of forms of implicit racism and discrimination in the 2000s.

## NOTABLE FIGURES

### **Paul, William (1885–1977)**

William Lewis Paul was born on May 7, 1885, in the village of Tongass, in southeastern Alaska. Paul was a Tlingit who attended missionary schools, before being sent to the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania at age 14. He eventually earned a bachelor's degree in 1909 from Whitworth College in Tacoma, Washington, where he also played quarterback on the football team. After college, Paul briefly tried a variety of different occupations, including singing, before working for a bank while he studied law through a program run by La Salle University. He married Frances Lackey in 1911. Paul passed the bar in December 1920 and was the first Alaska Native to become a lawyer. The charismatic young lawyer developed a reputation as a talented orator and fierce litigator.

During this period, Paul became increasingly active in territorial politics. He also became affiliated with political boss James Wickersham (1857–1939). A nominal Republican, Wickersham worked with mavericks from both parties. Wickersham built a political machine that sought to maximize Alaska's autonomy from the traditional political parties and from federal control.

He joined the ANB and was elected as the organization's grand secretary, and he later served as grand president of the organization. Through the 1920s, Paul and his brother Louis (1887–1956) worked to transition the ANB from a self-help organization that provided insurance, medical care, and other services to a politically powerful voice for Alaska Natives. The ANB launched a campaign against Alaska's segregated schools, along with a drive to overturn policies that disenfranchised Alaska Natives. Under Paul's influence, the ANB encouraged Alaska Natives to vote, and the group emerged as an important component of the Wickersham machine.

In the early 1920s, Paul and his brother launched a broad campaign to expand the ANB. An ANB newspaper, the *Alaska Fisherman*, was established in 1923 as both a resource for the community and a means to rally support for the ANB. Paul

was also active in seeking new members. The size of the ANB grew from fewer than 100 formal members to 2,200 under Paul's leadership (Kiffer 2009).

In 1923, Paul represented Tlingit chief Charlie Jones, who had been arrested the previous year for illegally voting. At the time, only Alaska Natives who could prove they were "civilized" were allowed to cast ballots. As leader of the Tlingit, Jones embraced a traditional lifestyle. At the trial, Paul was able to convince a judge that Jones met the criteria to vote since he paid taxes, donated to charities, and was acquitted. The trial brought widespread fame to Paul, who subsequently became the first Alaska Native elected to the territorial legislature the following year.

In 1925, the territorial legislature adopted a literacy test in an effort to disenfranchise Alaska Natives. Paul bitterly opposed the Jim Crow measure but was unable to prevent its passage. He did secure a major concession that allowed Alaska Natives who had voted in the past to be grandfathered and allowed to continue to cast ballots. Paul was reelected in 1926. The following year, he was involved in the design and adoption of what would become Alaska's territorial, and later state, flag.

Paul was defeated in 1928 after revelations emerged that he had accepted donations from the cannery industry (canneries were widely disliked by Alaska Natives because of overfishing, other environmental damage, and discriminatory practices toward indigenous peoples). Paul subsequently ran unsuccessfully for the post of attorney general for the territory in 1932.

Many Alaska Native tribes had lost their traditional lands. Most of this territory came under the control of the federal government or various commercial interests when the United States acquired the region from Russia. From the 1930s onward, Paul increasingly sought to reestablish indigenous control over traditional lands and to gain monetary compensation for the loss of any territory that would not be restored. The ANB was made an official body of the BIA, the first Alaska Native organization to hold a position in the agency.

Paul had made a number of enemies as a result of his advocacy on behalf of Alaska Natives. He was also at times a polarizing figure within his community. Some Alaska Native leaders believed Paul was more interested in self-aggrandizement than in the improvement of his people. By the late 1930s, Paul's influence in the ANB had begun to decline as a new generation of leaders, including Roy (1908–1989) and Elizabeth Peratrovich (1911–1958), began to emphasize the need for broad civil rights legislation to address issues such as school segregation and voting rights.

In 1937, Paul was disbarred after being accused of cheating a client. He was unable to practice law until 1959 when he was again admitted to the bar. Despite his disbarment, Paul was chiefly responsible for leading the lawsuit *Tee-Hit-Ton Indians v. United States* (1955). The Tee-Hit-Ton were a Tlingit subclan, and their suit accused the federal government of improperly harvesting timber on what had been tribal lands. The real purpose of the legal fight was to force the government to compensate indigenous tribes for land that had been appropriated. The Supreme Court ruled against the Alaska Natives, but the case brought the issue of reparations for lost land to the forefront of public debate on the eve of Alaska's statehood in 1959.

When the territory became a state, the federal government authorized the transfer of more than 103 million acres of land to state control. Paul quietly advised the

lead negotiators in the efforts to secure some compensation for Alaska Natives for the loss of territory and some portion of the profits from oil and minerals extracted from the lands. After more than a decade of negotiations, a settlement was finalized by Congress through the ANCSA in 1971. The agreement mandated that some 44 million acres would be returned to native control and the tribes would be paid restitution of just under \$1 billion.

On March 4, 1977, Paul died in Seattle, Washington, at age 91.

### **Peratrovich, Elizabeth (1911–1958)**

Elizabeth Jean Wanamaker Peratrovich was born in Petersburg, Alaska, on July 4, 1911. A member of the indigenous Tlingit people, Elizabeth's parents died when she was an infant, and she was adopted by Andrew and Jean Wanamaker. She studied at the Western College of Education in Bellingham, Washington, where, in 1931, she married Roy Peratrovich (1908–1989). The couple had three children. The following year, the Peratrovichs returned to Alaska, where they both became deeply involved in the movement to combat racial discrimination against indigenous people in the territory. Elizabeth then settled in Klawock with her husband, before the couple moved to Juneau in 1941.

Elizabeth joined the ANS, while Roy became active in the ANB, two parallel groups working to end school segregation and voting rights discrimination in Alaska. In 1940, Elizabeth and Roy became the respective leaders of the ANS and the ANB. On December 30, 1941, the two authored an open letter to Alaska governor Ernest Gruening condemning segregation in public places. With the nation in the midst of World War II against the fascist powers of Germany, Italy, and Japan, the Peratrovichs drew parallels between the treatment of indigenous Alaskans and persecuted groups by the Axis powers. They helped prompt the governor to introduce a civil rights bill in the Alaskan legislature in 1943. The measure was defeated after it failed to advance in the legislature following a tie vote.

The antidiscrimination bill was reintroduced to the legislature in January 1945. The measure outlawed segregation and other Jim Crow practices in Alaska. Opponents of the measure argued in favor of continuing segregation of the races and that antidiscrimination efforts would actually exacerbate tensions between Caucasians and Alaska Natives. Both Elizabeth and her husband testified before the territorial senate in support of the bill. With the fate of the legislation uncertain, Elizabeth was the last witness to speak. In a passionate and emotional address to the senators, the ANS leader described the shame of being denied entrance to restaurants or other businesses because of her race. She emphasized the inequality of segregated neighborhoods or hotels. She reminded the senators of the Bill of Rights and the American ideals of equality and justice. Her words were met with vigorous applause, and Elizabeth was credited with effectively silencing most of the opposition. The bill passed the Senate 11–5 and the House 19–5. The governor signed the Anti-Discrimination Act into law on February 16, 1945.

Elizabeth remained a staunch proponent of indigenous rights. She and her husband moved to Colorado in 1952 and then to Oklahoma the following year after Roy accepted a position with the BIA. Two years later, Elizabeth was appointed to

the executive committee of the National Congress of American Indians. She died from cancer on December 1, 1958.

In honor of her contributions, the Alaska state government designated February 16 as “Elizabeth Peratrovich Day.” In addition, in 2017, the U.S. Mint announced it would commemorate Elizabeth’s memory by including her likeness on the \$1 coin, beginning in 2020.

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# 3

## Arizona

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Alan Lechusza Aquallo

### CHRONOLOGY

#### **Pre-Columbian Period (c. 9000 BCE–1500 CE)**

Numerous indigenous tribes (e.g., Puebloan, Hohokam, Hopi, Yavapi, O’odham, Yuma) occupy, settle, and develop the land that becomes present-day Arizona

#### **1539**

Estevanico, a Moroccan slave, leads the expedition of Fray Marcos De Niza in search of the Seven Golden Cities of Cibola; the expedition crosses the region that will become Arizona

#### **1540–1542**

Francisco Vázquez de Coronado leads an expedition of exploration that passes through part of present-day Arizona

#### **1687**

Eusebio Kino, a Jesuit priest, establishes missions among the Tohono O’odham people along the Santa Cruz River

#### **1751**

The O’odham people rebel against the Spanish

#### **1752**

Four soldiers of African descent are stationed at the newly established Tubac presidio, the first Spanish colonial garrison and first European community in what will become Arizona

#### **1768**

Arizona becomes part of the Spanish Provincia de las Californias

#### **1776**

A Spanish presidio is established at Tucson in south central Arizona

## **38 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

**1781**

Yuma Indians massacre Spanish settlers and missionaries

**1821**

Mexico, of which the Arizona region is a part, gains its independence from Spain

**1824**

African American mountain men enter Arizona, including Jim Beckwourth, Edward Rose, and Moses “Black” Harris

**1848**

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed in February, ends the Mexican-American War; Arizona is part of the territory ceded to the United States by Mexico

**1850**

The Compromise of 1850 establishes the Territory of New Mexico, which includes Arizona

**1850**

The daughter of Wiley Box, a stagecoach driver, marries a black Indian named Curly Neale, who owns a hotel in Oracle, near Tucson

**1853**

The Gadsden Purchase brings into the United States territory from Mexico that will become the southern part of the modern state of Arizona

**1858**

The Butterfield Stage Company employs African American women as cooks at stage stops across Arizona

**1860**

The federal census records a black man named Charley Embers as living near the Vulture Mine near Wickenburg; other blacks include Charles Cooper and the Isaiah Bell family, residents of Tucson

**1862**

Confederate Arizona officially becomes a territory of the Confederate States of America

**1863**

Congress creates the Arizona Territory by splitting the New Mexico Territory virtually in half

**1863**

Ben McClendon, a runaway slave, finds gold deposits near Wickenburg

**1866**

Charley Embers begins working as a cook in a mining camp at Ajo, south of Tucson

**1868**

A domestic named Mary Green and her two children become the first African American residents of Phoenix

**1870**

Moses Green becomes the first African American born in Arizona

**1870**

Harvey Merchant, a black cowboy, is rescued from Indians by soldiers

**1872**

Phoenix's first Chinese immigrant settle in the town

**1879**

The Salt River Indian Reservation is established in its present location near Phoenix

**1880**

The U.S. Census shows 155 African Americans living in the Arizona Territory

**1881**

Phoenix officially incorporates when Governor John C. Frémont signs "the Phoenix Charter Bill"; the Phoenix Rangers, a paramilitary police force, organize in response to hostile Apache activity in the Tonto Basin

**1885**

The black "buffalo soldiers" of the 10th Cavalry are dispatched to Arizona to fight the Apache leaders Marqus and Geronimo

**1886**

The Apache leader Geronimo surrenders to General Nelson Miles; the Indian fighting in Arizona ends

**1889**

The capital of the Arizona Territory is relocated from Tucson to Phoenix

**1891**

Phoenix Indian School opens; a territorial convention is held to discuss statehood, which is voted down

**1891**

Henry O. Flipper, the first black graduate of West Point, lives in Nogales and Tucson; Charley Williams, popularly known as "Banjo Dick," moves to Nogales after the failure of the "Banjo Dick Mine," the first all-black mining company in Arizona

**1892**

The 24th Regiment of all-black soldiers is sent to Fort Huachuca to help guard the Mexican border

**1899**

A black fraternal lodge, Alpha Lodge No. 17, is formed in Tucson

**1909**

Segregation is legalized in the Arizona Territory, and school districts are segregated

## **40 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1912**

On February 14, Arizona enters the Union as the 48th state; Phoenix becomes the state capital

### **1912**

Arizona grants women the right to vote but forbids racially mixed marriages

### **1921**

Booker T. Washington Memorial Hospital is founded in Phoenix

### **1925**

Voters approve a separate high school for blacks in Phoenix

### **1926**

Segregated Phoenix Union Colored High School opens

### **1933**

The black-owned *Phoenix Tribune* is founded

### **1936**

Another black-owned newspaper, the *Phoenix Index*, is founded

### **1942**

Three African American soldiers from segregated units are killed in Phoenix during the Thanksgiving Day Riot

### **1942**

On November 26, the Gila River War Relocation Center, an internment camp for Japanese Americans, opens southwest of Phoenix, on the Gila River Indian Reservation; Japanese Americans from Phoenix are relocated to internment camps at Sacaton and Poston

### **1950**

Hayzel B. Daniels and Carl Sims become the first African American legislators in Arizona

### **1952**

Racial segregation is banned at Sky Harbor Airport in Phoenix; Adam Diaz becomes the first Hispanic on the Phoenix City Council

### **1953**

Arizona state courts declare school segregation illegal; Phoenix begins school desegregation

### **1954**

Phoenix finishes the desegregation of public schools

### **1955**

Ira Hayes, one of the men made famous by the flag raising on Iwo Jima, and a member of the *Pima Indian Tribe*, is found dead of exposure near Sacaton

### **1955**

Phoenix bans segregation in public housing



**1960**

The Phoenix National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Youth Council stages sit-ins in four downtown coffee shops and lunch counters

**1962**

Phoenix city bus drivers participate in an unsuccessful 62-day strike, which precipitates the decline of public transit in Phoenix

**1963**

Phoenix Police arrest Ernesto Miranda without informing him of his rights; this arrest leads to the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case *Miranda v. Arizona*

**1964**

The Phoenix City Council adopts a public accommodations ordinance

**1966**

Dr. Morrison F. Warren is the first African American appointed to the Phoenix City Council

**1972**

Cloves Campbell Sr., a cofounder of the *Arizona Informant* newspaper, becomes the first African American elected to the Arizona State Senate

**1972**

Calvin Goode becomes the second African American to serve on the Phoenix City Council; he serves for 22 years

**1975**

Phoenix elects its first female mayor, Margaret Hance

**1992**

After some controversy, the Arizona legislature passes a Martin Luther King Jr. or Civil Rights Day

**1992**

Joe Arpaio is elected Maricopa County sheriff; Arpaio is recognized as an advocate for immigration policies that are unfavorable to underrepresented communities

**1998**

Leah Landrum Taylor, an African American woman, is elected to the Arizona House of Representatives as a Democrat

**2006**

The Arizona Commission on African American Affairs (ACAAA) is created to establish more effective communication between the Arizona legislature and the state's African American community

**2006**

Leah Landrum Taylor is elected to the Arizona State Senate; Cloves Campbell Jr. wins a seat in the Arizona House of Representatives

## **42 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **2008**

Squaw Peak is renamed Piestewa Peak, in honor of the first Native American woman killed in combat, Lori Piestewa

### **2008**

Vernon Parker, a Republican, is sworn in as the first African American mayor of Paradise Valley

### **2010**

Arizona passes SB 1070 and HB 2162, immigration measures that are viewed as being discriminatory

### **2011**

Arizona U.S. House Representative Gabrielle Giffords and 18 others are shot in Tucson

### **2014**

About 325,000 undocumented immigrants are estimated to be living in Arizona

### **2018**

Arizona's 9 percent black unemployment rate is nearly double the state's white unemployment rate of 4.7 percent; Arizona's black income rate is lower and black poverty rate is higher than the corresponding rates for whites

### **2018**

A volunteer member of an Arizona group that attempts to prevent the deaths of United States–Mexico border crossers in the desert is arrested for giving food and water to undocumented immigrants

## **NARRATIVE**

### **Early History**

The European history of Arizona begins in 1539, with the first documented exploration of the area by the Spaniard Marcos de Niza. Early work expanded the following year when Francisco Vásquez de Coronado entered the area. Arizona, at that time, was part of the state of Sonora, Mexico (1822), with a small settled population. In 1848, under the terms of the Mexican Cession, the United States took possession of Arizona above the Gila River after the Mexican-American War, which then became part of the Territory of New Mexico. The early indigenous population within this area consisted of a number of Native American tribal cultures: Apache, Dine, Papago, Pima, Pueblloan, Hohokam, Hopi, Yavapi, O'odham, and Yuma. Each of these indigenous tribal groups maintained their own traditional knowledge, customs, and expressive cultures, which were related to and founded upon the local territories, later known—either in part or full—as Arizona. In 1853, the Gadsden Purchase brought the territory comprising present-day Arizona south of the Gila River into the possession of the United States.

In 1863, Congress created the Arizona Territory by splitting off the western portion of the Territory of New Mexico. With the arrival of the railroads in 1880,

the region became less remote. When Arizona entered the Union as the 48th state on February 14, 1912, its most rural economy was based on the four “Cs”—cattle, cotton, citrus, and copper. The state experienced dramatic population growth after 1945, when retirees migrated from the Northeast to take advantage of the warm weather and low costs.

In the 1840s, as part of northern Mexico, Arizona was remote and poor, with few outside contacts. The Mexican population of the area was based in Tucson, where a few hundred people lived, in addition to about a hundred soldiers in the presidio garrison. South of the Gila River, population clustered in the province of Sonora and a small piece of Chihuahua in the east. To the north, Arizona was nominally part of Alta California, with a fragment in the east belonging to Santa Fe de Nuevo México. The Tucson garrison, aided by the Pima and Papago militia, protected the population from hostile Apaches, who lived east of the San Pedro River and north of the Gila River. In the war between Mexico and the United States from 1846 to 1848, the garrison commander at Tucson avoided any conflict with Lieutenant Colonel Cooke and the Mormon Battalion by withdrawing from the town before the American troops marched through it on their way to California.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), which ended the Mexican-American War, ceded the northern 70 percent of present-day Arizona to the United States. In 1849, during the California gold rush, more than 50,000 men traveled through the area on the Southern Emigrant Trail, which was pioneered by Cooke, to reach the California gold fields. Also during this period, Apache raiders drove most of the Mexican ranchers out of the area, leaving large herds of wild cattle to roam southeastern Arizona. By 1850, the Apaches, American sportsmen, and contract hunters for the towns of Fronteras and Santa Cruz had destroyed these herds. When most of the remaining cattle were rounded up and sold to hungry Mexican War soldiers, the “forty-niners” who passed through en route to California had to forage to survive.

In 1850, Congress created the New Mexico Territory, which comprised modern-day Arizona and New Mexico. In 1853, President Franklin Pierce, seeking a route for a southern railroad, sent James Gadsden to Mexico City to negotiate with the Mexican president Santa Anna. The Gadsden Purchase secured the southern 30 percent present-day Arizona and the southwestern corner of present-day New Mexico for the United States. On March 16, 1861, at the start of the Civil War, the citizens of Mesilla—in what is now southern New Mexico—and of Tucson invited the Confederacy to take control of the New Mexico Territory, asking especially for the restoration of mail service. These secessionists were disappointed when federal troops from California invaded the Confederate Territory of Arizona in March 1862 and had to return it to Union control. Several battles involving Apaches as well as Union and Confederate forces were fought in Confederate Arizona, with the largest being the Battle of Picacho Pass, which occurred on April 15, 1862, north of Tucson. In 1863, the United States divided the New Mexico Territory, turning the western portion into the Territory of Arizona, which after 1877 had its territorial capital at Tucson.

In the last decades of the nineteenth century, the U.S. Army built a series of forts in the territory to control the Native Americans and act as a buffer between

them and the white settlers. Colonel Edwin V. Sumner established Fort Defiance in what is today northeastern Arizona on September 18, 1851. The fort was meant to provide a military presence in Navajo country. Sumner broke up the fort at Santa Fe to create the first military post in present-day Arizona. Built on valuable grazing land that the government prohibited the Navajo from using, the fort saw significant fighting in the late 1850s. In April 1860, one thousand Navajo launched an ultimately unsuccessful attack against the fort, which was abandoned in 1861 at the start of the Civil War.

In 1863, Colonel Kit Carson, commanding the 1st New Mexico Infantry, reoccupied the fort, which was reestablished as Fort Canby. Brigadier General James H. Carleton, who commanded the Federal District of New Mexico, ordered Carson to subdue the Navajos, who saw their crops, wells, houses, and livestock destroyed. Carleton forced 9,000 Navajos to undertake the grueling “Long Walk” to a reservation at Bosque Redondo, New Mexico. In 1868, the Navajo signed another treaty with the United States that allowed them to return with their sheep and other livestock to part of their former territory. After 1864, Fort Defiance became the agency for the new Navajo reservation.

In 1870, soldiers from the 1st Cavalry and 21st Infantry constructed Fort Apache on the Apache Indian Reservation. A small battle occurred here in September 1881, with three soldiers wounded. In 1924, the reservation Apaches received U.S. citizenship, and thereafter, Fort Apache was permanently closed.

Fort Huachuca, which was established east of Tucson in 1877, was the base for operations against the Apaches and Mexican raiders. From 1913 to 1933, the black “buffalo soldiers” of the 10th Cavalry Regiment were stationed at Fort Huachuca. During World War II, 25,000 soldiers, mostly in segregated all-black units, were stationed at Fort Huachuca. Today, Fort Huachuca remains in operation and houses both the U.S. Army Intelligence Center and the U.S. Army Network.

The Pueblos, a large Native American population centered mainly in northern Arizona, remained relatively quiet during the Navajo and Apache Wars. However, in June 1891, army troops were deployed to stop the Oraibi Pueblo community from preventing the building of a school on their mesa.

### **Racial Diversity**

In 1920, the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce advertised the city as, “a modern town,” which had a population of 40,000. A very small percentage of the total population were Mexicans, Negroes, or “foreigners,” which was a term used to identify Chinese immigrants, while the local Native American population was disregarded within the state census. “You can’t go far in looking at the early history of the Valley without encountering that kind of casual racism,” stated the Chamber of Commerce, as a means to boost American cultural values over those of the other included cultures.

African Americans, Mexicans, Chinese, and Native Americans made up a significant portion of Arizona’s population from the very earliest years. When Phoenix had fewer than 500 residents, half of them were Mexican. Early records define the word *Hispanics*, as a signifier for all or any individuals other than African

Americans, Native Americans, or Chinese, with little distinction made between: those of Mexican heritage, born in the United States after 1848; those born when Arizona was still part of Mexico; those who immigrated from the political and economic troubles in Mexico to find peace or opportunity in Phoenix; or, those who moved or migrated to the United States with Hispanic surnames from Texas or California. “Mexican,” therefore, became a default and generic descriptor, which itself becomes, over time, a racialized marker and stereotype. Mexicans were “other” than white.

The racial diversity of the state was present in everyday life. Before Arizona achieved statehood, there were 19 restaurants in Phoenix run by Chinese families. These establishments had names like, “American Kitchen,” which was owned and operated by Sing Yee. They did not serve Chinese food, but they were run by Chinese immigrants, who functioned not only as restaurateurs but also as the city’s primary grocers and launderers.

The first African Americans noted in the Phoenix records came with the Columbus Gray family from Arkansas in 1868. Mary Green—the first of many African Americans to come to Phoenix—arrived with her two children; many others followed. The historian Matthew Whitaker wrote, “African Americans were pushed by circumstances and pulled by hope, eventually finding their way to Phoenix, where they believed social, economic and political betterment awaited them.” However, what remained to be found by these hopeful migrants was a cluster of segregation, racist communities, and little work outside harsh manual labor.

There is no doubt that the founding fathers of Phoenix saw themselves as the cultural norm. They were white, spoke English, and wore the proper attire of suits and vests. Chinese, Mexicans, Indians, and African Americans were seen as part of the functioning community, but they were clearly seen as the racialized “others.” Likewise, the founding fathers of Phoenix were also primarily descended from northern European stock, which meant that the prevailing prejudice included the “wrong” kind of white people. This prejudicial attitude extended into how families composed and/or changed their names so that they could be accepted by and within the larger Phoenix communities. As one Italian family account notes, “whatever you do, add an ‘e’ on the end of your name and tell them you’re French. They didn’t want Italians here.” This manner of segregation along ethnic and racial lines formed an unspoken ethic within the landscape of Phoenix, which continues through the present era.

As Phoenix continued to grow, so did a certain embarrassment about their non-white population. The *Phoenix Herald* wrote that the city needed to control “half-naked Indians who disgrace our streets, bringing a blush to the cheeks of our mothers, sisters and wives.” In response to this culturally accepted racist attitude, a city ordinance was passed, in 1881, making it illegal for Indians to appear on city streets “without sufficient clothing to cover the person,” or to be in the city after dark unless employed by a Phoenix resident.

In 1891, the Phoenix Indian School opened. The *Arizona Gazette* wrote, “hundreds of boys and girls were annually transferred from the native condition of indolence and uselessness into civilized and useful members of society.” One of the ways they attempted to make this transformation was to hire out the students

as domestic workers, calling the opportunity an “outing,” as if it were a socially accepted event.

For many Phoenix residents, Indians were a popular tourist draw. It was not uncommon for community members to ask Indian School students to dress up in “war paint” for city parades: a sore historic reminder of American colonialism and the westward expansion. Furthermore, the geography of the roadways were drawn to designate east–west roads named for a particular U.S. president, whereas north–south streets were named for Indian tribes. As Phoenix itself began to grow, those streets named for Indian tribes were soon labeled with the numbers, e.g., Seventh Street and Seventh Avenue. This was, in effect, because the Indian names sent the “wrong message” about the forward looking, progressive image the city wanted to project. “Indians weren’t very modern,” says historian Philip VanderMeer (2013, 674–75). “If you wanted to project this image, then that would be the wrong one.” Following this progressive attitude and the need for Phoenix to position itself as an attractive contemporary location for incoming, acceptable—read: White—potential residents, it was further noted by VanderMeer that Phoenix itself was to become a “get-up-and-go,” community. This, then, led to the confirmation of a racial standard which states that if Phoenix was to be considered a modern town in the twentieth century, “they [must] think that . . . a lively modern city, [recognized as a] get-up-and-go [city] is associated with Anglo Saxon and not with Hispanics, Blacks or Chinese.”

Despite this growing racist ethic, it is clear that the early newcomers to the area—the Hispanics, blacks, and Chinese—played a vital role in the development of the state. Chinese residents, in particular, were among the most industrious of immigrants. Chinese immigrants came to Arizona in 1880 as workers on the Southern Pacific Railroad. Tucson, the main railroad center, soon had a Chinatown and a mix of Chinese-owned shops and businesses. Chinese and Mexican merchants and local farmers built strong and lasting business relationships, with Chinese residents leasing land from Mexicans. Chinese immigrants also operated grocery stores and restaurants and assisted their countrymen in entering the United States from Mexico. During the Mexican Revolution, Chinese merchants supplied General John Pershing’s forces in their campaign against Pancho Villa. Successful Chinese in Tucson led a viable community based on social integration, friendship, and kinship. Although the Chinese accounted for only about 1 percent of the total population of Phoenix, they were distrusted by their non-Chinese neighbors, who passed city ordinances and taxes intended to discourage Chinese immigration. Unlike Chinese immigrants in California, the Chinese Arizona suffered little overt violence, but they were segregated into one small part of town.

Hispanics, being a much larger group and better integrated into the local economy, could neither be ignored nor be legislated against. Enrique Garfias, the first elected constable/chief of police, was widely admired, as illustrated by his 1895 obituary, which declared that he “gave the greatest satisfaction to the citizens of Phoenix. He was brave and conscientious and never failed in his duty, no matter how danger menaced him.” As Phoenix grew and sought to look like older,

eastern cities, city officials were embarrassed by the Mexican “look” of the town. When the floods of the 1890s washed away many south Phoenix adobes, they looked on it as a good time to begin the long and slow attitude of distancing themselves from the Hispanic community. The floods provided the structure for separating the wealthier, white citizens, who bought the richer land elevated from the floods, from the Hispanics, who were left in flood-prone areas of south Phoenix. This action was regarded as a positive step on behalf of the Euro-American communities and aided in the further establishment of an already underscored racist attitude within Phoenix. The *Arizona Gazette* wrote, “here are none of the sleepy, semi-Mexican features of the more ancient towns of the Southwest, but in the midst of a valley of wonderful fertility, has risen a city of stately structures, beautiful homes, progressive and vigorous.” By 1910, however, Hispanics accounted for only 10 percent of the population inside the Phoenix city limits. Yet, these actions, both candid and openly stated, remained consistent, entrenching an attitude of racism, which remains visible today in the sociopolitical environment of Phoenix.

Arizona made a strong push toward segregation at the turn of the twentieth century. Schools that had been bilingual were now English-only. The change significantly affected the Hispanic community. In 1910, segregation was first established in city schools, aimed at separating the white and black populations. The territorial legislature passed a law allowing segregation, but territorial governor Joseph H. Kibbey vetoed the measure. Kibbey’s veto was overturned by lawmakers; soon after, Phoenix voted to segregate its own schools. This action, in effect, began to take hold throughout the state of Arizona. The early fight over bilingual education was only one movement that helped to satisfy a racialized environment within Arizona, which Governor Kibbey opposed. His reasons for vetoing the segregation measure were almost word for word the reasons given by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1954, when they ruled against school segregation in *Brown v. Board of Education*. Kibbey wrote, “it would be unfair that pupils of the African race should be given accommodations and facilities for a common school education less effective, less complete, less convenient or less pleasant so far as the accessories of the school and its operations are concerned than those accorded pupils of the White race in the same school district; and the bill in terms contemplates nothing less,”

Residential segregation was utilized to segregate the white and Hispanic populations and became the de facto strategy to separate white and black schoolchildren. Research by Whitaker, noted within, *In Search of Black Phoenixians: African-American Culture and Community in Phoenix, 1868–1940*, details the bitter fight between pro- and anti-segregation forces beginning in 1909, when the territorial legislature “passed a law permitting school segregation in Arizona.” According to the Arizona measure, school boards were free to segregate students based on race.

Response from the African American community was swift and angry and further outraged the white territorial governor Joseph Kibbey. Kibbey continued his track record of vetoing such measures, calling this particular political strategy

“utterly ridiculous, un-Christian and inhuman.” The Arizona legislature overrode his veto, and in 1912, Arizona entered the Union as a segregationist state. A major supporter of segregation was Dr. Benjamin A. Moeur, who chaired the convention to draft Arizona’s Constitution for statehood. “You gentlemen can do what you please,” Moeur said in a fiery address to the convention, “but I for one won’t send my children to school with n\*\*\*\*\*s.” Moeur’s language gives support to the opinion framed in 1915 by black Phoenician Frank Smith. In a letter to the editorial page of the *Arizona Republican*, he wrote: “There is more race hatred right here in Phoenix to the square inch than in any city I have lived in.”

While the temperament of racism grew throughout the state of Arizona, Kibbey continued to fight segregation and racist political measures. Judgments in favor of statewide segregation—residential and within the school system—suggested that the politically dominant white/Anglo lawmakers could not understand why “Africans” would want to attend white schools when they would be “happier with their own.” The *Arizona Democrat* newspaper editorialized, “The colored people in Arizona are nicely treated,” and then continued with a barely concealed threat, suggesting that, “they conduct themselves in such a manner as this kindly feeling will continue.” With all these actions, lawsuits, measures, and legal strategies for and against segregation forced relocation of immigrants and an openly controlled sense of racial injustice. It is important to note that the racial makeup of the population in Phoenix, in 1910, was 11,134, with 10 percent Hispanic, 4 percent black, and 1 percent Chinese. Fears about the growth of the minority population were grossly overstated.

However, as observed by Professor Thomas J. Davis of the Department of History and College of Law, Arizona State University, “Racial segregation in Phoenix matched the segregation of southern U.S. cities of the day, certainly in regard to African-Americans.” This is exemplified historically, demonstrated during a 1921 Arizona Republican gathering. Among those who gathered to celebrate Arizona’s statehood were dozens of African Americans (men, women, and children). In an expected move, “the children of Phoenix” (i.e., those in political offices and state officials) did not include African Americans. In the eyes of the state officials, African Americans were not truly representative of the state’s residents. They were turned away from the statehood celebration. Seeing that the growing African American communities within Arizona required some form of attention, separate gatherings were instituted and announced by the Republican administration. This action was considered a “solution” to the African American controversy while, at the same time, retaining a structure of racial injustice in favor of the white, Republican body politic. Throughout the years, the political platform for Arizona reflected this embedded form of racism.

This same attitude accompanied white immigrants who came to Arizona from the South and maintained their Southern attitudes and racial prejudices; they demanded racial separation. African Americans who sought to purchase homes within the Phoenix area were residentially segregated. Legislation was organized to locate the African American community to areas specific within Arizona, and white real estate agents simply refused to sell to blacks in white neighborhoods. Eventually, openly racist operations and housing discrimination were applied to



all minorities seeking to live within Arizona. In 1920, for example, one white entrepreneur developed tracts in Tempe exclusively for African Americans, a move designed to keep the modestly increasing African American population well east of white-dominated Phoenix area. The evil of race hatred was long growing within Arizona, giving credence to the importance for African American civic leaders to stand against such tensions.

African American civic leaders fought hard against both the de facto and the de jure segregation with “agency and resilience in the face of malevolence and apathy,” writes Whitaker. Their actions became visible as in 1919, when African Americans leaders formed the Phoenix Advancement League (PAL) and began a decades-long struggle against centuries-old prejudices. Their collaborative actions took aim at the racialized struggles, which plagued Arizona and were becoming widespread. However, from time to time, one African American civic leader or another (often with the aid of limited Euro-American political assistance) would challenge the system of segregation, but such challenges came to nothing.

From 1877 to 1955, Arizona underwent many changes. These changes established Arizona as a strong political center in the west, as well as a location for expanded population growth. However, during the Depression era (1929–1939), Arizona was significantly traumatized. Newly arrived Chinese, Mexican, and African American immigrants were devastated, unable to obtain adequate health, housing, or jobs throughout the early stages of the Depression. Relief only began to arrive during the 1930s, when emergency Federal monies (the New Deal) funded the construction of the Hoover Dam in 1933.

The World War II era provided a significant increase in the visibility and importance of Arizona. Construction of military bases, large amounts of unoccupied land, good railroads, cheap immigrant labor, low taxes, and its proximity to California’s aviation industry made Arizona attractive to both the military and private firms. Many of these businesses and government organization remained after the war era, expanding the racially diverse population. For example, Fort Huachuca became one of the largest nearly all-black army forts, with quarters for 1,300 officers and 24,000 enlisted soldiers. The 92nd and 93rd Infantry Divisions trained at this facility. The Mexican American community was very active in patriotic efforts to support American troops abroad and made efforts to support the war effort materially by providing moral support for the American troops, especially the Mexican American men from local communities. Community projects were seen as cooperative ventures where members of both the Mexican American and Anglo communities participated. Unfortunately, efforts were also made to segregate and marginalize Mexican Americans from other American housing communities. Despite these racialized separatist efforts, the Mexican American community, particularly the women, organized to assist their servicemen and the war effort. For example, the Spanish American Mothers and Wives Association, with nearly 300 members, engaged in activities in support of the troops; however, they had an underlying goal to reinforce women’s role in Spanish Mexican culture. The organization raised thousands of dollars, wrote letters, and joined in numerous celebrations demonstrating their support for Mexican American servicemen.

**Black Soldiers Riot in Phoenix (1942)**

On Thanksgiving Day in 1942, an off-duty black soldier struck a black woman with a bottle during an argument in a Phoenix café. When a military police tried to arrest the soldier, he pulled a knife and the MP shot and wounded him. When other black soldiers protested, MPs soon arrested about 150 black servicemen, most of whom had nothing to do with the incident. When MPs tried to transfer the black soldiers they had in custody to the nearby Papago Park military installation, the detainees broke away and began to riot after a jeep full of armed blacks appeared and a shot was fired. The rioters were eventually disbursed with gunfire, and search began for everyone involved in the incident.

All available Phoenix police officers joined the MPs in searching for and apprehending suspects. Police and MPs cordoned off 29 city blocks. Several black soldiers hid in the homes of friends, and MPs used armored personnel carriers to flush out the suspects, rolling up to a home and demanding via the loudspeaker that anyone inside involved in the riot surrender himself. If no one came out, the MPs would fire into the house with 50-caliber machine guns. Three men died in the riot, and eleven others were wounded. Most of the 180 men arrested and jailed were released, but some were later court-martialed and sent to military prison.

Finally, Arizona witnessed an increase in the Asian population as well; the state opened two relocation camps for Japanese and Japanese Americans, most of whom had arrived from the West Coast.

**Standing against Racism**

In 1953, Arizona suddenly became an unlikely leader in civil rights when Maricopa Superior Court judge Frederick C. Struckmeyer Jr. handed down a decision in *Phillips v. Phoenix Union High School District*. Struckmeyer, declaring that, “half a century of intolerance is enough,” ruled the Arizona law permitting school boards to segregate unconstitutional. Filing the case were prominent Phoenix attorneys Herbert B. Finn and Hayzel B. Daniels, the first African American to pass the Arizona bar. Neither lawyer was paid; Daniels paid the filing fee. Struckmeyer’s ruling anticipated by a year the groundbreaking U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

De jure segregation in the schools appeared to have come to an end. However, persistent de facto segregation in Phoenix neighborhoods meant that students attending neighborhood schools were likely to go to a school populated almost entirely by their own race and class.

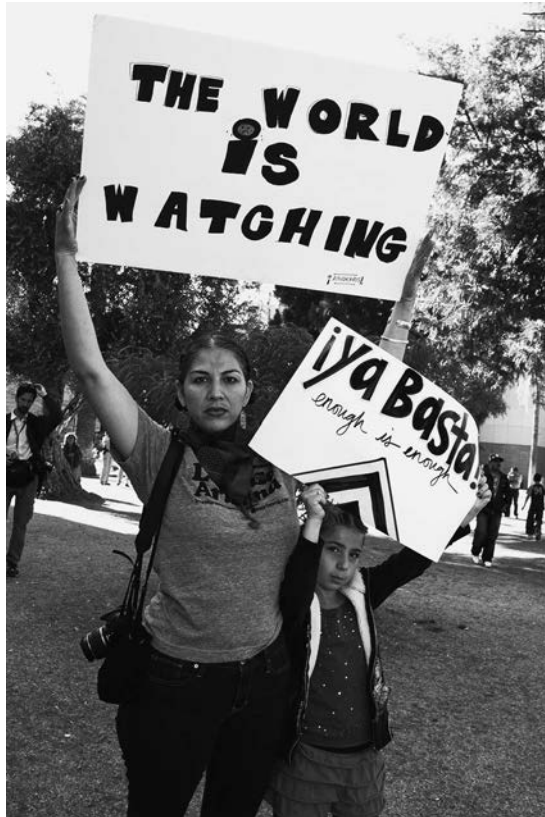
In 1985, more than three decades later, the Phoenix Union High School District entered into an agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice to desegregate the public schools through a series of measures designed to assure equal access to all educational programs. The programs involved included a dozen magnet schools. This amounted to de jure desegregation, the effectiveness of which remains as a “much debated” situation. In May 2005, the U.S. District judge Robert C. Broomfield lifted the desegregation order for the Phoenix Union High School District,

calling the efforts over two decades “a success story” and pointing to higher academic achievement for all students in the district. Once a hotbed of racist oppression, later a spearhead for social change, Phoenix settled the issues upon a middle ground.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the 2000 U.S. Census identified 5.1 percent of Arizona’s population as African American, but the majority lived in areas not far from the original black neighborhood of 1900. “A glance at the neighborhoods throughout the Valley in 2006 demonstrates the persistence of residential racial segregation,” the records state. “Black residents may dot various neighborhoods throughout the Valley, but the imperative realities of race and class continue to cluster the bulk of the Valley’s black population in south Phoenix. By no standard has there been much penetration.” In their 2005 book, *Metropolitan Phoenix: Place Making and Community Building*, authors Patricia Gober and Barbara Trapido-Lurie admit that, “Anglo Phoenixians are retreating from the city center and are isolating themselves in gated and guarded master-planned communities, rather than face the challenges of diversity.” Such retreat may signal a new need to reexamine the prejudices and policies of Phoenix’s majority population. One Arizona historian continues to state that, “I am not sure racial segregation in the Valley of the Sun was ever broken.”

### A New Wave of Racism

In April 2010, Arizona enacted two laws addressing immigration, Senate Bill (SB) 1070 and House Bill (HB) 2162. Proponents believed these laws were racially biased initiatives, targeting a racialized, primarily Mexican, immigrant population. HB 1070 added new state requirements to crimes and penalties related to enforcement of immigration laws. If enforced, the law required immigrants to carry alien registration documents, prohibitions on applying for work if unauthorized, and permission for warrantless arrests if there is probable cause



Protesters hold up signs opposing Arizona’s immigration bill, 2010. SB 1070, called for police to use reasonable suspicion to question and detain possible undocumented immigrants. These immigrants coming from south of the border are viewed as nonwhites. (Daniel Raustadt/ Dreamstime.com)

the offense would make the person removable from the United States. HB 2162 addressed the concerns over the possibility of racial profiling resulting from HB 1070 by stipulating that prosecutors would not investigate complaints “based on race, color or national origin.” After several legal challenges, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the provision requiring immigration status checks during law enforcement stops, positioning Arizona as a leader in the fight against illegal immigration. The state of Arizona has passed some of the broadest anti-illegal immigration restrictions in the nation. Following the legal strategies and racially biased footsteps of Arizona, similar bills have been introduced in six state legislatures, including South Carolina, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Rhode Island, Michigan, and Illinois. They, too, faced a backlash of resistance from members of the immigrant community, similar to the many protests that emerged in Arizona before and after the passage of the legislation.

The fight over what should be taught in public schools provides another example of Arizona’s ongoing struggle with race and racism. In 2003, state lawmakers passed HB 2281, aimed at crushing ethnic studies programs, or more specifically, curricula addressing the history and present state of specific communities of color. The bill’s origin was an apparent response to veteran Latinx labor organizer Dolores Huerta’s comment, “Republicans hate Latinos” in a speech to Tucson high school students. Huerta’s statement provoked vehement opposition from Republicans throughout the state and country. The bill, in part, bans ethnic studies programs using racist and antigovernment rhetoric “and declares that public school pupils should be taught to treat and value each other as individuals and not be taught to resent or hate other races or classes of people.” The bill prompted sustained activism to protect these programs, particularly Mexican American studies (MAS). *Acosta et al. v. Huppenthal et al.* and *Maya Arce v. Huppenthal* were the most important legal challenges to HB 2281. In August 2017, a federal judge overturned the Arizona ban on ethnic studies courses aimed at Hispanic students, stating that this action was motivated by racial discrimination and violated pupils’ constitutional rights.

Arizona House members approved HB 2281 in the same year their state senate colleagues approved SB 1070. Taking together, these measures negatively affected the Latinx community, reinforcing the belief that discriminatory racist practices are still alive and thriving in the state.

## **Conclusion**

These most recent legal measures, acted in part and full within the state of Arizona, place another mark along the torrid racialized history, which Arizona has developed since becoming part of the American Republic. Immigrants and migrants—albeit Chinese/Chinese American, African American, Mexican/Mexican American—and the Native peoples of the region have all undergone various forms of bias, legal injustice, racial tensions, and prejudice stemming from a sociopolitical ethic of racial hegemony and political profit. However, without the labor, cultural contributions, and political activism from these various ethnic communities, the Arizona landscape would widely be barren and monochromatic. The fact that wealthy Euro-American/Anglo settlers and landowners aimed their

political gains toward reducing the significant and potential contributions from these ethnic communities lays the foundations for the conservative political bend of Arizona. This sociopolitical leaning, in favor of a Western Euro-American/Anglo colonial ideology, continues to struggle with the dynamic histories of the various ethnic and immigrant communities, which are the staple of the Arizona cosmology. Any attempt to eradicate these contributing cultures would erase a large part of the western United States and its colonial history. Efforts to legally reduce the ongoing work, community participation, cultural contributions, and growing population of various ethnic immigrants in the state of Arizona demonstrate the continuing racially unjust social climate in the state. The fact remains that until the present legal matters facing the education, labor force, cultural expressions, and residential position of those deemed historically and contemporarily “untouchable,” are addressed by the politicians and citizens of the state, the racial struggles within the borders of Arizona will remain contested.

Without a balanced acceptance of both the dynamic and rich immigrant and ethnic communities in the history of Arizona, the state cannot, and will not, be able to address present sociopolitical and legal injustices. While the goal is to secure the good will for all, regardless of race, color, or creed, maintaining such current inequitable and legally defiant operations continues to position Arizona as one of the country’s most racially vulnerable states. It becomes important, then, to reference the past cultural histories of Arizona, which contributed to the current state corpus, in order to ascertain a potentially positive, balanced, and politically equitable Arizona for generations to come.

## NOTABLE FIGURE

### Geronimo (1829–1909)

One of the best-known Native American leaders of the nineteenth century, Geronimo was a member of the Apache tribe, which lived in eastern Arizona and western New Mexico. Consisting of bands of nomadic hunters, the Apaches were considered to be one of the most warlike tribes in the Southwest. The name Apache derives from the Zuni word *apachu*, meaning “enemy.”

Born in 1829 near present-day Clifton in eastern Arizona, Geronimo’s Indian name was *Gokhlayeh*, “One Who Yawns.” It is unclear why the Mexicans called him Geronimo, from the Spanish word for Jerome. “Geronimo” may have been a Spanish attempt to pronounce *Gokhlayeh*, or the name may have arisen from the fact that his Spanish enemies prayed to Saint Jerome to protect them from Apache raids.

Admitted to the warriors’ council of the Chiricahua Apache in 1846, Geronimo began leading raid to steal horses against both Mexican and American settlers. Geronimo quickly became known among both his enemies and his own people for his cunning and ferocity. In 1858, Mexican soldiers killed Geronimo’s mother, wife, and three children. In revenge for this act, Geronimo conducted numerous raids into Mexico until April 1877, when the Americans captured him and confined him to the San Carlos Indian Reservation.

In 1872, the U.S. government established the San Carlos Reservation along the Gila River in eastern Arizona. Covering 5,000 square miles, the reservation was a barren tract covered by cactus, mesquite, and cottonwood trees and frequently swept by sandstorms. Summer temperatures could reach 110 degrees Fahrenheit. By the 1880s, the federal government had forced some 5,000 Apaches onto the reservation, where they were expected to become self-sufficient farmers. The Apaches, however, scorned agriculture and relied instead on weekly food rations from the army and the Office of Indian Affairs. There was little to do on the reservation, where traditional ceremonies and practices were banned. After 1878, Geronimo led small bands of Apaches in breakouts from the reservation several times, each time establishing a base in the rugged mountains of northern Mexico from which he could lead raids on both Mexican and American settlements. These raids led to the conclusion of an agreement between the Mexican and American governments, which allowed soldiers of both countries to cross the border freely in pursuit of Geronimo and his raiders. General George Crook recruited Apache scouts, who eventually tracked and found Geronimo. Crook persuaded the Apache leader to return to the reservation, but in 1885, Geronimo and a small group of followers broke out again. Crook found the fugitives again in 1886, but this time they refused to return and slipped away from Crook at night.

Crook's failure to secure Geronimo led to a public outcry that forced the general to resign. General Nelson Miles, Crook's replacement, was ordered to capture Geronimo or destroy him. After several failed attempts to find Geronimo and his band, Nelson tried a different strategy, sending just one man, Lieutenant Charles Gatewood, to find Geronimo and convince him to return to the reservation. Gatewood had served at San Carlos for two years and knew Geronimo personally. In August 1886, Gatewood located Geronimo and informed him that his remaining family members had been sent to Florida. This news disheartened Geronimo, who promptly surrendered.

Exiled from Arizona, which he never saw again, Geronimo was imprisoned in Pensacola, Florida. In 1894, he was sent to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where he spent his time making and selling bows and arrows and peddling photographs of himself. In 1901, Geronimo marched in Theodore Roosevelt's inaugural parade in Washington, D.C. In 1904, he appeared at the St. Louis World's Fair, and in 1906, he dictated his autobiography. Geronimo died in 1909 after falling from his horse following a drinking spree.

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## Arkansas

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Naomi Warren

### CHRONOLOGY

#### 1541

Hernando de Soto, a Spanish explorer, leads the first European expedition into Arkansas; the de Soto expedition introduces new diseases, pillages and destroys Indian communities and agricultural fields, and captures Indians to serve its needs; de Soto's passage disrupts economic and social systems throughout the region

#### 1543

Mississippi River floods in June; rising waters allow de Soto's Spaniards to begin a journey down the river and out of the region

#### 1673

French explorer Louis Jolliet and Jesuit missionary Jacques Marquette start a voyage down Arkansas River; they are welcomed by Quapaw Indians, who warn them of enemy tribes further down the Mississippi, causing Jolliet and Marquette to end their expedition

#### 1682

French explorer Rene-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, travels down the Mississippi River; claimed La Louisiane territory on behalf of France's King Louis XIV; he also announces a Quapaw–French alliance

#### 1700

Catholic missionaries from France arrive to convert local Indians

#### 1738–1740

The French engage in two-year war with Chickasaw Indians

## **58 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1803**

The United States purchases the Louisiana Territory, which includes present-day Arkansas, from France

### **1806**

The District of Arkansas is created after Louisiana Territory is split

### **1812**

Congress makes Arkansas part of the Missouri Territory

### **1818**

The Quapaws cede their land between Arkansas and Red Rivers to the United States

### **1819**

Congress creates the Arkansas Territory

### **1830**

President Andrew Jackson signs the Removal Act, which allows the president to negotiate treaties to remove the West Indians living east of the Mississippi River; the act provides for financial and material relocation assistance

### **1836**

Arkansas becomes the 25th state to enter the Union on June 15

### **1838–1839**

The forced removal of the Cherokees east of Mississippi River, which becomes known as the Cherokee Trail of Tears, occurs

### **1859**

The Arkansas legislature orders free blacks to choose slavery or exile from the state

### **1861**

Arkansas secedes from the Union on May 6 and then is admitted to Confederate States of America

### **1865**

Arkansas ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery on April 14

### **1866**

The Arkansas legislature passes laws forbidding blacks from serving in the militia, sitting on juries, and attending white public schools

### **1867**

Congress passes the Reconstruction Acts, which place most of the former Confederate states, including Arkansas, under military rule until certain requirements, such as ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment, are fulfilled, thus allowing a state to be readmitted to the Union

### **1868**

Having ratified the Fourteenth Amendment on April 6, 1868, Arkansas is readmitted to the Union on June 22, becoming the second former Confederate state—

after Tennessee—to be readmitted; martial law is declared in most of the state in response to Ku Klux Klan violence

**1869**

Arkansas ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment granting the vote to black men on March 15; the Arkansas legislature passes an anti-Klan law

**1891**

Arkansas passes Jim Crow legislation (Separate Coach Law of 1891) mandating separate coaches on trains carrying black and white passengers

**1896**

The U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson* finds that state-imposed racial segregation laws, such as those enacted by the Arkansas legislature, do not violate the Fourteenth Amendment

**1919**

The most serious race riots in Arkansas history occur in Elaine when whites are killed during an attempt to disrupt a union organizing meeting for black farmers; white mobs descend on Elaine leaving dead hundreds of blacks

**1921**

Arkansas passes an anti-miscegenation law defining “Negro” as anyone with any Negro blood; the law also outlaws cohabitation between blacks and whites

**1924**

Congress passes the Indian Citizenship Act, which grants full U.S. citizenship to indigenous peoples, whom the act calls “Indians”

**1927**

John Carter, a 38-year-old African American, is lynched in Little Rock

**1942**

The United States and Mexico sign the Mexican Farm Labor Agreement (the Bracero Program); President Franklin Roosevelt signs Executive Orders 9066 and 9102, which allow for the relocation of Japanese Americans to designated “military areas”; the Jerome and Rohwer internment camps are established in Arkansas

**1947**

Arkansas celebrates its first holiday for Confederate General Robert E. Lee

**1954**

The U.S. Supreme Court issues its decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, which ruling mandates public school integration; Charleston, Arkansas, becomes the first Southern city to end school segregation

**1957**

Governor Orval Faubus orders the National Guard to Little Rock’s Central High School to prevent nine black students from attending; in response, President Dwight Eisenhower sends federal troops to protect the students—the National Guard troops are federalized and Central High School is integrated

**1958**

Governor Faubus orders Little Rock high schools to close for an academic year to protest integration

**1959**

Fire at the Arkansas Negro Boys Industrial School kills 21 people

**1964**

Bracero Program ends; President Lyndon Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawing segregation in all public accommodations (employment, education, transportation) and prohibiting federal government funding for institutions and agencies practicing Jim Crow

**1965**

President Johnson signs the Voting Rights Act guaranteeing blacks the right to vote; the act provides strict federal enforcement and harsh penalties for racial discrimination targeting voter registration and voting

**1967**

Arkansans elect Winthrop Rockefeller as the state's first Republican governor since Reconstruction

**1970**

Congress extends the Voting Rights Act

**1975**

The Pentagon announces selection of the Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, military base as processing and relocation center for Vietnam War refugees

**1980**

The United States announces that Fort Chaffee will serve as processing and relocation center for Cubans leaving the Port of Mariel ("Mariel Boatlift")

**1982**

The Voting Rights Act is extended for 25 years

**1983**

President Ronald Reagan signs a bill establishing the third Monday of every January as the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. National Holiday, beginning in 1986; Arkansas celebrates its first Martin Luther King Jr. National Holiday in 1983

**1985**

Governor Bill Clinton combines Arkansas's celebration of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. National Holiday and Confederate General Robert E. Lee Day into a single holiday

**1986**

First official federal celebration of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. National Holiday

**1990**

Latinas/os become Arkansas's fastest-growing minority population

**2006**

Congress reauthorizes and extends the Voting Rights Act for 25 years

**2008**

Barack Obama is elected as the first African American president of the United States; Arkansas gives almost 59 percent of its votes to Obama's Republican opponent John McCain

**2012**

Barack Obama is reelected for a second term as the president of the United States; Arkansas gives over 60 percent of its vote to Obama's Republican opponent Mitt Romney

**2013**

The U.S. Supreme Court nullifies sections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (*Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder*)

**2017**

Arkansas governor Asa Hutchinson signs a law separating same-day celebrations of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Confederate General Robert E. Lee holidays

**NARRATIVE**

Arkansas's racial history is complex, and historians continue to revise the official narrative to encompass the experiences of all of the state's residents. Griff Stockley writes that, "the official telling of Arkansas's racial past was put in the service of white supremacy for most of the state's existence" (2009, xxi). In fact, W. Fitzhugh Brundage corroborates this sentiment by observing that when the North Carolina and Arkansas history commissions first began to mark and preserve historic "shrines," they focused on sites that were revered by whites. If African American history was preserved, it was done through official documents and slaveholder records. Historical artifacts such as black newspapers, institutional records, and private correspondence were not collected. Thus, the scope of the historians' data collection created a void in the historical record that has often obscured the legacies of people of color.

Rooted in white supremacy, Arkansas's racial history includes the calculated removal of Indians by the federal government, the subjugation of African Americans to slavery and discrimination, the migration of Mexican guest workers through the Bracero Program (Mexican Farm Labor Agreement), the internment of Japanese Americans at the Jerome and Rohwer Relocation Camps, and the placement of Southeast Asian and Cuban refugees at Fort Chaffee by the federal government to await processing and relocation. Examining each group's contribution to the state's racial narrative is vital to ensuring the integrity of Arkansas's historical record.

**The Arkansas Region: De Soto's Expedition to Statehood**

While many may assume that those charged with documenting history do so objectively, the potential for self-interest to dominate narratives should not be overlooked. Narratives are fundamental to understanding the human experience

and how the past informs the present. Although Spanish conquistador Hernando de Soto's diaries from his first expedition to the Arkansas region in 1541 provided only sketchy information of Indian populations he and his army encountered, subsequent French and Spanish explorers during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries "left valuable accounts of the native people they met" (Whayne et al. 2013, 45, 53). Narratives captured in the explorers' accounts of their interactions with the region's Indian communities reveal the complexities of their relationships.

During the sixteenth century, de Soto and his army pillaged and plundered their way through the Arkansas region, introducing diseases such as yellow fever, smallpox, tuberculosis, plague, typhus, influenza, and measles for which Indians had no immunity. Indians faced three options when anticipating the Spaniards' arrival. They could comply with their demands, resist them and face uncertain consequences, or abandon their communities until it was safe to return. Facing existential threats, Indian leaders were often proactive in calculating the Spaniards' arrival to their respective villages. Through collective acts of agency, Indians managed to relocate their villages until the Spaniards had left the area. In a singular act of agency, Quapaw Indians living near the Mississippi and Arkansas Rivers welcomed French explorers including Louis Jolliet and Jesuit minister Jacques Marquette to their village with a calumet (a decorated wooden shaft with a carved stone tobacco pipe attached to one end) ceremony and a feast. As a symbol of peace and friendship, the calumet was offered as a first step toward forming mutually beneficial alliances. Also seeking mutual interests, Spanish and French explorers found it beneficial to pay Indians an annuity in exchange for protecting their land claims in the region.

Building on their common interest in trade, French explorers leveraged their relationship with the Quapaws to strengthen their military as they traversed the region. Likewise, Quapaws sometimes used marriage to solidify ties with both French and English traders. "Diplomatic trade marriages" between an Indian daughter of a tribal leader and a French or English trader served strategic goals and allowed disparate groups to coexist in the Arkansas region (Whayne et al. 2013, 87–88). Yet, neither intermarriage nor coexistence stripped Quapaw Indians of their sovereignty, as Quapaws retained control of their community—refusing to surrender authority to foreign nations. Thus, a Quapaw leader could withdraw warriors from a French military alliance at will. Pursuit of mutual interests allowed some explorers to live side by side with Indian communities that included the Caddos.

Skilled in diplomacy, Caddos dwelling in southwest Arkansas frequently negotiated alliances and political arrangements on behalf of European and American officials seeking harmony with other Indian groups dwelling in northern and western border regions that separated New Spain and the Louisiana territory. During the colonial era, the Caddos were also important trading partners with Spain and France. Residing primarily in southwestern Missouri, the Osage controlled trade access through the prairie-plains frontiers. Seasonal hunting and trading excursions took them to northern Arkansas. Similar to the Quapaws and Caddos, to protect their mutual trade interests, the Osages formed alliances with Europeans against other Indian communities in the region. For example, the Chickasaw

nation and Quapaws were historical rivals. The Chickasaws aligned with the English, and the Quapaws aligned with the French. By invoking their agency, Indians cultivated relationships with Spanish, French, and European explorers that advanced the evolving frontier exchange economy while also ensnaring them within it. Economic interdependence and the ability to sustain expected levels of trade with the Europeans changed the culture of both the Osages and Quapaws. Likewise, Indians participating in the annuity system found themselves trapped psychologically and materially bound to it.

With the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, which included the Arkansas region, the United States more than doubled its size, national challenges, and potential as a world power. President Thomas Jefferson's desire to resettle Indians living east of the Mississippi River westward to the Louisiana Purchase was obstructed by white settlers' and politicians' fervor for territorial expansion and land that would produce a cash crop. Identifying the people dwelling in the region, fulfilling the political goals of the United States, and integrating the territory into its political economy were instant priorities. But executing these priorities decimated the Indians' habitats, as the Arkansas region became the epicenter for Indian removal. Seeking territorial integrity and acting under guidelines sanctioned in the Land Ordinance of 1785 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, the U.S. Congress divided the Louisiana Territory into regions that would eventually be incorporated into the political system as slave-free states. Congress subsequently created the District of Arkansas in 1806, naming it after the "Arkansa" Indians.

In contrast to the Spanish and French military's measured restraint when populating the Arkansas region with their own people, after the Louisiana Purchase, the American government allowed white settlers to inundate the area. From 1810 through 1820, the number of non-Indian settlers increased from 1,062 to 14,273 (Whayne et al. 2013, 112). Similar to their plight with the Spanish and French, Indians faced three options when the Americans arrived: accommodation, resistance, or removal. Although Quapaw Indians in southeastern Arkansas became allies with the Americans, the government's inconsistent annuity policy compromised the alliance, making accommodation challenging, at best. Because of their location, Quapaws were the biggest threat to the Americans' desire to develop plantation agriculture. In contrast, Osages residing in central Arkansas aggressively resisted the Americans' efforts to relocate Indians from the east to their region. Between 1808 and 1825, Major William Lovely negotiated treaties with the Osages that culminated with their relocation to Oklahoma. Choctaws, adversaries of the Osages, were subjected to an 1820 treaty that authorized their removal to an Arkansas reservation. Seeing the Choctaw's resettlement as an impediment to obtaining their interests, white settlers near the reservation threatened war. Siding with the white settlers, the Arkansas General Assembly petitioned Congress to reverse its decision to relocate the Choctaws to Arkansas. Congress capitulated, and by 1825, all Choctaws were removed to southern Oklahoma.

Disparate views of government and Indian Affairs officials and politicians and white settlers' thirst for political and economic enrichment threatened the Quapaws' accommodation tactic. Some politicians and newspapers even initiated a public campaign to demonize the Quapaws. Under the terms of an 1824 treaty, by

January 1826, the Quapaws were forced to relocate to the Red River. After floods destroyed their riverside communities, some Quapaws returned to Arkansas with the approval of the federal government. Over the next six years, they were entangled in the fluctuating paternalism, benevolence, and demonization of U.S. government officials. Citizenship, land, and annuity payments were at the heart of the conflict. Whether advocating for their right to live as American citizens, encouraging their humane treatment, assigning them to tribal lands, or allocating some of their annuity to an education fund for their young, uncertainty permeated the Quapaws' relationship with the paternalistic Americans. On May 13, 1833, the Quapaws conceded to their final removal from Arkansas and relocation to Indian Territory.

Although Arkansas's evolution to statehood narrative is dominated by the U.S. government's methodical removal of Indians from the region to facilitate territorial expansion and the development of plantation agriculture, through their agency, Indians created a competing narrative that reflected their generally peaceful coexistence with Spanish, French, and European interlopers. The arrival of the Americans to the region after the Louisiana Purchase subordinated the Indians' peaceful coexistence to white supremacy. African Americans living in the Arkansas region were also subjected to white supremacy.

### **Sustaining a Region: African Americans and Arkansas's Plantation Economy**

Historical records of slavery, for example, typically presented blacks as passive actors who willingly subordinated their interests to the interests of their masters. Although Orville Taylor's *Negro Slavery in Arkansas*, published in 1958, challenged this narrative, it overlooked the nuances of power wielded by slaves as they negotiated with their masters. As part of the New Deal, during the Great Depression, the Works Progress Administration's (WPA) Federal Writers Project hired unemployed writers to interview former slaves about their experiences. The interviews were published in George Lankford's *Bearing Witness: Memories of Arkansas Slavery Narratives* from the 1930s' WPA collection. Of the 186 interviews amassed in Lankford's book, about one-third involved episodes of violence against an Arkansas slave.

During his first address as chancellor of the University of Arkansas, Little Rock, in 2003, Dr. Joel Anderson acknowledged that "race, particularly white-black relations, has been a major problem, indeed the major problem, the biggest obstacle to progress, in our state since it was founded in 1836" (Stockley 2007, 14). As a state that has been "ruled by race" since its inception, Arkansas continues to grapple with the evolving nature of relations between blacks and whites. Its storied history of race relations is both ignoble and noble. From "sundown towns" to racial cleansing to "whitecapping" to Jim Crow policies to segregation to race riots, examining black Americans' social justice advocacy to protect their humanity, beginning with slavery, even as white supremacy reigned is instructive.

Although slavery existed in Arkansas as early as 1721 when settlers from New Orleans formed a colony in the region, its "official" narrative began with the



Louisiana Purchase in 1803. According to the 1820 census, 1,617 slaves were included in the region's total population of 14,273 (Stockley 2009, 25). Between the 1850 and 1860 census, Arkansas, a slave-importing state, increased its slave population by 136 percent, with the 1860 census recording 111,000 slave residents and 11,000 masters. Migration transformed Arkansas from a society with slaves to a slave society. WPA interviews revealed that with New Orleans and Memphis serving as the primary slave-trading points for Arkansas, slaves arrived with their masters from states that included North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia or with slave traders who were making their way across the region. With cotton thriving, white planters in rural areas needed slaves to ensure the sustainability of their crop. Slaves in rural and urban areas were treated differently. For whites in positions of power, slavery was a moral institution that was ordained by God and administered to benefit both master and slave. The Arkansas Supreme Court's 1859 decision in *Ewell v. Tidwell* affirmed this belief, noting a striking difference between the black and white men in terms of intellect, feelings, and principles. The court stated that since blacks were inferior to whites and their bondage was acceptable and protected them. For this reason, the institution of slavery could be maintained.

Arkansas's 1836 Constitution legalized slavery. Given its legality, divine intervention suggested that whites were obligated to protect slaves and treat them humanely. After all, slaves were inferior beings who lacked the ability to care for themselves. Morality compelled their white masters to act accordingly. On the surface, this narrative sounded benevolent. In reality, it supported white supremacy, as evidenced by court actions, administrative procedures, and government policies. Arkansas's 1836 Constitution encouraged legislators to create laws that required owners to protect their slaves and treat them humanely. However, legislators' failure to create standards for protection and humane treatment made it difficult to prosecute slave owners who used physical force against their slaves. In fact, the appellate record includes no evidence of such prosecutions.

Thus, despite the Constitution's best intentions, legislators were free to do as they wished when considering policies for slavery, even though the Arkansas Supreme Court had created a hierarchy of legal values that protected the institution of slavery and white supremacy. Since slaves were considered valuable property, killing or injuring them was a major infraction, but the court protected "the right of any White person to overcome a slave's rebellion against lawful authority" (Stockley 2009, 27). At the same time, slaves had no right to sue on their own behalf, but a master could sue on a slave's behalf if he could prove "economic injury" (Stockley 2009, 27). Slaves were also restricted from purchasing alcohol and other commodities from their masters or other slaves and from hiring themselves out to secure additional disposable income. With their rights basically nonexistent, slaves found ways to exercise agency. Slaves could extract concessions from their owners by withholding their labor, sabotaging the plantation routine, running away, or acquiring skills that were essential to the plantation economy.

Overworked slaves would often sit down in the shade when the overseer was not looking. Acting as their own agents, slaves responded to the terrorism

consistently inflicted on them with tactics that protected some aspect of their humanity. For example, in *Black Culture and Black Consciousness*, Lawrence W. Levine's examination of slave narratives revealed that slaves were not inclined to accept whites' conventional thinking about them regarding their obligations to their owners. Slaves were well aware of their humanity. A North Carolina slave recalled that slave owners generally fed their animals better than their slaves. However, this forced some slaves to steal food, reasoning that if they were going to be whipped, it was easier to stand for the whipping if one's stomach was full.

Slaves often moved around of their own volition to escape unfavorable work routines and brutal masters or to reconnect with loved ones. Mobility gave slaves a way to deal with what Anthony Kaye refers to as their "terrain of struggle" and create familiar communities. While whites rationalized their behavior to protect white supremacy, blacks rationalized their behavior to protect their humanity. White planters gained power and status in areas of Arkansas where cotton and plantation agriculture thrived. In other parts of the state that were unsuitable for plantation agriculture, slaves learned skills that would sustain them once indentured servitude ended. Charlotte Stephens, a former slave and the first black school teacher in Arkansas, recalled that slaves who acquired skills as brickmakers, bricklayers, stonemasons, lathers, plasters, and builders would be able to find work and help both themselves and their owners.

Some slaves in Little Rock had more freedom than those in rural areas. Even so, they had to navigate their comings and goings to avoid interacting with slave patrols. Whites who were less affluent than the planters were responsible for patrolling urban areas to make sure slaves had their masters' permission to be off the property. Members of the slave patrols often carried knives and pistols. Slaves residing in rural areas whose duties required hunting, fishing, and trapping animals often carried weapons for their tasks and to protect themselves. Although race generally separated slaves and free people, within its social construction, slaves often had fluctuating degrees of autonomy. Sometimes, the construction of race also fluctuated.

Arkansas and other slave states used blood fraction laws and appearance to determine race and whether one was thereby a slave or free person. Under such laws, a fraction of Negro blood rendered one a slave. Appearance determinations could be challenged, especially if slaves were the offspring of white and black parents and could pass for white. Being presumed black did not preclude blacks from suing for their freedom. The 1861 case of *Guy v. Daniel* is instructive. Abby Guy was born to a mulatto woman and likely a white father. While she was traveling to Arkansas with her mistress, Polly Daniel, and her family, Polly died. Rather than remain with the Daniel sons, Abby, with her light complexion and straight hair, began living as a free white woman with her children. Although they never married, for a while, Abby lived with a white man whose surname was Guy. She handled her own affairs and hired men to work on her farm. In 1856, William Daniel, one of Polly's sons, began claiming Abby as a slave. In a case that lasted for around four years, Abby sued Daniel for falsely imprisoning her and her children. The court determined the family's status on the basis of physical features such as skin color, hair, shape of the nose, and "evidence of blackness" in their

bare feet. Although Abby eventually won her case, she and her children were forced to work as slaves at certain points during the trial.

While practices and policies governing racial interactions between blacks and whites during slavery generally supported white supremacy, depending on the situation, digressions from the norm emerged. Even though paternalism may have implied that the lowly, ignorant, and sinful slaves needed to be cared for, life's realities allowed for flexibility. At times, paternalism was simply an ideal that could be abandoned to address an economic crisis or an event that compromised the life of the slave owner. Expedience was quickly embraced during times of need. Need in terms of family life, adequate food and clothing, religious education, kindness, and punishment could displace traditional norms governing interactions between slaves and their owners. In some cases then, the trials of daily living forced both slave owners and slaves to take advantage of their agency. Slave owners who trusted their slaves and treated them humanely tended to believe that their slaves would never leave them. Finding comfort in this belief, they were surprised when, as the Civil War began, slaves readily abandoned their owners and the plantations to fight for the Union.

### **The Civil War and Reconstruction**

The Civil War was a wake-up call for white Arkansans and white supremacy. As the Union Army approached, "well treated slaves left as quickly as others" (Stockley 2009, 47). Initially, though, slaves joining the Union encountered conditions far worse than what they had experienced during bondage. Despite tasting freedom, deplorable conditions and the scarcity of food and shelter persuaded some to return to their masters. When the Civil War ended in 1865, Congress created the U.S. Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (Freedmen's Bureau) to assist freed slaves and poor whites during Reconstruction. While the war may have ended *de jure* bondage, it did not change the racial ideology in Arkansas. Rather, "[Freedmen] Bureau officials often perceived themselves as surrogate planters, white patriarchs taking care of infantile Sambos" (Stockley 2009, 58). Thus, prewar sentiments toward blacks persisted as whites and former slaves contemplated their place in the post-slavery environment. Freedmen agent E.G. Barker of Marion said to a friend in the North that "colored people having been suddenly changed from slaves to that of citizens of the U.S. are but children in their new position, and easily led astray" (Stockley 2009, 58). Although free legally, former slaves (freedmen and freedwomen) were essentially still in bondage, as former slave owners devised new tactics to maintain white supremacy. Freedmen also lived in terror as white Arkansans "threatened them with death and then threatened retribution if they reported it" (Stockley 2009, 66; Finley 1996, 143). Yet, former slaves and former slave owners had to find a way to coexist in a world that had disrupted the status quo. Historian Eric Foner found that newly freed African Americans considered freedom an open-ended ideal. In contrast, whites clung to the antebellum view of freedom as mastery and hierarchy. While blacks saw freedom as a promise for equality, whites considered it a privilege and juridical status.

It is clear from Foner's observation that former slave owners would cling to the prewar ideology and power dynamics that subordinated slaves to their masters. Whites seemed to believe they still needed blacks to ensure economic recovery. While the effects of the war may have changed the rhetoric about black–white relationships, the materiality of that discourse seemed chimerical for whites. Conversely, former slaves embraced both the rhetorical and material implications of freedom and postwar equality. Within the postwar environment, economic independence and education emerged as strong determinants of former slaves' future viability. Blacks believed landownership and education would ensure their freedom, equality, and economic self-sufficiency. Equality would garner them legal protection. In what may have been the first statement of an African American political agenda in Arkansas, on November 30, 1865, delegates to the Convention of Colored Citizens in Little Rock, led by advocates such as W.H. Gray of Phillips County, listed education, landownership, and government protection as their primary goals. They also petitioned Congress to “clothe us with the power of self-protection by giving us our equality before the law and the right of suffrage” (Proceedings of the Convention of the Colored Citizens of the State of Arkansas; Moneyhon 2014, 21). Blacks seeking the right to vote were helped by the Reconstruction Acts of 1867. Under the acts, the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution recognized blacks as citizens, and the Fifteenth Amendment gave former black male slaves the right to vote.

As slaves and former slave owners negotiated their way through Reconstruction, some whites still perceived slaves as intellectually inferior people who were “improvident and careless. . . . In their natural setting they were ‘savage cannibals’” (Proceedings of the Convention of the Colored Citizens of the State of Arkansas; Stockley 2014, 21). Unsure about whether their perceptions of former slaves derived from race or slavery, whites relied on their understanding of the “anti-progressive” history of the people of Africa and God for clarity. On the one hand, slaves were so backward that God had created slavery to protect them. On the other hand, that same God had directed whites to “save the souls” of their former chattel while cultivating their mind for freedom.

Black and white perceptions of freedom during Reconstruction collided when former slaves realized they would need to return to their former plantations and work for white landlords to earn money that would allow them to purchase land. Under the contract system developed by the Freedmen's Bureau, commissioners urged bureau agents “to teach the freedmen to sign labor agreements, to conform to their contracts, and, if the freedmen failed, to enforce the state's vagrancy laws” that favored white landlords. Thus, the contract system was designed to benefit whites rather than help blacks gain economic freedom. Exercising agency, freedmen took advantage of the postwar labor shortage and signed farm tenancy contracts that would give them some sense of autonomy. Under this system, freedmen farmed the land for a share of the crop. In forcing landowners to sign contracts, freedmen avoided working in gangs. However, they overlooked the potential for landowners' malfeasance. During bad economic times, many slave owners deprived their slaves of wages or their share of the crops by alleging that slaves had failed to honor their contracts. From encouraging tenant farmers to borrow

money to maintaining fraudulent books, at the end of the year, landowners ended up owing the tenant farmers nothing. Other than tracking the fraud, Freedmen's Bureau officials did little to assist the farmers—succumbing instead to white supremacy, largely out of fear, it seems, of Negro supremacy.

### **Protecting White Supremacy in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries**

Whites in Arkansas remained deeply mired in white supremacy toward the end of the nineteenth century and during the early years of the twentieth century. Perhaps in response to a perceived moral panic, “sundown towns,” “whitecapping” or “night riding” and race riots emerged—along with the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). These racial cleansing phenomena were designed to drive African Americans out of the areas and to keep them from moving there. Sundown towns tended to emerge in the “nontraditional South” in places such as Arkansas’s Ozark Mountains and in the Arkansas delta. Whitecappers were “bands of armed white men who engaged in what they viewed as community ‘regulation’ and retaliation, moving against those who violated norms, transgressed boundaries, or threatened livelihoods” (Lancaster 2014b, 49–50).

It was not uncommon for whitecappers to target African Americans during times of economic distress, with the goal of protecting the economy for whites. To create sundown towns, whitecappers posted threatening notices in public places and targeted companies that employed blacks. For example, in the Lawrence County town of Black Rock, Arkansas, “on the night of January 12, 1894, a group of whitecappers posted the following notice: ‘All negroes must leave this town inside of ten days or take what follows, and all who have houses rented to them must fire them or we will fire the houses inside of ten days. Negroes, don’t let this slip your mind’” (Lancaster 2014b, 51). Racial cleansing in the Greene County town of Paragould heightened in late October 1892 when “twenty-five or thirty men went to the houses and residences of the most of the colored population . . . and notified them to leave within three days and nights” (Lancaster 2014b, 52). This terrorism visited upon African Americans included vigilantes visiting black citizens and encouraging them to leave the town. Some Paragould residents managed to pass resolutions to oppose the violence and protect their black residents. Blacks in Lepanto, Poinsett County, faced “a negro dead-line, permitting no colored person to go among them” (Lancaster 2014b, 53). Blacks were prohibited from living on Buffalo Island, and those working for targeted employers left the area. Tactically, phenomena such as sundown towns and practices such as whitecapping promoted racial cleansing and white Arkansans’ efforts to maintain white supremacy.

During the fall of 1905, racism and a failed economic project with the railroad made African American residents of Harrison, Arkansas, targets of violent racial animus. After storming the jail to beat two black men, the crowd headed toward the black district and engaged in door-to-door destruction. The fact that blacks had lived in the community for years and had established their own church, school, and businesses was unimportant to those who were determined to riot

and confiscate property. Although law enforcement did not arrest the rioters, Western District judge Henry Rogers called for a grand jury hearing. When the case was heard, no victims were willing to come forward to testify, and no rioters were indicted (Froelich 2014, 62). After remaining silent about the race riots, years later, Harrison residents acknowledged that their silence had condoned racism and racist attitudes. In January 2006, more than 1,200 residents signed a declaration denouncing racism and promising to be “SILENT NO MORE.” The declaration was published in a Sunday edition of the *Harrison Times* (Froelich 2014, 66–67).

### **Race, Class, and Humanity in Twentieth-Century Arkansas**

#### *The Bracero Program*

Latinas/os (primarily Mexicans) began to have a noticeable presence in Arkansas during the twentieth century. Perceived labor shortages, primarily in agriculture as a result of World War II, led the United States to approach Mexico to resolve its workforce concerns. Through negotiations, on August 4, 1942, the United States and Mexico signed the Mexican Farm Labor Agreement, also known as the Bracero Program. In exchange for their labor, Mexican males (*braceros*) received contracts for seasonal work in the United States that guaranteed free and clean housing, medical care, transportation to and from the two countries, wages equal to those of American farm workers, and a Spanish language contract. Given the historical discrimination toward African Americans in the South specifically and the nation generally, these provisions were included to hold the United States accountable for its treatment of Mexican nationals. Between 1942 and 1964, more than 4 million Mexican men migrated to the United States to fulfill the Bracero Program’s short-term labor contracts, mainly in agriculture. Some arrived in the Arkansas delta to pick cotton in 1947. Although contracts were exclusively given to males, families often chose to stay together. Thus, some Mexican women and children entered the United States illegally. By the end of the Bracero Program, more than 300,000 *braceros* had worked in Arkansas’s cotton fields—at times representing one-fourth of the state’s cotton labor force. Weise speculates that even though some of the workers may have heard about the Mexican migrant experience in the United States from friends who had traveled there previously, it is likely that they had not heard about Arkansas. And while the provisions of the Bracero Program implied that Mexican nationals would escape discrimination, in reality, they faced the inhumanity of Jim Crow and the institution of white supremacy. Through their own agency and the Mexican government’s transnational power, Mexican nationals challenged the social and economic norms in the Arkansas delta.

In general, farmers in the delta sought to replace African Americans who had not migrated to the northern part of Arkansas with *braceros*, believing they would be “a cheap and pliant workforce.” Still, they complained that many of the “aliens” were not agricultural workers, had no intention of working, and that upon hearing about higher wages in another city or town, would abandon the farm before the

end of their contract. In 1949, 88 of the 648 *braceros* contracted left before completing their contract (Weise 2014, 130). This could be attributed in part to the region's racial dynamics, which included "No Mexicans" signs, and farmers' reluctance to uphold the terms of the contracts.

Although the terms and conditions of the Bracero Program stipulated otherwise, Mexican workers in the Arkansas delta usually lived in abandoned sharecropper cabins with no bathroom or toilet and limited transportation and meal options. White farmers often instructed their Tejano (Mexican Americans from Texas) crew leaders to ignore the *braceros*' complaints. In response, individually and collectively, Mexican workers engaged in various acts of resistance that drew upon their nationalistic expectations. From requesting consular intervention to combat discrimination to appealing to farmers (their employers) for fair wages, work, and living conditions to organizing strikes, and ultimately, to fleeing the farms, *braceros* demanded the full rights of citizenship that would have been afforded to them in Mexico. In 1948, 65 workers at one farm who were housed in facilities once inhabited by African Americans challenged their deplorable living conditions and their wage of two dollars per one hundred pounds of cotton by staging a work stoppage on Mexican Independence Day (September 16). After a visit from New Orleans's Consul of Mexico, their employer began paying the three dollars guaranteed by the contract.

Work stoppages also ensued over matters of equity. A strike by Mexican nationals who lost all of their belongings in a fire forced their employer to reimburse them for their losses. Mexican workers forced to pay for meals at the company restaurant of their Marianna employer refused to eat there and struck for access to cooking utensils that would allow them to prepare their own less-expensive meals. In response to the strikes, overtly, employers conceded to Mexican nationals' demands—to retain access to their preferred labor pool. Covertly, though, they remained committed to preserving white supremacy. For example, officials in Marked Tree, Arkansas, agreed to end discrimination against Mexicans since failure to do so could lead the U.S. and Mexican governments to cancel the city's bracero contracts. But the agreement was short-lived, as within a few months, "No Mexicans" signs reappeared and white establishments refused to serve both Mexican nationals and Mexican Americans. White farmers' preference for Mexican workers collided with Arkansas society's anti-Mexican norms, despite Mexican consulate's intervention. By the mid-1950s, white Arkansans began considering Mexicans white for Jim Crow and public space purposes and sometimes prohibited them from entering African American establishments; still, they were not accepted socially, and Mexicans often felt more comfortable among African Americans.

Many white conservatives and farmers considered bracero contracts a threat to the status quo because the federal government could eventually require employers to treat and pay domestic (African Americans and poor whites) and immigrant workers equally. Uncomfortable with the country's changing racial dynamics and New Deal policies that improved labor conditions for urban workers, white conservatives sought to safeguard their economic and political advantages over labor, even if it meant temporarily conceding to some aspects of racial segregation.

Farmers opposing New Deal policies that would extend labor rights to agricultural workers faced adversaries in Mexican nationals and their consulates.

To ensure their own humane treatment, economic, and social justice, Mexican nationals relied on the Mexican government, through consular intervention, to investigate *braceros'* complaints about contract violations such as unpaid wages, medical coverage challenges, and social discrimination. Between 1948 and 1953, *braceros* filed at least 400 complaints with their consulate. A consulate could threaten to blacklist specific employers and regions from the Bracero Program. In 1949, the U.S. government limited blacklisting to individual employers, and by 1954 the Mexican government had abandoned its right to unilaterally blacklist all together, as it had become more difficult to control. But with Mexico as their advocate, *braceros* generally fared better than Tejanos, African Americans, poor whites, and undocumented agricultural workers. Through their agency and consular actions, Mexicans became Arkansas's first agricultural workers to earn a minimum wage. Bracero contracts mandated that *braceros* earn the prevailing local wage or an amount necessary to cover their living needs. Since Arkansas's prevailing hourly wage was significantly lower than the 50-cent floor stipulated by the Bracero Program, in essence, the Mexican government established the minimum wage. Inadvertently, this action also benefitted African Americans and poor whites.

United States' racial norms evolved throughout the Bracero Program, even as Mexican nationals and the Mexican government challenged them. *Braceros* in the Arkansas delta lived through the dismantling of de jure segregation with the U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling. By the time the Bracero Program ended in 1964, just before President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, whites had learned to tolerate Mexicans in their organizations while paying scant attention to their stagnant wages and deplorable working conditions. While a presumptively mutually beneficial economic necessity rooted in the travails of war and the need for labor were the impetus for an influx of Latinas/os into Arkansas during the late 1940s, humanitarian concerns would bring a second Latina/o group to the state.

### *Marinel Refugees*

In April 1980, Fidel Castro announced that any Cubans who wanted to emigrate to the United States were free to do so—launching what became known as the Mariel Boatlift or Castro's "Back Door Policy." Between April and October 1980, 125,000 Cubans relocated to the United States, landing first in Florida before being transferred to one of four resettlement centers located throughout the country (Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, Camp Pendleton in California, Fort Indian-town Gap in Pennsylvania, and Fort Chaffee in Arkansas). More than 19,000 Cuban refugees arrived at Fort Chaffee during May 1980, five years after the Pentagon's selection of the former army base as a processing and relocation center for Vietnam War refugees (Guerrero 2014, 146). Initially, media accounts portrayed the Cuban refugees favorably and focused on their escape from Castro's communist regime. This changed after Castro declared that they were actually criminals, homosexuals, prostitutes, deviants, and people who had been released from



mental facilities. In reality, the U.S. government identified less than 2 percent of the Cuban refugees as serious criminals and denied them asylum. With the Cubans' arrival, Fort Chaffee, located in northwest Arkansas, became the state's 11th-largest city.

While most of the Vietnam War refugees had been families, more than 70 percent of Fort Chaffee's Cuban refugees were men, more than 40 percent were non-white, almost 30 percent were black, and 7 percent were mulatto. Cubans changed Fort Chaffee's racial makeup from predominantly white to almost half nonwhite. This racial transformation of the place collided with white supremacy, as both locals and Cuban refugees anticipated quick relocations. Neither Cuban refugees nor Arkansas politicians were satisfied with the sluggish relocation process. Some attribute the resettlement program's lethargy to lack of clarity about Cubans' legal status, the absence of families, and Castro's and the media's pejorative comments about the refugees' characteristics. Unlike previous Cuban immigrants to the United States who, as "welcomed exiles," were given a swift path to legalization, those arriving on the Mariel Boatlift were shunned.

Lack of clarity concerning Cuban refugees' legal status reflected conflict between Arkansas governor Bill Clinton and the federal government under the leadership of President Jimmy Carter. Robert Lyford, a Clinton aide, advised the governor to request written documentation for the Cubans' status along with local law enforcement jurisdiction. Staff in the governor's office had been told the Cubans were "applicants for asylum, not detainees, refugees, or aliens," and state and local law enforcement officials wanted to know whether they could arrest or detain Cubans who left Fort Chaffee without permission (Guerrero 2014, 147–48). Correspondence between the president's and governor's offices reaffirmed Arkansas's right to follow the U.S. Constitution's Tenth Amendment, which gave states the authority to rule on any matters that were not specifically preempted by the federal government. Thus, Arkansas attorney general Steve Clark concluded that while Fort Chaffee authorities should notify state law enforcement if any Cubans left the site, the state could only arrest those who violated state and local laws. If no state or local laws were violated, state officers were instructed to contact the Border Patrol—the "only agency authorized by law to arrest illegal aliens" (Guerrero 2014, 148). Hence, in Arkansas Cubans were the first Latina/o group considered "illegal aliens," a phrase that would later be applied to Mexicans who entered the United States without proper documents.

Relying on their own agency to accelerate Fort Chaffee's slow relocation processing, Cuban refugees protested their confinement by threatening hunger strikes, rioting, leaving the camp, and marching in the streets. Reacting to what they believed was a Cuban refugee invasion, residents in the nearby city of Barling armed themselves. To diffuse the conflict, the federal government fortified Fort Chaffee with barbed wire, installed more than 2,000 federal troops to guard the site, and agreed that no more Cuban refugees would be sent to Arkansas. Approximately 25,000 Cuban refugees were processed through Fort Chaffee between May 1980 and February 1982.

Other Latinas/os migrated and immigrated to Arkansas in significant numbers during the 1990s as a result of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986,

the recession of the 1990s, and the poultry industry's demand for low-wage workers who could be easily exploited. Lenient enforcement of immigration laws and Arkansas's low cost of living offered Latina/o immigrants opportunities for upward mobility that were more easily accessible than in other states. In general, all Latina/o immigrants in Arkansas were racialized as undocumented, criminal, Mexican, and "illegal aliens," regardless of their legal status. During the twentieth century, Latinas/os living in Arkansas were tolerated and scorned by whites. From *braceros* in the late 1940s to poultry workers beginning in the 1990s, Latinas/os were considered a reliable source of low-wage labor. In contrast, whites marginalized their humanity by constructing them as "illegal aliens," criminals, and underserving. Although their migration narratives differ, the arrival of people of color in Arkansas exposed consistencies in the region's long-standing racial animus. Similar to Indians, African Americans, and Latinas/os, Japanese Americans who found themselves in Arkansas also relied on their agency to maintain their humanity in the midst of adversity.

### *Japanese Internment in Arkansas*

In response to Japan's December 7, 1941, bombing of Pearl Harbor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942, as an administrative tactic couched in the "doctrine of military necessity" to protect the United States against perceived threats posed by Japanese Americans. After the bombing, many Americans living on the West Coast viewed first-generation Japanese nationals (*Issei*) and second-generation American-born Japanese (*Nisei*) with suspicion and feared a Japanese invasion. Executive Order 9066 authorized the secretary of war to evacuate and intern more than 110,000 Japanese nationals and Japanese Americans, most of whom lived in Oregon, Washington, and California. Almost two-thirds of those interned were U.S. citizens; under U.S. immigration laws, *Issei* could not become citizens.

To implement Executive Order 9066, on March 18, 1942, Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9102 and established the War Relocation Authority (WRA). Internment camps were limited to "federally owned lands located at a safe distance from strategic works, near railway lines for the easy transportation of prisoners, and capable of adequately holding 5,000 to 8,000 people under supervision" (Moss 20007, 2). Arkansas was one of seven states (along with Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming) in which land suitable for relocation centers was identified. The federal government subsequently established relocation centers in 10 cities—two of which were in Arkansas: Jerome (near Denson) and Rohwer (near McGehee). Beginning in September 1942, almost 17,000 Japanese were forced to leave their West Coast friends, families, and businesses and relocate to Arkansas's Jerome and Rohwer internment camps. They would remain there until the camps closed two and half years later in November 1945. Japanese Americans who resettled to the Jerome and Rohwer camps faced preexisting racial tensions that were exacerbated by Arkansas's economic and political climate. Despite internment's racist foundation, to the extent possible, through their agency, Japanese Americans maintained their humanity and experienced aspects of freedom inside the camps.

Japanese Americans' rights in Arkansas were further restricted when Governor Homer Adkins, a former KKK member who had launched his political career in 1924 as a KKK candidate, prohibited them from working in the state and attending local universities. Thus, they were forced to develop their own educational programs and parent teacher associations (PTAs) inside the camps. Internees retained their intellectual control through events that included an annual "education week" and commencement celebrations. Some even attended colleges and universities outside Arkansas. Social events such as New Years and other holiday-themed festivities helped create a sense of community and distract internees from the constraints of internment. Individuals at the Jerome and Rohwer camps who had been involved with farming prior to internment adapted their skills to the dry Arkansas conditions and produced numerous crops and poultry that provided their community with a sustainable food source. Although they were unable to work outside the Arkansas internment camps, the WRA frequently allowed Japanese Americans skilled in farming and agriculture to travel to other states to work and thereby strengthen neighboring economies. Despite their circumstances, internees were able to maintain some sense of autonomy and normalcy. In contrast, local Arkansans resented the Japanese Americans' presence and perceived disruption to the racial status quo.

WRA's efforts to recruit Arkansas teachers to work inside the Jerome and Rohwer relocation centers created animosity among white Arkansans who believed Japanese Americans were taking their educators. Some even equated poor local school attendance with the loss of teachers to the camps. Other white Arkansans believed that allowing internees to pursue higher education in other states prioritized their interests over those of loyal American men who served in the military. As for farming and agriculture, in a stroke of irony, Governor Adkins's refusal to allow internees to work in the state deprived Arkansas of a local opportunity to resolve its labor shortages. Successful farming and agriculture inside the camps collided with the state's struggling economy and fueled hostility toward Japanese Americans. Lastly, Arkansas's racially tinged political environment revealed anti-Japanese American sentiments that challenged the U.S. Constitution. Legislative attempts to restrict Japanese Americans' rights included banning Japanese children from attending school with white children, limiting landownership, and obstructing Japanese and Japanese Americans' ability to lease or buy property. Still, through their agency and resolve, Japanese Americans prevailed. Although they were forced into internment camps, Japanese Americans in Arkansas maintained their humanity. Thirty years after they were released from Arkansas's Jerome and Rohwer camps, another group of "others" made its way to Fort Chaffee.

### *Crisis in Little Rock: Integrating Central High School (1957)*

In matters of race and ethnicity, Arkansas is probably best known for Governor Orval Faubus's refusal to desegregate Little Rock's Central High School in 1957 and the ensuing crisis. Faubus's defiance led President Dwight Eisenhower to federalize Arkansas's state troops to protect the rights of black children (the Little

Rock Nine, at the time) to attend public school. Desegregating Central High School was contentious, dangerous, hateful, and hopeful, and further exposed America's racial hypocrisy to a global audience. Shining a spotlight on Faubus's resistance highlighted the racial animus that many sought to protect.

The U.S. Supreme Court's 1954 ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* concluded that "separate educational facilities were inherently unequal" and violated the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The Court ordered that schools across the nation be integrated "with all deliberate speed." In May 1954, the Little Rock School Board announced that it would comply with the Court's ruling once it received details about how to proceed. The board directed its superintendent to create a desegregation plan. The Blossom Plan, named after Superintendent Virgil Blossom and designed to begin at the elementary school level, was adopted in May 1955. However, when parents of elementary school students opposed the Blossom Plan, school district officials decided to implement a token desegregation plan at Central High School during the fall of 1957. Desegregation would expand to junior high schools by 1960 and to elementary schools by 1963.

In August 1957, members of the Mother's League of Central High School held their first public meeting. The league subsequently filed a motion for a temporary injunction against school integration. Pulaski County's Educational Chancellor Murray Reed granted the injunction, concluding that integration could lead to violence. Federal Judge Ronald Davies nullified the injunction and directed the School Board to proceed with its desegregation plan. In a nationally televised speech on September 2, 1957, Arkansas's Governor Orval Faubus announced that he planned to order the Arkansas National Guard to restrict African American students from entering Central High. On September 3, 1957, Federal Judge Davies ordered Faubus to remove the National Guard since they had not been used to preserve law and order. Faubus complied, but replaced the National Guard with members of the Little Rock Police Department. On September 23, 1957, an angry mob gathered in front of Central High School to block the entrance of nine African American students. After the Little Rock Police Department removed the students, President Eisenhower sent federal troops to Little Rock to protect them and maintain law and order. Federal troops escorted the nine students, Ernest Green, Elizabeth Eckford, Jefferson Thomas, Terrence Roberts, Carlotta Walls LaNier, Minnijean Brown, Gloria Ray Karlmark, Thelma Mothershed, and Melba Pattillo Beals, into Little Rock's Central High School on September 25, 1957.

### *Southeast Asian War Refugees (1975)*

Southeast Asian refugees (Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, and Hmong) fleeing Vietnam after the fall of Saigon arrived in Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, on May 2, 1975, through the "Operation New Life" program. Congress provided resettlement funds (\$455 million) under the Indochina and Refugee Assistance Act of 1975 to help refugees adapt to U.S. life. Funding covered things such as educational programs, language instruction, and cultural orientation courses. Almost

70 percent of the refugees spoke English, and upon arrival, many had already secured U.S. sponsors or had relatives in the country (Guerrero 2014, 141). These factors suggest that the refugees had been middle and upper class in their country of origin. Moreover, their preexisting connections and conditions implied that their time at Fort Chaffee would be limited and created opportunities for mutually beneficial alliances. Southeast Asians also exercised agency to safeguard their humanity.

Although they were fleeing war, some Arkansas politicians feared the refugees' presence would have negative economic and social implications for the region. Regardless of their skills, refugees were perceived as threats because they could overwhelm public services and take jobs away from native-born Americans. Local politicians' sentiments conflicted with those of President Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger who framed the refugees' plight as a humanitarian concern. One could argue that attitudes toward the refugees were as disparate as those engendered by the Vietnam War. On the one hand, the legacy of the Civil War served as a point of identification for Arkansans who understood the consequences of war. On the other hand, many worried that an influx of racial, ethnic, and undeserving immigrants would overwhelm the population and challenge cultural norms. While Southeast Asian refugees awaited sponsorship by host families and relocation to other states, at times they were the largest nonwhite group in northwest Arkansas.

As Governor David Pryor and a small group of residents welcomed the refugees to Fort Chaffee in 1975, others held signs protesting their presence. Signs announcing "Go Back to Vietnam" and asking "Would They Do the Same for Us?" reflected some whites' animosity. Much of the animosity was rooted in the Pentagon's unilateral designation of Fort Chaffee, a former army training site, as a refugee processing center and camp. In fact, the Pentagon's failure to consult with Arkansas's governor was considered a violation of states' rights, as it had stripped the state of its agency and ability to act in the best interest of Arkansans—even though Fort Chaffee was federal property. After conferring with the federal government, Governor Pryor advised his constituents that Fort Chaffee would provide transitory housing for up to six months and noted that processing and placing the refugees was a national problem that would be addressed on a national level.

Sentiments among the refugees were as disparate as those of Arkansans and played out through their agency and collaboration. One month after their arrival in Fort Chaffee, a frustrated group of about 80 refugees protested against what they perceived was a sluggish processing time. A few days later, a larger group of about 600 held a counter-protest to thank the Americans for their assistance. Even though some Arkansans saw Southeast Asian refugees as threats to the economic order, others welcomed the access to a new labor source. An unemployment rate of almost 10 percent in April 1975 along with the state's low minimum wage had forced many locals to seek public assistance. An ensuing labor shortage led some business owners to request Southeast Asian refugees to fill compensated positions in fields that included manufacturing, medicine, health care, and auto mechanics.

Other employers, primarily those seeking laborers for farming and outdoor work, considered compensation a distant possibility. For example, one farmer requested “a boy or girl, or maybe a woman and child to help him full-time with a salary to be paid at some future date if arrangement is working out” (Guerrero 2010, 95–96).

Humanitarian considerations compelled the United States to actively support the Southeast Asian refugees’ transition to American life. Thus, the *Tan Dan*, a Vietnamese newspaper, began publication two days after the first group arrived at Fort Chaffee. Five months later, K224AG/FM, a bilingual radio station, began regular broadcasts, and Westark Community College began offering English classes right away. “Operation New Life” lasted only seven months, and by the time it ended on December 20, 1975, almost 51,000 refugees had been processed through Fort Chaffee.

Race relations in Arkansas from the sixteenth century to the twentieth century included a variety of accommodation and resistance tactics as the state grappled with emerging and persistent white supremacy. During the twenty-first century, Arkansans would begin to question the moral efficacy of the state’s racial legacy.

### **Race in Twenty-First-Century Arkansas**

In the late twentieth century, historians and political scientists began to acknowledge that the costs of maintaining white supremacy had been significant and burdensome for generations of Arkansans and government institutions. The moral cost of privileging one racial group while marginalizing another has left the state with an ignoble reputation. In 2003, the chancellor of University of Arkansas, Little Rock, Dr. Joel Anderson initiated a “Community Conversation about Race.” Anderson stated, “race was an obstacle that could be fixed, if faced” (University of Arkansas, Little Rock, Anderson Institute on Race and Ethnicity). Anderson devoted time and resources to “facing and fixing” Arkansas’s race obstacle. Each year the university issues an annual survey of racial attitudes in Pulaski County, Arkansas. In 2013, it issued “A Decade of Difference: Racial Attitudes in Our Community, 2004–2013.” Community members were surveyed about their perceptions of trust, integration and equal opportunity, race relations, their sense of community, and their ideas about opportunity and advancement.

The “Decade of Difference” study found that while whites trusted others more than blacks, blacks’ trust in others aligned with national data. Blacks believed that trust improved when people lived in heterogeneous communities and when they engaged civically. In the matter of integration and equal opportunity, blacks and whites expressed divergent perspectives of equal opportunity. However, both groups embraced integration and acknowledged its benefits for the community, especially for education. Perception of the benefits of integrative practices in business, the workplace, and education had improved about 20 percent over the surveyed decade. “A Decade of Difference” acknowledged the historical transgressions that had created long and enduring memories among blacks that remain challenging to confront and difficult to overcome. After 10 years, perceptions of treatment

between the races remained unchanged. Nuances were revealed in responses to questions about perceptions of racial profiling and discrimination in housing, education, and employment.

In surveying the Little Rock residents' sense of community, "A Decade of Difference" found differences among black and white perspectives of "community" overall and across various nuances of the community—from political to governmental to economic and social. Differences concerning the quality of the community as "a place to live" were also observed. Involvement with the community—as evidenced by volunteering—was about 13 percent higher for blacks than whites. Blacks tended to volunteer at their place of worship, for schools and youth programs, and for neighborhood civic groups. The rate of volunteering for both races was nearly double the national average. In their responses to questions about opportunity and advancement, both blacks and whites agreed that educational opportunity was important. However, a significant disparity was observed among self-reported black and white college graduates (25% and 60%, respectively). Given the disparity, the study suggests using the Conversation about Race to heighten awareness of education's connection to social mobility and the value of a college degree. The study revealed that 98 percent of black children attended public schools, compared to only 51 percent for white children. The quality of education received in Little Rock public schools is an ongoing concern and must continue to be addressed with resources and difficult conversations. Blacks were more optimistic than whites about the likelihood of achieving the "American Dream" (61%) during their lifetime. Only one-third of whites believed the dream was achievable.

Since the early 2000s, the University of Arkansas at Little Rock faculty, staff, and students have been involved in projects to document, preserve, and honor the legacies of those who were confined to the Rohwer and Jerome Japanese American internment camps. Projects include restoring monuments constructed during internment to memorialize loved ones, collecting oral histories of former internees and Arkansans living near the camps, producing a documentary (*Time of Fear*) about life at the camps, developing curriculum for elementary and high school students, and hosting symposia for community conversations (University of Arkansas, Little Rock, Restoring Rohwer). These efforts to recover part of Arkansas's invisible racial and ethnic history are important and timely, as the state continues to wrestle with its past to understand contemporary relationships and its future. Arkansas's Asian population grew by nearly 80 percent between 2000 and 2010, to represent 1.2 percent of the state's residents (Guerrero 2014, 141). And, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, as of 2013, Asians (foreign and native-born) represented 1.3 percent of the state's population. In fact, collectively representing 8 percent of Arkansas's population, Asians and Latinas/os are the state's fastest growing racial and ethnic groups (American Immigration Council 2015, 1).

Whether native or foreign-born, consistent with national discourse, Latinas/os migrating to Arkansas during the 1990s were racialized and politicized as undocumented, illegal aliens, criminals, and Mexican. Anti-illegal immigrant sentiments were the basis of legislative policies such as Project Arkansas Now, which

were designed to protect Arkansans from “Mexican invaders” and uneducated and poor “Third Worlders” (Guerrero 2014, 150). Despite this stigma, Latinas/os established roots in Arkansas and added other dimensions to the state’s economy and social life. Arkansas’s Latina/o population doubled between 2000 and 2010, to represent 6.4 percent of the state’s population (Guerrero 2014, 141). By 2013, the number of Latinas/os in Arkansas had increased to 6.9 percent of the state’s population (American Immigration Council 2015, 1). Latinas/os’ growing presence in the state led to the University of Arkansas at Little Rock’s 2015–2016 Racial Attitudes Survey: Focus on Immigration. The study focused on black, white, and Hispanic attitudes toward race relations and divided respondents into geo-racial groups.

Results of the 2015–2016 Racial Attitudes Survey found clear differences related to whether respondents lived in or outside Little Rock (Arkansas’s capital and largest city). Blacks and whites in Little Rock had a more favorable attitude toward immigrants than those living outside the city. All geo-racial groups expressed a high level of agreement for a legal way for undocumented immigrants to remain in the United States. A large majority of Hispanics and whites residing in Little Rock favored legal status for undocumented children brought to the United States with their parents if they joined the military or attended college. The 2015–2016 study also found “mixed and sometimes contradictory attitudes regarding compensatory justice to Blacks for past wrongs” (University of Arkansas, Little Rock, Anderson Institute on Race and Ethnicity, 9). A majority of whites and Hispanics agreed that while blacks should receive special considerations since racism is not a thing of the past, “Blacks should stop using racism and slavery as excuses in order to succeed” (University of Arkansas, Little Rock, Anderson Institute on Race and Ethnicity). Race relations in Arkansas have had devastating consequences for disparate racial groups, and it is significant that the state is now acknowledging its history.

Although residents of Arkansas have struggled with the state’s contentious racial dynamics for years, recent efforts to “face it and fix it” seem promising. The struggle was perhaps best demonstrated by the state’s contemporaneous observance of holidays for Confederate General Robert E. Lee and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dual celebration of the holidays began in 1985 under Governor Bill Clinton. After honoring both of them on the same day for 32 years, on March 20, 2017, Arkansas governor Asa Hutchinson signed a law that designated a separate day for each man. The law also requires schools to “specify the teaching of content related to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in conjunction with the corresponding holiday” (Dwyer 2017, 1). Aligning with federal law, beginning in 2018, Dr. King’s holiday will be celebrated on the third Monday of January. Lee’s state holiday will be commemorated on the second Saturday of October. Prior to signing the bill, Governor Hutchinson remarked, “This bill was a priority. I was honored to testify for it in both Chambers” (Dwyer 2017, 1).

The University of Arkansas’s Community Conversation about Race and its annual Racial Attitudes Survey are impressive efforts to address Arkansas’s ongoing racial challenges. Results of the surveys are foundational to implementing policies that will engender equity and inclusion throughout the state. The



surveys allow decision makers to keep their proverbial finger on the pulse of Arkansas's racial dynamics.

## NOTABLE FIGURE

### **Jones, Scipio Africanus (1863–1943)**

Scipio Africanus Jones was born into slavery in Tulip, Arkansas, on August 3, 1863. His mother, 15-year-old Jemmima Jones, was a house slave for her master and Scipio's presumed father, Dr. Sanford Reamey, a prominent physician and planter. As a mulatto child, although Scipio worked as a field hand in the cotton patch, he also attended local black schools. With his father's financial assistance, at age 20, Scipio moved to Little Rock and enrolled at Walden Seminary, now known as Philander Smith College. He completed his four-year college preparatory course in three years. In 1885, Scipio earned a bachelor's degree from Bethel Institute, now known as Shorter College, in North Little Rock. After graduation, Scipio taught children attending Big Rock School District Two's all-black public school until 1887 and began to study law independently. Using his father's connections, Scipio volunteered to work as a janitor at the law offices of U.S. District judge Henry C. Caldwell, Judge T. B. Martin, and Attorney S. A. Kilgore. While at the law firms, as time permitted, Scipio began to "read law" and eventually became an apprentice-in-law for Circuit Judge Robert J. Lea.

In 1889, Jones became a member of the American Bar Association and began practicing in Little Rock's Pulaski County circuit court. He was admitted to Arkansas's State Supreme Court in 1900, the U.S. District Court in 1901, the U.S. Supreme Court in 1905, and the U.S. Court of Appeals in 1914. Along the way, Jones received an honorary doctorate degree from Atlanta's Morris Brown College. From 1891 until his death in 1943, "Jones appeared in federal district court and before the Arkansas Supreme Court [for 45 cases]—far more than most attorneys who practice law in Arkansas today" (Stockley 2009, 139). In 1901, Jones argued two cases before the Arkansas Supreme Court. Keenly aware of the constitution's provision for a jury of one's peers, in both cases Jones challenged the composition of all white juries, arguing that they were discriminatory and unconstitutional. His challenge produced mixed results. Agreeing with Jones in one case, the court overturned the lower court's conviction. The judge found no discrimination in jury selection in the second case.

As a resident and member of Little Rock's black elites, Scipio Jones was inducted into the Prince Hall Freemasonry through friendships with three prominent black men (John Bush, Ed Wood Sr., and Chester Keatts). Members of the freemasons' secret society pooled their resources to advance their interests in equality, freedom, and peace. Jones became legal counsel for the Mosaic Templars of America and other African American fraternal organizations. As one of the largest black-owned businesses in America, Mosaic Templars provided social programs for the community and services that included life and burial insurance, a building and loan association, a newspaper, a nursing school, and a hospital. Jones's legal advocacy on behalf of African American fraternal

organizations was so successful that he was often referred to as “the Gibraltar of Fraternal Organizations.”

Stockley writes that Jones “epitomized the aspirations of the black middle class”—as evidenced by his prestigious address in an affluent community of black professionals (2009, 139). Although Jones presented himself as “something of a dignified dandy,” he strictly adhered to Jim Crow precepts, using them strategically on behalf of clients whose criminal cases were heard by white juries. He “knew his place” in Jim Crow Arkansas, having closely studied whites’ behavior and expectations when interacting with blacks. Whether begging for exoneration because “[his client] was just an ignorant colored boy who hadn’t meant any harm” or asking Jeff Davis, Arkansas’s infamous attorney general and Negro-phobe to help him persuade the legislature to lower fines for incarcerated blacks, Jones was a fierce advocate for social justice for poor black Americans (Stockley 2009, 140). Jail conditions were deplorable, and poor blacks remained incarcerated until their fines were paid. Jones’s behavior within the Jim Crow system so impressed his white colleagues at the Little Rock Bar that they elected him to sit as a municipal judge and hear the case of two black litigants. Although whites may have been impressed by Jones’s behavior, some African Americans believed he should have been more confrontational. As a habitual letter writer, Jones would write messages of appreciation to governors and politicians for what some considered trivial matters. He ingratiated himself to those in power through flattery and praise.

Active in Republican Party politics, in 1912, Jones organized the “State Suffrage League” and campaigned for blacks to pay their poll taxes and vote to defeat Eleventh Amendment. If approved, the constitutional amendment would have allowed illiterate whites to vote while requiring blacks to read and interpret the state constitution. Although the amendment was defeated, it was considered a “pyrrhic victory” since blacks were not allowed to vote in Democratic Party primary elections. However, the defeat demonstrated the ability of middle-class blacks to support their own interests as well as the interests of poor blacks. Leading the “Black and Tan” faction of the Republican Party, Jones spent 20 years challenging the party’s efforts to exclude African Americans. The “Black and Tan” faction held its own state conventions in 1914, 1916, and 1920. Despite Jim Crow practices and segregation, through persistence, Jones was elected as a delegate to the 1908, 1912, and 1940 National Republican Conventions.

Scipio Africanus Jones is probably best known for representing 12 black male defendants (the Elaine Twelve) in 1919’s Elaine Arkansas Race Riot. Jones was hired by middle-class African American residents of Little Rock to assist George Murphy, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People’s (NAACP) white attorney. According to estimates, three days of “rioting” between blacks and whites resulted in the death of five white men and between 25 and several hundred blacks. Police arrested 143 black men and not a single white. Seventy-three of the men were indicted by a grand jury. Working alone, Jones represented about 60 of the 73 defendants and negotiated their prison terms. Appearing before all-white juries, the Elaine Twelve defendants were convicted of murder and sentenced to death. Driven by belief in his clients’ innocence and his determination to

challenge inequities in the criminal justice system, Jones litigated the case multiple times before state and federal courts over several years. Six of the Elaine Twelve (also referred to as the “Ware Defendants”) were assigned to the Marianna jail in Lee County. Through Jones’s efforts, their case was eventually overturned on a technicality. In 1923, the U.S. Supreme Court heard the case for the remaining six defendants (the “Moore Defendants”; *Moore v. Dempsey*) and concluded that the defendants had not received a fair trial. The case was returned to Arkansas for a new trial, and by 1925, the 12 men who had been convicted and the others who had been sentenced to prison terms were released.

Scipio Africanus Jones died in Little Rock on March 28, 1943.

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# 5

## California

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Jon Allan Reyhner

### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **1769**

Father Junípero Serra founds the first Alta California mission at San Diego on July 1; under Serra's presidency, eight more missions are founded in California

#### **1821**

Mexico wins its independence from Spain; independence increases the demand for secularization of California missions, with land to be given to Indian residents

#### **1824**

A revolt of Chumash mission Indians focuses more attention on the issue of secularizing the California missions

#### **1834**

Governor José Figueroa issues a proclamation ordering the secularization of the California missions; half the land is promised to the Indians, but they usually get little and a few non-Indian families take control of large areas of California instead

#### **1846–1873**

The population of California Indians declines sharply as many are hunted down and killed by an influx of white settlers

#### **1848**

With the defeat of Mexico and the conclusion of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo ending the Mexican American War, the United States takes possession of California

**1849**

Gold is discovered in California in January 1848 and a gold rush begins in 1849, bringing in many immigrants from eastern United States, including many African Americans; the gold rush makes Spanish speakers a minority in California and they increasingly become targets of racism and so called “greaser laws” that marginalize them

**1850**

California enters the Union as the 31st state on September 9; it is admitted as a free state as part of the Compromise of 1850

**1851**

The California Land Act requires landowners to prove title in English-language courts; many Hispanics with land grants lose their title because of litigation costs

**1855–1857**

African American leaders in the state hold three “Colored Conventions” to seek equal rights for blacks, including the right to testify in court

**1855**

California ends Spanish language schooling

**1865**

The Central Pacific Railroad uses Chinese labor to help build the California section of the first U.S. transcontinental railway

**1865**

On December 19, California ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery; California’s ratification comes two weeks after the amendment takes effect

**1870**

On January 28, California rejects the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing the right to vote for black men

**1872–1873**

California’s only major Indian war, the Modoc War, is fought in northern California’s lava beds, where some 60 Modoc fighters oppose 600 U.S. troops—53 soldiers and 15 Modoc warriors are killed; when an unarmed U.S. government peace commission is attacked and of its two members are killed, four Modoc, including the leader Captain Jack, are captured, tried and hung for the murders

**1879**

A new California state constitution requires all laws and other official documents to be only in English

**1879**

An organization that will become the Women’s National Indian Association (WNIA) is founded in California to support American Indian rights

**1879**

Publication of the *California Eagle* (originally *The Owl*) begins in Los Angeles; it will become the leading black newspaper in the state

**1884**

Helen Hunt Jackson publishes *Ramona*, highlighting the mistreatment of the southern California's Mission Indians

**1894**

The U.S. Army arrests 19 Hopis in Arizona for refusing to send their children to U.S. government schools; incarcerated at the military prison on Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay, they remain, forced to do hard labor, until their release the following year

**1901**

In a U.S. Supreme Court decision, the Cupeño Indians lose their right to live on Warner Ranch lands where their ancestors had lived from time immemorial

**1905**

The Sherman Institute, a U.S. government-run boarding school for Indians, opens in Riverside California (it continues to operate in 2018)

**1908**

Lieutenant Colonel Allen Allensworth founds the black farming community of Allensworth in Tulare County

**1910s**

Various California chapters of the Afro-American Protective Association are organized

**1910**

The Angel Island Immigration Station opens; about one million Asian immigrants come through this "Ellis Island of the West," with many spending years on the island because of racist immigration restrictions

**1910**

The U.S. Census puts California's black population at about 22,000

**1911**

Ishi, the last survivor of the Yahi Indian people, emerges from hiding near Lassen National Park and is taken to Berkeley, California, where he lives until his death in 1916

**1918**

Republican Frederick M. Roberts is elected to the State Assembly; he is the first African American to hold office at the state level

**1920s**

Restrictive housing covenants and Jim Crow-type laws are enacted in the state

**1920**

According to the U.S. Census, California's black population is about 39,000

**1922**

Born in Japan, Takao Ozawa is denied U.S. citizenship in the *Ozawa v. United States* Supreme Court decision because he is not white; Ozawa applied for

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citizenship in 1914 after graduating high school in Berkeley, California, and attending the University of California for three years

### **1924**

The California Supreme Court rules in *Piper v. Big Pine School District* that Indians have a right to attend public schools

### **1928**

Los Angeles elects a Ku Klux Klan (KKK) member as mayor

### **1930s**

During the Great Depression, many blacks from the South and Midwest migrate to California seeking work

### **1930**

According to the U.S. Census, California's black population is about 81,000

### **1940**

Angel Island Immigration Station closes; it is now a state park

### **1942–1964**

Mexican nationals, known as braceros, are imported to work on farms in California and elsewhere; they are often exploited and used as strikebreakers

### **1942**

In March, Japanese residents of California are sent to the Manzanar Internment Camp in the Owens Valley of California and other camps across the western United States where they reside until the end of World War II

### **1943**

In June, the Los Angeles “Zoot Suit” riots begin when white off-duty soldiers attack Mexican American and other minority youth; the clothing the young men wore, which required the use of more fabric than other suit fashions, was considered unpatriotic during wartime rationing, but racism largely fuels the violence

### **1944**

On July 17, munitions being loaded on a ship at Port Chicago just off San Francisco Bay explode, killing 332 people, almost two-thirds of whom are poorly trained black sailors

### **1947**

On April 14, in *Mendez v. Westminster School District*, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco ends the practice of several Orange County school districts requiring students of Mexican descent to attend separate schools; this is considered the first case where a federal court found segregation of students by race a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment's equal-protection clause

### **1950s**

The U.S. government's Bureau of Indian Affairs encourages Indians to relocate from reservations with high unemployment across the U.S. West and Midwest to cities, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sacramento, where employment opportunities exist; however, too many become mired in urban poverty



**1958**

The California Rancheria Act (P.L. 85–671) terminates all California Indian Rancherias, causing further pauperization of Indians

**1959**

California ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, guaranteeing full civil rights to African Americans; the state's ratification comes 91 years after the amendment took effect

**1962**

California ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, 92 years after the amendment took effect

**1962**

Augustus Hawkins becomes the first African American elected to Congress from California

**1963**

On February 7, California ratifies the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing the poll tax

**1963**

The California legislature passes the Rumford Fair Housing Statute outlawing racial discrimination in real estate transactions; the law is repealed by the initiative process in 1964

**1964**

African American politician Willie Brown is elected to the California State Assembly; he becomes one of the most influential politicians in state history and later serves two terms as mayor of San Francisco

**1965**

The Watts race riot, the largest and costliest urban rebellion of the civil rights era, rages in Los Angeles for six days and causes \$40 million of property damage; the riot begins on August 11, when Marquette Frye, a young African American motorist, is pulled over and arrested by a white California Highway Patrolman for suspicion of driving while intoxicated; a crowd of onlookers gathers and strained tensions between police officers and the crowd erupts into a violent exchange

**1966**

On August 22, the United Farm Workers (UFW) Organizing Committee, a coalition of Mexican American and Filipino American migrant workers led by César Chávez, forms to promote better working conditions and wages for farm workers in the central valley of California

**1966**

The Black Panther Party organizes to protest police brutality and discrimination in Oakland

**1966**

Dr. Maulana Karenga creates the pan-African holiday, Kwanzaa

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### **1968**

On February 29, the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders issues its report blaming urban riots, including the 1965 Watts riots in Los Angeles, on white racism and black frustration over the lack of economic opportunities available to them; its most quoted passage is, “Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, and one white—separate and unequal”

### **1969**

A group calling itself “Indians of All Tribes” seizes Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay and demands that the former prison located on it become an Indian cultural and educational center; relocated Indians and students from San Francisco State and other colleges take part in the occupation

### **1971**

DQ (Deganawidah-Quetzacoatl) University founded near Davis California as a tribal college; it ceases offering a full-time classes schedule in 2005 because of funding difficulties

### **1973**

Tom Bradley is elected as the first African American mayor of Los Angeles

### **1974**

In *Lau v. Nichols*, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously finds that the lack of supplemental language instruction in San Francisco public schools for students with limited English proficiency violates the Civil Rights Act of 1964

### **1982**

Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley narrowly loses the California governorship; because polls had projected Bradley as the winner, the outcome gave rise to the term “Bradley effect” to describe voters who tell pollsters of a black-white race that they are voting for the black candidate when they in fact vote for the white one

### **1992**

On April 29, a jury acquits four white Los Angeles Police Department officers on trial for beating black motorist, Rodney King; the verdict leads to five days of rioting, leaving 50 people dead and 2,000 injured

### **1994**

Voters approve California Proposition 187 (also known as the Save Our State initiative) establishing a citizenship screening system and prohibiting undocumented aliens from using nonemergency health care, public education, and other services; most of its provisions later declared unconstitutional

### **1995**

Willie Brown is elected the first African American mayor of San Francisco

### **1998**

California voters pass Proposition 227, the English Language in Public Schools Statute, which largely bans bilingual education

**1999**

Sixty-one California tribes finalize their state compacts required by the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) for tribes wishing to have Class III gaming; California's largest casino is the Pechanga Resort and Casino in Temecula, with more than 3,000 slot machines and approximately 200,000 square feet of gaming space

**2008**

Karen Bass becomes the first black woman to serve as speaker of the California State Assembly

**2015**

On September 23, Pope Francis canonizes Junípero Serra over the complaints of some Indigenous activists who object to his mistreatment of Indians

**2016**

On November 8, California voters approve Proposition 58, thereby largely reversing the 1998 Proposition 227 that banned non-English languages in California public schools

**2017**

A Pew Research survey finds the largest cluster of undocumented immigrants in the United States to be in southern California

**2018**

California leaders criticize the Trump administration for threatening to arrest mayors of California sanctuary cities and for planning an immigration sweep in northern California

**NARRATIVE**

Unlike many other states, California has a long and rich history of racial and ethnic diversity. An examination of race and racism in California includes the social histories of Native Americans, Mexicans, Asians, Caucasians and African Americans. The following essay offers a brief but important synopsis some of the obstacles and social barriers faced by each group in the nation's most populous state.

**American Indians**

From time immemorial, California Indians lived in small bands, hunting game and gathering various foods, especially acorns that they grounded into flour. In northwest California, a major source of food was the salmon that teemed annually in the rivers. However, their lives began to change radically as Russian explorers and Aleut fur trappers sailed down from Alaska onto the California coast, and Spanish explorers moved north from New Spain (Mexico). In 1768, the inspector general of New Spain José de Gálvez sent explorers to locate missions in Alta (upper) California.

Gálvez chose 55-year-old Franciscan Father Junípero Serra to head the missionary team. Serra saw his opportunity to bring Christianity to thousands of pagan

souls in lands previously untouched by the Catholic Church. He founded the first Alta California mission in 1769, at San Diego. By 1808, there were 19 California missions, and in 1823, 21 stretching up the coast along El Camino Real (the Royal Road) from San Diego to just north of San Francisco.

On his first Indian mission in New Spain, Father Serra learned the Native language, translated catechisms and prayers, and fought colonial encroachment on Indian lands. He was also an inquisitor for the Spanish Inquisition, though he sent no one to burn at the stake. Serra told the Indians that if baptized, they would become “equal to the Spaniards” (Forbes 1839, 98).

The Spanish government financed Catholic missions to pacify the frontier and protect California from Russian encroachment. The missions reduced the cost of stationing soldiers in California by supplying them with food grown by Indians. Mission lands were held in common, and Indians were expected to speak Spanish. Agricultural training, as well as religious instruction, was important, as the missions were largely self-sufficient using Indian labor. Early Spanish mission efforts focused on *reducción*, the gathering of nomadic Indians onto mission compounds ruled by missionaries, as practiced in Paraguay from 1610 to 1757. An unintended consequence of concentrating Indians into mission villages was a high death rate caused by new diseases brought from Europe.

According to the friars, hell was the destination of all Indians who did not give up their former way of life, even their harmless or good customs—taking the fun out of life. Religious instruction given neophytes was rudimentary, limited to repeating “in Spanish and Latin the offices of the church” from memory without understanding their meaning (Forbes 1839, 235). Under such harsh conditions, deaths among Indians outnumbered births, and the missions were only kept going by rounding up replacements from Indians not yet captured. The friars were unalarmed by the high mortality rate. They believed “epidemics were a punishment sent by God” and “suffering on earth merely prepared Indian converts for a better life in heaven, in God’s grace. These attitudes contributed to a rejection of innovations in medicine that could save lives.” The Franciscans tended to become “tied into a routine of acting as labor and estate managers responsible for the administration of the mission” (Jackson and Castillo 1995, 35, 42).

Under Spanish law, after ten years, missions were secularized. The military governor of California, Filipe de Neve, tried to force this secularization; however, Serra opposed him. According to historian Daniel Fogel (1988), the missionaries’ efforts to educate the Indians were doomed because they continued to treat Indian men and women like children. The Franciscan missionaries excluded Indians from the priesthood. Alexander Forbes (1839), a British merchant and author of the first comprehensive history of California, described the California missions as a system of “ecclesiastical slavery.” The missionary served as a slave master supported by a few soldiers, the students were hostages, and the Indians were more interested in the food they received for going to Catholic services than the prayers. Each mission comprised about 15 square miles and functioned as a self-supporting agricultural and industrial school.

“Wild” Indians, the women and children generally captured first, faced force conversion. Once at the missions, they were expected to work seven hours a day

and pray two hours, though there were many saints' holidays. Priests received twice the rations of Indians, and soldiers received one and a half times that of priests (Tinker 1993). A convert described the Indians' diet:

The Indians at the mission of Santa Cruz, after prayers in the morning at church, received their orders as to their labors at the church door; then they went to breakfast, and had their meal altogether of boiled barley, which was served out to them from two large cauldrons, by means of a copper ladle. This full was the ration to each in a cora (a small kind of basket), from which they ate with a shell or the fingers. Some had small gourds into which they received their rations. Boiled barley was all that they had in the mornings. . . . At eleven A.M., the bell was rung to call them together. . . . The dinner consisted of cooked horse beans and peas. At the end of an hour the bell was rung again, and all went to work until about sunset, when each received his rations of boiled corn. Such of the Indians as had families were given meat also. (Quoted in Jackson and Castillo 1995, 32)

Unmarried girls over eight years old were locked in a dormitory at night. In 1806, a German naturalist described the treatment of widows and girls at the San Francisco mission:

All the girls and widows are in separate houses, and are kept at work under lock and key; they are only sometimes permitted, by their superiors, to go out in the day, but never at night. As soon, however, as a girl is married she is free, and lives with her husband in one of the villages of Indians belonging to the mission. . . . About a hundred paces from the buildings called the mission, lies one of the villages or barracks for Indians, which consist of eight long rows of houses, where each family lives entirely apart from the rest. (Jackson and Castillo 1995, 81)

The friars punished lesser infractions of their rules, such as missing Mass, with whippings; serious infractions with imprisonment or the stocks. Soldiers were used to quell any Indian opposition. In contrast to the brutality of mission life, Forbes (1839, 195) noted "the extreme tenderness and love shewn by the [Indian] parents to their children."

In 1795, the Spanish monarchy decreed that Native languages be suppressed, overturning the Law of the Indies. However, even before that time, most Catholic missionaries did not learn the Native languages of California. They held Indian cultures in contempt and provided little academic instruction of any kind. Visitors described Mission Indians as "sullen, listless, and dull." Forbes estimated that, in 1802, there were 15,562 Indians on eighteen missions, compared to only 4,342 soldiers and settlers (who were discouraged from entering the missions). In 1833, the California missions were secularized, and many Indians promptly fled. However, the end of Mexican rule, in 1846, did not improve the situation for California's Indians.

### **Murderous State**

If anything, the situation got worse for California's Indian population after the United States took over governance. In his well-documented study *Murder State*, historian Brendan C. Lindsay writes:

The will of the white majority, enshrined as the sacred will of the people, drove the democratic process of creating a multifaceted campaign of genocide in California,

in which Native people were starved to death, worked to death, shot to death, or so badly broken by poverty, exposure, and malnutrition as to waste away from diseases at an alarming rate. (2012, x–xi)

Moreover, many Indians, murdered with impunity, could not seek justice in the court system. In 1850, California barred Indians and blacks from testifying in court against whites. In 1854, the Chinese were also restricted from testifying.

Most Californians of the time either participated in or ignored this genocide, but not all. Historian Valerie Sherer Mathes (2012) provides a detailed study of the activities of the Women’s National Indian Association (WNIA) in California. Founded in 1879, reformers who had worked on freeing slaves shifted their focus to the abuse of American Indians. Part of the initial impetus for the organization was the 1879 speaking tour of Ponca Chief Standing Bear, who eloquently described the mistreatment of his people. Among his listeners was Helen Hunt Jackson who went on to write *A Century of Dishonor* and the popular novel *Ramona*, the former of which chronicling the mistreatment of Indians that she mailed to every congressman. The latter described how after California became part of the United States, after Indians were thrown off their traditional lands. She writes, they say they are the Americans, “when they buy the Mexicans’ lands, drive the Indians away as if they were dogs; they say we have no right to our lands” (Jackson 1886, 88).

The original name of the WNIA was the Indian Treaty-Keeper and Protective Association. The organization dropped “Women” from its name, in 1901, and its last meeting held in 1951. The better treatment of American Indians provided a socially acceptable outlet for the energies of the middle and upper class; these activities led “almost exclusively white evangelical Protestant women” at a time when many other outlets, forbidden by the patriarchal society that denied them voting and many other rights. One example of discrimination noted by Mathes is that, in 1885, only single women and widows could teach for the U.S. government’s Indian Office.

Without the vote, the women of the WNIA relied on petitions to try to influence government policy. One such petition supporting Indian rights (with 100,000 signatures) was presented to President Chester Arthur in 1882. Besides lobbying the federal government for better treatment of Indians, the WNIA provided clothing and home loans and supported missions, physicians, and field matrons. Quakers lobbied for the position of Field Matron in the 1880s, and the Indian Office started using them in 1891. Field Matrons went into Indian homes, promoting better sanitation and other improvements. The WNIA worked with the Lake Mohonk Friends of the Indians, organized by Albert and Alfred Smiley that provided similar support for Indians. Mathes notes, “Because the Smileys were Quakers, women participated equally” (2012, 46).

Several WNIA leaders devoted their lives to what they saw as the needs of the Indians. Most notably, WNIA cofounder Amelia Stone Quinton continued to be active in the organization, including becoming its president in 1887 and serving for 18 years. By 1881, she had worked in 20 states to promote the WNIA’s causes, and in 1884, she traveled 10,000 miles while organizing state affiliates. Quinton

helped organize California affiliates that provided more local support. Unlike many other places in the West, California Indians never had any treaties ratified by the U.S. Senate.

Mistreatment of California Indians was, if anything, greater than other U.S. Indians. By 1855, two-thirds of the Indians in California who had survived Spanish colonization were dead. Hounded by greedy whites wanting land, they had little protection from U.S. government Indian agents, appointed through the spoils system at the end of the nineteenth century and who often placed their own interests over those of the Indians. The Hoopa Reservation in northern California, established in 1864, had four agents in its first six years. Even under President Ulysses S. Grant's Peace Policy, in which churches recommended agents, things were not much better. Mathes writes that the "Methodist Episcopal Church was more interested in promoting its own interests' than the Hoopas" in California (2012, 80). Quinton recruited influential Californians, including the first president of Stanford University, to seek justice for Indians.

The southern California situation was very different from that of northern California. The long history of Spanish missions in the South meant a Catholic presence that conflicted with the mostly Protestant WNIA. In both northern and southern California, Indians were forced to move under threat of violence. One well-known instances of the dispossession of Indians was the Warner Ranch Case, tried before the U.S. Supreme Court in 1901. The Warner Ranch decision led to the forced the removal of an entire Indian village. The WNIA helped get a 1905–1906 congressionally funded investigation of the plight of California Indians, which led to Congress appropriating \$100,000 to purchase land for them.

At times, white vigilantes hunted and killed Indians in northern California. Small reservations were established, but many chipped away by land hungry settlers. The WNIA did not help. By shifting its initial support from upholding treaties and tribal group rights to supporting "civilizing" Indians and the allotment of any tribal lands, landownership diminished. Indians could have small homesteads and "surplus land," however the land could be sold to white settlers.

In the late nineteenth century, the U.S. government either converted old forts or built new boarding schools to teach Indians to speak English and learn how to farm, thus ending their hunting and gathering lifestyle and freeing up land for white settlement. In 1894, the U.S. Army arrested 19 Hopis in Arizona for opposing sending their children to these schools; they are sent to the military prison on Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay where they remained at hard labor until their release the following year. One example, Sherman Institute in Riverside, California, opened in 1902 as a U.S. government run high school for American Indians. (As part of this lasting legacy, Sherman Institute remained open in 2018.) In 1906, the conflict between the Friendlies and Hostiles on the Hopi Reservation in Arizona led to a split. The leader of the Friendlies, Kikmongwi (village chief) Tawaquaptewa, was willing to work with the U.S. government, but because he would not let the Hostiles remain in the village, he, his wife, child and 70 students relocated to Sherman where they stayed for three years. Hopi historian Matthew Sakiestewa Gilbert (2010, xxvi) states, "Having been instructed in Hopi education and cultural values, Hopi pupils went to Sherman Institute with an eagerness to

excel and to obtain the best the school had to offer.” Having some Hopi adults at the school to give the children “good advice” as well as allowing Hopi songs and some other aspects of Hopi culture led to positive outcomes (2010, xxv).

### Relocation

In the early 1950s, the U.S. government’s Bureau of Indian Affairs encourages Indians to relocate from reservations across the U.S. West and Midwest with high unemployment to cities, including Los Angeles, San Francisco and Sacramento, where employment opportunities existed. This initiative proved unsuccessful. In the large urban centers, too many Native Americans live in poverty. Wilma Mankiller, who went on to become the first female chairperson of her Cherokee tribe, describes in her autobiography her experience going with her family from Oklahoma to San Francisco where they lived in poverty in the crime ridden Tenderloin district, known for alcoholism and prostitution. Kiowa author N. Scott Momaday’s Pulitzer Prize–winning 1968 novel, *House Made of Dawn*, about a World War II veteran from a pueblo in New Mexico is set in Los Angeles describes the same fate. Momaday describes the police brutality and racism that urban Indians faced that helped lead to the formation of the American Indian Movement.

When the notorious federal prison on Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay closed on March 21, 1963, there was a question regarding what to do with its



During various Red Power movement activities, Native Americans protested against years of unfair treatment by the U.S. government. Under an altered sign, American Indians, who had occupied Alcatraz island, unload supplies from a boat, San Francisco, California, 1969. (Ralph Crane/The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images)



existing buildings. In 1969, Indian activist Russell Means participated in a 24-hour occupation of the island. He had been there once before, to occupy it for 24 hours with his father, Walter “Hank” Means and a few other Lakota men in March 1964. On November 20, 1969, a third occupation began that lasted to June 11, 1971, when the U.S. government evicted the few remaining occupants. This occupation, begun by 89 American Indians calling themselves Indians of All Tribes, was justified under the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie between the United States and the Lakota, indicating that abandoned or out-of-use federal land be returned to the Native people who once occupied it. The occupation brought attention—as did the more violent standoff led by the American Indian Movement at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, in 1973—to the many grievances that American Indians had concerning their treatment. Vine Deloria Jr., a well-known Indian author and activist, wrote about the Alcatraz occupation that “there was a tremendous amount of positive Indian energy there but no social or political framework in which it could be channeled” (2002, x–xi).

Today, the National Park Service administers Alcatraz Island and exhibits include information about the Hopi Prisoners and the Indian occupation of the island. According to U.S. Census figures, only about 22 percent of the nation’s 5.1 million citizens who identify as all or part American Indian or Alaska Native live on Indian reservations, in Alaska Native villages or other Indian lands. Los Angeles County has the largest population of American Indians of any county in the United States.

### **Mexican Americans**

When California was seized from Mexico in 1848, Article IX of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo declared that the current inhabitants “shall be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty and property, and secured in the free exercise of their religion without; restriction.” However, shortly thereafter, laws passed requiring all legal proceedings held in English. Many Mexicans lost their land, as legal fees ate up their wealth as they defended their land titles. In the decades that followed, many Mexican descendants would become an undesirable, impoverished group that fared poorly in social and economic progress as compared to the growing white population of the state.

During the Great Depression, in the early 1930s, the United States deported many people of Mexican descent (including the illegal expulsion of up to 1.2 million U.S. citizens) to Mexico, in order to reduce demands on limited American economic resources. By the late 1930s, about three million Mexican Americans resided in the United States. Los Angeles had the highest concentration of ethnic Mexicans—the descendants of the indigenous people—outside Mexico, and many lived in dire poverty. In June 1943, the “Zoot Suit” riots, named after the clothing some young Mexican American men wore, occurred when white off-duty soldiers attacked Mexican American and other minority youth. The clothing, considered unpatriotic during wartime rationing, required the use of more fabric than other suit fashions. However, racism was the real cause. Marching through the streets of downtown Los Angeles, a mob of several

thousand soldiers, sailors, and civilians beat up every zoot suiter they could find. They invaded motion picture theaters and ordered the management to turn on the house lights, and then ran up and down the aisles dragging Mexicans out of their seats. Streetcars were halted while Mexicans, and some Filipinos and Negroes, were jerked from their seats, pushed into the streets and beaten as well (McWilliams 1990).

Both in World War I and II, labor shortages created by the drafting of workers into the military helped racial and ethnic minorities find jobs in cities and increased wages, but those advances did not outlast wartime. One way the farmers kept wages low was through the importation of braceros from 1942 to 1951, under an informal agreement. The program was formalized in 1951 and expired in 1964. Catholic clergy and others exposed abuses, such as the use of braceros as strike-breakers. Other abuses occurred as well, for example, border patrol officers called to deport workers just before payday. California growers complained about not having enough workers to harvest their crops, leading to the further development of mechanical harvesting machines and reducing the need for field workers. And by the mid-1960s, language rights emerged as a priority in the fight for Mexican American rights.

Similar to issues in the civil rights struggle, language rights for U.S. citizens have waxed and waned. National studies have repeatedly demonstrated that Hispanic students as a group have historically not done as well economically and academically in California and elsewhere in the United States. African American scholar Lisa Delpit notes that one reason ethnic minority students as a group get below average tests scores is because they often do not speak Standard English, and their home cultures and language dialects are devalued or ignored in schools. For example, in a high school Spanish class, students speaking a Mexican dialect of Spanish are criticized for not speaking Castilian Spanish, and black students criticized for speaking a black dialect of English rather than Standard English. In 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court in *Lau v. Nichols* (Chinese American plaintiffs) declared the practice by the San Francisco public schools of putting non-English speaking students into regular classrooms (so-called treating them equally) was in violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In the ruling, the Court clarified the need for schools to provide supplemental services for limited English-speaking students, which could include English as a second language (ESL) or bilingual instruction. The lead attorney for the plaintiffs said that it should have been *Garcia v. Nichols*, but they thought they would have a better chance of winning with Chinese plaintiffs.

For the Mexican American student, test score disparities resulted from children growing up in poverty and facing racial discrimination and language issues. The passage by Congress of the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 provided some funding to help students who were not fluent in Standard English, but California moved in the opposite direction in 1986, becoming one of the 32 states that have declared English as its official language. Then, in 1998, California voters passed “English in the Public Schools” Proposition 227 after an advertising campaign funded by computer millionaire Ron Unz. For the most part, it banned public schools from offering bilingual education, mostly serving Hispanic students in California, until

2016 when voters passed Proposition 58, repealing Proposition 227. California is now more in line with the various United Nations' human rights declarations and its 2007 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which support the rights of ethnic and racial minorities to retain their cultures and languages, including nonstandard dialects of English.

With the election of Donald Trump as president, anti-Mexican and anti-Hispanic rhetoric increased in the United States. Fear of increased deportation for undocumented immigrants is exist throughout the communities.

## Asians

The political turmoil in southern China in the mid nineteenth century resulted in many Chinese fleeing the country and moving to California. As newcomers to the state, they found employment, first in the gold mines, and then building railroads as a labor shortage, aggravated by low wages, encouraged the Central Pacific Railroad to recruit them to build the western end of the first transcontinental railway over the Sierra Nevada Mountains in 1863. At first, the Irish construction superintendent did not think they could be good workers, but he soon changed his mind. When railroad work dried up, the Chinese turned to a variety of occupations, including in the 1870s, making up 75 percent of farm laborers in California. The Chinese suffered from a variety forms of discrimination. In San Francisco, in 1877, their laundries, a dominant business for many Chinese entrepreneurs, fell to arson attacks. During the depression of 1893, out of work whites seized Chinese labor camps and vandalized Chinese businesses. America's first racially based, discriminatory legislation—the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882—targeted Chinese immigration. Chinese born in the United States had to fight for citizenship rights. Wong Kim Ark was born in San Francisco. Questions about his citizenship status reached the U.S. Supreme Court. In 1898, the U.S. Supreme Court in *United States v. Wong Kim Ark* (169 U.S. 649) ruled:

A child born in the United States, of parents of Chinese descent, who, at the time of his birth, are subjects of the Emperor of China, but have a permanent residence in the United States, and are there carrying on business, and are not employed in any diplomatic or official capacity under the Emperor of China automatically becomes a U.S. citizen at birth.

This decision established an important precedent in its interpretation of the Citizenship Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Japanese filled in as laborers as Chinese immigration stalled under the Chinese Exclusion Act. However, Japanese workers tended to be militant, independent and worked to buy small farms. This resulted in legislative action that led to their exclusion in 1906, which continued in the Immigration Act of 1924. Japanese immigrants also faced challenges about their status as citizens. Born in Japan, Ozawa applied in 1914 for citizenship after graduating from high school in Berkeley, California, and attending the University of California for three years. In 1922, *Ozawa v. United States*, the U.S. Supreme Court denied his request because he was not Caucasian.

Hindu workers replaced the Japanese, while Filipino immigration increased during the early 1920s. In the 1930s, 35,000 Filipinos, 93 percent male, immigrated to the United States. They, too, like many other racial minority groups in California faced wide scale discrimination. In 1921, a University of California professor described Mexicans as “childish, lazy, unambitious”; Japanese were ‘tricky and sexually lax’; Hindus were ‘lean, lanky and enervated’; and Negroes were ‘notorious prevaricators’” (as quoted in Dunne 1971, 40). However, a publicist for the shipper growers described Filipinos as “the most worthless, unscrupulous, shiftless, diseased, semi-barbarian that has ever come to our shore.” The devaluing of the humanity of these people by businessmen and farmers formed a rationalization for their exploitation and mistreatment.

Worker strikes protesting employee mistreatment has a long history in California; but, for the most part, the workers usually lost. For example, in the 1913 Wheatland Hops Field Riot, the owner of the Durst Ranch attracted several thousand men, women, and children with promises of jobs. However, conditions were terrible and there were never not enough jobs, leading to a strike with International Workers of the World (IWW) involvement. When a sheriff’s deputy fired a shotgun into the air during a confrontation with workers, a melee ensued, leading to the death of a district attorney and deputy sheriff as well as two hop-pickers. State authorities blamed the riot on the IWW and workers, rather than on the ranch owner who exploited the workers and the sheriff’s deputy who started shooting first.

With the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, immigration from Asia increased, especially as refugees fled the Communist takeover of Vietnam. Chinatowns and other ethnic enclaves in San Francisco and other cities in California grew up partly because of housing discrimination and partly because of the desire of people to be around neighbors who shared their culture. Asians viewed, at times, as “the model minority” experienced higher levels of educational and economic achievement. The relative economic success of many Asians compared to many African Americans and Hispanics led to some friction. In 1992, during the Rodney King riots in Los Angeles, Korean Americans armed themselves to protect their small businesses from looting and arson in the predominantly African American community. Unfortunately, half the losses from the riot were sustained by Korean owned businesses.

The careers of three Japanese American congressional representatives reflect the resiliency of Asian Americans in California, all of whom spent their early childhoods in World War II internment camps. Despite both his parents being born in the United States, in 1941, Michael Makoto Honda and his parents were internees at a camp in Colorado. Honda served as a Democrat from California in the U.S. Congress from 2001 to 2017. Fellow California congressional representative, Norm Mineta, was an internee in Wyoming; and congressional representative Robert Matsui an internee at Tule Lake in California.

### **Black Americans**

As part of the Great Migration from the South, African Americans began coming to California in large numbers during World War II with the opening of war

industry jobs and opportunities to serve in the military. Many black military recruits (some with the lowest test scores) were assigned to labor battalions, often doing dangerous jobs like loading ships with munitions. The Port Chicago disaster near San Francisco is one such tragedy involving black military personnel. After the war, many of these jobs vanished, leaving blacks living in poverty in inner cities and creating the conditions for social upheaval.

Within two decades of the mass migration of blacks to California, most had settled in run down city neighborhoods that the federal government “redlined” as areas too risky for government backed home loans. Blacks, including World War II veterans, faced discrimination, systematically denied loans to buy homes and from buying homes in the new suburban communities built until the federal Fair Housing Act of 1968. However, housing discrimination continued and was a major obstacle for improving the quality of life in black communities.

### **Social Protest and Social Organization**

In November 1965, shortly after the August riots in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles (the nation’s deadliest riot, needing 4,000 National Guard soldiers to quell), Martin Luther King wrote a letter to the *Saturday Review*. Los Angeles, he noted, should have anticipated the riots. Further, King stated that “when its officials tied up federal aid in political manipulation; when the rate of Negro unemployment soared above the depression levels of the 1930s; when the population

#### ***Race and Racism at Port Chicago***

On July 17, 1944, bombs and shells being loaded onto ships at Port Chicago north of San Francisco Bay exploded; of the 332 people killed, two-thirds were poorly trained black sailors. Soon after, 258 black sailors, also without training, refused to carry out orders to load munitions nearby in San Francisco Bay; 208 of them received bad conduct discharges and pay forfeiture; the remaining 50 men were sentenced to between 8 and 15 years of hard labor. Attorney Thurgood Marshall, a special counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Legal Defense Fund, was involved in appealing their sentences. Two years later, clemency was granted to all. Directly after the court closed the case, Marshall sent a letter to the Secretary of the Navy asking a series of questions, including why only blacks were assigned to load munitions; why they were not given training; and why they were not allowed to rise in rank? The Navy asked Congress to give each victim’s family \$5,000. However, a Mississippi congressional representative, upon learning that most of the dead were black, asked the amount be reduced to \$2,000. Congress settled on \$3,000 in compensation. A 1994 review of the trials revealed race played a large factor in the harsh sentences. A year before the disaster, the U.S. Navy had over 100,000 African Americans in service, but not one black officer. In March 1945, a battalion of 1,000 black sailors staged a hunger strike at Port Hueneme, California, to protest discrimination. In response, the Secretary of the Navy implemented a plan for total racial integration of the Navy, and in 1948, President Truman desegregated the U.S. Army by executive order. In 1994, the Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial was dedicated.

density of Watts became the worst in the nation,” and when the state of California repealed a law that prevented discrimination in housing (1965, 34).

The prolonged impoverished living conditions of urban blacks powered calls for civil rights and black pride, evinced in the civil rights movement of the 1950s–1960s, led by Martin Luther King Jr. Lacking sufficient progress, other forms of social protest emerged, including both radicalized and cultural forms of Black Nationalism. Inspired by the preaching and philosophy of Malcolm X, the Black Panther Party formed in Oakland, California, in October 1966. Their militant approach to self-defense resulted in its description as radical. With a firm belief in the right to self-determination, the Panthers launched armed citizens’ patrols to monitor police behavior and challenge instances of police brutality. Public awareness of the Black Panther Party rose after a 1967, protest at the California State Assembly in Sacramento. Its Committee on Criminal Procedure scheduled hearing to discuss an act making carrying loaded firearms in public illegal. Eldridge Cleaver and Huey Newton sent a group of 26 armed Panthers, led by Bobby Seale, from Oakland to protest the bill. Police to arrest Seale and five others who pleaded guilty to misdemeanor charges of disrupting the assembly. The Black Panther Party first publicized its original Ten-Point Program, and list of demands, on May 15, 1967. However, following the Sacramento action, the Black Panthers renewed their call in the second issue of *The Black Panther* newspaper. In 1969, community social programs also became a focus of the party, including a free breakfast programs for children and community health clinics and the movement spread to other major urban centers. However, the largest number of members in the Black Panther Party resided in the Oakland–San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles areas.

In 1966 in Los Angeles, Maulana Karenga created and promoted Kwanzaa as a pan-African holiday. His goal was to “give Blacks an alternative to the existing holiday and give Blacks an opportunity to celebrate themselves and their history, rather than simply imitate the practice of the dominant society” (Mugane 2015, 255). Karenga was a leader in the Black Power Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, and cofounded US, a black cultural nationalist and social change organization.

There were clashes between King’s integrationists, the Black Panther Party and US. Martin Luther King had a middle-class upbringing and argued for nonviolence and integration. In contrast, many of the youthful members of the Black Panther Party and US grew up in poverty, saw less hope of peacefully winning equal rights than did King, and expressed interest in a cultural revolution for the black community.

Another Black Panther supporter, Angela Davis, was born in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1944, where her family lived in the “Dynamite Hill” neighborhood. In the 1950s, the homes of middle-class blacks were bombed in an attempt to drive them out. A friend of one of four black girls killed in a Birmingham church bombing in 1963, Davis relocated to California. Davis purchased firearms used in the 1970 takeover of Marin County Courthouse, north of San Francisco, which left four dead, including Superior Court judge Harold Haley. One of the

first black women to be included on the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) 10 most wanted list, she was, eventually, tried and acquitted of aiding in the takeover.

### **Social and Political Gains**

In contrast to the more radical black activists who criticized the police and eschewed running for political office, Thomas Bradley (1917–1980) served as a Los Angeles police officer for more than two decades. Bradley was the grandson of a slave; his father worked as a railroad porter, his mother as a maid. The family moved to California from Texas where lynchings of blacks and Jim Crow laws made life difficult. His desire to achieve social justice led to an interest in politics. Following his service as a city council member, in 1969, Bradley launched his first mayoral campaign. He was defeated, accused by his opponent of being “anti-police” and running a campaign powered by black militants, white radicals, and Communists. However, in 1973, he won election, becoming the first African American mayor of Los Angeles, and the second black mayor of a major U.S. city. He served five terms, from 1973 to 1993, the longest in the history of Los Angeles. Bradley ran twice as a Democrat to be California's governor, losing both times in the general election.

U.S. Congresswoman Maxine Waters is another black politician who has risen to political prominence in California. First elected in 1991, she has served in congress for more than two decades; leading the fight on many social issues that affect the predominantly black and Latino district that she represents. She has provided leadership to the congress, serving as chair of the Congressional Black Caucus from 1997 to 1998. In 2018, Waters was the most senior of the twelve black women serving in Congress.

Blacks in California have also made progress in the film and sport industries. California is famous for its central role in the film industry. Early movies like 1915 epic *The Birth of a Nation*, directed by D.W. Griffith, glorified the Ku Klux Klan and used white actors to portray some of its black characters, characterized as unintelligent and sexually aggressive toward white women. American Indians, portrayed as savages brutally attacking wagon trains to kill innocent white women and children, were casted in a negative light as well. And the roles for the more heroic Indians were often played by white actors. Blacks, Native Americans and Asians were often portrayed as “sidekicks” to white heroes; however, the civil rights era brought many changes to Hollywood. From Oscar award winners Sydney Poitier to Viola Davis, the last fifty years of blacks in films has provided America with more diverse, positive views on the many contributions that blacks made to society.

Finally, it has been suggested that American sports are the opiate of the people. Americans are addicted to sports and caught up in the cult of celebrity. California's multiple sport franchises have highlighted some of the most prominent and acceptable black sport figures in America and is one of the few industries in which blacks are permitted to be superstars.

Changes in the social fabric in California mirror similar changes occurring across the United States. Nonwhites are advancing in many social arenas; however, the progress, at times, seems to slow, further demonstrating that California and the United States still have a ways to go to accomplish true racial equality.

## **NOTABLE FIGURE**

### **Chávez, César (1927–1993)**

César Chávez was born Yuma, Arizona, in 1927, and raised until he was ten years old on a small farm his grandfather settled in the late 1800s. As the Great Depression spread across the United States in the 1930s, his family lost their farm. They were forced to travel throughout the southwestern United States seeking work as migrant laborers. The growers and their labor contractors often cheated migrant laborers, like the Chávez family. Their experiences were similar to those of the “Oakies” fleeing the dust bowl in the Midwest, as brilliantly described by John Steinbeck in his Pulitzer Prize–winning novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*. Farmers in California with promises of jobs lured both the Oakies and the migrant workers. Unlike the East and the 160-acre homesteads of the Midwest, California farms tended to be large, with 2,000 or more acres. Many of these large farms had grown out of some 800 land grants from the era of Spanish and Mexican colonization, and from grants of some twenty million acres of lands that railroad companies received to help support railroad construction. In the mid twentieth century, seven percent of California farmers own 75 percent of the land. These large industrialized farms, partially subsidized by government funded irrigation projects, needed large numbers of workers.

When he was 15, Chavez dropped out of seventh grade in order to help support his family, a common practice among the children of migrant farm laborers. In 1945, he was drafted into the U.S. Navy for two years. Upon leaving the Navy, he resumed his life as a migrant worker in the farms and vineyards of California where he met Helen Fabela, a fellow laborer. The two married in 1948. The newlyweds moved to San Jose, California, and Chavez began studying books on labor history while working odd jobs as a laborer.

Despite Chávez’s lack of higher education, he was a reader, heavily influenced by the post–World War II civil and human rights movements. He got ideas from the work of Mahātmā Gandhi in India and Martin Luther King Jr. Like them, he realized that there was little to gain by utilizing violence to wrest concessions from people, like the powerful farm owners in the central valley of California. The farmers could depend on the support of the courts, police, and even the U.S. Army. Chávez utilized nonviolent tactics, much like those used in the civil rights bus boycotts. His embrace of nonviolent tactics helped him gain support from National Migrant Ministries of the National Council of Churches.

Of help to Chávez were the efforts of Saul Alinsky (1909–1972), author of *Rules for Radicals* and other books. Alinsky graduated from the University of Chicago and worked as an organizer for the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)—an organization that previously had been supported by his father. Illinois governor and



Democratic presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson said Alinsky's work reflected the ideals of brotherhood, tolerance, charity and individual dignity. Alinsky saw sit-downs, boycotts, strikes, demonstrations, mass meetings, and picket lines as tools to empower the oppressed. He hired Fred Ross as an organizer in California. Ross met Chávez in 1952, and, recognizing his potential, hired him to work for Alinsky's Community Service Organization (CSO). For the next ten years, Chávez worked in rural California and Oakland for the CSO as an organizer and later as the CSO's national director. Chávez coordinated efforts to help Chicanos fight discrimination, gain citizenship and become registered voters. He also helped organize area farm workers involved in labor disputes. The John Birch Society and other conservatives labeled Alinsky, Chávez and other labor leaders as communists.

Chávez became disillusioned with the CSO's refusal to commit more resources to the organization of farm laborers; he resigned from his position as director. He moved to Delano, California, where in 1962 he founded the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) and began traveling among California's farm communities to recruit workers for his new labor organization. Chávez's union voted to support a Filipino union's strike against grape growers on September 16, 1965, the Mexican Independence Day, and then merged with them. Chávez visited the University of California at Berkeley and Stanford University to recruit students as pickets to help with the grape strike. Pickets were required to take an oath of non-violence. In March 1966, the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Migrant Labor held a hearing in California with committee member Senator Robert F. Kennedy taking an active interest in supporting the union's efforts; however, this support vanished with Kennedy's assassination. The union also received support from a variety of people and organizations, including Reverend Ralph Abernathy of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the National Council of Churches, California's seven Catholic Bishops, and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. The United Auto Workers, led by Walter Reuther, was the biggest financial contributor supporting the NFWA strike. Folksinger Pete Seeger held a benefit concert and the American Friends' Service Committee donated medical equipment.

Chávez used a variety of means to bring pressure on the growers to sign union contracts. These included a 343-mile march from Delano, the site of the strike, to the state capitol building in Sacramento that started on March 17, 1966. However, the strike dragged on and some violence occurred as striking workers became frustrated. On February 14, 1968, Chávez started a fast that lasted 25 days that helped stop strike violence. A campaign to boycott the purchase of table grapes in the United States and Canada finally led the growers to sign contracts with the union in July 1970. The NFWA grew to over one thousand workers in a few years and was involved in several successful strikes, leading to bargaining agreements, wage increases, and better working conditions.

In 1970, from December 10 to 23, Chávez was jailed for refusing to obey a court order during a series of strikes against lettuce growers in California's Salinas Valley. Coretta Scott King, the widow of Martin Luther King, and Ethel Kennedy, the widow of Robert Kennedy, visited him. The election of Jerry Brown, a Democrat, as governor of California in 1974 helped the farm workers. The California Labor Relations Act passed the next year, the first U.S. law to specifically

deal with farm labor, giving farmworkers the right to boycott, conduct secret union ballots, and granting union voting rights to migrant and seasonal workers. The 1982 election of George Deukmejian, a Republican, as governor of California shifted the fortunes of the farmworkers as his administration backed off on enforcing farm labor laws.

In 1986, Chávez gave a series of speeches about how farm growers threatened the health of farm workers with the use of pesticides. At the same time, a documentary entitled *The Wrath of Grapes* was shown to buttress his argument. In 1988, he endured a 36-day fast to bring attention to the issue, which weakened his health. In 1991, he was awarded Mexico's Aquila Azteca (Aztec Eagle), honoring achievements of people of Mexican heritage outside Mexico. He died in 1993, but was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President William Clinton in 1994.

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# 6

## Colorado

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Melanie Moore

### CHRONOLOGY

#### 1848

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ends the Mexican-American War, ceding the area now comprising western Colorado to the United States, and granting U.S. citizenship to Mexicans who reside in the ceded territory

#### 1851

The Fort Laramie Treaty secures the area north of the Arkansas River for the Cheyenne and Arapaho

#### 1858

Flecks of gold are discovered in Colorado, marking the start of the Pike's Peak gold rush

#### 1861

Congress approves the establishment of the Colorado Territory

#### 1864

A Colorado voluntary militia, led by Colonel John Chivington, kills more than 150 Cheyenne and Arapaho in what is known as the Sand Creek massacre

#### 1865

The Treaty of 1865 results in the vast majority of Arapaho and Cheyenne moving to reservations in Oklahoma and Kansas

#### 1867

Colorado enters the Union as the 38th state on August 1; its progressive constitution provides for education for people of "all colors"

#### 1874

With the Brunot Treaty, the federal government takes control from Ute tribes of parts of the San Juan Mountain area that are rich with gold and silver

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### **1880**

A mob of 3,000 whites destroys businesses in Denver's Chinatown and injures many Chinese Americans in what is known as the Denver Riot

### **1910**

Dearfield, a black agricultural community, is established on the Colorado plains

### **1920**

The Ku Klux Klan organizes in Colorado

### **1922**

Black entrepreneurs open a resort, Lincoln Hills, in the Rocky Mountains specifically as a refuge for African Americans from racism and segregated establishments

### **1924**

Colorado's governor, Denver's mayor, a state Supreme Court justice, and many state legislators are beholden to the Ku Klux Klan

### **1936**

Colorado's governor orders 100,000 people with Mexican heritage to be expelled from the state

### **1942–1945**

Some 7,500 Japanese Americans are held at the Granada War Relocation Center in southeastern Colorado for the duration of World War II

### **1967**

The poem "I Am Joaquin," by Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales, is published by Bantam Books

### **1968**

The University of Colorado offers a black studies program

### **1969**

In *Keyes v. School District No. 1*, Denver Public Schools are accused of segregating students by race even though the state and school district have no segregation laws or policies

### **1969**

The University of Colorado offers a Chicano studies program

### **1969**

Corky Gonzales holds the Chicano Youth Conference in Denver

### **1973**

The U.S. Supreme Court finds de facto school segregation in Denver Public Schools in *Keyes v. School District No. 1*; the Court also rules that Hispanic students are entitled to the same kinds of desegregation remedies black students have been afforded in prior court rulings

### **1983**

Federico Pena becomes Denver's first Latino mayor

**1991**

Wellington Webb becomes Denver's first African American mayor

**1995**

After more than 20 years, court supervision of Denver's school desegregation plan ends with the court concluding that for all practical purposes, schools are no longer organized by race

**1995**

Adams State University changes its mascot from "the Indian" to the "Grizzlies"

**2003**

The Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library opens in Denver

**2006**

The Granada War Relocation Center is designated a National Historic Landmark

**2009**

The state of Colorado and Ute tribes sign a memorandum of agreement allowing Utes to hunt and fish on land outside their reservation that used to be part of Ute Territory

**2011**

Michael Hancock becomes Denver's second African American mayor

**2014**

At the remembrance of the 150th anniversary of the Sand Creek massacre, Colorado governor John Hickenlooper offers an official state apology, and a memorial to the massacre is erected at the state capitol complex in Denver

**2017**

The Denver Police Department announces that it would continue its current policy of not arresting undocumented immigrants, despite the stricter deportation policies of the Trump administration

**NARRATIVE**

The relevance of race and racism in Colorado was apparent from the beginning. The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American War and ceded the Southwest to the United States, providing citizenship to Mexicans living on the ceded territory. Colorado was formed out of a large chunk of that ceded territory.

Utes had migrated to that area from the Great Basin before 1600, and the Comanche came from the northern plains in the early 1700s. Later, large tribes of Arapaho and Cheyenne and other smaller tribes arrived. Fiercely contested battles for territory followed with Arapaho and Cheyenne tribes forcing Utes into the mountains and the Comanche into southeastern Colorado. Bison was the primary food source, and buffalo hides were used for clothing and as flooring for teepees. Other food sources included elk, deer, berries, seeds, and roots. While subsistence was the purpose of work, some trading occurred. Usually buffalo and other hides

were traded for horses and manufactured goods. Each tribe was divided into bands, with each band having a specific hunting territory. Bands usually included a few large extended family networks and were fairly self-sufficient, providing food, shelter, protection, and social activities for themselves. Sometimes, bands would raid bands of other tribes and take their resources.

After inhabiting this region for centuries, in the second half of the nineteenth century, life for Native American tribes in this area changed dramatically with the massive influx of mostly Anglo miners, hunters, and farmers. Few Anglos lived in the area before 1850, with the first known Anglo settlement established in the San Luis Valley in 1851. That same year, the Fort Laramie Treaty secured ownership of the land north of the Arkansas River for Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes. This in fact was the beginning of the movement of tribes in the region to reservations, most of which were located outside the Colorado Territory. The U.S. government negotiated many treaties with different tribes that were revised, renegotiated, and discarded over the years. For example, the Brunot Treaty, approved by Congress in 1874, stripped the gold- and silver-rich San Juan Mountain area from Ute tribes. Utes felt betrayed; they thought they were agreeing only to allow mining on the land. Instead, the federal government forced them out of these lucrative parts of the region. More than 130 years later in 2009, the state of Colorado and the Utes signed a memorandum of agreement allowing Utes to hunt and fish on some of this land, which still lies outside their reservation. Most impactful for Colorado, the Treaty of 1865 resulted in the vast majority of Arapaho and Cheyenne tribes moving to reservations in Oklahoma and Kansas. By most accounts, reservation life was difficult. Native Americans had to transform their hunter and gatherer lifestyle to an agricultural one, and efforts to “Americanize” Native Americans was swift and intense, including a requirement that Native American children attend reservation schools and learn English.

This dramatic change in Colorado inhabitants and culture can be attributed, at least in part, to the news in 1858 that prospectors found specks of gold in the riverbanks of Pike’s Peak. With this news, the gold rush began. Within a year, tens of thousands of people, mostly Anglos, headed west to the Rocky Mountains in search of gold. Mining camps sprung up throughout the region, and a flat area adjacent to the mountains became a supply hub, eventually developing into the city of Denver. As gold mining was not a reliable source of income, other minerals in abundant supply in the mountains became the economic basis for the region. With such rapid growth and chaotic social changes, community leaders sought more formal governmental structures and laws and submitted an application for territory status to the federal government. This took some time, as debates raged in Congress about whether or not new western territories would permit slavery. The country was deeply divided over slavery, and the Civil War was just around the corner. When the South seceded though, Northern politicians in Congress had the votes and were anxious to create free labor territories and states. With that, Colorado Territory was officially approved in 1861.

As many headed west, the route through eastern Colorado, much of which was Cheyenne and Arapaho land, was well traveled. Resources were in short supply,

and conflict between Native American tribes and Anglo prospectors and settlers was common. Anglos reported that Native Americans were attacking wagon trains and miner camps and viewed Native Americans as impeding the development of settlements. Many Native Americans were frustrated by treaty changes and the large and seemingly endless wave of incoming settlers. The governor of the Colorado Territory, John Evans, took the position that the Cheyenne and Arapaho in the eastern plains were detrimental to the expansion of white settlements and encouraged “citizens” to kill Native Americans they deemed hostile. Tensions escalated further in the summer of 1864, when Colorado troops were deployed to Civil War battles in the east, and a notorious murder of an Anglo family in Denver was thought to have been committed by Native Americans. In an effort to reduce tensions, Governor Evans met with select Cheyenne and Arapaho tribe leaders and encouraged them to relocate. His approach worked, as some tribes were lured away, often to locations near military bases, in exchange for supplies and protection. Chief Black Kettle, an influential Cheyenne advocate for peace, was directed to move his following to the Sand Creek area. At the same time, the governor was encouraging tribes to scatter across the region, and he solicited volunteers to bolster the military available in the territory. Then, later that year, the governor assigned a well-respected military officer the job of keeping Native Americans in check. To that end, this officer led a band of newly enlisted volunteer troops in a surprise attack on the isolated and unsuspecting tribes of Sand Creek, slaughtering many including children and babies.

### **The Sand Creek Massacre (1864)**

Although applauded by many at first, when the details of the attack became known, most, including congressional and military committees investigating the events of that day, condemned the attack and characterized it as a massacre. From the testimony of participating troops and Native American survivors, the details of the massacre emerged. More than 700 military volunteers, many of whom were about to complete their 100-day enlistment period, attacked the Sand Creek settlement at dawn, indiscriminately killing all they could. Overwhelmed, some Native Americans fled immediately yet were chased down and killed anyway. Chief Black Kettle raised a United States flag during the massacre in an effort to stop the killing, but to no avail. Reports were abundant of women and their children surrendering, yet being killed on the spot and scalped. Before leaving, soldiers shot and killed the wounded, mutilated dead bodies, and stole belongings and horses. Scalps were kept as trophies and displayed with pride by some soldiers. More than 150 Cheyenne and Arapaho and 9 soldiers were killed that single day. When pressed, most soldiers indicted their leader for the atrocities, after which, Colonel Chivington, a decorated and respected military officer to that point, was forced to resign to avoid a court-martial.

Intended to reduce resistance from Native Americans, the Sand Creek massacre did the opposite. Many young Native Americans organized and responded with attacks on Anglo settlers and transportation routes. In response, some

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Union forces were diverted from the Civil War to end resistance from Native Americans. Nevertheless, resistance continued for years, only ending with the Wounded Knee massacre in 1890. The racially motivated Sand Creek massacre has been memorialized in Colorado and by the federal government in recent years. In 2005, the location of the attack became a national park, the Sand Creek Massacre National Historical Site. At the 150th anniversary of the massacre in 2014, Colorado's Governor John Hickenlooper apologized on behalf of the state, and a memorial to the massacre was erected at the state capital complex in Denver.

Shortly after the massacre and in response to a variety of political pressures, Colorado applied for statehood with a unique, progressive proposed state constitution. For example, one clause stressed the value of education for people "of all colors" at a time when school segregation was the norm in much of the rest of the country. Colorado was granted statehood in 1867, and a new wave of settlers followed. Many African Americans headed west in the late 1800s and early 1900s because of the perception of wide open economic opportunities and to escape racial oppression in the eastern and Southern states. Many moved to the largest cities of Denver and Pueblo, with others finding opportunities in mining and farming communities. The number of African Americans in Colorado grew from zero recorded in 1850 to more than 8,500 in 1900 (Junne et al. 2011). At the time, racism was prevalent, but the segregation and Jim Crow laws found elsewhere in the country were virtually nonexistent in Colorado. White settlers regarded African Americans more positively than Chinese and Native Americans, who were viewed with much suspicion and derision because of their distinctive language and cultural practices. In fact, when few Chinese came to Colorado, anti-Chinese racism was especially vicious, as Chinese immigrants were viewed as exotic and uncivil, and fears of a "yellow peril" were prevalent. The largest anti-Chinese incident was the Denver Riot of 1880, during which a mob of some 3,000 ransacked Denver's Chinatown, destroying and burning businesses; several Chinese were injured, and one was killed. A wave of Japanese arrived in Colorado from California just after 1900. Like Chinese settlers, Japanese faced rejection, fear, and worry about a "yellow peril." Most with Japanese heritage were employed in mining and agriculture, with many working on sugar beets farms. In Denver, a community of Japanese, referred to as Little Tokyo, formed.

### **The Ku Klux Klan**

African Americans built a prosperous community in the Five Points neighborhood in Denver by the 1920s. Although most new settlers in the area were from the North and supported the Union during the Civil War, racism was rampant. Coupled with declining economic conditions, the Ku Klux Klan (Klan) arrived in Colorado in 1920. John Locke, a Denver physician, was selected by the Imperial Wizard of the national organization to recruit in Colorado and Wyoming and establish local chapters. State incorporation papers for the Klan were filed in 1922 and explained that the organization's purpose was to "unite White male Gentile



native-born citizens of the U.S.” (Marriner 1976, 77). The Klan targeted people of color, although Colorado chapters especially focused on Catholic and Jewish immigrants. Surprisingly, and in just a couple of years, the Klan in Colorado became one of the most successful in the country with as many as 50,000 members and 81 chapters (Quillen 2003). The Klan quickly became one of the most significant influences in local and statewide elections. Both the governor of the state, Clarence Morley, and the mayor of Denver, Benjamin Stapleton, supported the Klan and could be counted on to take the Klan’s interests into account when making political decisions and appointments. Colorado’s Senators Rice Means and Laurence Phipps openly supported the Klan, and a majority of the state’s house of representatives were at least Klan-friendly. In addition, the state’s Supreme Court, local courts, city councils, and law enforcement agencies included Klansmen at that time. Much of the legislation desired by the Klan though was thwarted by the significant number of lawmakers who opposed their positions. The Klan unsuccessfully advocated for repealing the state’s civil rights–related laws and for firing all Jewish and Catholic faculty at the University of Colorado. The Klan was successful in getting a state law passed that required all schools in the state to hang the American flag.

Besides political power, the Klan wielded tremendous economic clout, prodding its members to patronize businesses with owners who shared their views. Businesses even put stickers in their windows denoting their affiliation with the Klan to attract customers. Businesses without such support often suffered significant financial losses.

Terror and violence also were a part of the Klan’s impact on the community. For example, in 1923, more than a thousand hooded Klansmen celebrated the organization’s coming out of the shadows and into the public arena by burning a 40-foot cross near Denver. Houses were bombed when blacks attempted to integrate neighborhoods in Denver. Sometimes the Klan targeted individuals. In response to the Denver chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People’s (NAACP) effort to integrate theaters, the chapter’s president received a threatening letter, and a cross was burned near his office. In another well-known incident, the Klan sent a threatening letter to a black janitor who was accused of having sexual relations with white women. For his safety, he moved out of town. On separate occasions, a Jewish attorney and a Knights of the Columbus member were kidnapped and beaten by Klansmen.

The Klan attracted new members with marches across Colorado and by sponsoring social events. These events were usually well attended, although many attendees only desired the social and economic benefits of being connected to the Klan; they were less interested in their racist views. One Klan picnic in Denver had more than 100,000 attendees. The Klan thrived during this period in part because people were not willing to speak out against them. Rare notable exceptions included Philip Van Cise, Denver’s district attorney, Billy Adams, a state senator, Hugh Harper, the police chief in Colorado Springs, and C.C. Hamlin, the owner of two newspapers in Colorado Springs. Although the Klan’s rise to prominence in Colorado was meteoric in the early 1920s, the Klan quickly fell into disfavor by the end of that decade.

### **An African American Resort**

In 1922, in response to pervasive racism and segregated resorts, two Denver businessmen built a resort in the Rocky Mountains specifically for African Americans. At the time, Lincoln Hills was one of only three such resorts in the country, and the only one west of the Mississippi. Lincoln Hills was a vacation destination for people from across the country and for many living in Denver. The resort was located on a creek near Eldorado Springs, less than an hour's drive from Denver, and offered a variety of outdoor recreational activities, including fishing and swimming. More than 1,500 small lots priced at less than \$100 each were sold to African Americans. A few built summer cottages on their lots while most used their land for camping. The resort included a main hotel known as Winks Lodge, a tavern, and some cabins for rent. Well-known black writers and musicians, such as Langston Hughes, Billy Eckstine, Ella Fitzgerald, Lena Horne, Count Basie, and Duke Ellington, stayed at Winks Lodge, often after performing in Denver. For almost 20 years, the resort also served as a summer camp for young black girls. Camp Nizhoni, named after the Navaho word for beautiful, focused on outdoor recreation and education.

After more than four thriving decades in business as a sanctuary from racial discrimination, with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, African Americans had many more resort options, and business declined. Today, descendants of the original lot owners continue to vacation in Lincoln Hills, and the resort property is now owned by a private fly fishing club and a nonprofit organization that provides outdoor programming for black youth.

### **Mexican and Japanese Americans**

Mexican Americans were categorized differently in terms of race at different times in Colorado. Initially, they were included in the white category. Even so, they faced prejudice and discrimination in employment and housing, and some restaurants posted signs indicating that Mexicans were not welcome. In 1936, the governor of Colorado called up the National Guard to expel some 100,000 people with Mexican heritage from Colorado, and the National Guard was posted at the southern border of the state to ensure that none returned. Although this action officially ended when it was deemed unconstitutional, the anti-Mexican sentiment remained. To justify discriminating against this group, people with Mexican heritage were often associated with crime. The incarceration rate for this group was more than double that of non-Mexican whites. The *Rocky Mountain News* first reported Mexican gang activity in 1942, and police responded by informing patrols to pay special attention to youth dressed in a flashy manner. The clothes that were being targeted, Zoot Suits, were common in Mexican American neighborhoods at the time. As concerns about Zoot Suit-wearing youth in California escalated, panic about Zoot Suit-clad youth in Denver spread. The result was greater police patrols and seemingly more harassment and aggression toward Mexican American youth from the mostly white police force.

When Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japan in 1941, life for Japanese Americans in Colorado changed dramatically. More than 7,500 Japanese Americans were

sent to and held at the Granada War Relocation Center, also known as Camp Amache, in the plains of Colorado. They were not released until the war ended in 1945. Camp Amache was one of 10 such centers in the country. Most came to Camp Amache from California after being forced to sell their businesses, homes, and possessions. The U.S. policy was to detain and move those with Japanese heritage inland. Although anti-Japanese sentiment was widespread, the governor of Colorado welcomed these Japanese American detainees to the state, and referred to them as loyal as anyone to American institutions. Conditions at Camp Amache were challenging. Living quarters consisted of unfurnished wood structures with concrete floors and thin walls and roofs, and all detained were clear that they were not free to leave as the camp had watch towers with armed guards and was surrounded by a barbed wire fence. Nevertheless, Camp Amache was unique in that it did not experience the violence and conflict typically found at the other relocation centers. Detainees created a peaceful family-like community with a sense of routine and normalcy. The camp was isolated, and so it operated like a small town with its own stores, schools, and hospital.

Despite being interned, some young men at Camp Amache volunteered to serve in the military, wanting to contribute to the war effort. Others with Japanese heritage contributed their Japanese language skills. The University of Colorado in Boulder employed about 150 *Issei* (first-generation of Japanese Americans) to be language instructors for the navy's Japanese language school (JLS) housed on campus. To counter racial animosity, the university and military created public relations campaigns reflecting the contributions being made by these instructors with the hope that the Boulder community would accept them. After the war, some instructors stayed on at the JLS to aid in postwar efforts. In hindsight, most agree the internment was wrong, and that Japanese Americans were victims of racist wartime hysteria, and that the impact on those interned, having lost their homes, businesses, and freedom in many cases, is immeasurable. In 2006, the Granada War Relocation Center was designated a National Historic Landmark.

### **Political Action**

In 1947, Denver's Mayor Newton was credited with modernizing and humanizing the city's government. He expanded public housing and developed one of the country's earliest civil rights commissions. The Colorado Anti-Discrimination Commission's most remarkable achievement was creating one of the first fair housing laws in the country that ensured that African Americans, Japanese Americans, Mexican Americans, and Jews could live in any neighborhood in the city. This angered some, and many middle-class families moved away from the city. While discrimination persisted in the region, the commission's actions and presence seemed to shield Denver from the kinds of racial unrest experienced in many other U.S. cities.

About this time, Denver was becoming a hub for the developing Chicano Movement. Mexican Americans often experienced prejudice and discrimination, being excluded from some businesses and neighborhoods, and stereotyped by



Racially classified as “other white,” Chicanos respond to various forms of racial discrimination in the social system. Chicano organization leader Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales during a Chicano Conference at Colorado State Penitentiary in 1971. (Bettmann/Getty Images)

some as being dirty and lazy. Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales, a Denver native and nationally renowned activist for Chicano rights, took the lead in changing this. He advocated for Chicanos creating their own political structures to address their social and economic concerns. Gonzales was also passionate about developing opportunities for Chicanos in social, economic, cultural, and art endeavors. To this end, he personally opened a school with the express purpose of providing Latino/a and Hispanic youth with an identity- and culture-affirming educational experience. He established the Crusade for Justice, which organized Chicano-related rallies and protests to address inequalities in Denver and across the country. Among other things, protests concerned police violence toward minorities, racism in education, and political access limitations. Indeed, Gonzales’s work promoting political participation among Latino/as in Denver was responsible at least in part for the 1983 election of Denver’s first Latino mayor, Federico Pena. During Mayor Pena’s administration, minorities were included in a meaningful way in city decision-making.

### **De Facto Discrimination**

Although no official school segregation laws or policies existed in Colorado, its largest school district, Denver Public Schools (DPS), was accused of intentionally segregating students by race in a significant legal case in 1969. Some fire-bombing of school buildings followed. *Keyes v. School District No. 1* was the first de facto

school segregation case in the country heard by the U.S. Supreme Court. It was also the first case in the United States to address both African Americans and Latino students. The plaintiffs, residents of Park Hill, an affluent and racially mixed Denver neighborhood, contended that DPS knowingly organized students into schools based on race. DPS countered that their actions had to be race-neutral because they had no segregation policies in place. The plaintiffs claimed that attendance boundaries and school building sites were manipulated to produce and maintain “majority Anglo” and “majority minority” schools. To make their case, it was essential to look beyond the usual black–white dichotomy and include Mexican American students in the minority category. This was important because Denver had majority Anglo, majority black, majority Mexican American, and majority black and Mexican American schools. Segregation was also promoted within schools with black and Mexican American students regularly tracked into specific classrooms, sometimes based on culturally biased tests. A key to this case was where Mexican American students were located on the majority–minority spectrum. DPS’s case was enhanced by arguing that Mexican American students were more like white students than black students and should be counted in the majority category. In contrast, the plaintiffs needed to show that Mexican Americans students were more like black students and belong in the minority category. This was a dilemma because Mexican Americans desired the privileges associated with being white, yet the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 now offered protections against and opportunities to impact the institutional discrimination they experienced in employment, housing, and education. Interestingly enough, the original case did not consider the educational needs of Mexican American students in particular. Otherwise, it would have directly addressed the need for multicultural and bilingual programs. Much later, these needs were added to the lawsuit.

The local court ruled against DPS in 1970, concluding that schools were essentially segregated and that the quality of education in predominately minority schools was lacking. However, the judge rejected the idea that black and Mexican American enrollments could be combined to define a minority majority school, even though both groups shared many experiences related to poverty and discrimination. Upon appeal, the Supreme Court ruled that Mexican Americans were an identifiable group that was more similar experientially to blacks than whites. Subsequently, the interests of Mexican American students were included in this action and represented by the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) and the Congress of Hispanic Educators (CHE). While the original case resulted in school desegregation actions in Denver and established Mexican Americans as a minority group, additional remedies addressing discriminatory practices in education were included in subsequent filings and rulings. For example, eventually, court-ordered remedies included language rights and a consent decree that was negotiated to provide for the educational needs of students with limited proficiency in English. Over the years, again and again, DPS was found to have maintained a dual education system and was ordered to remove “all vestiges” of discrimination. After more than 20 years since the original lawsuit, the Court

ruled that DPS had essentially desegregated for all practical purposes and no longer supervised their desegregation efforts.

### **Racial Progress**

In 1991, Wellington Webb became Denver's first African American mayor. At the time, the vast majority of Denver citizens identified as white, with just 12 percent identifying as black. As a virtual unknown, Webb went door-to-door meeting a large proportion of Denver residents in their homes in what was referred to as the "sneaker campaign." His victory was due in large part to a coalescing and high rate of voter turnout among all of Denver's minority communities. He was reelected twice, serving as Denver's mayor for 12 years. In that time, Mayor Webb is credited with moving Denver from a "cow town" to an internationally recognized destination for businesses and visitors. He made large investments in infrastructure, attracted corporations from around the world, opened trade offices in London and Shanghai, revitalized downtown, significantly lowered the unemployment rate, and reduced crime. He also advanced a variety of race-related economic and social programs. Mayor Webb ensured that Denver's new airport used minority contractors, and he hired the city's first Hispanic police chief and first African American fire chief. He led the successful effort to make Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday a state holiday and spearheaded the development of an elaborate monument in Dr. King's honor displayed in the city's most prominent park. The monument is 28 feet tall with a nearly 10 foot statue of Martin Luther King Jr. in the middle, surrounded by life-sized statues of Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, Mahatma Gandhi, and Rosa Parks. Mayor Webb also was responsible for reviving Five Points, a neighborhood in Denver with a significant percentage of African American residents. He helped bring the area out of a long period of economic and social decline, substantially lowering rates of crime and drug use. Currently, thousands of people come to this neighborhood every year for the largest Juneteenth festival in the west.

Among other honors, Mayor Webb was elected president of the National Conference of Black Mayors, served in President Obama's administration, and in 2016, gave a rousing speech at the Democratic National Convention in support of Hillary Clinton's candidacy for president. In tribute to his remarkable contributions, in 2002, a new city building was named the Wellington E. Webb Municipal Office Building, and in 2006, the Denver Health Hospital named their primary care facility after him.

Colorado, and Denver in particular, have some important research and cultural centers devoted to community outreach and the study of African Americans. Built for \$16 million during Mayor Webb's administration, the Blair-Caldwell African American Research Library is unique in that it is the only library of its kind in the entire western United States, housing numerous collections of African American literature, culture, art, and history. The Black American West Museum and Heritage Center, also in Denver, is another regional resource. Likewise, universities in Colorado led the way in the western United States in the development of black studies curriculum and programs. The University of Colorado's black studies

program was initiated with much fanfare in 1968, followed by programs at the University of Northern Colorado in 1969, and the Metropolitan State College of Denver, Colorado State University, and Colorado College shortly afterward. Bachelor's degrees in African and/or African American studies are available at several universities in the state, which is quite unusual for the western United States, as only California has more such universities.

At the same time that these programs were developing, some schools in the state wrestled with changing racially demeaning mascots. One struggle that received much media attention involved the retirement of the "Indian" mascot at Adams State University. The "Indian" mascot represented Adams State since it was founded in the 1920s and until the mascot was "retired" in 1995. The change was led by a group of students who formed the Coalition for the Respect of Indigenous Peoples to specifically address their concerns about the "Indian" mascot. The coalition included Native and Chicana/o students who urged the university's administration to attend to race issues beyond those of black and white students. Similar to mascot debates occurring at schools across the country, the coalition argued that the "Indian" mascot was indicative of a history of racism at Adams State and a derogatory and dehumanizing representation. Those opposed to the change cited college tradition. The coalition presented educational forums on campus and organized regular "sit-ins" at the university president's office. A turning point seemed to come when a Native student at Adams State, Phil Castillo, won a national championship in running and used his national platform to address his opposition to the school's mascot. After years of protest, with this development, Adams State's president swiftly retired the "Indian," and the university replaced it with a grizzly bear.

In a very recent case about racial bias in Colorado, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on a matter involving jurors in a Colorado courtroom. Right after Miguel Peña-Rodriguez was found guilty, a juror reported that two other jurors had repeatedly expressed bias toward him and his primary alibi witness because they were Mexican. When questioned, it was revealed that one juror explained that Peña-Rodriguez was guilty because Mexican men are aggressive and think they can do whatever they want to women. Similarly, the alibi witness's testimony was dismissed by another juror because he was "an illegal," even though his testimony made it clear that the witness was a legal resident. In response to this case, the Supreme Court ruled that racial bias was impactful enough to warrant an exception to the usual secrecy associated with jury deliberations as it would prevent a defendant from receiving a fair trial.

In 2017, the Denver Police Department (DPD) announced that it would continue its current policy of not arresting undocumented immigrants or assisting federal authorities in doing so. The reasoning offered by DPD is that deportation is a federal matter and outside the range of responsibilities of local police departments. This announcement came in response to the Homeland Security Administration expanding its deportation policy to include undocumented immigrants who commit any crime, no matter the level of seriousness. President Trump has threatened to pull federal funding from cities that do not comply with his administration's stricter deportation orders. Such cities are sometimes referred to as sanctuary

cities, where undocumented immigrants are actively protected from deportation. Denver is not an official sanctuary city, although in practice, it operates as if it is. This is a rare circumstance in which the DPD and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) are in agreement about the appropriate action.

When considering the Sand Creek massacre, the rapid rise of the Ku Klux Klan, the internment of Japanese American citizens, the two-decade effort to desegregate schools in Denver, and the other events delineated here, there can be no question that race and racism have been central to the development, growth, and culture of Colorado.

## **NOTABLE FIGURE**

### **Gonzales, Rodolfo “Corky” (1928–2005)**

Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales was a political activist instrumental in fighting for Mexican American rights and a founder of the Chicano Movement. He was born in Denver in 1928 and grew up in a tough and poor neighborhood. Gonzales was raised, along with his seven siblings, by a single father because his mother died when he was young. His father came to the United States from Mexico and taught his son about his experiences with the Mexican Revolution. Gonzales had several jobs beginning at the age of 10, including setting pins at a bowling alley and working on a farm. At the age of 16, he graduated from high school in Denver. These early experiences laid the groundwork for his activism.

As a young adult, Gonzales was a successful professional boxer, one of the best in the world in his weight division, and used his acclaim in boxing to help him advance his political causes. In fact, his last professional fight was a benefit for the Latin American Education Fund in 1952. After boxing, Gonzales opened a sports bar in Denver, had a bail bonds business, and worked for an insurance company, all the while engaged in activism. As a member of the Democratic Party, Gonzales’s early political work included campaigning for the election of Denver mayor Quigg Newton in 1947 and leading the “Viva Kennedy” campaign in Colorado in 1960. He was single-handedly responsible for recruiting a substantial number of new Latino/a voters in Denver. Gonzales himself ran for city council in 1955, for the Colorado legislature in 1964, and for mayor of Denver in 1967. He lost all three elections. In 1965, he was appointed director of the Neighborhood Youth Corps, and led the War on Poverty group. Gonzales left both positions though after a boisterous press conference where he complained about a story in the *Rocky Mountain News* that negatively portrayed him and the larger Mexican American community. He proudly proclaimed that he was an agitator and trouble maker who could not be bought with political appointments.

Indeed, he became disillusioned with the Democratic Party when his efforts for change within the party failed, and he began to advocate for Chicanos creating their own political structures. Gonzales contended that Chicanos could not rely on the “gringo establishment” for social or economic advancement. He was passionate about creating and promoting opportunities for Chicanos in the many realms where their voices were not being heard. This meant a grassroots effort to develop



Chicano social, economic, educational, cultural, literature, and art activities. For example, Gonzales opened a school for Chicano children where they could cultivate their Chicano or Hispanic identities and learn to become activists. He also established the Crusade for Justice through which he spearheaded political rallies and protests on college campuses across the country. He led a Poor People's March on Washington in 1968, and in response to a teacher's racist comment, he organized a well-publicized walkout at West High School in Denver.

In 1969, Gonzales led the Chicano Youth Conference in Denver. Here, the agenda of the Chicano Movement was delineated in writing. Essentially, the movement called for ethnic pride and self-determination. The basis for the movement was distinguishing an identity that while rooted in an indigenous Mexican ancestry acknowledged the variety of cultural influences and heritages that combined to form a Chicano/a. Moreover, for Chicano/a activists in the 1960s and 1970s, the label of Mexican American had been tainted with a presumption of assimilation into white culture. From the beginning, when the Southwest was ceded to the United States, Mexican Americans were considered white because race was thought of in binary terms, and they did not fit the African American category. Shortly afterward, Mexican Americans were considered by some to belong in a third or "other" category, a catchall for those who did not fit neatly into the black-white binary at the time. This certainly matched the secondary treatment and diminished economic and social positions experienced by Mexican Americans. Census workers though given four race options (white, black, American Indian and Alaskan Native, and Asian and Pacific Islander) usually placed Mexican Americans in the white category. Subsequently, when "other" was an option and people completed their own census forms, many Mexican Americans selected "other," and a few would write in terms such as Mexican, Mexican American, and Latino. Beginning with the 1970 census, people were asked to indicate whether or not they were Hispanic, with Hispanic defined as including people with any Spanish, Chicano, Latino, or Mexican heritage. The Census Bureau defined Hispanic as an ethnicity, meaning people who shared cultural and geographic ancestries or traditions. Race was characterized as a different concept altogether requiring a separate question. People who claim an Hispanic ethnicity then might also select any of the race categories, indicative of their diversity.

The goal of the Chicano movement was a distinctive identity in which cultural heritage was appreciated, maintained, and even revered, and speaking Spanish, for example, was valued, a source of cultural pride and not something to be reduced or eliminated. Acknowledging that all labels used to potentially define people with some Mexican heritage, including Latino/a and Hispanic, are imprecise and arbitrary, the movement maintained that it was important to reclaim the label Chicano to convert it from a derogatory insult into a source of empowerment and community.

Gonzales also initiated campaigns to stop police violence against minorities, to create economic opportunities, and to eliminate poverty completely. Furthermore, his efforts to develop Chicano power through institutional reforms and increased participation in the political process undoubtedly cleared the way for the election of Federico Pena, Denver's first Latino mayor in 1983. Mayor Pena beat a

powerful incumbent, and went on to serve two terms as mayor even though less than a fourth of the population of Denver was Latino/a. Because of his relentless work in founding the Chicano Movement and pushing its goals forward, Gonzales was nicknamed “the fist.”

Gonzales’s influence in the Chicano Movement was amplified by a poem he wrote. In this poem, “I Am Joaquin,” he described a vision of a distinctive “Chicano” person who is not simply Mexican, American, Indian, or European and who was hopeful about the future because of a spiritual awakening prompted by being a minority in the United States. The poem appeared in many newspapers, and copies of it were posted in public spaces across the country. This poem is viewed as the call to action for the Chicano movement. It is often quoted in activist literature and was published several times, including in a collection of Gonzales writings and speeches in 2001.

Gonzales was sharply focused on making waves and promoting social change, and his experiences, defeats and successes, made a difference on a variety of political fronts. In his later years, Gonzales attended Chicano events and celebrations around the country. He died in 2005 at the age of 76 from heart problems. The Corky Gonzales Symposium was initiated after his death, and is held regularly on the Auraria Campus in downtown Denver. The Chicano school he founded, Escuela Tlatelolco, continues to offer pre-kindergarten through 12th grade curriculum where Latino/a culture and pride are center stage, and political activism is cultivated. In 2016, the school had 135 students, 97 percent of whom identified as Latino, and their principal, Nita Gonzales, is Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales’s daughter (Hernandez 2016).

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# 7

## Connecticut

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Katie V. Kirakosian

### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **1636–1638**

The Pequot War is fought between New England colonists and the Pequot tribe

#### **1638**

The Hartford Treaty is signed, ending the Pequot War

#### **1646**

The Connecticut Code recognizes the enslavement of Indians and Africans

#### **1660**

The first mention of “negroes,” clearly African slaves, is found in Connecticut records

#### **1675–1676**

King Philip’s War, a conflict between New England colonists and New England Indians led by Metacom (known as King Philip), chief of the Wampanoags, is fought in Connecticut and neighboring colonies

#### **1683**

The Eastern Pequot Tribal Nation is relocated to a 225-acre reservation in North Stonington

#### **1690**

The Connecticut General Assembly enacts a law requiring slaves to carry a pass from their master when out of town bounds

#### **1701**

Yale University is founded in New Haven by Elihu Yale who has clear ties to the slave trade in the Indian Ocean

**1704**

The Mohegan tribe brings its first case against the Connecticut Colony for selling tribal land; the case, referred to by colonial powers as the “Mason Case,” is heard several times over nearly 70 years

**1730**

The Connecticut General Assembly passes an “Act of the General Assembly of the Colony of Connecticut, May Session of 1730, for the Punishment of Negroes, Indian and Molatto Slaves, for Speaking Defamatory Words”

**1744**

Due to anxiety leading up to King George’s War, the Connecticut General Assembly passes an act that dictates where Indians can go—“friendly” Indians are also required to wear badges, probably also as a means to protect them because the General Assembly was offering 300 pounds per scalp for an Indian enemy

**1754**

Moor’s Indian Charity School is founded by Eleazar Wheelock in New Lebanon

**1755**

London, the first known “Black Governor,” is elected; he is a slave of Captain Thomas Seymour

**1773**

The Mohegan land case is concluded, with the Connecticut Colony retaining control of tribal lands illegally

**1774**

The slave trade is deemed illegal in Connecticut, although slavery itself is still legal; the law states, “no Indian, negro, or mulatto slave shall at any time hereafter be brought or imported into this State, by sea or land, from any place or places whatsoever, to be disposed of, left, or sold within the State”

**1784**

The Gradual Abolition Act is passed; the act frees “negroes and mulattos” born after March 1, 1784, when they turn 25 years old

**1787**

The Hebron community does not allow slave catchers to seize Caesar and Lois Peters as payment for their master’s debts

**1790**

The first antislavery society is formed in Connecticut; Ezra Stiles is president

**1800**

Infamous abolitionist John Brown is born in Torrington

**1818**

Connecticut takes away the right to vote from African American men who had not voted before by adding the word “white” to describe voting privileges

**1822**

Jedidiah Morse submits his “Report on Indian Affairs,” calling Native communities “a few feeble remnants”

**1831**

A proposed Negro College in New Haven is voted down 700–4, perhaps due to the news of Nat Turner’s slave rebellion in Virginia; mobs terrorize the local African American community of “New Liberia”

**1832**

Prudence Crandall, a Connecticut Quaker, admits the first African American student to her academy for girls

**1833**

The New Haven Anti-Slavery Society is formed; it follows by one year the establishment of the New England Anti-Slavery Society

**1833**

After Prudence Crandall allows only African American students to attend her school, she is arrested and put on trial; passage of the Black Law of Connecticut makes educating African American student increasingly difficult, if not impossible

**1834**

Crandall’s school is attacked and shuts down; Crandall leaves Connecticut

**1835**

Race riots occur at the Talcott Street Church in Hartford

**1836**

The Talcott Street Congregational Church is burned down

**1837**

In *Jackson v. Bullock*, Nancy Jackson, a slave, sues her master and ultimately is ordered to be freed when the court determines that she was brought to Connecticut illegally

**1837**

Hartford Reverend Hosea Easton publishes *A Treatise on the Intellectual Character, and Civil and Political Condition of the Colored People of the U. States; And the Prejudice towards Them: With a Sermon on the Duty of the Church to Them*

**1838**

The Connecticut Anti-Slavery Society is formed; *Charter Oak*, a weekly abolitionist newspaper, is started in Hartford

**1839**

Fifty-three enslaved Africans are imprisoned in New Haven and charged with murder while they were at sea aboard the *Amistad*. They had been abducted from Sierra Leone and sold into slavery in Cuba. While at sea, they mutinied and killed several members of the crew. Hearings and court cases occurred between New Haven and Hartford in late 1839 and extended into 1840, before the U.S. Supreme Court heard the case in 1841.

**1842**

James Mars petitions to have the word “white” removed from the state’s voter eligibility clause

**1846**

Leonard Bacon publishes “Slavery Discussed”

**1850**

Moor’s Indian Charity School unofficially closes

**1851**

Harriet Beecher Stowe, a native of Connecticut, publishes *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*

**1856**

The last known “Black Governor,” Wilson Weston, serves in the town of Seymour

**1862**

Connecticut governor William Buckingham initially opposes having a “colored regiment” in his state, but due to the burdens of war, he reverses his decision in August 1863, and the Connecticut General Assembly authorizes colored infantry units in the state; many Connecticut Native American men are paid to fight in place of white soldiers

**1863**

As a sovereign nation, the Mohegan tribe sends a letter to the War Department opting out of the newly instituted draft

**1865**

A referendum denies African Americans the right to vote in Connecticut

**1868**

Frederick Douglass speaks to the town of Meriden, CT, which voted in favor of allowing African Americans the right to vote

**1917**

Hartford establishes a chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

**1918**

Mary Townsend Seymour helps begin a Hartford Equal Rights Advocacy chapter of the Circle for Negro War Relief, Inc., which aims to help African American soldiers’ families during World War I

**1923**

The New England Indian Council is formed; the council’s motto is “I still live”

**1925**

The American Eugenics Society is founded in New Haven

**1925**

A Ku Klux Klan (KKK) rally is held in Branford, with roughly 15,000 members attending

**1926**

A KKK rally and march draws 3,000 members to the town of Woodstock

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### **1949**

The Connecticut National Guard is integrated

### **1953**

Senate Bill 502, “An Act Concerning Indians,” seeks to sell tribal lands, but is struck down; in the hearing, local Native groups are referred to as “a burden to the Welfare Department”

### **1961**

The Connecticut legislation that created tribal “overseers” is repealed

### **1962**

Community Progress, Inc. begins in New Haven

### **1964**

The Urban League of Greater Hartford is founded

### **1969**

Riots erupt in Hartford over a *Hartford Times* article containing disparaging remarks about Puerto Ricans

### **1970**

The New Haven Black Panther Party trials in New Haven concern the torture and murder of Alex Rackley; a May Day Rally occurs on New Haven Green

### **1973**

The Connecticut Indian Affairs Council is formed and comprises representatives from all five state-recognized tribes

### **1981**

Dozens of KKK members march in Meriden in support of a police officer who shot a black man suspected of shoplifting

### **1983**

The Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation receives federal recognition

### **1989**

Public Act 80-368 is passed; the act acknowledges that Native American tribes are self-governing and sovereign nations

### **1989**

*Sheff v. O’Neill* case is filed in Hartford; the case deals of allegations of unfair education for black and Latino students in Hartford schools

### **1990**

Trust agreements are made between the governor and “willing indigenous tribes”

### **1992**

The Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation opens Foxwoods Resort Casino

### **1994**

The Mohegan tribe gains federal recognition



**1996**

The Mohegan tribe opens the Mohegan Sun Casino; Native American history month is recognized in Connecticut

**1996**

Connecticut passes “An Act Enhancing Educational Choices and Opportunities”

**2000**

The Freedom Schooner *Amistad* is launched

**2002**

Local officials and towns appeal the positive Final Determination for federal recognition bestowed on the Eastern Pequot

**2004**

The Schaghticoke tribe receives federal recognition

**2004**

The Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR)–Connecticut is formed; CAIR’s offices are located in Hartford and New London

**2005**

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) revokes recognition of both the Eastern Pequot and the Schaghticoke tribe due to pressure from lawmakers and other gaming tribes

**2007**

The Freedom Schooner *Amistad* retraces the triangular slave trade and commemorates the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade

**2008**

Connecticut requires racial impact statements for criminal justice policies before they become law; this requirement allows lawmakers to consider the possibility of racial disparities before they are voted on

**2009**

*Ricci v. DeStefano*, a case involving a New Haven firefighter’s affirmative action claim, is filed

**2014**

The New London Board of Education recognizes two Muslim school holidays

**2017**

Yale University renames Calhoun College, one of its residential colleges, because of the current name’s historical association with slavery and white supremacy

**NARRATIVE****Native Peoples**

The story of race and racism in Connecticut, as one can imagine, is a complex narrative. The first marked signs of persistent unrest between local indigenous

groups and colonists occurs nearly a generation after the Dutch explored the Connecticut River in 1611. By this time, the wampum and fur trade had made the Pequot tribe quite powerful in their region, requiring many other tribal nations to pay them tribute. During these years, the Pequot and the Dutch were relatively amicable trading partners, but with the arrival of the English into the region, tensions flared. In 1634, English trader John Stone was murdered, likely in retaliation for kidnapping and/or killing several Pequot men. When another English trader was killed, John Oldham, the Massachusetts Bay colony reacted, and the Pequot War officially began. The Pequot War involved the Pequot tribe of Connecticut and the Western Niantic who fought against the Connecticut, Plimoth, and the Massachusetts Bay colonies. These colonials forced allies with the Mohegan tribe (of Connecticut), the Nipmuc tribe (of Massachusetts), the Narragansett tribe (of Rhode Island), as well as the Montauk tribe (of Long Island, New York). There were numerous skirmishes and battles throughout Connecticut, including an infamous battle in 1637 at Mistick Fort, led by Captain John Mason and Captain Underhill. In a surprise attack, Mason laid siege to the fortified village, killing hundreds of Pequots, including women and children. In particular, this attack was one of the first genocidal assaults on indigenous groups in the region. At the war's end, the Hartford Treaty was negotiated in September 1638. The treaty forbade that the name "Pequot" be spoken again, and Pequots could not live in their homeland. It also divided captured Pequots among the Mohegan and Narragansett tribes, who, in turn, had to pay wampum as a tribute to the colonies per captive. Finally, the Narragansett and Mohegan tribes were prohibited from taking up arms unless they consulted with the English. After the war, Mason wrote, "thus the Lord was pleased to smite in the hinder parts and to give us their land afor and inheritance" (Thomas 1975, 15).

Besides the Pequot War, King Philip's War and its immediate aftermath were arguably one of the worst periods in Connecticut's history in terms of racial relations. The war was fought between Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, from 1675 to 1676. Although the conflict lasted only 14 months, it had been deemed America's most costly war, given the casualties and damage that was done to Native communities throughout southern New England as well as colonial settlements throughout these states. Although Metacom (also known as King Philip) was planning an uprising for some time, the war began after three Wampanoag men were tried, convicted, and put to death for the apparent murder of John Sassamon, a translator of King Philip's who had recently warned leaders at Plimoth Plantation of Metacom's plans. In December 1675, troops from Connecticut, together with members of the Pequot and Mohegan tribes, laid siege to a fortified village of Narragansett in what is known as the Great Swamp Massacre. Hundreds of men, women, and children were killed, many being burned alive. The following year, skirmishes occurred in Simsbury, Connecticut, as well as Plymouth, Longmeadow, and Hadley, Massachusetts, and in Providence, Rhode Island. During this time, Major John Talcott of Simsbury captured many Native prisoners, who were soon indentured or sold into slavery in the West Indies. On August 12, 1676, Metacom was killed, effectively ending the war. The period after the war is referred to as the "Dark Ages" for Native tribes throughout southern New England.



Native Americans, viewed as inferior to the white man, were early victims of American racism. In one of the largest battles of King Philip's War, General Goffe led the colonists to defeat a Pequot attack at Hadley Mountain. They would, eventually, lose their tribal lands to white settlers. (Library of Congress)

Although Native people are the first slaves in Connecticut, it is not until 1643 that chattel slavery is made legal in Connecticut, with the adoption of the Articles of the New England Confederation. The number of slaves in Connecticut increased exponentially throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In 1680, there were roughly 30 slaves on record; by 1782, there were over 6,000. In fact, on the eve of the Revolution, New London County, Connecticut, had the most slaves in all of New England. Interestingly, even before the 1643 Articles, slaves are mentioned in Hartford as early as 1639. Freedom was likely on the minds of every slave, which led one group of enslaved Africans and Native Americans to burn several houses in an attempt to escape in 1658. Fear over this incident likely led to a law in 1660 that made it illegal for Africans to serve in the military. Laws such as these were quickly rescinded during wartime when every able-bodied man, regardless of skin color, was needed in the colony. White fears regarding the enslaved flared often, as is seen in 1690, when the Connecticut General Assembly passed a law requiring slaves to carry a pass from their master when out of town bounds. Such paranoia continued into the eighteenth century. Due to anxiety leading up to King George's War, the Connecticut General Assembly passed an act in 1744, dictating where Indians could go. "Friendly" Indians were required to wear badges, which was likely viewed as a means of protection since the General Assembly was offering 300 pounds per Indian enemy scalp. Whippings were common in Connecticut for black, Indian, or mulatto slaves, standard punishment for a slave found on the street after dark, disturbing the peace, or "speaking defamatory words" about a white townsman.

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, local Native tribes struggled to maintain a land base due to English encroachment and seizure. Uncas “deeded tribal lands in trust to Major John Mason, to protect them against the incursions and claims of Connecticut settlers” (Salyer 2012, 104). Reservations were established in 1659 for the Golden Hill Paugussett, in 1666 for the Mashantucket Pequot tribe, and in 1683 for the Eastern Pequot. In 1703, Uncas’s worst fears came true when the colony of Connecticut attempted to remove Mohegans from their land, much of which was redistributed and sold. In 1720, the Noank Reservation was taken from the Pequots and the General Court appointed the first white “guardian” or “overseer” for the Pequot tribe. The Mohegan were also given an overseer. In 1726, the role of overseers was clarified by Governor Joseph Talcott who said, “They are to take care of the Indians their lands, and are appointed Commissioners to hold a court at Mohegan, if need be, to put off any that may have wrongfully enter’d upon said Indians’ lands” (St. Jean 1999, 362). In 1731, the Mashantucket Pequot tribe sued Groton proprietors for land encroachment and won, although the decision was appealed decades later and resulted in roughly half of Mashantucket Pequot tribal lands being lost in 1762. In 1773, the Mohegan land case was concluded, which was a court case that lasted 70 years and ended with the Connecticut Colony retaining control of Mohegan lands without the Mohegan receiving compensation. Mohegan land was also illegally sold by overseers, in direct opposition to the 1790 Trade and Intercourse Act, which was a federal act signed by George Washington. This was seen by the Mohegan as an attempt whereby “the state bolstered its own domination land interests in direct violation of federal law” (Fawcett 1995, 20). In direct response, the Mohegan tribe filed many petitions to the state regarding these violations. This was also not unique to the Mohegan tribe; however, as most of the Golden Hill Paugussett’s lands were sold by their overseers in 1802.

Missionaries focused on Christianizing Indians in Connecticut as soon as they arrived. Three “praying Indian” communities were established in Connecticut: Maanexit (modern-day Thompson), Quinnatisset (6 miles south of Maanexit), and Wabaquasset (modern-day Woodstock). Missionary John Eliot set up “Rules of Conduct for the Praying Indians,” which worked to instill Christian values in Native people and outlawed many traditional Native practices. Fines were required for idleness, sex out of wedlock, women keeping their hair down, men having long hair, men not setting up their own home and farming, and women baring their breasts. In addition to Christianizing the Indians, efforts were also made to provide them with a “proper” Christian education. In 1754, the Moor’s Indian Charity School was founded in Lebanon by Calvinist minister Eleazar Wheelock. In 1761, the school began taking in female students as well, but stopped focusing on Indian education when Eleazar died in 1779.

Native groups consistently stood up to the prejudices of their white neighbors. In 1705, Mohegan soldiers, protesting not being paid their bounties, refused to fight for the British in Queen Anne’s War for two years. The eighteenth century also saw the birth of two important Native leaders in Connecticut that stood up for Native rights: Samson Occom (Mohegan, 1723–1792) and William Apess (Pequot, 1798–1839). Occom was trained by Eleazar Wheelock and served as a missionary

to the Montauk Indians on Long Island. In 1759, he was ordained a Presbyterian minister. Throughout his life, he spoke out for Indian rights. In one instance, he was asked to give a sermon at Moses Paul's execution, a Wampanoag Indian and convicted murderer. Here Occom spoke directly on the hypocrisy of Christianity. In the early 1760s, Occom tried to raise money for a Christian Indian School, which met with "Anti-Indian public paranoia," likely in part due to Pontiac's rebellion (Fawcett 1995, 17). Occom was not deterred and went to England and raised £11,000 for his school. To his dismay, "when he returned home that money was inappropriately diverted by white missionaries towards funding for the Non-Indian institution today known as Dartmouth College" (Fawcett 1995, 17). Occom was also witness to the Connecticut Colony outlawing the Mohegan sachemship because of "the tribe's refusal to back its puppet-candidate" (Fawcett 1995, 17). In 1773, when the Mohegan land case was decided, the disheartened Occom helped lead an intertribal group of Native people (i.e., the Brothertown movement) to resettle in New York and eventually Wisconsin.

Apess, who was of "mixed race," became an indentured servant at six years old and moved between several Connecticut families. In 1822, Apess was forbidden from preaching in Massachusetts. He returned to Groton and formed a small congregation of Pequots and also worshiped with local group of African Americans in Saybrook. Apess published several influential works: *A Son of the Forest* (1829), *Indian Nullification* (1835), and *Eulogy on King Philip* (1836). He faced discrimination during his lifetime, with insults such as Jedidiah Morse's 1822 *Report to the Secretary of War of the United States on Indian Affairs* calling Native communities in New England "a few feeble remnants." Perhaps in response, Apess supported Indian rights in nearby states as well, having direct involvement in the 1833 Mashpee Revolt in Massachusetts, which erupted over the Mashpee's insistence on their continued sovereignty. Apess's life was cut short when he died from a stroke at 41 years old.

### Slavery and Abolition

Educating nonwhites also has a violent history in the state, as is seen in Occom's attempt to open a Christian Indian School. In 1831, news of a proposed Negro College in New Haven was voted down 700–4, a likely response to the news of Nat Turner's slave rebellion in Virginia. Mobs terrorized the local African American community of "New Liberia" as well as sympathizers in the town. In 1832, Prudence Crandall allowed the first African American student in her school in Canterbury, which led to many white parents removing their daughters. The following year, she reopened her school as an academy that would only admit African American students. This led to harassment, Crandall's arrest, several trials, a "Black Law" outlawing equal education, and several attacks of the school that resulted in its closure in 1834. That same year, members of the black community in Hartford, supporters of Reverend Hosea Easton of the Talcott Street Congregational Church, were harassed by white mobs. Throughout 1834 and 1835, there were riots in Hartford. An English traveler who toured the United States, Edward Abdy, recalled, "Throughout the Union there is, perhaps no city, containing the same amount of population, where blacks meet more contumely

### ***Black Governors of Connecticut***

The institution of Black Governors started in Connecticut in the mid-eighteenth century. Although partially under white direction, these black men were intermediaries who intervened when concerns arose between the local white and black community. Black Governors were elected, although the particulars of this process are not entirely known. Black Governors had a host of responsibilities, including representing their community in a ceremonial capacity, and also stepping in to fill various judicial and religious needs.

The first known Connecticut Black Governor was named Hercules and was elected in 1749 in New London. From 1749 to 1856, several dozen Black Governors have been identified, many of whom were slaves. While most Black Governors appear to have served their communities for several years, Sam Huntington of Norwich served his community for 28 years (from 1772 to 1800). Black Governors represented some, although certainly not all Connecticut towns, including Derby, Durham, Farmington, Hartford, Litchfield, New Haven, Norwich, Plainville, Seymour, Simsbury, Wethersfield, and Woodbridge. These towns likely had the highest number of black townspeople, warranting representation by a Black Governor. From limited written records on this topic, intriguing stories emerge. For example, in 1776, Hartford's Governor Cuff names a successor, John Anderson, who was not welcomed by the local African American community. In 1832, New Haven's Governor Quash Piere was stripped of his title when he was suspected, but never found guilty, of stealing chickens. Why Black Governors were not elected after 1856 is not known, although tensions surrounding the impending Civil War may be the cause. In 1998, a memorial was erected at the Ancient Burying Ground in Hartford to commemorate the African Americans buried there, which includes five Black Governors.

and unkindness than in this place. Some of them told me that it was hardly safe to be out on the street along at night" (Abdy 1835, 206). In 1836, the Talcott Street Congregational Church was burned down, although the cause is unknown, arson is suspected. The 1830s proved to be a bleak period for race relations throughout the state.

Slavery remained legal in Connecticut in some capacity for over two centuries, but not without many fights for its abolition. In 1774, the slave trade was recognized as illegal in Connecticut, although slavery itself was still legal. The law stated, "no Indian, negro, or mulatto slave shall at any time hereafter be brought or imported into this State, by sea or land, from any place or places whatsoever, to be disposed of, left, or sold within the State" (Colonial Records 1784). In 1777, slaves were offered their freedom if they enlisted as soldiers in the Revolutionary War. Slaveholders also granted freedom to them if they volunteered to enlist in their place. Black, Native, and white soldiers fought side by side in the Revolutionary War, with no "colored" regiments. In 1784, the Gradual Abolition Act was passed, which freed "negroes and mulattos" born after March 1, 1784, when they turned 25. In 1790, the first antislavery society was formed, with Ezra Stiles as president. Abolitionist societies formed throughout the nineteenth century, including the New England Anti-Slavery Society in 1832, and the New Haven Anti-Slavery Society in 1833. By 1837, there were 29 Connecticut-based antislavery societies. The following year, the Connecticut Anti-Slavery Society was formed. *Charter Oak*, a weekly abolitionist newspaper, was started in Hartford by John Hooker,

with the motto: “Free Principles, Free Men, Free Speech, Free Press.” Abolitionists and antislavery societies flocked to New Haven during the Amistad Trial in 1839 (see biography below on Roger Sherman Baldwin). The Underground Railroad spread throughout many Connecticut towns, and Farmington was a critical pipeline for escaped slaves.

Connecticut has a place on the national abolitionist stage, with Torrington serving as the birthplace of John Brown, born in 1800. Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1851), was born in Litchfield, in 1811, and died in Hartford in 1896. She wrote her famous tale while her husband was teaching at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. Connecticut was witness to counter-abolitionist movements, which also occurred during the early nineteenth century, and argued for the return of freed slaves to Africa and was against their integration into American society. In 1827, the Connecticut Colonization Society was founded in New Haven, after the American Colonization Society (1816). Abolitionists in Connecticut and beyond opposed their mission because it would send freed slaves to Africa rather than integrating them. Slaves and free blacks certainly argued against slavery as well. In 1837, Hartford Reverend Hosea Easton publishes *A Treatise on the Intellectual Character, and Civil and Political Condition of the Colored People of the U. States; And the Prejudice towards Them: With a Sermon on the Duty of the Church to Them*. That same year, Nancy Jackson sued her master in *Jackson v. Bullock*. It was determined that she was brought to Connecticut by her master illegally and should be freed.

Notable exemplars of the complicated nature of race and racism in Connecticut surfaced throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1783, Lemuel Haynes (1753–1833), a well-respected mulatto minister, married Elizabeth Babbit, a white schoolteacher. It was seemingly unacceptable for him to propose to her, obliging her to take the initiative. Haynes was cautious and did not accept her invitation until after he consulted with numerous white ministers. Two years later, Haynes was ordained in Torrington, leading some parishioners to protest his sermons. Decades later, Haynes was invited to preach at the New Haven green in 1814. His sermon was so moving that it, “brought tears to the eyes” of Yale’s President Timothy Dwight. In 1787, a group from Hebron stepped in and stopped men who were trying to remove the Peters, a family of slaves living and working in Hebron. They were sought by slave catchers to settle the debts of their masters who had fled his debtors.

## The Civil War

The outbreak of the Civil War led to more flash points in Connecticut race relations. For the first few years of the war, Connecticut governor William Buckingham did not support having a “colored regiment.” Suffering heavy casualties, he reversed his decision in late 1863, and the Connecticut General Assembly authorized colored infantry units in the state. Some Connecticut Democrats still protested saying that it would help arm “a horde of African barbarians” (Hawley 2013, 177). They also warned of “black cowardice, disgrace, and ruin” (Hawley 2013, 177). By the end of the war, over 1,700 “men of color” had served in Connecticut

in the 29th, 30th, and 31st Regiments. This amounted to over three-quarters of eligible men. Remembering his time in the 29th Regiment, Minister Alexander Newton recalled, “Although free born, I was under the curse of slavery, surrounded by the thorns and briars of prejudice, hatred, persecution and the suffering incident to this fearful regime” (Newton 1910, viii). Almost unimaginably, after the Civil War ended, a Connecticut referendum denied African Americans the right to vote in 1865. In 1868, Frederick Douglass spoke in the town of Meriden, whose voters had been in favor of allowing African Americans the right to vote.

Native participation in the Civil War is another unique story. Many Connecticut Native men were paid to fight in place of potential white soldiers. However, in 1863, the Mohegan tribe sent a protest letter to the War Department speaking out against the newly instituted draft. They did not believe that they should be drafted because of generations of loss due to war and disease. It appears as though none was drafted, although many volunteered, some serving in the “colored regiments.”

### **The Twentieth Century**

After the end of the Civil War, equality became the focus for Connecticut’s African American communities; for Native communities it was a renewed push for both equality and sovereignty. For the next 50 years, more and more African Americans in Connecticut became property owners and successful business owners. Advocacy and collective action took many forms during the early twentieth century. Chapters of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) were established in Hartford and New Haven in 1917. The following year, Mary Townsend Seymour started the Hartford Equal Rights Advocacy chapter of the Circle for Negro War Relief, Inc., which aimed to help African American soldiers’ families during World War I. In 1923, the New England Indian Council was formed, with the motto “I still live.”

Many notable African American women forged clear paths toward access and equity during the early twentieth century. For example, Connecticut native Martha Minerva Franklin (1870–1968) founded the National Association for Colored Graduate Nurses (NACGN) after uncovering real and pervasive discrimination from a letter writing campaign to hundreds of black nurses and administrators. By 1921, the NACGN had 2,000 members and was making continued progress toward their goals of improving standards, eliminating discrimination, and cultivating leaders. New Haven native, Constance Baker Motley (1921–2005), was a tour de force. Motley had many firsts throughout her lifetime: She was the first black woman accepted to Columbia Law School; the first black woman to argue a case before the U.S. Supreme Court; the first woman elected to the New York State Senate; and, the first black woman to serve as a federal judge. Motley was very active in the civil rights movement and served a leading role in preparing the *Brown v. Board of Education* case. She represented James Meredith and helped him gain admission into the University of Mississippi. She also represented many of the Freedom Riders. Amazingly, between 1961 and 1963, she won all but one of the 10 cases she argued before the Supreme Court.

However, this progress was met with clear pushback, including the founding of the American Eugenics Society in New Haven (1926) and marches and rallies by



the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) that, in 1925, drew 15,000 members in Branford, and 3,000 in Woodstock. The KKK likely had a continued presence in Connecticut for several decades. However, KKK activity did not seem to impact the young Martin Luther King Jr. who, in 1944, spent one summer as a teenager working in Simsbury's tobacco fields. He would later recall that he felt a profound sense of "freedom" that summer. The last major Ku Klux Klan incident appeared to have been in 1981, when dozens of members marched in Meriden, in support of a police officer who shot a black man suspected of shoplifting.

King returned to Connecticut nearly two decades later in 1963. At that time, he called for an end to housing and employment discrimination throughout the state. King was likely very pleased the following year when he came to Hartford to break ground for an affordable housing project led by the Mount Olive Baptist Church. After King was assassinated, riots broke out in Hartford, and vigils and marches spanned the state, as they did across the country.

King was not the only African American leader to take up these causes. In the 1950s, famed baseball star, Jackie Robinson, moved to North Stamford with his wife and three children. Here, Robinson continued to be a vocal supporter of civil rights issues on national and local fronts. Robinson spoke at Weaver High School in 1953 to encourage the creation of a community center. In 1958, he served as the master of ceremonies for a NAACP event focused on ending racism and discrimination. That same year, Robinson was denied a membership at an elite Connecticut country club. In 1962, Robinson joined a group that was protesting the proposal for a new high school in Stamford (Rippowam High School), around which district lines carefully "cut off" access to most African Americans in the town. In 1963, Robinson's stage was a bit larger, when he led a group of Connecticut citizens to Washington, D.C., for the March on Washington. He worked to improve the lives of African Americans throughout Connecticut and the country until his death in 1972.

Influential civil rights leader and black nationalist, Malcolm X, also had continued relations with Connecticut, first speaking in Hartford in 1955. In 1956, after gaining a small following, he founded Temple No. 14 in the city. By 1957, he was followed by Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents in the New Haven office. Throughout the 1960s, Malcolm X spoke at numerous Connecticut colleges in 1962 and 1963, including Wesleyan University, the University of Bridgeport, and the University of Hartford.

During the civil rights movement, various groups were founded that worked to support and uplift people of color in Connecticut, including the Community Progress, Inc., in New Haven in 1962, and the Urban League of Great Hartford in 1964. Strife rose to the surface many times during these years. In 1969, riots erupted in Hartford after a *Hartford Times* article made disparaging remarks about Puerto Ricans. The following year, members of the Black Panther Party were tried in New Haven for the torture and murder of a fellow Black Panther, Alex Rackley, who was suspected of working for the FBI. Conflict over the potential collusion of the FBI for not intervening in some way led to a May Day Rally on the New Haven Green. It was alleged that FBI agents might have even seen or heard Rackley's torture through surveillance and wire taps. One of the local founders of the New Haven chapter of the Black Panthers, Ericka Huggins, was brought to trial

and was accused of boiling the water that was used in Rackley's torture. In 1971, Huggins was acquitted in a deadlock jury 10–2 and was never retried.

Assaults on Native groups in Connecticut did not end even in the twentieth century. In 1953, Senate Bill 502, "An Act Concerning Indians," was introduced, which sought to sell more tribal lands, but it was struck down. In the hearing, local Native groups were referred to as "a burden to the Welfare Department," which essentially took over as "overseers." It was not until 1961 that the Connecticut legislation that created tribal "overseers" was repealed. A decade later, 1973 was a pivotal year for Indian Affairs in Connecticut—a Connecticut Indian Affairs Council was also formed with representatives from all five state-recognized tribes. Also in 1973, the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection replaced the Welfare Department as tribal overseers.

### **Federal and State Recognition of Native Tribes**

Two tribes in Connecticut have federal recognition: the Mashantucket Pequot and the Mohegan tribe. As mentioned earlier, five tribes are recognized by the state of Connecticut. Federal acknowledgment means that the Native tribe is considered a sovereign entity entitled to self-government. In essence, this reverses the precedent set in 1832, by the Supreme Court, when all Native tribes were deemed "domestic dependent nations" with no right to self-govern (*Worcester v. Georgia*). While recognized tribes are still "domestic dependent nations," they are able to make treaties with the federal government and other states, but not other countries. In short, federal recognition occurs after a formal petition in direct response to seven detailed criterion is submitted to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), which must show that a tribe was a distinct and autonomous community before 1900. The federal recognition process is incredibly long and arduous, often taking decades to consider. But who are the Native Americans?

Intermarriage between Native people, Africans, African Americans, and whites over hundreds of years has led to a diversity among those who identify as Native American in Connecticut and throughout the United States today. The appearance of Native people as seemingly "inauthentic" throughout the state has led some to oppose tribal recognition as a result. Because recognition allows tribes to enter into gaming, regardless of whether a tribal nation is interested in pursuing a gaming facility, many who oppose Indian gaming have also been vocal about recognition, even calling local Native groups "wannabees." This includes then casino owner, Donald J. Trump, who, in 1993, said the following to Representative Miller of California, while testifying before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources: "Well, you go up to Connecticut, and you look. Now, they don't look like Indians to me, sir."

While there were great assaults on Native people during the twentieth century in Connecticut, there were also great successes. Under the leadership of Richard Hayward, the Mashantucket Pequot tribe received federal recognition in 1983 and opened Foxwoods Resort Casino in 1992, which has grown substantially since that time. They also financed the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, which is a world-renowned facility. In 1989, Public Act 80-368 was passed, which

acknowledged that the five state-recognized tribes are self-governing and sovereign nations. In 1990, trust agreements were allowed to be made between the governor and “willing indigenous tribes,” a turn of events that would have been deemed impossible just over 300 years before at the end of King Philip’s War. In 1994, the Mohegan tribe also gained federal recognition and opened a casino, Mohegan Sun, in 1996. This attests to the sovereignty of the Mohegan tribe and “their right to pursue the economic development of their choice on their traditional reservation” (Fawcett 1995, 33). In that same year, Native American History Month was recognized in Connecticut. Several Connecticut tribes received federal recognition, which was later rescinded, for the Eastern Pequot, who received federal recognition in 2002, and the Schaghticoke in 2005. However, in 2005, the BIA revoked both over pressure from lawmakers, local towns, and other gaming tribes. In 2004, the Golden Hill Paugussett were simply denied federal recognition.

Over the past few decades, many of the battles still being waged relate to educational access, as is seen in the filing of the *Sheff v. O’Neill* case in 1989. This case argued that black and Latino children in Hartford schools were receiving an unfair education because of race and class-based segregation in the city. Legislation that was passed in Connecticut to help meet this issue includes the 1996 “Act Enhancing Educational Choices,” which promotes voluntary racial integration. Ironically, in 2016 the University of Connecticut was involved in an episode akin to segregation in their dorms through the ScHOLA<sup>2</sup>RS House program, which was touted as black male student housing. Universities in Connecticut have also worked to make amends for the past. In 2017, Yale University renamed Calhoun College. The college was named after John C. Calhoun, a Yale alumnus and politician from South Carolina who was an outspoken supporter of slavery. This name change is part of a larger recent trend across the United States and within universities in particular, which had names tied to slavery and repression. Such changes are never meant to undo the past, but they can atone for it.

## NOTABLE FIGURES

### **Baldwin, Roger Sherman (1793–1863)**

Baldwin is best known for his role in the Amistad case, but his legal as well as political career was much more extensive. He was born into an abolitionist family. His father, Simeon, was a lawyer in New Haven who also served in Congress and vehemently opposed slavery. His maternal grandfather was Roger Sherman, a signer of both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

Sherman graduated from Yale in 1811, by route of the Hopkins School in New Haven and the Tapping Reeve Law School in Litchfield. In 1814, he joined the New Haven bar. Sherman broke with tradition and opened a practice in downtown New Haven. He earned a quick reputation as a skilled orator with a great legal mind. His early legal career focused on freeing enslaved people. For example, one of his early clients was a runaway slave, whom he helped win freedom. Baldwin was also in support of the proposed Negro College in New Haven and confronted and dispersed mobs that opposed the school in 1831.

Sherman gained national notoriety when he agreed to help defend the 53 Mendi slaves who had mutinied aboard the *Amistad* in 1839. The Mendi were first taken to a jail in New Haven and then were moved to Farmington. Wealthy abolitionists stepped in to pay for the Mendi's defense, including wealthy businessman Lewis Tappan. With the financial ability to hire the best defense lawyers for the Mendi, Baldwin and John Quincy Adams were chosen. Baldwin gave impassioned speeches before the Supreme Court, which focused on the centrality of human liberty and the illegality of the Mendi's story. He and Adams compelled the Supreme Court to agree that the Mendi should once again go free in 1841.

Baldwin also had an extensive political career, serving in Connecticut's Senate from 1837 to 1838 and the House from 1840 to 1841. Baldwin served as the governor of Connecticut from 1844 to 1846. During this time, his administration focused on educational reform. He also worked to ensure election reform and implemented laws that would allow foreign-born citizens to own more land in Connecticut, which had been restricted until the late 1840s. He also served as a U.S. senator from 1847 to 1851. He was a vocal opponent of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. This angered other leaders in Connecticut and likely cost him reelection in 1851. Baldwin then returned to New Haven to continue his practice. Although no longer serving in public office, he helped found the Connecticut Republic Party and was a passionate supporter of Abraham Lincoln's 1860 presidential nomination. In 1861, Baldwin was called to public service one more time, when he served as a delegate for the National Peace Conference in Washington, D.C., which was a last attempt to avoid Civil War. It is perhaps bittersweet that Baldwin lived to hear the Emancipation Proclamation, but died two years before the conclusion of the Civil War.

### **Tantaquidgeon, Gladys (1899–2005)**

Mohegan Medicine Woman Gladys Tantaquidgeon was a true survivor. A 9th great-granddaughter of Sachem Uncas, Gladys was born on the Mohegan Reservation in Uncasville in 1899. Her aunt, Emma Fielding Baker served as a mentor to Gladys and taught her about Mohegan spirituality and medicine, as well as several other knowledgeable women in the tribe, Lydia Fielding and Mercy Ann Nonesuch. In 1919, she began formal studies with Frank Speck, an anthropologist at the University of Pennsylvania, which continued formally until 1926. Some of her earliest work outside her tribe was among the Gay Head Wampanoag on Martha's Vineyard (known today as the Wampanoag tribe of Gay Head/Aquinnah). Here, Gladys spent two summers traveling to Gay Head in 1928 and 1929 where she recorded elements on their unique culture and language. *Notes on the Gay Head Indians of Massachusetts* was published in 1930, showing the hallmarks of Speck's influence and tutelage, and is of archaeological, ethnographic, and linguistic significance. Gladys also helped Speck research one of his most influential works, *The Delaware Big House Ceremony* (1931).

Along with the help of her father and brother, Harold, she helped found the Tantaquidgeon Indian Museum in Uncasville in 1931. The museum remains open to this day, providing free tours, and is the oldest Indian-operated museums in the country. The museum was part of the Tantaquidgeon's family quest to educate

others about the richness of Mohegan life and history. Gladys once said, “You can’t hate someone that you know a lot about,” which became the driving force behind the museum’s opening. In 1934, Gladys was recruited by John Collier, the commissioner on Indian Affairs, to serve as a community worker for the Yankton Sioux on their reservation in South Dakota. Ironically, it was not common for Native people, especially Native women, to work for the Federal Indian Service. Her background served her well, as she was trusted by Native communities during a very difficult time in Indian history. Her support of traditional medicines over Western medicine set her apart, for example, while she could also relate to other tribes’ unique struggles against colonization. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, she worked to organize Indian artists and to record the history or Indian craftsmanship throughout the United States and Canada. Her work helping revitalize Native arts and crafts was vital to Native communities, considering that much of this work was done during the height of the Depression. During her work for the Arts and Crafts Board, she met First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt while working with Hopi artist Fred Kabotie on an exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art in 1941.

In 1932, she published *Notes on the Origin and uses of plants among the Lake St. John Montagnais*, after visiting their camps the previous winter. In 1942, she published *A Study of Delaware Indian Medicine and Folk Beliefs*. In 1947, she returned to Uncasville and the beloved Tantaquidgeon Indian Museum, where she served as a curator and educator until 1998. During the 1940s, she also worked at the Niantic Women’s prison library, where she served women in crisis. Later in life, she served as a Mohegan elder and a member of the Tribal Council. She was influential in her tribe’s recognition case in 1994, which relied upon her personal archive of correspondence and other materials to show continuity within the tribe. Her life’s work was recognized by the University of Connecticut and Yale University. Gladys passed away at her home on Mohegan Hill in 2005, at the remarkable age of 106, having lived in three distinct centuries.

Gladys’s life spans a critical time in Native American history, not only in Connecticut, but the United States, which saw increasing pressure on tribes as their land rights and sovereignty were continually stripped. Despite these pressures, Gladys was raised to be proud of her heritage and to ensure that it was honored at all costs. As stated in her *New York Times* obituary, “she watched her tribe grow from a handful of Mohegan families in Uncasville who struggled to keep their tribal heritage alive to a federally recognized tribe that owns and operates one of the most successful casinos in the world. Her resilience led to a stronger Mohegan Tribe today and her work and life has inspired and impacted countless other Native groups.”

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# 8

## Delaware

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Ying Yang

### CHRONOLOGY

**c. 8000 BCE**

Lenni Lenape Native Americans establish residence alongside the Delaware River early seventeenth century; some Delaware Indians are enslaved

**1631**

The inhabitants of the Dutch settlement at Zwaanendael are massacred after a misunderstanding leads to violence between the two peoples

**1639**

“Black Anthony,” the first black man in Delaware, works as a servant to the governor and is eventually freed

**1682**

William Pen, the proprietor of Pennsylvania, signs a peace treaty with the Delaware Indians

**1700**

The “For the Trial of Negroes” Act marks the beginning of a strict slave code to regulate race relations in Delaware; the “For the Trial of Negroes” Act is the start of 150 years of legalized discrimination and segregation in the state

**1721**

Delaware bans interracial marriage between white women and black men

**1737**

The “Walking Purchase,” a scheme whereby the heirs of William Penn secured over 1 million acres of land from the Lenape, who were eventually forced to leave their long held lands, occurs; the scheme destroys the good relations that had existed between the Native peoples and the Pennsylvania government



**1755**

Scalp bounties are issued by Pennsylvanian government

**1773**

The Pennsylvania General Assembly increases the duty on slaves so as to control the number of slaves that could be brought into the lower counties

**1775**

Governor John Penn vetoes the Pennsylvania General Assembly's attempt to eliminate slave trade in the Delaware

**1776**

The three lower counties of Pennsylvania break away to form the state of Delaware; the state adopts a constitution that outlaws slavery importation into Delaware

**1787**

Delaware becomes the first state to enter the Union on December 7; Delaware enacts a law that imposes fines on individuals who bring slaves to the state

**1788**

The Delaware Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery and the Delaware Society for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery are founded

**1801**

Quakers organize the first effort in the state to educate blacks

**1813**

Unwilling to be controlled by whites, large numbers of blacks leave the congregation of Ezion Church in Wilmington and form the Union African Methodist Episcopal Church, which becomes the first denomination in the United States controlled entirely by African Americans

**1816**

The African School Society opens a school for blacks in Delaware

**1821**

Blacks are declared not eligible to attend state-aided schools

**1832**

"Black Codes" are passed to control free blacks

**1847**

The Delaware State Senate defeats a bill to abolish slavery in the state by one vote

**1850**

Delaware has more free blacks proportionally than any other state

**1860**

Slavery is extinct in the city of Wilmington

**1861–1865**

Approximately 12,000 Delaware citizens fight for the Union during the Civil War, while several hundreds fight for the Confederacy

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### **1865**

On February 8, the Delaware legislature rejects ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

### **1866**

The Delaware Democratic legislature declares blacks to be of inferior social and political status

### **1867**

On February 7, the Delaware legislature declines to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees equal protection of all persons under the law

### **1867**

Howard High School for black students is founded in Wilmington

### **1869**

On March 18, the Delaware legislature fails to ratify the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution giving black men the right to vote

### **1875**

Responding to passage of the Civil Rights Act by the U.S. Congress, the Delaware legislature passes the first of a series of Jim Crow laws regulating race relations and making blacks second-class citizens in Delaware; this law is not repealed until 1963

### **1876**

Edwina B. Kruse becomes the first black principal of Howard High School in Wilmington

### **1890**

Delaware State College for Colored Students is established by an act of Congress

### **1895**

W.C. Jason becomes the first black president of Delaware State College

### **1900**

William W. Coage of Delaware is appointed clerk of the U.S. Census Bureau with the assistance of Delaware senator Henry A. DuPont; Coage is the first African American from Delaware to receive such a federal position

### **1901**

The Postles Club is established to fight for the benefits of the blacks; John Barclay becomes the first black man to work in state administration as a janitor

### **1901**

On February 12, the Delaware ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery, 35 years after the amendment took effect; the Fourteenth Amendment granting citizenship to African Americans, over 30 years after it took effect; and the Fifteenth Amendment granting blacks the right to vote, 30 years after it took effect

**1903**

George White, a black man accused of rape and murder, is lynched by a white mob in Wilmington

**1915**

A chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is established in Wilmington

**1919**

A white mob tries to lynch two black men accused of killing a police officer in Wilmington

**1929**

Louis Redding becomes the first black attorney admitted to the Delaware bar

**1945**

William Winchester, a Republican, becomes the first black member of the Delaware legislature

**1948**

The University of Delaware starts to accept black students

**1950**

Louis Redding files suit on behalf of black students in Claymont and Hockessin for integration into better white schools; when the vice chancellor of the Delaware Court of Chancery orders Delaware schools desegregated, the resulting appeal makes Delaware one of the defendants in the U.S. Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education* that ordered school desegregation in 1954

**1951**

The Delaware YMCA is integrated; the Delaware National Guard begins accepting black recruits

**1952**

Paul Livingstone becomes the second African American elected to the Delaware legislature

**1953**

Hotel DuPont in Wilmington opens its doors to black citizens

**1959**

All Delaware schools are integrated

**1963**

On May 1, Delaware ratifies the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing the poll tax

**1968**

Riots erupt in many cities in Delaware after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; the riots in Wilmington lead to a 10-month occupation of the city by the National Guard

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### **1970**

According to the U.S. Census, African Americans comprise 40 percent of the population of Wilmington, a significant increase over 1960

### **1984**

S.B. Woo becomes the first Chinese American lieutenant governor of Delaware

### **1993**

James Sills becomes the first black mayor of Wilmington

### **2005**

The number of undocumented immigrants in Delaware has grown by 15,000–20,000 since 1990

### **2008**

U.S. Census data put African Americans in Delaware at about 21 percent of the total population

### **2008**

Democrat Barack Obama, the first African American candidate for president of a major political party, carries Delaware with 62 percent of the vote; his running mate is Delaware senator Joseph Biden

### **2012**

The Obama-Biden Democratic presidential ticket carries Delaware with about 59 percent of the vote

### **2015**

Delaware extends driving privileges to those in the state illegally

### **2015**

Undocumented immigrants account for about 2 percent of the state's total population

### **2015**

The Sons of Confederate Veterans in Delaware (known as the Delaware Grays) refuse to remove the Confederate flag they have flown over the Marvel Carriage Museum since 2007

### **2016**

Democrat Hillary Clinton carries Delaware against Republican Donald Trump, who runs on an anti-illegal immigration platform; Clinton's 53 percent of the vote is significantly lower than the voter percentage of Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012

### **2017**

The number of undocumented immigrants in Delaware has remained at between 20,000 and 25,000 persons since 2005; about 70 percent of undocumented immigrants in the state are from Mexico and Latin America

### **2017**

Responding to recent white nationalist marches in Charlottesville, Virginia, Delaware governor John Carney says that Confederate monuments on public property

should be removed, but those on private property, such as the Delaware Confederate Monument in Georgetown, should be allowed to remain at the discretion of the property owner

## **NARRATIVE**

### **Native Americans**

Before the appearance of Europeans, the land now known as Delaware was occupied by the Lenni Lenape Indians. The name “lenni” means “real men” or “genuine men.” English settlers called them “Delaware,” as most of the tribe members lived along the Delaware River. French settlers referred to them as “wolfs” or “loups.” The Lenape had three major subgroups: Munsee, Unalachtigo, and Unami. Each group had a distinct identity, speaking their own dialects and maintaining physical boundaries. The Munsees were so different from the others that scholars sometimes treat them separately.

In 1631, the Dutch West India Company, along with a Dutch captain, David Pietersen de Vries, established the first European settlement at Zwaanendael (presently the town of Lewes). However, the encounter between the Dutch and Native Americans was catastrophic. Trouble started when the Dutch decided to hang up a shining tin plate with the arms of Holland painted on it as a declaration of ownership. This plate was stolen by an Indian chief, who did not understand its meaning and wanted only to use it as an ornament for his pipe. Great offense was taken by the settlers, and the chief was murdered by members of his tribe as response to the settlers’ complaints. The chief’s death led to bloody revenge when his friends slaughtered the colony. Because their primary interest was trading, not permanent settlement, the Dutch left the area after the massacre. The area also witnessed violent encounters between Indians and other European settlers.

Trade between Europeans, especially the Dutch, and Indians had a notable impact on local natural resources. The Delaware Indians began trading with the Dutch, especially furs, which were in high demand in Europe. This demand almost drove the local beaver population to extinction, and the exhaustion of resources resulted in the decline of trade. The other consequence of the fur trade was increased conflict between tribes. In 1634, the Iroquois went to war with the Lenape over control of trade with the Dutch. The Lenape lost the war and became tributaries of the Iroquois.

Between 1652 and 1674, the English and the Dutch fought several wars against each other for trade and colonies. In 1667, the English took over the Dutch territories. After this, Delaware experienced a great influx of English settlers. In 1682, William Penn, a Quaker, gained proprietorship over Delaware. By this time, the number of Delaware Indians had already been greatly reduced as a result of diseases, such as smallpox, brought by European settlers. Under Penn, a peace treaty was signed with the Delaware Indians, which maintained peace between English settlers and Natives for about 75 years. While there was no direct conflict during this period, the increasing number of English settlers put tremendous pressure on the traditional lifeways of local Indians.

### ***Peace Treaty***

William Penn, the founder of the Pennsylvania colony, signed a peace treaty, also known as the “Great Treaty,” with Tamanend and several other leaders of the Delaware Indians from the Turtle Clan. Penn, as a Quaker, firmly believed that Indians were children of God and should be respected and loved as much as any European. The purpose of the treaty was therefore to establish a lasting friendship between colonialists and Natives. This signing took place in Shackamaxon, an Indian village that was close to modern Philadelphia. Historians have debated when exactly this treaty was concluded. Some argue that it was around June 1683, but others suggest it was late November 1682. To add to the confusion, there is no written record of this treaty, and some historians questioned its authenticity. However, artifacts such as the wampum belt kept by the Native Americans, historical testimonies, and the works of historians such as Oldmixon and Voltaire all suggest otherwise.

Regardless of the debates surrounding this treaty, it holds a significant place in the history of racial relationships in the United States. As Voltaire points out, “This is the only treaty between those persons and the Christians which has not been sworn to, and which has not been broken.” As a league of peace and friendship, though there was no written record, Native Americans passed it on orally from one generation to the other. It was recorded that in 1718, a Chief of the Conestoga Indians wanted to continue the “old League of friendship that had hitherto been between us and them.” This treaty lasted until the 1730s, when the “Walking Purchase,” a new agreement that saw Penn’s heirs eventually take more than a million acres from the Indian, occurred.

In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, colonial planters enslaved some Indians in the hope of addressing the manpower shortage they faced in Delaware. At that time, a myth was perpetuated among the European settlers that the Indians of the lower Delaware Valley were gifted with special farming skills. But Europeans soon realized that Natives were not suitable laborers for several reasons. First, Europeans generally preferred male laborers, but it was Indian women who worked in the fields. Second, the Delaware Indians were only partially dependent on agriculture, and they had no desire to work for the invaders who had taken their land from them. Third, it was very common for Native Indian laborers and slaves to run away and disappear into their own communities. Finally, the number of available Indians dropped quickly as a result of diseases, warfare, and the increasing presence of whites. The general consensus among historians is that because of its brevity and small scale, the Indian slave industry is often forgotten and ignored by general society and government authorities.

In 1737, after William Penn died, his heirs sought to greatly increase their land holdings through a scheme called the “Walking Purchase.” With this so-called purchase, the Penn family secured about 1,200,000 acres of land from the Lenape, who were forced to vacate this area. Although the Lenape sought help from the Iroquois Confederacy, the Iroquois leaders declined their request because Iroquois Confederacy had already concluded an agreement with the white colonists. Threatened by colonial expansion, the Lenape had to move from their traditional lands. This dispute destroyed the trust between the Lenape and the Pennsylvania government and contributed to the rising violence between Lenape groups and English settlers in Pennsylvania.

In 1754, the French and Indian War, the North American aspect of the much larger Seven Years War in Europe, erupted. The Lenape sided with the French, but some Lenape leaders, such as Teedyuscung, attempted to negotiate with the English. The Lenape hoped that by working with the English, they could secure land for their displaced people, but such attempts were dismissed in the face of the competing interests of the Penn family and the Iroquois Confederacy. In 1755, supported by supplies from the French, Delaware Indians and Shawnees swept the English communities all the way from northern New Jersey down to the Juniata River. This series of raids led the Pennsylvania government to issue scalp bounties that permitted individuals and military units to hunt and kill Indians, especially the Lenape. Allied Indians, such as the Iroquois, were exempted from this bounty. The bounty allowed “\$150 for each male prisoner above the age of twelve years, or \$130 for a corresponding scalp; \$130 for a male prisoner under the age of twelve, or a female prisoner; and \$50 for the scalp of an Indian woman” (Young 1957, 209). It is important to note that during the first few months of this bounty, friendly Indians could claim rewards like whites did. The Pennsylvania government soon stopped paying rewards to Indians because of the possibility of indiscriminate killing driven by profits. This concern was valid because Teedyuscung, chief of some sympathetic Lenape, strongly supported renewal of the bounty. This bounty, and its subsequent renewals, so encouraged the killing of Indians that casualties among the Lenape *after* the war actually surpassed the number of deaths *during* the war.

The Treaty of Easton, reached between the Lenape and the British colonists in 1758, drove the Indians further west. Along with the westward movement, diseases brought by European settlers greatly diminished the number of Indians. Today, there are no Indian reservations in Delaware, as most moved to either Oklahoma or Canada. The remaining descendants of the Delaware Indians have been fully assimilated into the mainstream society.

### **African Americans before the Civil War**

Historical records show that the institution of slavery in Delaware began with the arrival of a black man named Anthony, who was captured by the skipper of the *Grip* in 1638. In 1639, “black Anthony” was delivered to Fort Christina. After that, he served as special servant to Governor Printz in 1648. According to Williams (1999), evidence shows that Anthony was eventually freed.

For the first half of seventeenth century, the Delaware region witnessed competition and conflicts among the Swedish, the Dutch, and the English. Each group wanted to protect and reinforce their control over the Delaware Valley. To ensure their trading position, the Dutch relied on slavery and the profits of the slave trade to grow cash crops. The Dutch first established the slavery system in the Delaware area, but the Swedes and the English soon adopted the same practices to meet their economic and political needs. It is important to note that during this time period, many slaves were company-owned.

In 1664, the English seized control of the Delaware Valley. After an open invitation sent out by the English to white settlers, the Delaware Valley became home to two groups with vastly different interests. Northern Delaware was occupied by

Quakers and the Scotch Irish, and southern Delaware became home to white immigrants from the Chesapeake. The northern Delawareans maintained a close tie with Pennsylvania, while the south was more akin to a plantation economy and heavily dependent upon slave labor. The divergent ethnic backgrounds among these settlers also laid the groundwork for various sentiments toward slavery. For instance, the English whites wanted to replicate their rigid hierarchical social structure in the colony, with them on the top, Irish and Scottish in the middle, and slaves at the bottom. Such division laid the foundation for the long debate over the slavery system in Delaware. As Essah (1996) noted in her book, *A House Divided: Slavery and Emancipation in Delaware, 1638–1865*, the political, religious, and economic battle between the two groups caused Delaware to miss its opportunity to officially abolish the slavery system prior to the Civil War.

Once the English were established as the sole authority in Delaware, the operation of the slavery system became privatized. Individuals then purchased and owned slaves for farming or domestic services. Successful planters also used large numbers of slaves to grow tobacco crops in the lower three counties (New Castle, Kent, and Sussex) that constituted Delaware. During the French and Indian War, the decreasing influx of European indentured servants along with the increasing demand for labor from tobacco plantations resulted in more slaves being brought to Delaware. It is estimated that about 500 slaves lived in the lower three counties by 1721. In 1775, the number of blacks in the region increased to 2,000. The 1790 Federal Census recorded that 12,876 blacks, most of them were slaves, lived in the state (Williams 1999). Such numbers constituted 22 percent of Delaware's total population, which was considered the highest among all northern colonies.

Rapid growth in the black population caused uneasiness among the white colonists, which led to strict slave codes such as "For the Trial of Negroes" Act of 1700. This act signaled the starting point of 150 years of legalized discrimination and segregation in Delaware. Then in 1721, Delaware legislation banned interracial marriage between white women and black men. Those post-1700 laws served the purpose of restricting the activities of slaves and free blacks and protecting slaveholders' ownership over their properties. The underlying ideology was that blacks were inferior to whites. These laws and the following amendments legitimized whites' privileges and supremacy in society.

Before and during the American War of Independence (1775–1783), several key factors, including economy, religion, motivation from the slaves, the Underground Railroad, and the Enlightenment contributed to the general sentiment toward reducing the institution of slavery in Delaware. At the same time, due to the complex and interwoven nature of the same factors, a certain stagnation of abolitionist movements in the Delaware region occurred.

### *Economy*

Tobacco was the staple crop in Delaware for a long time. Around 1754, the decline in the demand for Delaware tobacco and an increasing need for grain from nearby Philadelphia pushed planters to switch from commercial tobacco production to grain production. Because grain production is not as labor-intensive as



tobacco agriculture, many planters sold their lands, equipment, and slaves to others. According to Williams (1999), corn and wheat replaced tobacco as the staple crops in Delaware. The nature of how the two types of crops were produced drew a line between planters and their views of slavery. For those who lived in Kent County, their lands were better developed for growing both wheat and corn. Wheat and barley are much easier to grow than tobacco and other crops and require limited physical labor. Therefore, planters soon realized that it would be cheaper to simply hire free labor when needed, rather than keep a large number of slaves year-round. Therefore, it was common to see planters free their slaves voluntarily, especially slaves who were old or sick. Planters living in Sussex County, however, had to continue relying on slaves to grow more labor-intensive Indian corn because their lands were not as fertile.

Despite some reliance on slave labor in the southern part of Delaware, the overall trend was that slaves became increasingly burdensome to the slaveholders as the state's economy became more commercial and less agricultural. With a strong push from religious groups and changing ideology, Delaware passed laws banning the interstate selling and buying of slaves in 1787. The hope was that since slaveholders could not benefit from slave trading any more, they would be more motivated to free their "surplus" slaves, especially the young and healthy ones. The government asked masters to pay a bond for free slaves older than 35, and the money collected was used as financial support for such freed slaves.

To maximize their profits, slaveholders invented various ways to benefit from slaves. One was smuggling slaves across the state border to sell them in Virginia or further south, where they could fetch a good price. It was also common for whites to kidnap freed slaves and free blacks to sell them illegally. Another practice was that slaveholders would reach delayed manumission agreements with their slaves. Under such an agreement, the slaves would eventually be freed after certain conditions were satisfied, for example after a certain number of years of service or once the slave reached a certain age. As such, the slaveholders could continue enjoying the service of their slaves or hire them out to urban employers for payment. Sometimes, when the agreement was reached verbally, the master would change his mind and void it. Legal loopholes and the ambivalence of legislators regarding abolition caused the process of manumission to be greatly delayed.

The delayed manumission agreement, however, caused an outburst of legal disputes from unhappy heirs who had to pay for the cost associated with the delayed manumission. The Delaware legislature responded by implementing a much more comprehensive and detailed act in 1810 to protect the rights of slaves under the agreement. For example, according to the 1810 Act, the children born to slaves under delayed manumission would automatically be free after they reached age 21. With the enhanced legal protection, emancipation at the individual level reached a reasonable rate. Although the institution of slavery remained in place, the percentage of slaves in the total population of Delaware dropped to a little over 6 percent by 1820 (Ford 2009). The reduction relieved slaveholders of the high costs of keeping slaves year round. Free black laborers became more desirable; their low cost as laborers and their skills made them a good choice for employers in both urban and rural areas.

*Religion*

In 1663, a small group of 40 Mennonites arrived in Delaware. Their leader, Peter Cornelius Plockhoy, announced that Mennonites would not tolerate slavery on their settlements. This group of Mennonites only stayed in the Delaware Bay area for a short time; they soon moved to Pennsylvania. Despite the fact that their voice was small and brief, they were remembered as the first group of whites that categorically took an antislavery position in Delaware.

Beginning in the mid-eighteenth century, American society experienced a dramatic increase in the level of religiosity. The beliefs of various religions affected the slavery system and abolitionist movements differently. Among them, three religious groups stand out as challenging the slavery system in Delaware—the Quakers, the Nicholites, the Methodists.

The Quakers believed in the brotherhood of man. They pleaded publicly for emancipation, while discouraging their members from buying or selling slaves. However, the number of Quakers was small, which minimized their efforts of raising public awareness about emancipation in Delaware. In addition, quite a few early Quakers (who lived in Philadelphia and Delaware) were slaveholders. It took a long time for this religious group to reach consensus among themselves about slavery.

The Nicholites, or the New Quakers, were founded in Delaware by Joseph Nichols. This group was very similar to the Quakers in their practice and belief system. The members refused to interact with anyone who owned slaves and banned the purchase of goods produced by slaves. The group was active in Kent County for a period of time, until founder Joseph Nichols died in 1770.

The third and much more successful religious group was the Methodists. Historical records show that, unlike the Quakers and the Nicholites, the Methodists constituted the largest religious group in Delaware, and they stayed influential for a long time. The Methodists despised the overall lifestyle of slaveholders and promoted some rather revolutionary ideals: equality, cooperation, compassion, and seriousness. Naturally, the practice of slavery was viewed extremely negatively by Methodists. Quite a few slaveholders answered the call of the Methodists and freed their slaves. Among them were Allen McLane, Richard Bassett, and Phillip Barratt. Some worked with the Quakers to try to abolish slavery altogether. It is interesting to note that during the antislavery movement, the Quakers and Methodists became allies, and together founded abolitionist societies in Dover and Wilmington counties. Their efforts resulted in a series of restrictions on the internal slave trade and interstate slave commerce in 1787.

*Desire of Slaves for Freedom*

The third factor that contributed to the diminishing number of slaves in Delaware during the mid- to late-eighteenth century actually came from the slaves themselves. The desire of slaves to change their situation was an important element that pushed masters to take manumission into consideration. As discussed earlier, a series of laws banned the slave trade in Delaware, and transition to wheat

and corn production reduced the need for slave labor. These two external factors added an economic burden to the masters. At the same time, the relatively small ratio of slaves to masters allowed the possibility of dialogue between the two sides. Hiring out was then adopted by the slaveholders as one way to recoup their financial interests. This practice allowed slaves to negotiate with masters to save a portion of their earned income to buy freedom. By the early eighteenth century, Delaware began to see a few slaves purchasing their freedom. By the later eighteenth century, more slaves, especially those with nonagricultural skills, were able to save enough to buy their freedom. Given that slaves could only keep a small percentage of income for themselves, it usually took a long time for them to save enough to purchase their own liberty, not to mention their families.

The freedom purchase agreements between masters and slaves were, however, usually not in writing. The reason was that the masters were unwilling to pay a fee associated with signed manumission documents to the government. Verbal agreement did not provide any legal security to the slave. Without paperwork, freed slaves were subjected to slave abduction, especially with the increase in slave prices in the South. Or, they could be reenslaved by the heirs. Furthermore, the general public feared “wandering” slaves, due to the long history of physical separation. As a result, whites demanded written documents, so they could differentiate free blacks from enslaved ones. All of these concerns led to the 1797 legislation requiring written documentation to determine the status of a slave.

### *Underground Railroad*

With the combined help and effort of free blacks and white and black conductors, the Underground Railroad functioned between 1830 and 1860. This system allowed fugitive slaves to escape from the South to the North. A collaboration between free blacks and whites, the Underground Railroad conductors and helpers provided shelter, finance, transportation, food, and clothes to runaway slaves. Delaware holds a unique geographical location in the United States at the dividing point of North and South. The city of Wilmington was located close to the relatively more slave-friendly state of Pennsylvania. There, many famous abolitionists and conductors, blacks and whites, made tremendous efforts to help numerous fugitive slaves to reach freedom. For instance, Harriet Tubman, an ex-slave, made at least 19 trips between Delaware and Maryland to bring slaves out of their bondage. Her close friend, Thomas Garrett, a white abolitionist and Quaker (see Notable Figure section), used his own house as a station and assisted thousands of slaves to reach Pennsylvania. Abraham Shadd, a black abolitionist, was actively involved in the Underground Railroad.

### *Enlightenment*

The Enlightenment Movement, which began in Europe, brought conflicting viewpoints on the legitimacy of slavery. On one side, the Enlightenment promoted the ideas of humanity, freedom, and equality. From this perspective, the institution of

slavery was in total violation of the principles of the movement. Numerous colonists, religious or nonreligious, were deeply influenced by the Enlightenment and became actively involved in the emancipation movement. Thus, increasing numbers of slaveholders freed their slaves before, during, and after the War of Independence.

On the other side, this same movement also laid the bedrock for modern racism. Three key elements emerged from the Enlightenment: (1) a passion for empiricism and scientific classification; (2) rather limited understandings of the perceived physical and mental differences between Europeans and non-Europeans; and (3) the belief that European culture was superior to others, which led to the idea of racial taxonomy. Moreover, a large portion of Europeans and Americans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries believed the institution of slavery to be a legitimate practice, based on their beliefs that blacks were inferior, lazy, and unable to survive on their own.

A number of factors contributed significantly to the reduction in the slave population of Delaware before the Civil War. The number of slaves in 1860 dropped to 1,789 from 4,500 in 1820 (Newton 1997). However, there were elements that slowed the overall progress of abolition in this state. The long existence of the institution of slavery in Delaware created a persistent perception that blacks were inherently inferior to whites. There were ongoing tensions between the newer, more progressive religious ideologies and old social beliefs that remained unresolved. Therefore, it is historically ironic that Delaware was the only slave state loyal to the Union during the Civil War.

The steady increase in the number of free blacks caused great public concern. Whites complained about how freed blacks could be threats to their physical and financial safety. The concern was so pronounced that the General Assembly was asked to impose strict laws on free blacks for the sake of public safety. In 1832, soon after the Nat Turner rebellion of 1831 in Virginia, the infamous “Black Codes,” a series of laws controlling and restricting the activities of free blacks, were passed. One of these laws banned free blacks from possessing guns, which was regarded as a fundamental freedom since the beginning of colonization. Several other discriminatory laws further disadvantaged blacks socially, legally, and financially. For instance, in 1849, a law was enacted that an unemployed and poor free black could be sold into servitude as punishment. Given that many blacks of the era were poor and had limited skills that could allow them to find jobs easily, they suffered the fate of being sold into a new form of slavery under this law. As a result, many blacks moved north to pursue more freedom and better opportunities.

As time went on, several other attempts at abolishing slavery failed. During the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln even offered to provide Delawarean slaveholders monetary compensation in exchange for freeing their slaves. The underlying resistance to granting blacks equal status with whites, along with independent attitudes regarding in-state affairs, made Lincoln’s proposal fall flat. A passage from an 1862 newspaper summarizes the hostile view toward the black race: “if it [Lincoln’s proposal] shall succeed, others will follow tending to elevate the Negro to an equality with the white man or rather to degrade the white man by obliterating the distinction between races” (Williams 1999, 175). In addition, proslavery

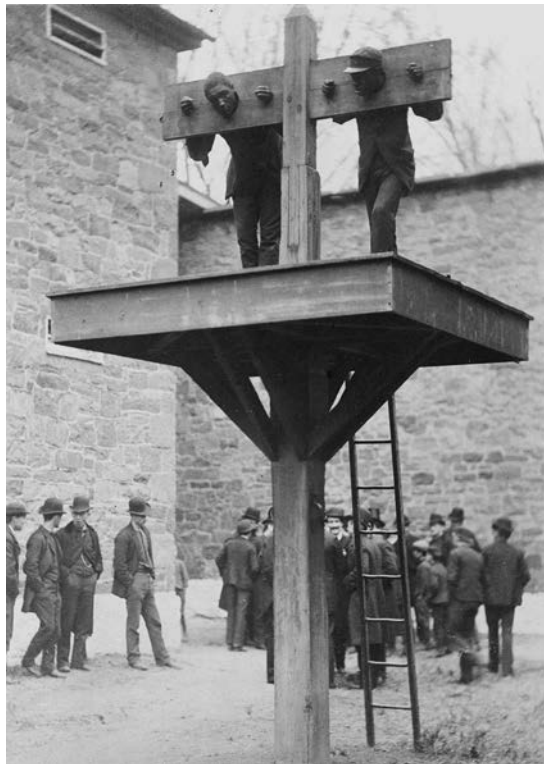
legislators fed the fear of the general public by predicting a possible racial massacre if the number of freed blacks became equal to that of whites. As such, Delaware remained a slave state, despite the fact that the number of slaves was quite small. Indeed, slavery in Delaware lasted until December 1865, when the Thirteenth Amendment put an end to the institution throughout the United States.

### **African Americans from Reconstruction to the Present**

The abolition of slavery did not improve blacks' status in this state. Racist ideas prevailed among whites. The Democrats were strongly against the idea of granting blacks equal citizen status. The voice of Republicans was almost negligible given the overwhelming majority of the public was antiblack. In 1875, the Congress passed the Civil Rights Act, which caused great disturbance among white Delawareans. Resisting the possibility of blacks enjoying equal rights, Delaware passed Jim Crow laws starting in 1875. Until these laws were repealed in 1963, blacks were basically treated as second-class citizens, with many rights of citizenship greatly curtailed.

There were some positives in the midst of anger, fear, discrimination, and resistance as a result of racial segregation. For instance, Newton (1997) suggests that some slaveholders believed that they treated their slaves well. A handful of slaves were able to purchase their freedom from their masters and even owned small properties afterward. Hofecker (1974) also notes that in all three counties in Delaware, free blacks owned houses and other properties. They had the freedom to travel and move from one place to another. In addition, free blacks participated in nonagricultural jobs, which provided more economic mobility.

Throughout the nineteenth century, blacks also experienced improvement in educational opportunity. Before 1821, blacks were barred from attending publicly funded schools. As such, black children could only attend privately funded schools. The Quakers, the Freedmen's Bureau,



A ground-level whipping post above which is a pillory, in which two African American men are confined, Delaware, ca. 1889. This type of punishment was common in the Jim Crow era. (Library of Congress)

and later the Delaware Association for the Moral Improvement and Education of Colored People all contributed tremendously to the education of blacks. With all the combined efforts, black children received general education. In 1891, Delaware State College was founded with the aim of improving blacks' socioeconomic conditions. However, the number educated remained small, as facilities and financial resources for blacks were rather limited.

Economically, Delaware did see the existence of a small number of middle-class blacks. Increasing numbers of black schools allowed more black teachers to get hired. Meanwhile, these achievements could not mask the overall economic hardship blacks experienced during the Reconstruction period (1865–1877). For instance, high illiteracy rates were prevalent among free blacks; a majority of blacks were employed at the bottom of labor market and made very little progress; no black held a white-collar job at that time.

In 1901, Delaware finally ratified the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, which abolished slavery and granted citizenship and the vote to blacks. Although these amendments had been in effect for over 30 years, Delaware had refused to ratify them earlier. Also in 1901, Thomas Postles, a black businessman, was elected a member to the Wilmington City Council. His election made him a hero in the eyes of blacks. The Postles Club was founded and named after him, and the mission of the club was to “battle for the benefit of the Negro until the last Negro in Delaware dies, if need be” (Newton 1997, 21).

The lynching of George White in 1903, however, revealed the persistence of racial tension in Delaware and the rest of the country. White was accused of raping and murdering a teenaged white girl. A racist Presbyterian pastor, Robert Elwood, gave an open sermon that fanned the hot coals of deeply embedded racial resentment. A mob of about 5,000 people broke into the workhouse and burned White to death. This triggered several days of violence afterward.

To protect and advocate for blacks' interests in Wilmington, a chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was established in 1915. This chapter was successful in banning the showing of *The Birth of a Nation*, a film that portrayed blacks in a negative fashion. In addition, the chapter tackled important civil rights–related issues like fair housing, social integration, and employment opportunities for blacks.

An estimated 1,400 African Americans from Delaware served the country during World War I. However, their service did not change the clearly drawn racial line between blacks and whites. Overall, northern white Delawareans showed more tolerance toward blacks than their southern counterparts. For instance, in Wilmington, there were blacks who worked as specialists and professionals. Despite these positive gains, racial segregation persisted, as noted in a 1924 article by Alice Dunbar-Nelson, an African American poet, journalist, and political activist who taught at Howard High School in Wilmington for more than a decade after 1906.

The Great Depression of the 1930s worsened racial inequality in Delaware. A majority of blacks were either employed in agriculture or worked as servants. Few unions offered blacks membership, which resulted in low wages. The economic hardship caused many blacks to switch support to the Democratic Party.

Though blacks continued to serve the country by participating in World War II, and the Korean and Vietnam Wars, their status did not improve much until the end of the twentieth century. Throughout the first half of the century, Delaware witnessed individual black leaders and various organizations that actively fought for the equal rights for blacks. Louis Redding, the first black lawyer in Delaware, worked with the NAACP to remove institutional barriers for blacks. Their first victory was the integration of the University of Delaware. During the following years, Redding worked diligently to end physical segregation in public schools in Delaware. His efforts were successful insofar as Delaware was eventually included in the *Brown v. Board of Education* litigation.

The U.S. Supreme Court's ruling of desegregation was better practiced in cities like Dover and Wilmington. In southern counties, such as Sussex, especially in rural areas, local whites tried to slow down the change. For instance, an organization mockingly entitled the National Association for the Advancement of White People played an active role in this delaying process. Though numerous legal actions took place to change the landscape in public schools in the lower counties, de facto segregation persisted throughout 1970s. Many argued that it was housing disparity that contributed to the educational inequality. Residential segregation was well-pronounced in Delaware with whites highly concentrated in racially exclusive suburbs. Whites even deterred blacks from moving into white communities with violence.

The percentage of blacks kept increasing in the city of Wilmington. However, the increase in number did not change the inferior status of blacks in Delaware. The frustration over racially based social and economic disparities peaked when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in 1968. The infamous 1968 Wilmington Riots were characterized by shooting, looting, and firebombing on the night of April 4. Mayor Babiarz declared a state of emergency, and a curfew was put in effect. On April 9, Governor Terry sent the National Guard to Wilmington to keep order, and they patrolled the city for nine months afterward. The riot caused quite a few social changes. First, more whites and businesses relocated to the suburbs, which contributed to an increase in poverty and crime rates in the city of Wilmington. Second, four assemblymen from New Castle County requested legislation to end residential discrimination. Third, blacks gained more access to important opportunities in business and politics. Ever since, moderate progress has been achieved in Delaware. Wilmington saw its first black mayor, Jim Sills, elected in 1992.

The twenty-first century has so far presented a rather mixed picture of the relationship between blacks and whites. On one side, more blacks were able to climb up the socioeconomic ladder. On the other side, social class became the new base for racial segregation. Those who have less access to educational and vocational opportunities experience high levels of poverty and unemployment, which in turn feeds into continued residential segregation.

## **Asians**

Changing economic structure plays an important role in shaping the racial composition in Delaware. Between the twentieth and the early twenty-first

centuries, Delaware's economy experienced a rapid transformation from agriculture to manufacturing and then to service industries. Chemistry, electronics, human resources, financial services, and biotechnology are some of the leading economic sectors in the twenty-first century. With the economic transition, large numbers of immigrants attracted to Delaware vie for job opportunities, which in turn adds to the racial/ethnic diversity of the state.

Asians started to move to Delaware in the 1970s. As of 2013, 33,639 or 3.6 percent of Delawareans were Asian (American Immigration Council 2015). Asian Indians are the largest Asian subgroup in Delaware, followed by Chinese and Filipinos. This minority group is known for their higher educational attainment and median household income. Asian Indians are overly represented in engineering and computer science–related professions. With a median household income of \$65,190, Asians fare better economically than other racial groups in the state (American Immigration Council 2015). However, 7.5 percent of Asian Delawareans still live under the poverty line (American Immigration Council 2015).

As most Asians moved to Delaware after the civil rights movement, they are exposed to much less discrimination and prejudice in this state. One notable example is S.B. Woo, a Chinese American who migrated to the United States in 1949. He joined the University of Delaware in 1966 and worked as professor of physics and astronomy for 36 years. In 1984, he was elected as the first Asian lieutenant governor of Delaware. Possibly as a result of Asians' relatively recent arrival and stereotype as a "model minority," the overall experience of Asian Americans in Delaware has been understudied.

### **Hispanics**

For a long time, Hispanics were mistaken as a racial group in the eyes of the public. Indeed, Hispanics are a rather complicated ethnic group with people of gradient skin tones and from various cultural and historical backgrounds. For instance, a high percentage of Caribbean Latinos identify themselves as blacks or Afro-Latinos in the United States, due to their ancestry or skin color. The Mexican government added "Afro-Mexican or Black" in their census survey in 2015 so that African descendants in Mexico can choose an appropriate racial identity. In Delaware, regardless of their skin color or country of origin, the commonly shared language, Spanish, serves as a tie that binds Hispanics as one community. In this chapter, Hispanic is included as an ethnic minority group. Due to the rapidly increasing number of Hispanics in the population, it is important to understand how this group is shaping the landscape of the United States.

The Hispanic population has increased tremendously in Delaware. According to the 1940 census, there were 200 Hispanics in Delaware. After World War II, the transitioning economy and the Bracero Program opened doors for Hispanic workers, and their number rapidly increased to 8,477 in 1970. By 2000, the number of Hispanics almost quadrupled to 32,727 (American Immigration Council 2015). According to the 2014 American Community Survey data, there were 83,000 Hispanics in Delaware, constituting 9 percent of the state population (Census Bureau 2014). These figures make Hispanics the fastest growing minority group in the



state. The majority of Hispanic population is from Mexico, followed by Puerto Rico and Cuba. As of 2010, a large proportion (64%) resided in New Castle County (Simon 2013).

Like other Hispanics in the United States, Hispanics in Delaware experience high rates of poverty and unemployment. The main barriers that prevent them from getting better jobs are low educational achievement and language proficiency. Many of them found employment in service, construction, and maintenance. In south Delaware, the poultry industry and booming agricultural work attracted many Hispanic workers to this area. These jobs are often characterized by low wages and provide very limited economic upward mobility for Hispanics. As a matter of fact, the poverty rate for Hispanics is about 20 percent, according to 2010 American Community Survey data (Simon 2013). As a result of their prevailing lower socioeconomic status, there is residential segregation between whites and Hispanics in the wealthier parts of Delaware. Their lower social class can then be translated into educational disadvantages because those who live in poor neighborhoods are more likely to attend public schools with less resources and funds.

On the positive side, there are Hispanics who came to this area with higher education and various kinds of capital. With these human and social capitals, they were able to find professional jobs or open their own businesses. Simon (2013) records that between 2002 and 2007, the number of Hispanic-owned businesses in Delaware increased from 879 to 1,533.

Overall, Delaware is rapidly becoming a highly diverse U.S. state. With moderate increases in the white population and faster increases in minority populations, Delaware, by 2060, is estimated to become the 14th most racially diverse state in the United States. Diversity means opportunities as well as challenges, and minority Delawareans are facing less discriminatory legislation and practices. However, economic barriers, such as differential access to quality education, housing, and employment, still divide people into varying socioeconomic strata.

## **NOTABLE FIGURE**

### **Garrett, Thomas (1789–1871)**

A prominent abolitionist, Thomas Garrett was born on August 21, 1789, in Delaware County, Pennsylvania. He grew up in a Quaker family with 12 siblings. He learned toolmaking skills from his farmer father. Around 1807, Garrett saved a free black female servant from a kidnapper, preventing her from being sold into slavery in the South. Garrett was said to have actually convinced the slave trader to release the victim. This experience made a huge impact on Garrett family—all the boys grew up to become abolitionists, but Thomas Garrett was the most famous.

Garrett married Margaret Sharpless in 1813; she died in 1828 after giving birth to their fifth child. In 1830, Garrett married Rachel Mendenhall, whose father was Eli Mendenhall, an active abolitionist. They stayed married for 38 years. In 1822, Garrett moved to Quaker Hill in Wilmington, Delaware, and joined the Pennsylvania Abolition Society.

There is speculation about why Garrett chose Wilmington over many other possible places. Economically, Wilmington was a growing city that offered great opportunities for a young businessman to develop his business. Geographically, Wilmington is the northernmost city of Delaware and very close to Philadelphia, a city that was relatively friendly to escaped blacks. Indeed, Wilmington was the last and most important stop before slaves fled to Philadelphia. Garrett's house was 5 miles away from the border of Pennsylvania. Religiously, Wilmington was home to the African Union Methodist Church. Led by Peter Spencer, a former slave, this church was a station for slave fugitives. It was also in Wilmington that Garrett became a follower of "Hicksite," as suggested by researcher James McGowan. Hicksite Quakers, led by Elias Hicks, condemned the slavery system. Demographically, although Delaware was a slave state, a large proportion of Wilmington's population consisted of free blacks. Many of the free blacks worked as Underground Railroad workers and assisted Garrett with his mission. Wilmington was thus an ideal place for Garrett to practice his beliefs. It was in Wilmington that Garrett helped thousands of slaves fulfill their dream of freedom.

As a successful hardware merchant, Garrett offered financial assistance to runaway slaves and Underground Railroad "conductors." One prominent conductor, Harriet Tubman, received help from Garrett to bring slaves out of Maryland. Garrett also turned his own house into a station, and provided safety and shelter to runaway slaves. He was very open about his beliefs and practices. He challenged slave hunters and slaveholders directly and without fear. The courage Garrett displayed earned him great trust and respect from fugitive slaves, slave owners, and slave kidnapers. His house became the "go-to" station. His reputation as a fearless abolitionist and stationmaster was widespread, and conductors and ship captains from the rest of Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia delivered runaway slaves to Garrett. As an open and active stationmaster, it was very impressive that he never got arrested or harmed as a result. Garrett thought it was because of his age (mid-sixties).

Between the 1820s and 1840s, Garrett helped hundreds of slaves fleeing to freedom. In 1852, the passing of the federal Fugitive Slave Law and the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* fired up antislavery sentiment in the North. Garrett and his fellow antislavery Quakers formed the Progressive Meeting of Friends in Longwood, Pennsylvania. This meeting attracted many famous antislavery figures. Garrett's second wife, Rachel, also attended the meetings regularly.

One rescue mission officially made Garrett a well-known stationmaster. In December 1845, Garrett assisted the Hawkins family to escape Queen Anne's County, Maryland. The husband, Samuel Hawkins, was a free black and owned a house. The wife, Emeline Hawkins, was a slave who first belonged to James Glanding, and then to Elizabeth Turner. As the wife was enslaved, their children were also enslaved. Two of their children belonged to Charles Glanding, the son of James Glanding. The other four children belonged to Elizabeth Turner. The slaveholders allowed the Hawkins family to maintain close contact. For a certain time period, although a majority of the household were slaves, they were able to live in their father's house. Samuel made continuous efforts to purchase freedom for his

wife and children. However, those attempts came to naught. As a result, in 1845, Samuel decided to take his family and escape from Maryland.

The Hawkins family made their way to the house of John Hunn, who was a Quaker and a conductor who worked with Garrett. It was while there that the Hawkins family was reported by John Hunn's neighbor and consequently captured by slave hunters. Even though Samuel showed his legal papers to prove his identity as a free black, the slave hunters ignored it. The family was sent to the New Castle County Jail. Garrett went to New Castle and defended the Hawkins's freeman status. The Hawkins family were released from jail after much effort and help, and Garrett then sent them to Pennsylvania and freedom.

This action, however, led to the trial of Garrett and Hunn in 1846. The slave owners filed a lawsuit against the two under the 1793 Fugitive Slave Act. Both Garrett and Hunn were convicted by a jury of slave owners. This conviction made him a true hero in the eyes of fugitive slaves and other abolitionists. However, as a result, Garrett had to pay a fine that drained the majority of his wealth. Regardless, Garrett displayed great courage in court, and his speech apparently moved one juror so much that he apologized to Garrett for being a slave owner.

Garrett carried on, and actively engaged in assisting runaway slaves to escape to Pennsylvania after the trial. It was said that Garrett helped 2,700 slaves escape bondage. When the Fifteenth Amendment was passed giving blacks the right to vote in 1870, supporters of Garrett carried him on their shoulders through the streets of Wilmington, and he was referred to as "our Moses." He passed away at age 81, in January 1871. His funeral was attended by a mix of whites and blacks. People, regardless of race, waited in long lines to go into his house to say farewell. His coffin was carried by free black men to the Quaker Meeting House cemetery.

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# 9

## District of Columbia

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Sandra Jowers-Barber

### **CHRONOLOGY**

**1608**

Captain John Smith meets the Nacotchtank Indians for whom Anacostia is named

**1612**

Smith draws a map that charts the waters of the Chesapeake Bay, Potomac River, and Eastern Branch (later Anacostia River)

**1790**

On July 16, Congress passes the Residence, which authorizes the selection of a 10-square mile site somewhere in the Potomac region for a permanent seat of government

**1791**

By a January 14 proclamation, President George Washington orders surveying of land for a federal city; Andrew Ellicott, the surveyor, hires Benjamin Banneker, a free man of color who was a farmer and a mathematician, to assist him in surveying

**1791**

Benjamin Banneker writes a letter to Thomas Jefferson challenging Jefferson's belief in the inferiority of black people

**1791**

The design for the capital is submitted by the French architect Major Pierre-Charles L'Enfant

**1792**

The cornerstone is laid for the President's House (later the White House), the first public building erected in Washington City

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**1792**

Enslaved labor is used to build the U.S. Capitol building

**1800**

The federal government officially moves to Washington, D.C.; President John Adams becomes the first president to live in the President's House

**1800**

African Americans constitute 25 percent of the population of Washington, and the majority of them are enslaved

**1807**

George Bell, a former Anacostia slave, along with former slaves, Nicholas Franklin and Moses Liverpool, build the first schoolhouse for black children in Washington

**1810**

African Americans are prohibited from carrying mail for the U.S. Postal Service by the U.S. Congress

**1813**

Tobias Henson, an Anacostia slave, purchases his freedom and the Rudge, a tract of farmland later subdivided into homesteading lots for his family

**1816**

The American Colonization Society is founded by Bushrod Washington (the nephew of George Washington) and other prominent white Americans who believed enslaved African Americans should be freed and resettled in Africa

**1831**

Nat Turner's slave rebellion in Northampton, Virginia, influences the racial attitudes of whites in Washington, D.C., and surrounding areas

**1835**

The Snow Riots begin when Beverly Snow, a free black restaurant owner, allegedly insults the wives and daughters of white Navy Yard mechanics; in the riot that followed, white mobs destroy the homes, churches, and schools of free blacks

**1841**

John F. Cook, who was born enslaved, becomes the first black ordained Presbyterian minister in the District of Columbia and the founding pastor of the Colored Presbyterian Church (now the 15th Street Presbyterian Church)

**1848**

The nation's largest single slave escape, involving 77 enslaved and free men, women, and children, aided by black and white abolitionists, is unsuccessfully attempted aboard the schooner *Pearl*

**1848**

The Black Code of the District of Columbia, dictating the movements of enslaved and free blacks, begins to be enforced on September 1

**1851**

Myrtila Miner, a white woman, founds a school that is known as both Miner's School and the School for Colored Girls

**1853**

Anthony Bowen, formerly enslaved in Anacostia, founds the first YMCA branch for black men and boys in the District of Columbia

**1862**

Slavery is abolished in Washington, D.C., when Congress passes the District of Columbia Compensated Emancipation Act, making enslaved Washingtonians the first freed in the nation, nine months before President Abraham Lincoln issues the Emancipation Proclamation in January 1863

**1863**

Congress grants a charter to reopen Miner School as the Institution for the Education of Colored Youth; its first classes are held after the end of the Civil War in 1865

**1864**

On New Year's Day, four African American men are welcomed at the Lincoln White House for an annual reception

**1864**

On February 23, Dr. Alexander Thomas Augusta, the U.S. Army's first African American physician, and his assistant, Dr. Anderson Abbott, take a meeting at the White House

**1865**

The Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (called the Freedmen's Bureau) is founded

**1867**

Howard University, among the nation's first historically black colleges and universities, is founded in Washington, D.C.

**1867**

Congress passes the Reconstruction Act; the city's African American men gain the right to vote three years before the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which gave all men of color the right to vote

**1868**

The first black municipal office holder is elected for Washington, D.C.

**1870**

The Preparatory School for Colored Youth, the city's first public high school opens; the school will become renowned as M Street High School, and later, Dunbar High School

**1871**

James Wormley, a black man, opens the Wormley Hotel at the corner of 15th and H Street NW

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**1871**

Washington briefly becomes a federal territory

**1871**

The separate municipalities of Georgetown, Washington City, and Washington County officially become the District of Columbia

**1871**

Frederick Douglass is appointed to the City Council by President Ulysses S. Grant

**1872**

Lewis H. Douglass, an African American man, introduces a law making segregation in public accommodations illegal

**1874**

Negative white reaction to the growth of black political power in Washington results in the replacement of the territorial government with three presidentially appointed commissioners

**1879**

Miner Normal School becomes part of the District of Columbia public school system

**1879**

Reverend Alexander Crummell, with 35 parishioners, establishes St. Luke's, the first independent Black Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C.

**1900–1920**

In the segregated District of Columbia, the Strivers Section, housing well-to-do African Americans, flourishes in the integrated space between two neighborhoods, Dupont Circle and Shaw

**1900**

Washington has the largest percentage of African Americans of any city in the nation

**1919**

A race riot on 7th Street in Washington, D.C., occurs during the Red Summer

**1952**

In its decision in *Miller v. D.C. Board of Education*, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia ends the educational exile of resident black deaf school-age children living in the District

**1954**

*The Brown v. Board of Education Topeka, Kansas* decision, handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court, integrates schools in the District of Columbia and throughout the nation

**1963**

On August 28, during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivers his historic "I Have a Dream" speech



**1967**

Walter E. Washington becomes the first African American chief executive of a major U.S. city when President Lyndon B. Johnson appoints him as the mayor commissioner of the District of Columbia

**1968**

After Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee, riots take place in Washington, D.C., along the 14th Street and the H Street corridors

**1973**

Washingtonians are granted the right to vote for their mayor and city council

**1974**

Walter Washington is elected mayor and serves until 1978

**1978**

African American Marion Barry, a former member of Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), is elected mayor of Washington, D.C.; he will be elected mayor for four terms

**1990**

Mayor Marion Barry receives a jail sentence for cocaine possession

**1991**

Sharon Pratt Kelly, a native Washingtonian, wins election and becomes the first African American female mayor of a major American city

**1995**

Congress creates a financial control board for the District of Columbia, a measure that will effectively end home rule for the city for at least eight years

**2001**

The financial control board ends day-to-day management of District functions

**2009**

After winning the 2008 election to become the first African American to hold the office, Barack Hussein Obama is inaugurated as the 44th president of the United States; he and his wife, Michelle, two children, and mother-in-law occupy the White House for eight years

**2014**

Washington, D.C., grants limited purpose driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants

**2014**

Former Washington, D.C., mayor and then councilmember Marion Barry dies

**2016**

The National Museum of African American History and Culture opens on the Mall

**2016**

Reacting to the recent election of Donald Trump, undocumented immigrants march on Washington, D.C., at Thanksgiving

**2017**

The March for Racial Justice and the March for Black Women converge in Washington's Lincoln Park in September

**NARRATIVE**

The District of Columbia, sandwiched between Maryland and Virginia, is not one of the 50 states. However, its unique history, location, and role as the center of the nation's capital necessitates its inclusion in a state-by-state review of race and racism in the United States.

**Native Americans**

The tribe of Native Americans that lived along the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers during the seventeenth century was called Nacostine. The large village where they lived was named the Nacotchtank. Situated along the frontier, the village divided the southern tribes in the Tidewater region from those in the northern areas. The bounty of beaver pelts, copper, and shell beads in the area made trading between the two tribes profitable. The Nacostine benefited from the extensive and profitable trade; however, they also were at a disadvantage because of their location when the southern and northern tribes were at war. The tribes formed alliances among themselves as the Nacostine aligned with the larger Piscataway tribe. The chief of the Piscataway led over 7,000 people (Musgrove and Myers 2017, 6). Their rivals were Powhatan Confederacy, a larger tribe to the south that dominated the Tidewater area. When the English settlers came to Nacotchtank in 1608, led by Captain John Smith, the region was dominated by Native Americans with political sophistication, rivalries, alliances, tribal customs, and rituals. The English colonists came with a charge by the Virginia Trading Company to subdue the Native Americans whom they thought to be barbaric. The Native Americans, led by Powhatan, watched the colonists struggle to survive. Powhatan saw an opportunity for expansion of his political empire by using the colonists and their firearms. He ordered them to relocate to Capahowasick, which was downriver from his capital. If they agreed, he would provide them with food and protection. For the English, this turn of events meant that people who they viewed as savage were engineering a trade that would allow them to survive the winter. Dying, hungry, and in need of assistance, they accepted the offer. Powhatan sent the promised food, and the colonists accepted it and survived. However, despite the lifesaving interaction of Powhatan, Captain Smith refused to move his men. They began exploring Powhatan's military strength for weaknesses. Smith began taking steps to obtain the territory for King James. Captain Smith and his men began their exploration up the Chesapeake. They then explored the Patapsco and Potomac Rivers. Powhatan was infuriated; his men harassed the colonists as they traveled

the waterways until they were in the upper Potomac and out of his domain. Smith and his party reached the villages of Nacotchtank, Moyaone, and Toags. The Natives, seeing an opportunity to unite with them against the more powerful Powhatan, welcomed him.

Powhatan realized that the colonists whom he thought were allies now were enemies who wanted his land. Acting on this realization, Smith was summoned to a meeting with Powhatan. At the meeting, Powhatan told Smith that he knew it was his land that the colonists wanted. The act of trading was just a pretense. Their relationship was destroyed, and shortly thereafter, they were at war. This war was known as the First Powhatan War and lasted for five years. The ability of colonists to continue exploration of the Chesapeake was curtailed. They remained sheltered in Jamestown. When the English won the First Powhatan War in 1614, Powhatan was forced to provide them food and recognize their ownership of prime farming area. The settlers began to cultivate tobacco, using the expertise of John Rolfe, who had earlier introduced tobacco in Virginia. They succeeded in their efforts. By 1620, tobacco became their cash crop, and the Virginia Company brought in hundreds of indentured servants to work on the plantations.

With their focus on tobacco, the colonists abandoned their plans of exposing and converting the Native Americans to Christianity, with the ultimate goal of assimilation. However, in 1622, members of the Powhatan tribe attacked the plantations along the James River and killed hundreds of English colonists. The response from London was to denounce them as savages and call for their destruction. This resulted in the Second Powhatan War in 1622. For the next 10 years, the English attacked the villages and raided their crops. As the war continued, the English grew even more tobacco and used the crops from the raids to feed the indentured servants who worked the plantations.

The late 1650s saw the economic situation worsen for the Nacostine when prices for beaver pelts fell. As a result, Maryland colonists began to focus fully on growing tobacco. That required more and more land. In 1663, the Maryland Assembly entered into an agreement that created a designated section of land for the Piscataway Natives. However, that designated area was situated in Nacostine Territory. Although the agreement stipulated that they could remain, many Nacostine simply moved. When the colonists needed the land on the reserve, they simply planted their crops in violation of the agreement. By the 1660s, the Nacostine suffered devastating losses; their trade routes were destroyed, and they moved endlessly trying, unsuccessfully, to escape the expansive tobacco plantations of the English settlers. The continued success of tobacco as a cash crop drove the explosion of plantations and provided the colonists with the economic stability they needed to survive; that same success drove the Nacostine and Powhatan tribes from the region. By the seventeenth century, the tribes had scattered, and the colonists controlled Maryland and Virginia (Musgrove and Myers 2017, 9).

### **Creating a District to Govern**

The District of Columbia was established to house the seat of power of the new federal government. From the nation's founding in 1776 through 1800, the Congress

was without a permanent location and met in several places. The last temporary location, from 1790 to 1800, was in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. However, the Pennsylvania Mutiny, which occurred in June 1783, proved that the Congress needed a permanent home. During that month, an antigovernment protest by nearly 400 soldiers of the Continental Army took place. The lack of promised payment for their services rendered during the American Revolution was the engine that drove the protest. On June 20, 1783, the ranks of the soldiers increased when a smaller group sympathetic to their cause joined them. Together they marched on the Congress in Philadelphia. The Congress had earlier asked the Executive Council of Pennsylvania for protection in stopping the soldiers. The Executive Council, for various reasons, refused to provide any assistance. The Congress fled to Princeton, New Jersey, where they regrouped. The Congress moved several times before relocating back to Philadelphia, where they decided to select a permanent site for the nation's capital.

The controversy that arose over the founding of a permanent site was intense and divisive. The seat of power of the new federal government was birthed out of controversy. Since the Constitution did not address any specific site for a capital, the Residence Act, which allowed President George Washington to select a site was passed on July 16, 1790. Northern states wanted the federal capital to be within easy access of their cities, while Southern states, which were slaveholding and agricultural, wanted the national capital further south. Thanks to a compromise worked out by two Virginians, Madison and Jefferson, with Hamilton, who was from New York, the area along the Potomac River on the boundary of two slave states, Maryland and Virginia, was selected. The compromise was Southern acceptance of Hamilton's plan for the federal government to assume payment of debts incurred by the states during the Revolutionary War. By 1790, the Southern states had largely paid off their foreign debts, so adopting Hamilton's plan required Southern states to take over a share of Northern debt. Madison and Jefferson agreed to do this in return for a southern location of the federal capital.

The site President George Washington selected was 10 square miles along the Potomac River that contained land from the slaveholding states of Maryland and Virginia. He appointed three commissioners as overseers. It would take 10 years before the first meeting of Congress in the new capitol on November 17, 1800.

President Washington chose Pierre Charles L'Enfant, a Frenchman who came to America to fight in the Revolutionary War, to be the city planner. L'Enfant, an established architect, was asked to survey the area and recommend locations for buildings and streets. Arriving in the District in 1791, his designs for the city envisioned wide avenues, public squares, and inspiring buildings. The centerpiece of that plan was a great "public walk" that became the National Mall. Thomas Jefferson had already sketched out a small and simple federal town, but L'Enfant reported back to the president with a much more ambitious plan. Washington liked the idea, and L'Enfant proceeded with plans for a European-designed city with American ideas.

He faced city commissioners who were concerned with funding the project and appeasing the District's wealthy landowners who did not share L'Enfant's vision.

In December 1791, L'Enfant's decision to demolish the home of a powerful resident's house to make way for an important avenue and his refusal to share his plan for the city with the commissioners prompted them to take action. Commissioner David Stuart wrote to President Washington in February 1792 informing him that the commissioners would resign if L'Enfant continued his insubordination. Washington asked Alexander Hamilton to draft a letter for Thomas Jefferson to reprimand L'Enfant for his insubordination. L'Enfant chose resignation over subordination and left the project.

During that same period, Andrew Ellicott, the city's surveyor, was surveying the territory north of Georgetown with hired assistants. His assignment was to prepare the land with 40 stone markers, one for every mile around the diamond of land that would become the federal district. He produced an engraved map that provided details for lot sales. It was very similar to L'Enfant's plan, but included the recommendations of the city commissioners. Ellicott hired Benjamin Banneker, a free black man, to assist in surveying territory for the nation's capital city. He was largely self-educated in astronomy and mathematics. With Ellicott, he worked in the observatory tent using a zenith sector to record the movement of the stars. Once the government controlled the property and building began, President Washington identified the site as the Federal City. The appointed commissioners agreed that the federal district would be the Territory of Columbia and to honor the president, the city would be named city of Washington. Columbia was a popular name for America in songs after the American Revolution.

Less than 50 years later, Alexandria's voters petitioned Congress asking for the return of the land to Virginia. But it was not until they petitioned the Virginia legislature in 1846 that they were able to retrocede the land where Alexandria and Alexandria County sat. As part of the District, they had not only lost the right to vote and representation, but also potential economic growth. Merchants and traders in Alexandria had anticipated doing business with the new government. However, once the land retroceded, they realized that the government had no interest in land south of Alexandria and Alexandria County and their projected financial windfalls would not materialize.

The slave trade was also a reason for the retrocession. The slave trade flourished in Alexandria; by removing the city from congressional authority, Alexandria was able to keep it alive until slavery was outlawed. Also, retrocession gave Virginia's slaveholders two additional representatives in Virginia. In addition, the retrocession reduced the total area of the capital by one-third.

The District of Columbia commissioners, charged by Congress with building the new city under the direction of the president, initially planned to import workers from Europe to meet their labor needs. However, response to recruitment was dismal, and soon they turned to African Americans—both enslaved and free—to provide the bulk of labor that built the White House, the U.S. Capitol, and other early government buildings. Construction on the White House began in 1792, in Washington, D.C., with a labor force of enslaved persons from Maryland and Virginia doing much of the work. Both states had enslaved and free African Americans, skilled and unskilled, who were used to construct the needed government and public buildings. Stonemason Collen Williamson trained enslaved people at

the government's quarry at Aquia, Virginia. Enslaved people quarried and cut the rough stone that was later dressed and laid by Scottish masons to erect the walls of the President's House. The labor force, however, was not solely enslaved persons. Free people of color also worked on the government buildings. White laborers from the two states joined Scottish and Irish immigrant workers as the government buildings were erected. The National Archives and Records Administration, established in 1926 to maintain government records and artifacts, houses primary sources, such as eighteenth-century payrolls, that document the work done by enslaved persons on the government buildings as well as the wages paid to their owners.

In 1800, members of Congress arrived with their families and their slaves. The District, which was formed from two slaveholding states, had enslaved and free populations. Free people of color in Maryland and Virginia looked to the new city for work. Enslaved people whose owners allowed them to work during their free time found markets for produce they raised. They also found buyers for their catch of oysters and crabs. These were avenues that allowed enslaved people opportunities to purchase their freedom. However, many other Southern states began blocking the avenues of manumission, and it became more difficult for enslaved people to purchase their freedom.

In 1807, George Bell, formerly enslaved, with the assistance of Nicholas Franklin and Moses Liverpool, built the first school for black freed children in the District. It was illegal to educate enslaved children, so only children who were free could attend the new school. In a step backward, in 1808, the city passed the first in a series of Black Codes that included fines for blacks out after 10 P.M.; requirement that freedmen carry documents; fines for playing cards or dice; and, 40 lashes for slaves caught at disorderly meetings. Cash bonds were also required.

Opportunities in Washington attracted free blacks in large numbers. In 1812 and 1813, the increased population was concerning to the local government, particularly the interaction between free and enslaved blacks. The District was still a slave state. Ordinances were passed that labeled unemployed blacks as vagrants and allowed them to be jailed. Because of the slave labor used to erect the buildings in Washington, free blacks had difficulty finding work, subsequently, many were jailed as vagrants. The restrictions on blacks increased in 1820, when the Senate and House of Representatives empowered the Washington City Council, which was run by free white heads of households, to determine conditions that would allow free blacks to reside in the city. The law, passed in May 1827, was directed at all free blacks who came into the District. Free blacks were given 30 days to provide evidence of their freedom. They were also required to pay renewable bond fees for good conduct. Failure to comply meant they would be forced to leave the city or sent to the workhouse. Blacks able to afford the bonds, which were held by whites, carried their freedom papers on their persons at all times. By 1830, half of the black people in the District were free.

Two events in 1831, Nat Turner's Rebellion in Northampton, Virginia, and the increase in antislavery literature, made the environment more toxic for blacks in the District. The concern that literacy would be used to cause blacks to rebel led to the burning of schoolhouses. Additional resentment of black businesses grew and

resulted in the Snow Riots of 1835. Businesses, schools, churches, and homes of free blacks were destroyed.

The movement of enslaved and freed blacks was limited even more on September 1, 1848, when the Black Code of the District became law. The Black Code defined the movements of enslaved and free people in the District and those coming from Maryland and Virginia. It addressed marriage between races, whether children were bond or free, how runaways would be punished, and the acceptance of testimony in court of people of color. It remained in effect until the Compensated Emancipation Act of 1862 freed enslaved people in the District of Columbia. From 1860 to 1870, the number of African Americans in the District increased, and they were one-third of the population. For a brief period in 1866, black men were able to vote. Blacks started newspapers and entered the legal and medical professions.

### **Education in the District of Columbia**

#### *The M Street School and Dunbar High School*

The desire of freed and enslaved people of color in the District to seek formal education has a long history. The history of the District's segregated school system, which endured from the mid-nineteenth century until the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* case, is also long. The M Street School, the first high school constructed for African American students from public funds, was built from 1890 to 1891. The three-story brick building housed high school classes under the dual system of public education. Other similar schools had already been established, but with private funding. Due to public support, M Street High School was able to offer high school teachers substantial and equal salaries, regardless of gender or race. As a result, the country's best African American educators were attracted to the positions, and therefore, the school's faculty was arguably superior to the white public schools, whose teachers were generally graduates of normal schools and teachers' colleges.

The M Street High School put its emphasis on academic and college preparatory subjects, rather than focusing on vocational education for its black students. By 1916, the student population outgrew the school. Paul Laurence Dunbar High School, named after the poet, was built a few blocks away from M Street High School. Dunbar was established as a preparatory academy for students; M Street High School was then used to house Cardozo High School students. In 1932, M Street became the Perry School for junior high school students. It remained segregated until 1954 when the U.S. Supreme Court decision in the historic *Brown v. Board of Education* case dismantled segregated education in the nation. Students who graduated from the District's segregated schools could be found in many of the best majority institutions around the country. For example, Dunbar had graduates enrolled in Howard University as well other East Coast Ivy League schools. Moreover, because of the quality of their teachers and education, many graduates went on to achieve graduate degrees and were considered among the best in the country.

*Howard University*

Howard University, often called the Mecca of black education, was chartered in 1867 to educate newly freed African Americans. The University was named after Major General Otis Oliver Howard. General Howard was appointed as commissioner of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, also known as the Freedmen's Bureau. Deeply religious, General Howard joined the group that founded the First Congregational Church of Washington. Originally located at 10th and G Streets, it is still active at its current location, 945 G Street, NW. The church is now the First Congregational United Church of Christ. Church members met to discuss ways to assist in the education and advancement of newly freed people. A normal school was considered, and General Howard was brought into the group. The "normal school" idea quickly evolved into a university. On March 2, 1867, the charter approved by the 39th U.S. Congress to incorporate Howard University, named in honor of General Howard, was signed into law by President Andrew Johnson. Howard University, although formed with the intent to provide education for newly freed African Americans, does not have that statement in its charter. Admission was extended to all without regard to race, gender, or class. On May 1, 1867, Howard University opened with five white female students, daughters of two of the founders. The following year, on November 5, 1868, the Medical Department's first opening exercise was held at the First Congregational Church.



The graduating class of law students at Howard University, Washington, D.C., ca. 1900. Historically black colleges have played an integral role in the empowerment of African Americans. (Library of Congress)



While the institution was created to provide for the higher educational needs of African Americans, it was not until June 20, 1926, that the first African American president of Howard University, Dr. Mordecai W. Johnson, was appointed. He was Howard University's 11th and longest serving president. It was during his tenure that Howard produced prominent scholars, educators, and professional achievers, including Alain Locke, who was the first African American Rhodes Scholar and holder of a PhD from Harvard University, and Ralph Bunche, professor of political science and later a Nobel Laureate. Charles Drew, who perfected the use of blood plasma, Percy Julian, a noted chemist, and Sterling Brown, professor of English and noted Harlem Renaissance poet were also Howard alumni. Additionally, under the Johnson administration, the number of faculty tripled, faculty salaries doubled, congressional appropriations increased to \$6,000,000 annually, and Howard University's Freedmen's Hospital was training half the African American physicians in the country. Perhaps Dr. Johnson's greatest contribution was the development of the university's Law School as the preeminent source of civil rights attorneys and law professors, including future U.S. Supreme Court justice Thurgood Marshall.

Howard University School of Law has a history of activism and commitment to challenging social injustice. It started as Howard University Law Department on January 6, 1869, under the leadership of Professor John Mercer Langston. Howard Law School produced the attorneys that crafted the strategy for dismantling educational segregation in the country. Thurgood Marshall was appointed to argue the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* case before the U.S. Supreme Court, and he won. He became the first African American to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court.

### **President Woodrow Wilson and Segregation in the Federal Government**

In 1913, President Woodrow Wilson was in the White House. His presidency supported putting Jim Crow policies in place throughout the federal government. Less than a month after his March 4, 1913, inauguration, Postmaster General Albert S. Burleson argued for segregating the Railway Mail Service. President Wilson did not object, and Burleson moved forward, segregating the agency. Additionally, the Railway Mail Association, representing the railway mail workers, refused African Americans membership. The Post Office Department, headquartered in Washington, D.C., quickly followed and instituted segregation. Many African American employees were downgraded and even fired. Employees who were downgraded were transferred to the dead letter office, where they did not interact with the public. The remaining African American workers at the main post offices worked behind screens, were not visible to customers, and had to eat in separate lunchrooms and use separate bathrooms. Starting in 1914, all applicants would have to submit a photograph with their application.

The African American community fought against the policies by establishing and supporting its own institutions. One such institution was the National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees (NAFPE). In 1914, NAFPE started and

maintained a protest against the requirement to submit photographs until the practice was discontinued in 1940. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), founded in 1909 to protest segregation and lynching of blacks, protested the federal segregation as well.

Forced to live in a racially segregated society, the African American community also built and maintained churches, schools, banks, department stores, funeral homes beauty parlors, barber shops, restaurants, and food stores. They established educational, social, religious, and economic harbors, built and cared for by the community. These attempts at self-sufficiency provided protection and pride.

### **Protests and Parades**

The District has been the site of important protests, many related to civil rights. On March 3, 1913, activist Alice Paul orchestrated a march on Washington, pushing for a constitutional amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote. The parade drew women from all over the country. However, the racist element of the women's suffrage had begun after the Fifteenth Amendment, which gave African American men the right to vote. Two suffragists, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, refused to support African American male suffrage unless women also had the right to vote. They never got over the fact that white women were passed over for African American men. Paul believed that many white women felt the same way. She did not invite black women to the march. However, 22 founding members of Delta Sigma Theta, a new Howard University sorority, joined the procession anyway. Among black activists, the prevailing view was that if white women needed the vote to secure their rights, black women needed it even more. Mary Church Terrell, a founder of the NAACP, an activist for women's rights and an honorary member of the new sorority, marched with them. Ida B. Wells, a Chicago journalist and anti-lynching advocate and also a member of Delta Sigma Theta, wanted to march with the Illinois delegation. She was asked to march with the black delegation and not with white women. She refused and, waiting until the end of the parade, positioned herself between two white Illinois women.

### ***Sharing the Commitment to Sisterhood, Brotherhood, and Service***

Greek letter sororities and fraternities are important educational and social organizations in the black community. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Alpha Chapter, was founded on January 13, 1913, by 22 collegiate women at Howard University. These students wanted to use their collective strength to promote academic excellence and to provide assistance to those in need. The sorority, formed during the struggle for women's right to vote, was focused on being activists. The founding members of Delta performed their first public act by participating in the Women's Suffrage March in Washington, D.C.

Delta is a private, not-for-profit organization whose purpose is to provide assistance and support through established programs in local communities throughout the world.

Since its founding, more than 200,000 women have joined the organization. The organization is a sisterhood of predominantly black, college-educated women. The sorority currently has 1,000 collegiate and alumnae chapters located in the United States, England, Japan, Germany, Virgin Islands, Bermuda, Bahamas, Jamaica, and the Republic of Korea.

Omega Psi Phi, Inc., Alpha Chapter, was founded on November 17, 1911, when three ambitious Howard undergraduates met in the office of their faculty advisor, Dr. Ernest Everett Just, to form a new fraternity. The three men, Edgar Amos Love, Oscar James Cooper, and Frank Coleman gave birth to Omega in Howard University's Science Hall—now named Thirkield Hall. The motto, "Friendship is essential to the soul," and cardinal principles, Manhood, Scholarship, Perseverance, and Uplift, were adopted. Less than a month later, the students and 11 of their friends of like attainment and similar ideals were brought into the fraternity's first chapter, affectionately known as "The Mother Pearl." Today, Omega is a brotherhood of predominantly black, college-educated men, with more than 750 chapters worldwide.

### **A New Tactic**

The 1940s brought a new response by African American leaders to the Jim Crow laws. The March on Washington Movement (MOWM) was a new strategy and became an important force in African American politics. The movement was formed in order to protest the segregation in the armed forces. A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of the Sleeping Car Porters, proposed the idea of a national, black-led march on the capitol in Washington, D.C., to highlight the issue. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had not responded to demands to desegregate the armed forces. Randolph's proposal laid the ground work for future protests, involving grassroots efforts and people normally not engaged in political protest. Ordinary people would be the organizers. Work began as the national March on Washington Committee formed chapters in cities across the country; the new format for protest caught the attention of the people. The plans took shape, and the march was scheduled for July 1, 1941. The popularity of the proposed march grew, and both seasoned political activists and the press saw the impact on a population new to protest politics. President Roosevelt, aware of the widespread acceptance of the protest movement, issued Executive Order 8802, establishing the first Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC). A. Philip Randolph cancelled the march. However, he retained the MOWM model. He wanted to ensure that the FEPC would complete the mission of desegregating the armed services.

### **March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom (1963)**

Perhaps, the most impactful march took place in Washington, D.C., on August 28, 1963. Twenty-two years after the 1941 MOWM was launched, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and others had put the format to work. The leaders of the major civil rights organizations, including A. Philip Randolph, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Roy Wilkins, John Lewis, Whitney Young, and James Farmer,

were in attendance. Dorothy Height, president of the National Council of Negro Women, also played an important role. Walter Fauntroy, born and raised in Washington, D.C., served as coordinator of the march. He was the director of the Washington Bureau of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and a graduate of Dunbar High School.

The march brought over 250,000 people into the District. They all gathered on the National Mall, stretching from the Lincoln Memorial to the Washington Monument. At that time, this was the largest gathering ever to assemble on the Mall. Although there were predictions of violence, the protest was peaceful, and everyone, regardless of race, gender, or class, marched together. The demand for equality, jobs, and freedom resonated among the crowd. Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech electrified the audience and found a place in history.

African American demands for justice helped push the federal government to take first steps toward "home rule" by appointing Walter Washington the first mayor of District of Columbia in 1967. However, when Mayor Washington delivered the city's first budget to Congress, the chairman of the House Committee on the District of Columbia sent watermelons to the mayor's office (Lilienthal 2012).

The 1968 riots were triggered by the assassination of Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, 1968. The reactions throughout the city were immediate and intense as buildings were burned and destroyed. Many African Americans rebelled against continued racism, injustice, and the federal government's abandonment of the city. For decades, despite promises issued by the federal government to rebuild District of Columbia, blocks destroyed by the riots were not redeveloped and deteriorated even further. Only in recent years have neighborhoods most impacted by the riots—H Street NE, 7th Street NW, and 14th Street NW—began to recover, as young, white urban professionals move into neighborhood blocks of condominiums, once home to burnt buildings, vacant lots, or sub-standard housing.

Dr. King's last major initiative was the Poor People's Campaign, which was planned for April 8, 1968. However, King's death left the fate of the Poor People's Campaign in doubt. In 1967, King, as chairman of the SCLC, responded to recent riots in Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, and Newark, New Jersey, by committing the full resources of the SCLC to the Poor People's Campaign. The campaign was intended to put a national spotlight on the plight of the poor and to pressure Congress to enact federal legislation for the improvement of economic and social conditions, especially in urban areas. At the time of King's assassination, the SCLC was already making preparations for a giant poor people's demonstration in Washington. Ralph Abernathy, who succeeded King as leader of the SCLC, vowed to carry on with the campaign in his predecessor's memory. Arriving by every conceivable mode of transportation, by foot, mule train, and horse-drawn carriage, demonstrators flocked to Washington, D.C., in May 1968. To accommodate the mass of protestors, an encampment known as Resurrection City, sprang up on the National Mall. Equipped with dining and daycare facilities, a dispensary, and even a city hall, Resurrection City was home to thousands of demonstrators for a period of over six weeks. Each day, Resurrection City residents staged demonstrations at

government offices and agencies throughout the city, all in an effort to convince federal officials to act on behalf of the nation's poor. Despite these efforts, the Poor People's Campaign was unsuccessful; it failed to generate the hoped-for response from national legislators. On June 19, 1968, a demonstration at the Lincoln Memorial ended the campaign, and Resurrection City was closed (Civil Rights Digital Library).

### Home Rule

Residents of the federal city found themselves living under rules and restrictions that over time became burdensome. Although lacking the congressional representation and freedom from regulatory actions accorded to the states, residents of District of Columbia paid full federal and local taxes. And, unlike the states, any federal funding given to District of Columbia came with strict directives as to how the money could be spent. Most irksome, District of Columbia residents had no vote in Congress, but only nonvoting representatives who sit on committees but who cannot vote on any bills, including those that affect the district. Not until 1964, could District of Columbia residents vote in presidential elections, and their electoral vote is equal to that of the least populated states (i.e., three votes), regardless of the District's population. Also, local District of Columbia judges are appointed by the president, whereas the states can appoint their own judges.

After President Richard Nixon signed the District of Columbia Self-Government and Reorganization Act of 1973, also known as the Home Rule Act, the District was allowed to have an elected mayor and city council. In 1974, Walter Washington was elected the District's first African American mayor. By 1975, African Americans were politically and culturally leading the city with more than 70 percent of the population.

Marion Barry, succeeded Walter Washington as mayor in 1978. As mayor of the District, he became a national symbol of self-governance for urban blacks. Barry's administration was intentional in creating programs to provide summer jobs for youths, home-buying assistance for working-class residents, and food for senior citizens. And he placed African Americans in thousands of middle- and upper-level management positions in the city government that in previous generations had been reserved for whites. Additionally, rank-and-file workers were hired in thousands to serve under Mr. Barry's newly appointed supervisory corps of African American middle- and top-level managers. When Barry took office in 1978, the city's African American population was approximately 70 percent. However, only 7 percent of the city contracts went to African American companies (Chocolate City 2017). The new administration pushed back against racism in city government. Under the direction of a newly appointed Minority Business Commission Director, city agency directors were told to increase the number of contracts awarded to minorities. Barry told white contractors that in order to get city contracts, they needed to hire black workers. Benefitting from government contracts, a new black middle class emerged within the District.

### **Race and the Crack Epidemic**

The crack epidemic of the 1980s devastated communities of color and black neighborhoods. Newspaper articles and television news programs overwhelmingly described the crack epidemic as primarily taking place in inner cities, a street-corner drug operation that came with gangs and guns. Its users were instantly addicted and became super-predators. Alternatively, powder cocaine, the more expensive version of the drug, was found among white, more-affluent users. Drug users are described as those who are more likely to be carrying briefcases, wearing suits, and living in the suburbs. There was no denying that violence and gang activity were associated with the sale of crack. In 1989, the annual homicide rate had risen above 400, and the District became the city with the highest rate of homicides in the nation. However, very different descriptions were used in bringing legal and political responses to the crisis that compounded the tragedy for the African American communities. The federal Anti-Drug Abuse Act, passed in 1986, imposed mandatory-minimum sentences that were far harsher on users of crack cocaine than on those found with the drug in powdered form.

### **The Control Board**

In 1995, the District faced insolvency, and President Clinton signed the law creating a presidentially appointed District of Columbia Financial Control Board. The Control Board (officially the District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority) was a five-member body established by the U.S. Congress to oversee the finances of the District. The Control Board had the power to override decisions by the mayor and Council of the District of Columbia. The same legislation that created the Control Board also created the position of chief financial officer, which had direct control over day-to-day financial operations of each District agency and was independent of the mayor's office. The Control Board's power provided unelected officials with the largest influence over the District since limited home rule was granted by Congress in 1973. This situation was a setback to residents who were seeking statehood for the District. It was also a reminder of the days before home rule.

### **New Black Leaders**

Anthony A. Williams, the former chief financial officer for the Control Board, was elected in 1999 and served two terms as the mayor of the District. The election of Williams ushered in a new era of political leadership. He was not a native Washingtonian, nor did he have any prior political experience. Unlike former Mayor Barry, he was not beloved in the African American community and did not have a close relationship with community leaders and activists. However, after the Control Board's takeover, the city emerged with a balanced budget and a less strained relationship with the federal government. The national economy was more robust, and Williams's experience in working with investment companies offered the opportunity to attract new investment to the city.

In 2007, Adrian Fenty, a native Washingtonian, became the District's youngest elected mayor. He served one term. Fenty's standoffish personality did not endear him to the African American community. While his attempt at school reform was initially seen as positive, as was the response to his choice of Schools Chancellor Michelle A. Rhee to lead that reform, it became controversial. Rhee's position was that teachers needed to be more accountable for ensuring students learned. She fired hundreds of teachers after implementing a new evaluation system that many felt was too harsh. This brought an angry response from the Washington Teachers' Union, the majority African American teachers, who felt that they were being blamed unfairly for the shortcomings in the school system. Fenty was unable to recognize the significance of the African American community's support and lost the Democratic mayoral primary.

In 2011, Vincent Gray was elected mayor. A native Washingtonian, his platform focused on restoring fiscal responsibility to city government, creating jobs and boosting economic development, providing a quality public education to all children, and building safe communities. Gray was well known in the African American community and worked in numerous government agencies, heading divisions that enabled him to become an anchor in the community. However, in 2012, three of Gray's top campaign associates pled guilty to felonies over illegal campaign finance practices in his 2010 mayoral campaign. Although Mayor Gray was not indicted in the corruption charges, questions about the ability of African Americans to run District of Columbia governments without political corruption resurfaced. Mayor Gray lost the Democratic mayoral primary.

Muriel Bowser, a native Washingtonian and only the second woman to lead the District, took office on January 2, 2015. Her platform addressed the need for creating affordable housing and pathways to the middle-class residents. Bowser's campaign also emphasized fostering a culture of inclusion, transparency, and action. While addressing issues facing residents of color, she also spoke to the reality that Washington is no longer the Chocolate City it used to be. Many African Americans are unable to afford to stay in their communities and see the results of the economic boom as a racial bulldozer driving them out of the city. The robust economy resulted in the gentrification of moderate income communities of color into newly renovated locations that are only affordable by those with higher incomes. This is an issue that challenges Mayor Bowser as well as the future leaders. Is the dream for social and racial equality still possible?

## **NOTABLE FIGURE**

### **Banneker, Benjamin (1731–1806)**

Benjamin Banneker, born free on November 9, 1731, in Baltimore County, Maryland, led an extraordinary life. His mother, Mary Banneky, was the daughter of an Englishwoman and a free African slave. His father, Robert, had bought his own freedom. Benjamin's grandfather's freedom had been bought by his grandmother who lived with his family. Banneker had three sisters. His mother and grandmother taught him to read. He started life with opportunities that most people, black or

white, did not have. He was surrounded with literate family members who could and did teach him how to read. He saw in his father a man who worked to secure his own freedom. Banneker knew from an early age how determination and dedication could support life-changing decisions. He had an enviable family life. His was one of a few hundred free black landowning families in Maryland.

Banneker met and befriended brothers George and Joseph Ellicott. They shared an interest in astronomy and mathematics. The brothers loaned Banneker their instruments and shared their books with him. Because of their generosity, Banneker was able to teach himself both subjects.

During an era when the average life expectancy was 37 years old, Banneker was borrowing these instruments when he was 46 years old. Major Andrew Ellicott, a cousin of the Ellicott brothers, was the surveyor for the District. He was charged with surveying the land and placing boundary markers at the four quadrants demarking the 10 square miles of the city limits. Major Ellicott had heard of Banneker's skills and hired him as an assistant to help with the survey. Amazingly, this took place in 1791 when Banneker was 60 years old.

Banneker's most outstanding accomplishment was not his ability to grasp mathematics and astronomy from self-study and readings, but it was his ability to understand the significance of what he could do and the importance of making sure others knew as well. In his August 19, 1791, letter to Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, Banneker provided him with a lesson in the intelligence, reason, literacy, and graciousness that he possessed. Banneker, aware of his fortune at being free and educated, informed Jefferson that there were far too many of people of color in America who did not have these freedoms merely because of their color. He challenged Jefferson to rethink how he felt about the fight for independence from Britain. He then urged him to put himself in the place of enslaved people who were without freedom. Jefferson needed to explain how he could write about freedom and equality for all while intentionally denying the equality of human beings who looked differently from himself.

Banneker clearly understood the precarious position he was in as he undertook to write to Jefferson. There were limits for even a free man of color in eighteenth-century America. But he dared to express the very pressing matter of trying to explain how stifling it was to be considered inferior because of skin color or only to continue to keep that freedom from people of color.

According to Banneker, he was only going to send Jefferson a copy of his newly completed almanac. However, when he started the letter he was directed to present his statement on his belief that Jefferson needed to rethink his opinion of people of African descent manifested in Jefferson's book, *Notes on the State of Virginia*. It was Jefferson's position that African people were inferior because of their color. Banneker's well-crafted, well-written, and direct attack on that position made him the first colonial-era free black man to counter a white man's declaration that people of color cannot possess the same intelligence as whites. Banneker's letter is significant in that it shows the critical thinking that went into it. He addressed Jefferson's assertions while giving him a history lesson on the price that his fellow countrymen paid to help those who thought them inferior obtain their freedom from England.



Banneker was 60 years old when he gained prominence in the fields of astronomy and mathematics without having the benefit of formal education. As he wrote the letter, he could well be thinking of the lost formal educational opportunities that his fellow brothers and sisters of color never experienced, even as free men and women of color. This letter is a document that provides evidence of a man unafraid to challenge a bias from an important figure in American history. By doing so, he had shown that his classification of inferior based on color was false. He proved himself equal to the task of refuting Jefferson's statement of black inferiority.

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# 10

## Florida

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### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **1513**

Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de León leads an expedition to a site that he claims and names Florida; at the time, there are 200,000 Native Americans living on the land

#### **1565**

Pedro Menendez de Aviles establishes the area of Saint Augustine as the nation's first permanent settlement and America's oldest city

#### **1738**

Hundreds of slaves flee South Carolina in search of freedom and arrive in Fort Mose, becoming the first community of free blacks in the United States

#### **1790**

Spain officially suspends the practice of giving refuge in Florida to runaway black slaves from the United States

#### **1816**

American troops destroy Fort Negro and kill most of the "Black Seminoles" within the fort

#### **1818**

The first conflict between the Seminoles and the U.S. Army begins; the Seminole Wars (also known as the Florida Wars) occur at three different periods between 1818 and 1858, and by the end of the third war, the Seminole population is reduced to just under 200 members

#### **1821**

Florida becomes a U.S. territory

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### **1834**

The Seminoles sign the Treaty of Payne's Landing and thereby agree to hand over escaped African Americans to the American authorities

### **1840**

According to the U.S. Census, African American slaves constitute almost half of Florida's total population of 55,000

### **1845**

On March 3, Florida becomes the 27th state to join the Union

### **1861**

Florida secedes from the Union on January 10

### **1862**

U.S. General David Hunter issues General Order 11, which frees slaves in Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina; President Abraham Lincoln soon rescinds the order

### **1864**

Colored troops participate in the Battle of Olustree in Florida; after the battle, reports surface of atrocities committed against the African American soldiers by Confederate troops

### **1865**

Abraham Lincoln Lewis is born in Jacksonville, Florida; in 1901, Lewis founds the Afro-American Life Insurance Company and becomes the state's first black millionaire

### **1865**

Florida ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery on December 28

### **1866**

Edward Waters College, the first historically black college in the state, is founded

### **1868**

On June 9, Florida ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting full citizenship to African Americans

### **1868**

On June 25, Florida is readmitted to the Union with a new state constitution that guarantees civil rights and the vote for African Americans

### **1869**

Josiah Walls, a black man, is elected to the Florida legislature

### **1869**

On June 14, Florida ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing black men the right of vote

### **1871**

Josiah Walls is elected to the U.S. House of Representatives

**1885**

Florida's new constitution mandates a separation of the races in all public facilities, including schools

**1887**

The community of Eatonville is incorporated as the nation's first all-black city; acclaimed novelist and anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston is raised there

**1897**

James Weldon Johnson becomes the first African American admitted to the Florida bar

**1900**

Schoolchildren at Stanton School in Jacksonville recite the poem, *Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing*, in honor of Abraham Lincoln's birthday; the poem is written by civil rights activist James Weldon Johnson and is set to music by Johnson's brother, John Rosamond, in 1905; the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) declares the song the Negro national anthem in 1919

**1904**

Mary McLeod Bethune opens the Daytona Literacy and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls in Daytona Beach; in 1931, the school is renamed Bethune Cookman College

**1923**

The Rosewood massacre takes place in Levy County; at this time, the state of Florida leads the country in the lynching of black males per capita

**1935**

American Beach opens on Amelia Island, founded by Jacksonville native A.L. Lewis; during the Jim Crow era, American Beach is the only beach in Florida open to black Americans

**1951**

The home of civil rights activists Harry T. and Harriette Moore is bombed on Christmas Day in Mims, killing both husband and wife; the Ku Klux Klan is believed responsible for the death of the couple; however, the case remains unsolved

**1956–1957**

The Tallahassee bus boycott leads to the integration of the city's buses

**1957**

The Seminole Tribe of Florida is formed

**1959**

A group of wealthy political exiles fleeing Cuba (referred to as the "Golden Exiles") arrive in Miami; their arrival is the first of three waves of Cuban migration to South Florida from 1959 to 1980

**1960**

Members of the Jacksonville Youth Council of the NAACP conduct a sit-in demonstration at several lunch counters in downtown Jacksonville and are confronted

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by nearly 200 white men wielding baseball bats and ax handles; the attack leaves several African American protesters wounded and is known as Ax Handle Saturday; although the violence receives national coverage, the local media is prohibited from telling the story of the racially charged beatings

### **1963**

On April 18, Florida ratifies the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing the poll tax

### **1964**

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. leads successful civil rights protests in St. Augustine

### **1965**

The second migration of Cubans to the United States begins; flights carrying Cuban refugees landed in Miami daily from 1965 to 1973.

### **1966**

The Cuban Adjustment Act grants Cuban migrants residing in the United States for at least two years of permanent residency

### **1970**

Gwendolyn Cherry becomes the first African American woman elected to the Florida legislature

### **1973**

Racial tensions erupt at a northwest Florida high school when the school's sports teams use Confederate imagery as their mascot

### **1975**

Joseph W. Hatchett becomes the first African American to serve on the Florida Supreme Court

### **1980**

In May, Miami is rocked by three days of rioting in the African American communities of Liberty City, Overton, and Coconut Grove, where black rioters rise up after white police officers are acquitted of the beating to death of a black man; 17 people die in the riots, and property damage is estimated at more than \$100 million

### **1980**

The final wave of Cuban migration occurs between April and October with the landing of a group of migrants dubbed the "marielitos" because they departed on boats for the United States via Cuba's Mariel Harbor; more than 125,000 Cuban refugees arrive in Florida by the end of the Mariel boatlift

### **1982**

A riot erupts in Miami after a Hispanic police officer shoots and kills a young black man; a similar incident in 1989 leads to further riots and to the eventual conviction and imprisonment of the Hispanic officer

### **1987**

Robert "Bob" Martinez is inaugurated as Florida's first Hispanic governor

**1987**

Johannetta Betsch Cole, the great-granddaughter of Abraham Lincoln Lewis, becomes the first African American female president of Spelman College

**1990**

A black jurist, Leander Shaw, is selected to be chief justice of the Florida Supreme Court

**1992**

After 17 years in the Florida legislature, Carrie Meek becomes the first African American woman elected to the U.S. Congress from Florida as well as the first African American sent to Congress by Florida since Reconstruction

**2000**

Attorney General Janet Reno orders the return of six-year-old Elian Gonzalez to his father's custody in Cuba

**2002**

Kendrick Meek is elected to Congress, succeeding his mother Carrie Meek, as representative for Florida's 17th District

**2005**

The Seminole Tribe of Florida enters into an agreement with Florida State University that allows the university to use the likeness of Chief Osceola as the school mascot

**2005**

Florida is the first state to enact the "Stand Your Ground" statute into law; individuals are granted the right to use deadly force in cases of self-defense

**2008**

Angela Corey is the first woman elected as the Florida state attorney for the state's fourth judicial circuit court; she prosecuted several high-profile cases with racial implications that received national exposure, becoming, for instance, the special prosecutor investigating the murder of Trayvon Martin in 2012.

**2010**

Marisa Alexander fires a warning shot at then husband Rico Gray, who had threatened to kill her; Alexander is charged with aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, which carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 20 years; Alexander's case receives national attention due to concerns of institutional racism and bias in the criminal justice system

**2012**

Seventeen-year-old Trayvon Martin is shot to death on his walk home from a convenience store; the shooter, George Zimmerman, claims self-defense and is acquitted of second-degree murder on July 13, 2013

**2013**

On the day after Thanksgiving, Michael Dunn, a white man, and Jordan Davis, a black teen, get into a heated exchange over loud music at a crowded gas station

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in Jacksonville; Dunn shoots and kills Davis, who at the time was a senior in high school

### **2014**

Florida surpasses New York as the third-largest state in the nation, behind California and Texas

### **2015**

Almost 5 percent of the state's total population is estimated to have arrived as undocumented immigrants

### **2016**

Although passed by the Florida House of Representatives, a bill to prevent counties from passing "sanctuary" policies and force them to help federal immigration officials round up illegal immigrants fails in the state senate

### **2016**

What is at the time the largest mass shooting in U.S. history occurs at Pulse nightclub in Orlando, leaving 49 dead, most of whom were young Latino patrons; in June 2017, Governor Rick Scott declares June 12 as Pulse Remembrance Day in the state of Florida

### **2016**

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, running on an anti-illegal immigration platform, carries Florida with 49 percent of the vote

### **2017**

When the president of Jacksonville's City Council calls for an inventory of the city's Confederate monuments and a prelude to removing them, resistance to the move comes from Jacksonville's white community, 54 percent of which, according to polls, opposes the action; the council president also receives much hate mail and some monuments are vandalized

## **NARRATIVE**

In 1513, Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de León led an expedition to a site that he claimed and named Florida. At the time, Native Americans were the primary inhabitants of the land (scholars trace the first arrival of Paleo-Indians to Florida at least 12,000 years ago) who had already established permanent towns, traditions, and large political centers. Ultimately, the Spanish seized the land from the indigenous population, and over time the Native American population dwindled due to disease and warfare. From the point of Ponce de León's discovery of Florida, various parts of the territory would exchange hands between the French, Spanish, and British due to several conquests and seizures during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The United States acquired the entire Floridian Territory in 1821, and in 1845, Florida became the 27th state to join the Union.



## Florida's Growing Racial Diversity

Today, Florida is the third-largest state in the nation, behind Texas and California. As of July 2016, the state population stood at over 20 million residents. The state is very diverse in terms of race and ethnicity; Hispanics and Latinos account for nearly 25 percent of the state population, black Floridians account for 17 percent, and the Asian population makes up approximately 3 percent. Native Americans are a small portion of the Floridian population. On the 2010 census, a mere 0.38 percent of the state's residents identified as American Indian. And while many Native American tribal groups continue to fight against appropriation of their heritage and racial identity, one of Florida's best-known surviving tribes, the Seminole, granted the Florida State University permission to continue to do so. White Floridians constitute 58 percent of the state's populace. Several cities in the state—including Jacksonville, Tampa, and Orlando—are among the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the nation, with steady population increases in recent years. Each of these metropolises is expected to have minority-majority populations by the year 2050. Overall, the state's racial/ethnic composition is expected to grow even more in the coming decades, surpassing national averages.

Demographic trends and immigration patterns in the state of Florida have resulted in a very diverse state population, and perhaps more importantly, expanded societal imagery, ideas, and perspectives about race beyond the traditional boundaries of black and white. Florida is a multilingual and multicultural place; this diversity is directly connected to migration patterns of racial and ethnic

### *The Seminole Tribe and Florida State University*

Over the past decades, the practice of sports teams using Native American imagery has come under fire from Native tribes and various progressive groups because many college and professional sports teams use mascots and associated imagery that employ savage caricatures and historically inaccurate traditions and rituals of Native people and culture. In 2005, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) addressed these concerns by evaluating college teams for the use of potentially offensive imagery and requiring many to remove all references to Native American groups. However, some schools were granted waivers to retain their nicknames and mascots after gaining support from their respective tribes, including the Florida State University (FSU) Seminoles.

In 2003, Max Osceola, acting chairman of the Tribal Council of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, supported FSU's mascot Osceola, stating that "We don't look at it as a mascot, we look at it as a representation of the Seminole Tribe."

The university consults the tribe on associated imagery and team rituals, offers a course designed in part by the tribe on Seminole history and traditions, and provides scholarships and reduced tuition for tribal members. The official mascot, Chief Osceola, who rides an Appaloosa horse named Renegade, is depicted in ritual during football games by students chosen for their character and academic achievement wearing clothing sewn by the women of the Seminole tribe. In gaining both written and enthusiastic support from the Tribal Council, FSU has maintained the use of their imagery while managing to do so in a manner that is inclusive, respectful, and reverent.

groups and their individual and collective influence upon Florida's culture. The evolving demographics of Floridians—coupled with key events occurring in the state—has signified the state as a place of growth, transformation, and racial politics that are reproduced and intensified at the national level.

Hispanics/Latinos represent an ethnic group, not a racial category. A term adopted by the U.S. Census in 1980, Hispanics are a group sharing Spanish language, culture, and traditions. In spite of their ethnic identity and national origin, Hispanics can be of *any* race. Their presence—particularly in the state of Florida—has significantly impacted (and complicated) our social, political, and cultural ideals of race and identity in the United States. Hispanic/Latino populations (including the Cuban, Puerto Rican, and Mexican subgroups) have been settling in Florida since the 1800s, yet more recent immigration patterns have contributed to a growing and powerful Hispanic presence in the state. Currently, Florida is home to just under 5 million Hispanic residents, and the state has the third-largest Hispanic population in the United States.

The Cuban population in the state of Florida represents one-third of the Latino population in the state, and two-thirds of the Cuban population in the country (see Gutierrez 2016). The history of Cuban migration to the state of Florida dates back to the nineteenth century, yet the Cuban migration to South Florida beginning in 1959 has significantly impacted the state's diversity and the cultural influence of Hispanics in the state. Seeking refuge from the Fidel Castro regime, Cubans migrated to South Florida (primarily Miami) in three waves. The first two waves of Cubans migrants (1959 and 1965, respectively) were viewed as political exiles and encouraged by the U.S. government to leave their homeland and temporarily settle in the United States. A large majority of Cubans who came to Miami at this time were educated, professional, and upper class. They came with resources and were able to build social networks that translated into unprecedented levels of social and political capital for Hispanics in South Florida. The critical mass of Cubans in Florida since the 1960s has been pivotal in leveraging a powerful Latino presence in the state. Through politics and economics, the Cubans proved an unstoppable force in altering South Florida's history. "If you look at Greater Miami, every area of endeavor is now led by Cubans, whether it's educational institutes, politics, business, banking," George said.

While the region of South Florida (consisting of the Miami, Fort Lauderdale, and West Palm Beach areas) is considered to be the hub of Florida's Hispanic presence, recent migration patterns reflect more growth in other "nontraditionally" Hispanic regions. The Latino population in the Central Florida region (which includes the cities of Tampa and Orlando) grew 44 percent between 2010 and 2015. A considerable amount of this growth can be attributed to Puerto Ricans migrating to the area. This group holds a unique position compared to other Hispanic groups in that Puerto Rico became a U.S. territory in 1898, and as a result of the Jones Act of 1917, Puerto Ricans were granted citizenship and limited voting power. The Hispanic Federation reports that between 2000 and 2010, the Puerto Rican population in Florida grew by 76 percent. Currently, one million Floridians are Puerto Rican. By 2020, there will be more Puerto Ricans living in Florida than in the state of New York; it is also anticipated that Puerto Rican residents will

surpass the Cuban population in the state (Hispanic Federation 2016). As Jose Calderon of the Hispanic Federation notes, “the migration of hundreds of thousands of Latinos from Puerto Rico to Central Florida is reshaping the contours of Latino life in the state, creating the most important demographic development since the arrival of Cubans in the 1960s” (Hispanic Federation 2016, 3).

The presence of black Americans in the state of Florida (and in the United States more broadly) traces back to the seventeenth century. The population of blacks in Florida has increased steadily and is projected to remain stable in the coming decades. Foreign-born blacks (i.e., non-African Americans) living in Florida constitute a significant percentage of the overall black population: one-third of blacks living in the Miami–Fort Lauderdale–West Palm area are immigrants, and the state of Florida has the second-largest African-born population in the United States (Pew Research Center, 22). The influence of Jamaicans, Haitians, Nigerians, and many other black immigrant populations in Florida has resulted in broadened understandings of blackness and shifting notions of ethnic diversity among blacks in the state and nation.

The population of Asian Americans in Florida has grown exponentially in recent years. At present, Florida has the eighth-largest Asian population in the country, slightly behind the state of Hawai‘i (Kotkin and Cox 2015). Since 2000, the Asian population in Florida has experienced a 70.8 percent rate of growth. Asian Indians, Filipino, and Chinese Floridians represent the largest groups of Asians living in the state. The majority of Asian residents live in South and Central Florida. Asians are the fastest growing minority group in the United States. Future projections related to the Asian presence in Florida are expected to keep pace with this overall growth.

Given these demographic trends and projections, the state of Florida is positioned to be a key influencer in the national landscape of race relations and minority group experiences in the twenty-first century. This was evidenced during the 2008, 2012, and 2016 presidential elections; in each of these election cycles, Florida was considered to be a “battleground state,” and voter turnout (and, subsequently, the voting blocs of minority group populations) was pivotal (see Frey 2017). In the 2016 U.S. presidential and Senate races, the turnout of Hispanic, Asian, and black voters in Florida was of key concern to candidates, and their voices (or the lack thereof), ultimately, determined the winning candidate.

There are many aspects to Florida’s history and contemporary matters that offer a diverse and rich context for race relations. Now, the state of Florida is known to many for its tropical weather and vacation destinations including Walt Disney World. However, the history of race and racism in the state situates Florida as “ground-zero” for racial violence and the fight for racial justice. Scholar and Pulitzer Prize winner Isabel Wilkerson (2012) notes that oftentimes, Southern states like Alabama, Mississippi, and Georgia are thought of as the epicenters of the civil rights movement. Yet, during the height of Jim Crow segregation, the state of Florida played just as much of a role in shaping our nation’s fight for civil rights and racial equality. Further, present-day events in the state continue to shape the broader discourse of the nature of contemporary race relations in American society.

This history dates back as early as eighteenth century when hundreds of slaves found their way to freedom in the region, which at the time was still under Spanish rule. Planation slavery had become institutionalized in the Southern United States by the mid-seventeenth century, and the Spanish government began offering enslaved Africans asylum from captivity. In 1738, Fort Mose was established as a place of refuge for hundreds of slaves fleeing South Carolina. Just a short distance from Saint Augustine, Florida, Fort Mose became the first community of free blacks living in the United States.

The founding of Fort Mose was not the only “first” for black Americans in the state of Florida’s history. In 1866, a group of missionaries in Jacksonville opened Edward Waters College, the first historically black college in the state (and one of the first established in the South), in an effort to provide educational access to freed slaves. One year later, the nation’s first all-black city was incorporated in Eatonville, Florida. Acclaimed novelist Zora Neale Hurston (1891–1960; author of *Their Eyes Were Watching God*) spent her childhood in Eatonville and would later become a central figure in African American literature and culture, particularly during the Harlem Renaissance.

The state of Florida is also home to numerous leaders and civil rights pioneers, including: Abraham Lincoln Lewis (1865–1974), Florida’s first black millionaire and the founder of American Beach; James Weldon Johnson (1871–1938), author and composer of *Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing*, the Negro national anthem; Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune (1875–1955), civil rights advocate and founder of Bethune-Cookman University (B-CU); and Virgil D. Hawkins (1907–1988), educator who fought for nearly 30 years to practice law in the state of Florida.

### **Racially Motivated Violence**

Florida was the birthplace and residency of many individuals who shaped and advanced civil rights from the late nineteenth century through the height of civil rights movement in the 1960s. Akin to this history is the number of racially violent incidents taking place in Florida. Two well-known examples are the Rosewood massacre, which occurred in Levy County in 1923, and a lesser-known, but equally important event, Ax Handle Saturday, which occurred in Jacksonville in 1960. The Rosewood massacre occurred in the small town of Rosewood in 1923 (at a time in which the state led the nation in the lynching of black males per capita) and resulted in the death, through murders and lynchings, of black residents and the ultimate complete destruction and desertion of the town. The events in Rosewood resulted from racial tensions that were simmering between the white and black communities, and initiated by the fast-spreading rumor that a black man had sexually assaulted and raped a white woman. The mob attack by hundreds of white men led to the town’s demise.

Another pivotal event in the history of race-related violence occurred in downtown Jacksonville on Saturday, August 27, 1960. The incident later became known as Ax Handle Saturday and resulted from youth-driven efforts to organize for change.

### ***The Rosewood Massacre***

The Rosewood massacre occurred in the small, predominantly black town of Rosewood, Florida. The series of events began on January 1, 1923. According to historical reports, it was rumored that a white woman had been sexually assaulted by a black man (Jesse Hunter), presumed to be a resident of Rosewood. A group of white men began to search for the alleged rapist and those believed to be his accomplices—Aaron Carrier and Sam Carter and Carrier's cousin, Sylvester Carrier, whom they believed aided Hunter in his efforts to escape. Eventually, Carrier was captured and incarcerated, and Carter was lynched. On January 4, a group of 20–30 white men approached the Carrier home and shot and killed Sylvester Carrier's mother Sarah, when she came to the porch to confront them. Sylvester defended his home, killing two men and wounding four others before he was killed. Many of the African American residents of Rosewood retreated into the swamp to escape the violence. A white mob of at least 200 men, many from surrounding towns, returned the next day and burned down the Carrier home. As evening approached, the mob continued its attack on the town, slaughtering animals, burning buildings, and forcing residents to flee. Some were hidden by white residents; many others fled to the swamps and eventually escaped to other towns and Northern cities via train. The town was decimated. No one was ever charged or convicted for the Rosewood murders. In 1994, the Florida legislature passed the Rosewood Bill, which provided \$150,000 compensation to each of the nine living survivors.

In the era of Jim Crow, black youth in Jacksonville—like many young people in Southern cities—were actively involved in the civil rights movement. At the height of the movement, the Jacksonville chapter of the National Association of Colored People (NAACP) was led by local teacher and activist Rutledge Pearson. Pearson, who was later elected president of the Florida State Conference of the NAACP, was a former baseball star for the 1952 New York Black Yankees who went on to become an educator, human rights activist, and civil rights leader. He was noted for his ability to connect and communicate with black youth and for his efforts to steer organizers away from violence, which garnered him the support of ministers, teachers, politicians, and other civic leaders. Pearson was also instrumental in raising NAACP membership from just a few hundred to over 2,000 in the 1960s. An April 1964 issue of *Jet* magazine cites a newscaster hailing Pearson as someone who “holds this Negro town together” and adding that “if he is killed, let's hope it'll be in an auto accident” (*Jet*, April 30, 1964, 53). Indeed, three years later, Pearson was reportedly killed in a car crash, though his brother Lloyd Pearson has stated that “there was no scars in his face, but the back of his head looked like someone had beat him with a club” (Nelson-Williams 2016). Rutledge Pearson has an elementary school named for his efforts, with a student population that is over 90 percent black. A short dead-end street has also been named Rutledge Pearson Drive, which branches off from Moncrief Road. Ironically, this street is viewed by some as one of the deadliest streets in the city of Jacksonville.

Rodney L. Hurst, a 16-year-old protégé of Pearson, served as president of the NAACP Jacksonville Youth Council after being invited by Pearson to join when

he was 11 years old. Hurst sat in on lectures and attended training sessions by Pearson, who had also been his eighth grade American history instructor, along with other prominent local activists and organizers in the area. Young students learned about the principles of nonviolence and how to conduct themselves during sit-ins. These types of protests had proven to be successful in the fight against racial segregation. For example, the Greensboro student sit-ins of 1960 inspired similar peaceful demonstrations in many other cities and ultimately led to the integration of Woolworth's and other stores before the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Hurst, along with the other members of the Youth Council, organized and led sit-in demonstrations at Woolworth's, McCory's, and Kress eateries in downtown Jacksonville. The young leader was arrested for his participation in the demonstrations, although the charges were eventually dropped.

The NAACP Youth Council reignited its sit-in campaign on August 13, 1960, with a strategic focus on Woolworth's at the corner of Monroe and Hogan in downtown Jacksonville. Although black shoppers were allowed to spend their money at the store, they were not allowed to be seen eating at the public lunch counter by the front windows and were instead relegated to the small, windowless room at the back of the store.

On August 24, 1960, two young African American demonstrators, allegedly running from police, knocked an elderly white woman through a plate-glass window. A fight then broke out in front of a downtown store between some black female protestors and a white woman. The dispute angered several white individuals, who purchased over 50 ax handles in a 15-minute period from Sears and Roebuck Department Store. In a short time, racial tensions escalated between blacks and whites in Jacksonville, which had faced deepening tensions in the past decades, much like other similar Southern cities.

At approximately 11:00 A.M. on August 27, 1960, 25 students met at Grant's store in downtown Jacksonville, which was approximately three blocks from Woolworth's at the corner of Main and Adams. After entering the store and making their purchases, the students took seats at the white lunch counter and were forced out by the store's manager at 11:37 A.M. The violence occurred when a large group of white men, brandishing ax handles and baseball bats, confronted a group of African Americans who organized the sit-in demonstrations, fully engaged in the local fight to end racism and segregation. The attack left several protestors wounded, with no major fatalities. The violence received coverage by national newspapers, but the local media was prohibited from telling the story of the racially charged beatings. According to the Florida Historical Society, it is believed the mob attack was organized by the Ku Klux Klan. As stated by Hurst, "many times you could not draw a line between the Klan and law enforcement, because law enforcement were at least accomplices to a lot of the things the Klan did" (My Florida History 2017).

Even though the violence initially targeted the demonstrators, it escalated to include any black person in sight, along with whites who were sympathetic to their cause. The police stood by and did nothing until a local African American gang, the "Boomerangs," armed with guns, knives, sticks, and Molotov cocktails, tried to protect those who were being attacked. Then, the police joined with the ax

handle-wielding mob and attacked every black person in sight. The bloodied victims sought refuge in a nearby African American church until the crowd dispersed. The demonstrations subsided, and ultimately, in the spring of 1961, lunch counters in downtown Jacksonville agreed to integrate.

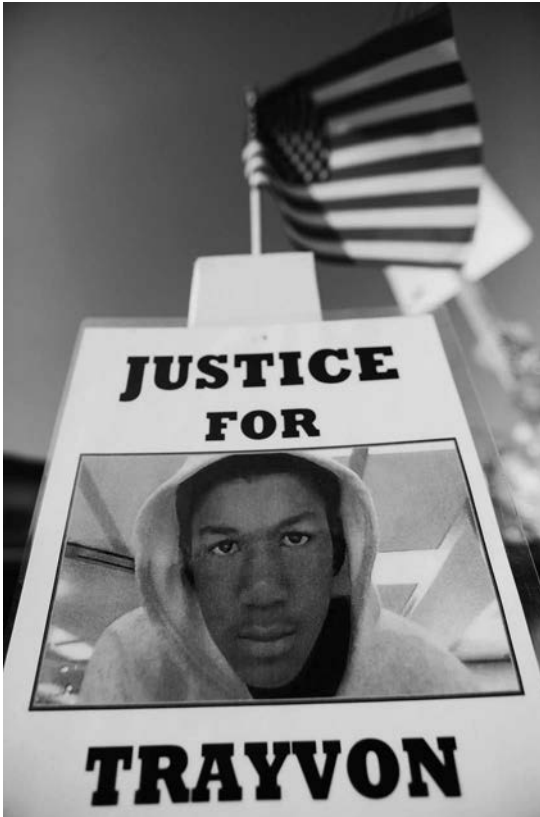
In what is thought to be an effort to obscure the violence perpetrated against the Youth Council and demonstrators, the local newspapers and television stations provided almost no coverage of the event. Various news articles of the day exist from that time, and many of them often obscure the purpose of the demonstrations, or chose to focus on police efforts to control the outbreak of violence. While the events of that day were covered by *Life Magazine* and media outlets from major cities across the nation, reporters from the *Jacksonville Journal* and the *Jacksonville Times-Union* were forbidden to document the events.

Rodney Hurst wrote about his experiences in the book, *It Was Never about a Hot Dog and a Coke*. Published in 2008, the account of Ax Handle Saturday enabled the city of Jacksonville to have a broader conversation about the event, and the city's strained history of race relations. Hurst won numerous awards for this account of his experiences, including the Silver Medal for Nonfiction of the 2009 Independent Publisher Awards, the Inaugural Stetson Kennedy Award, and the Winner for Multi-Cultural Nonfiction in the 2008 USA Book News Book Award. Hurst has also since published an account of black history, racism, and civil rights in the Jacksonville area entitled *Unless We Tell It . . . It Never Gets Told!*

In 2010, the city of Jacksonville commemorated the 50th anniversary of Ax Handle Saturday with a series of lectures and public events, including the photography exhibit, "Fifty Years Later: Revisiting the History of Ax Handle Saturday in Jacksonville, Florida," which was on display at the University of North Florida. Jacksonville's center for African American history and culture, the Ritz Theater and Museum, also exhibited "Stony the Road We Trod" in 2010. The day has also been memorialized by a plaque in Hemming Plaza, a cultural and social urban gathering place that was close to the site of the violent attacks of Ax Handle Saturday.

### **The Murder of Trayvon Martin (2012)**

In 2013, blogger Clarence Jones noted that "the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the Trayvon Martin case provided us with a case study of race in America in the 21st century" (Jones 2013). Seventeen-year-old Martin was killed a year earlier in Sanford, Florida. In many ways, his death served as a tipping point for exposing the fragility of race relations in a seemingly "postracial" America. The incident and the media coverage of Zimmerman's trial (and ultimate acquittal) for second-degree murder and manslaughter highlight the deep racial cleavages between blacks, whites, and other racial minorities that were once considered to be obsolete. The murder of Trayvon Martin (and George Zimmerman's defense of his actions) also caused a national debate over Florida's controversial "Stand Your Ground" statute (Florida was the first state in the nation to adopt this bill into law in 2005). Many people began to question what makes an individual "suspicious," and what constitutes "self-defense." Finally, understanding the circumstances



Viewed as a racially motivated killing of a young black man, a memorial to Trayvon Martin stands outside the community where Trayvon was shot and killed by George Zimmerman while on neighborhood watch patrol on April 12, 2012, in Sanford, Florida. Second-degree murder charges were brought against George Zimmerman who was not initially charged with any crime due to Florida's "Stand Your Ground" self-defense law. (Getty Images)

7:17 P.M., Zimmerman shot Martin through the heart, killing him after a brief confrontation.

After the shooting, Zimmerman was taken to the Sanford Police Station and was briefly questioned by homicide detective Christopher Serino, who recommended Zimmerman be charged with manslaughter. His reasoning was that Zimmerman failed to identify himself as a concerned citizen or neighborhood watch volunteer on two occasions that night. Moreover, Zimmerman's injuries (an open wound of the scalp without compilation and a closed nasal fracture) were only marginally consistent with those that would be considered life-threatening as posited by Zimmerman. According to Sanford Police Chief Bill Lee, Zimmerman was then released because there were no grounds to disprove his version of events.

surrounding the death of Trayvon Martin is important because it produced a new generation of activists engaged in social movements, employing social media as a platform to create a more just and equitable society.

On the night of February 26, 2012, George Zimmerman, a biracial Hispanic and volunteer neighborhood watchman, called the Sanford Police Department to report what he described as a "suspicious guy" walking in Retreat at Twin Lakes Community in Sanford, Florida. The young man described as "suspicious" was Trayvon Benjamin Martin, a 17-year-old African American teen from Miami Gardens, Florida, who was visiting his father and his father's girlfriend. At approximately 7:11 P.M., Zimmerman made the call about Martin and suggested to the police dispatcher that he would follow Martin. The police dispatcher asked Zimmerman not to pursue Martin, and at this point, there was debate over whether Zimmerman continued to pursue Martin or whether he started walking back to his vehicle.

Nevertheless, at approximately



On February 27, 2012, the day after the shooting, Martin's parents, Tracy Martin and Sybrina Fulton, were unaware that their son had been killed (although the confrontation and shooting took place approximately 100 yards from Tracy's home). Tracy Martin filed a missing person's report with the Sanford Police Department. Later that day, Sanford police officers visited Tracy Martin; he identified Martin's body using a photo of Trayvon. On March 19, 2012, the Justice Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) launched an investigation into the incident.

On March 21, 2012, CNN (Cable News Network) analyzed a tape of Zimmerman's telephone call to the police dispatcher in which he allegedly used anti-African American racial slurs. The results were inconclusive, but the incident had already sparked more debate between those who supported Zimmerman and supporters of Martin. The next day, March 21, 2012, a petition on Change.org calling for the arrest of Zimmerman, created by Martin's parents, surpasses 1.3 million signatures. Soon thereafter, George Zimmerman launches a website warning about groups claiming to raise money for his defense. It is estimated that Zimmerman supporters provided between \$300,000–\$500,000 for his legal defense (Abad-Santos 2013).

On April 11, 2012, Zimmerman is charged with second-degree murder and turns himself in. Zimmerman posts bail on April 23, 2012, and enters a plea of not guilty. The legal team of Zimmerman requests that Judge Kenneth Lester step down from the case because it would be impossible for Zimmerman to receive a fair trial with Lester presiding over the case, due to remarks made by Lester during the bail hearing. Ultimately, on August 29, 2012, the Florida appeals court grants Zimmerman's request for a new judge, reasoning that comments made at the previous hearing put Zimmerman in reasonable fear of a fair trial.

Tracy Martin and Sybrina Fulton, the parents of Trayvon, settled a wrongful death claim against the Homeowners' Association of the Retreat at Twin Lakes on April 5, 2013, for an amount that was estimated to be over \$1 million. Not long after, on April 30, 2013, George Zimmerman waived his right to a stand your ground pretrial immunity hearing. If the hearing had taken place and the judge ruled in Zimmerman's favor, it would have meant that no criminal or civil trial could proceed.

The Zimmerman trial begins with opening statements on June 24, 2013. The trial was broadcast on television across the globe, and high ratings were evidence of intense interest in the case. This jury comprised six white women and one Afro-Latina woman. As they listened to the prosecution and defense, the jury had to make one of three choices: (1) to find Zimmerman guilty of second-degree murder; (2) to find Zimmerman guilty of the lesser charge of manslaughter; (3) to find Zimmerman not guilty on all counts. After deliberating for more than 16 hours, the jury found Zimmerman not guilty on all counts. The verdict ignited a high degree of mixed emotions across the country. In spite of the verdict, Tracy Martin and Sybrina Fulton continue their social justice work through the Trayvon Martin Foundation, which was founded in March 2012, and seeks to bring an end to senseless gun violence, mentor minorities, enhance S.T.E.A.M. education, and provide holistic support for families.

On May 13, 2017, Trayvon Benjamin Martin was posthumously awarded a Bachelor of Science degree in Aeronautical Science with a concentration in Aviation Education from Florida Memorial University in Miami, Florida (Muhammad 2012).

### **Black Lives Matter**

The murder of Trayvon Martin is also considered by many to be the spark that ignited the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement and the Emmett Till for millennials. Unlike the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, the BLM is more loosely organized and does not have an identifiable leadership infrastructure. The lack of identifiable leadership could be beneficial because the movement will not be as susceptible to negative police and FBI surveillance that thwarted the progressive movements of the 1950s and 1960s.

The BLM was officially founded by three black women, Patrisse Cullors, Alicia Garza, and Opal Tometi (Blay 2016). Immediately after George Zimmerman was found not guilty of second-degree murder and manslaughter on July 13, 2013, Garza shared her feelings about the verdict in a Facebook post writing: “Black people. I love you. I love us. Our lives matter.” She added the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter and the leaderless movement was officially born (Blay 2016).

Although the BLM movement has been criticized by many conservatives as a hate group, over the past few years, it has had several wide-ranging successes. One of the most notable among these successes was established in 2015, in the form of the “Say Her Name” movement. Created in honor of Sandra Bland, a black woman who died while in police custody, this movement resulted in increased awareness of police violence against black women and campus racism protests, which forced many educational institutions to deal with their racist history (e.g., Harvard, Yale, and Brown), and the Missouri University student protests that led to the resignation of the university president. Also, in 2016, the BLM movement won a lawsuit against the Baton Rouge Police Department (BRPD) when the city settled with 92 protestors for a total of \$100,000. Finally, in 2016, the movement signed an agreement with 50 other organizations to pursue the demilitarization of law enforcement, unionization of unregulated industries, and the decriminalization of drugs (Meyerson 2016).

### **NOTABLE FIGURE**

#### **Bethune, Mary McLeod (1875–1955)**

Dr. Mary Jane McLeod Bethune was born on July 10, 1875, near Mayesville, South Carolina. She is often considered to be one of the most significant black leaders in American history, being called in some accounts of her life the “First Lady of the Struggle” or “Black America’s First Lady.” She holds an important place in the racial history of Florida, where her legacy as an educator, visionary, and civil rights activist endures today.

Bethune was one of 15 children; both of her parents were former slaves. Mary was the only one of her siblings to receive a formal education. In 1893, she graduated from the Scotia Seminary for Girls in North Carolina. From there, Bethune attended the Moody Institute for Home and Foreign Missions in Chicago. In 1898, Bethune married fellow educator Albertus Bethune. A year later, they had a son, Albert McLeod Bethune. The couple relocated to Palatka, Florida, in 1904, and Mary and Albertus stayed together until Albertus left the family in 1907. The couple never formally divorced, but Albertus passed away in 1918.

Bethune had a passion for education, and upon the completion of her schooling, she moved to the state of Florida to follow her dreams. In 1904, with \$1.50, Mary McLeod Bethune opened the Daytona Literacy and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls. In 1919, the name changed to the Daytona Normal and Industrial Institute. In 1923, the school became coeducational upon its merger with the Cookman Institute of Jacksonville, Florida. In 1931, the college was renamed Bethune-Cookman College. Dr. McLeod Bethune served as the president of the institution until 1942.

In addition to her contributions in the education realm, McLeod Bethune was a trailblazer in the fight for equity and social justice, particularly for black women. Bethune once noted to fellow activist Dorothy Height, “black women don’t follow trends—they set them” (National Council for Negro Women 2017). Her work for the empowerment for black women was evident in her service to the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), an organization in which she was elected president in 1924. In an effort to unify the collective efforts of black women’s organizations, Bethune formed the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) on July 25, 1936. An “organization of organizations,” NCNW aimed to foreground the unique perspectives and experiences of black women, with a focus on economic empowerment, the right to vote, and anti-lynching legislation (National Council for Negro Women 2017). Dr. Bethune served as the first national president of NCNW until 1949.

Bethune’s work on advocacy and equality for African Americans led to her appointment on several U.S. presidential advisory councils. She advised Presidents Calvin Coolidge, Herbert Hoover, and Franklin Roosevelt on issues of minority affairs. President Harry S. Truman appointed Bethune as the national delegate to the inauguration of the president of Liberia in 1952. Most notably, she served from 1936 to 1944 as the director of the Division of Negro Affairs in the National Youth Administration. This designation secured Bethune’s position as one of the highest-ranking black officials in the Roosevelt administration. Her national leadership positions also resulted in a long-standing friendship with former first lady Eleanor Roosevelt.

Mary McLeod Bethune died in 1955 at the age of 79. In a touching last will and testament, Bethune bequeathed to the Negro community several key principles (love, hope, confidence, education, power, faith, racial dignity, harmony, and a responsibility to young people) that were to serve as her philosophical legacy to the world. On the key principle of education, Bethune wrote: “I leave you a thirst for education. Knowledge is the prime need of the hour” (Bethune-Cookman University 2017).

Dr. McLeod Bethune was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 1973 and was honored with a U.S. postage stamp in 1985. In 1994, the U.S. Park Service purchased the former headquarters of the NCNW in Washington, D.C. The location now serves as the Mary McLeod Bethune National Historic site.

In 2007, Bethune Cookman achieved its university designation and became Bethune-Cookman University (B-CU). Currently, the institution has an enrollment of just under 4,000 students and is considered one of the top HBCUs (historically black colleges or universities) in the country. In 2015, the university was ranked no. 3 among College Choice's 25 Best HBCUs in the nation. B-CU offers an array of undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Since 1943, B-CU has graduated more than 13,200 students.

Today, the NCNW boasts a membership of 25,000 members and 3 million affiliate members. The current mission of NCNW is to "lead, develop, and advocate for women of African descent as they support their families and communities" (National Council of Negro Women 2017).

Bethune's granddaughter, Dr. Evelyn Bethune, founded the Mary McLeod Bethune Legacy Preservation Institute and wrote a biography on her grandmother, entitled *Out of the Darkness and into the Light of Freedom* in 2009.

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# Georgia

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Komanduri S. Murty

## **CHRONOLOGY**

**1732**

King George II signs the Georgia charter, allowing James Oglethorpe and his associates to establish a new colony

**1733**

James Oglethorpe founds the town of Savannah

**1735**

Slavery and rum are prohibited in the new Georgia colony

**1749**

Georgia's trustees appeal to the king for repeal of the colony's ban on slavery

**1751**

African slavery is officially authorized in Georgia

**1758**

To encourage settlement of skilled white workers, the Georgia Assembly bans African slaves from engaging in such trades as carpentry, masonry, and bricklaying

**1773**

The First African Baptist Church, the oldest African American church in Georgia, is established

**1775**

Georgia adopts a new slave code

**1788**

On January 2, Georgia becomes the fourth state to enter the Union

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**1793**

The Fugitive Slave Act is passed by Congress

**1798**

Georgia prohibits the further importation of slaves

**1847**

The city of Atlanta is incorporated

**1859**

Georgia again bans the manumission of slaves by last will and testament and allows free blacks to be enslaved if they are convicted of vagrancy

**1861**

Georgia secedes from the Union on January 19 and is admitted to the Confederate States of America on February 8

**1865**

On January 16, General William T. Sherman issues Special Field Order No. 15 granting abandoned coastal lands in Georgia and elsewhere to “negroes now made free by the acts of war”

**1865**

On December 6, Georgia ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

**1866**

On November 9, Georgia rejects the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees full civil rights to African Americans

**1868**

Blacks are elected to, and then expelled from, the Georgia legislature

**1868**

On July 21, Georgia is readmitted to the Union, but the state is denied representation in Congress and reoccupied by the U.S. Army in 1869

**1870**

African American representatives are restored to seats in the Georgia legislature

**1870**

On February 2, Georgia ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting black men the right to vote; ratification of this amendment allows Georgia’s representatives to be recognized by the U.S. Congress

**1870**

On July 15, Georgia is again readmitted to the Union

**1871**

African American Jefferson Long of Macon is elected to the U.S. House of Representatives

**1877**

Georgia institutes a cumulative poll tax for voting



**1881**

Morris Brown College in Atlanta is founded by former slaves; Henry Ossawa Tanner, one of the first few black artists, is hired as an instructor

**1882–1927**

Five hundred ten blacks are lynched in Georgia, more for the period than in any other state except Mississippi, where 517 blacks were lynched.

**1883**

The U.S. Supreme Court declares the Civil Rights Act of 1875, which provided for public accommodations to blacks, unconstitutional

**1895**

In an address to the Cotton States and International Exposition in Atlanta, Booker T. Washington enunciates what is popularly known as the “Atlanta Compromise,” wherein Washington expressed willingness to accept segregation in return for whites’ help to advance educational and economic opportunities for blacks

**1899**

In *Cumming v. Richmond County* (Georgia), the U.S. Supreme Court upholds segregation in public schools by allowing unequal levels of resources for black and white secondary schools

**1900**

Georgia Democrats institute all-white primaries

**1905**

On June 29, a white mob invades the Oconee County jail and forcibly removes eight inmates, seven black men and one white man; the men are tied to fence posts and riddled with bullets—no one is ever charged in the killings

**1906**

Lasting from September 22 to 24, the Atlanta race riots occur when white mobs attack blacks, killing dozens and wounding many others, and causing considerable property damage, all in an effort to expand Jim Crow segregation

**1915**

A new Ku Klux Klan is organized on Georgia’s Stone Mountain

**1917**

The first Georgia chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is founded

**1935**

A Georgia state law, requiring segregation on all public transportation, is enacted

**1945**

A new Georgia constitution calls for separate schools for whites and blacks

**1947**

Jackie Robinson, a native of Cairo, Georgia, joins the Brooklyn Dodgers and becomes the first African American player in the major leagues

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**1955**

Georgia repeals its poll tax

**1955**

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) is founded in Atlanta to eradicate Jim Crow and to fight nonviolently for racial equality

**1960**

Martin Luther King Jr. returns to Atlanta, where he was born, to be co-pastor with his father at Ebenezer Baptist Church

**1961**

Martin Luther King launches his first direct action campaign to end segregation and racial discrimination in Albany, Georgia; the Albany Movement achieves little success due to divisions in the city's black community

**1961**

The University of Georgia and the Atlanta public schools are desegregated

**1972**

Andrew Young becomes the first black congressman from Georgia since Reconstruction, winning election in a district with a white majority

**1973**

Maynard Jackson is elected as the first black mayor of Atlanta

**Mid-1970s**

The SCLC splits into two distinct halves—a faction of older, middle-class protesters espousing nonviolence and marches and a faction of younger students espousing direct action and self-protection from the police, especially gun ownership rights

**1985**

The Council of Conservative Citizens (CCC) is founded in Atlanta; the group publicly opposes interracial marriage, affirmative action, and nonwhite immigration into the United States

**1986**

John Lewis, a Democrat and civil rights activist, becomes the second African American elected to Congress from Georgia in the twentieth century

**1992**

Cynthia McKinney becomes the first black woman elected to Congress from Georgia

**1996**

The Centennial Olympic Games take place in Atlanta; both Andrew Young and Maynard Jackson, former mayors of Atlanta, were instrumental in bringing the Olympics to the state

**2001**

The Georgia state flag is redesigned to remove the Confederate battle emblem, which had been part of the official state flag since 1956; when Governor Roy Barnes, who led the redesign effort, is defeated for reelection in 2002, opposition to the new flag is considered a key factor in his loss

**2001**

Shirley Clarke Franklin is elected mayor of Atlanta, becoming the first black woman to be mayor of a major Southern city

**2002**

Savannah dedicated a bronze statue to Africans brought into Georgia as slaves through the port of Savannah

**2010**

According to the census, Hispanics account for 10.7 percent of Atlanta's population, an increase of over 103 percent in a decade

**2011**

The Georgia legislature enacts and the governor signs a tough immigration measure empowering local police to question certain suspects about their immigration status

**2012**

Over 10,000 undocumented immigrants living in Georgia apply for a reprieve from deportation under the Obama administration's "Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals" (DACA) program

**2015**

According to the Pew Research Center, almost 400,000 undocumented immigrants, an estimated 56 percent of them from Mexico, are living in Georgia

**2015**

The Georgia legislature rejects a measure that would have prohibited undocumented immigrants benefiting under President Barack Obama executive immigration actions from getting a state driver's license

**2016**

According to the Pew Research Center, the number of Latinos registered to vote in Georgia tripled in the previous decade, although they still account for only 2.3 percent of all the state's registered voters, compared to 56.7 percent for whites, 30.1 percent for blacks, and 1.8 percent for Asians

**2016**

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, running on an anti-illegal immigration platform, carries Georgia with 50.7 percent of the vote

**2017**

According to the American Immigration Council, the foreign-born people account for just over 10 percent of Georgia's population, with the major countries of origin

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for immigrants to the state being Mexico (25.7% of immigrants), India (8.6%), Korea (4.1%), Vietnam (3.5%), and Jamaica (3.2%)

### **2017**

In response to the Confederate monuments controversy, Atlanta mayor Kasim Reed asks the public art commission to review the city's art and determine which pieces have ties to racism and slavery, though no proposals for any specific removals are made

## **NARRATIVE**

The racial history of Georgia is mainly the story of evolving relations between whites and blacks. However, racism against black Americans is not the only type of racism to exist and wreak havoc in the state. The near genocide and complete displacement of the Native Americans in the land that later became the state of Georgia is unforgettable. The five main Native tribes in these lands, the Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, and Seminoles, were forced to move hundreds of miles away from their homes and relocate to new sites in other states. Thousands perished on the journey known as the Trail of Tears in the 1830s. In the twenty-first century, Georgia, which has seen great growth in legal and illegal immigration since the 1980s, especially from Mexico, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia, has also experienced a strong anti-immigrant backlash against undocumented immigrants. Tensions have also risen in the state over Confederate monuments, views of which divide along racial lines, and the incorporation of the Confederate battle emblem into the official state flag.

### **The Colonial and Antebellum Periods**

Georgia was established as a colony in 1733 to provide a place for poor people who were unable to support themselves in England. When the city of Savannah was founded, the intention was to prohibit slaves and rum. In December 1738, a group of 121 whites petitioned unsuccessfully to the king for the use of slaves in a limited capacity to alleviate their poor economic conditions. In January 1749, a new petition was sent to the trustees for the authorization to use black slaves in Georgia. With growing pressure and threats to evade the law from Georgians, including evangelist George Whitefield, African slavery was authorized in Georgia in 1751 with certain provisions: (1) enslavers should permit their bondspersons to attend church on Sundays, and no work was to be required on that day; (2) enslavers would be penalized for any interracial sexual cohabitation or interracial marriage; (3) enslavers should not exercise unlimited powers over their slaves; and, (4) each slave trader and slaveholder should pay a tax for each person held in bondage. Thus, for those first few years (1735–1750), Georgia remained unique among Britain's American colonies to prohibit black slavery as a matter of public policy. However, neither Prohibition nor the subsequent provisions when slavery was authorized to protect slaves lasted long. Between 1751 and 1775, the enslaved population in Georgia grew rapidly from fewer than 500 to close to 18,000 people,

### **Georgia Slave Code**

Slave codes were sets of laws enacted during the American colonial period or by individual American states in which slavery was practiced during the antebellum period. These laws defined the status of slaves and the rights and responsibilities of slave owners. Georgia adopted the South Carolina slave codes in 1775, and Florida later adopted the Georgia code. The chief measures comprising this code included the following:

- Slaves are forbidden to leave the owner's property without permission from the owner.
- Any slave attempting to run away and leave the colony (state) receives the death penalty.
- Owners violating the slave codes are fined and forfeit ownership of their slaves.
- No slave shall work for pay; plant corn, peas, or rice; keep hogs, cattle, or horses; own or operate a boat; buy or sell; or wear clothes finer than "Negro cloth."

Later changes to the code stated that no slave should be taught to read and that slaves should not work more than 15 hours per day in summer and 14 hours in winter. Willfully killing a slave exacted a fine of £700, but killing one in passion was only £350. The fine for concealing runaway slaves was \$1,000 and a prison sentence of up to one year. A fine of \$100 and six months in prison was imposed on anyone selling or giving alcoholic beverages to slaves. Manumissions of slaves was forbidden, except by deed, and after 1801 required permission of the Georgia legislature. In addition, the Georgia code forbade more than six slaves from assembling at any place without the presence of a white person. The code also imposed the death penalty from insurrection, rape, murder, poisoning, burglary, arson, and assault upon a white person (Christian 1995, 27–28).

most of whom were directly imported from Angola, Sierra Leone, and the Gambia. When the first General Assembly of Georgia was held in 1775, a new slave code was adopted, which assigned all slaves at the time to bondage forever. The bondspersons worked to grow rice in the beginning, and later, when the cotton became king in the area, they worked in the cotton fields. Apart from religious services, their social activities included limited social activities for recreation during late nights, weekends, or on holidays—all in their slave quarters.

The founders' best intentions to ban slavery and limited landholdings were short-lived, and the white Georgians' utopia emerged that took the control of wealth and political power. In 1763, a slave workhouse was erected in Savannah for the purpose of enslavers sending slaves for punishment, and often brutal state-sanctioned punishments were administered. Ten years later, in 1773, two ex-slaves, George Leslie and Andrew Bryan, founded the First African Church at Savannah and opened its doors to a small congregation.

By the start of the American Revolution in 1775, many slaves were also serving in militias of several colonies, but Georgia elites prohibited blacks from joining the state militia, primarily because of fear of jeopardizing their security by allowing slaves to bear arms. Such refusal resulted in the British invasion of Georgia in late 1778. Blacks seized the opportunity and supported the British, even though they did not promise abolition. Several blacks, including runaways, joined the

British invasion and fought in the Siege of Savannah, which earned praise for their efforts. Realizing their role in defeating the Patriots, blacks refused to return to their plantations or surrender their weapons, took over shops and abandoned houses in Savannah, engaged in trade, and established a settlement called Durnford Village outside the city. The common goal of defeating the rebels was shared by Georgia slaves and the British, but for different purposes: for the British, it was a matter of bringing rebels under control; and, for blacks, it was an opportunity for freedom. Therefore, 7,000–8,000 slaves left with the British when they evacuated Savannah at the end of the war and wound up in Jamaica and East Florida. Some settled in Nova Scotia or London, and others made their way back to Africa. Thus, the revolution destabilized the institution of slavery in Georgia and elsewhere, but it did not destroy it.

Refusing to recognize an end to the Revolutionary War, blacks, those who remained, waged their own revolution. Some maroons, who served with the British, continued to wear British uniforms, called themselves “King of England’s Soldiers,” mounted a guerrilla campaign by raiding nearby plantations, enticed slaves to flee, triggered doubts among planters that their numbers might grow, threatened the efforts of Reconstruction, and gained such titles as rebels and daring banditti of slaves—all in their desire for freedom. Yet, it did not dampen white Georgians’ desire to retain slavery. By 1790, Georgia planters resurrected the slave regime through imports from Africa, the West Indies, and other states to the extent that Georgia’s slave population reached nearly 30,000. Although many free slaves failed to achieve substantial prosperity, some managed to establish and strengthen business and social relationships with white Georgian elites. Some found jobs as skilled artisans, and others obtained land and became yeomen farmers. The free slave population of Georgia grew from 398 in 1790 to 1,919 in 1800.

In 1793, Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin while working on the Mulberry Grove plantation near Savannah, which was owned by Catharine Greene, widow of Revolutionary War general Nathanael Greene. The advent of this new technology gave Georgia plantation owners a new and lucrative staple crop that could be profitably grown across much of the state. Seeking new lands for cotton cultivation, Georgia politicians after 1793 increased their efforts to acquire and distribute to white planters the lands in the state held by the Creek and Cherokee peoples. With the eventual expulsion of these tribes, cotton plantations spread across much of the state by the 1830s.

Because cotton production was labor-intensive, Georgia cotton planters relied increasingly on slave labor. As a result, Georgia’s slave population grew dramatically in the first decades of the nineteenth century. In 1793, the Georgia Assembly banned the importation beginning in 1798. Cotton planters sought to increase their enslaved workforce before the Prohibition took effect or simply ignored the ban after 1798. As a result, Georgia’s slave population had doubled by 1800, to almost 60,000, and stood at over 100,000 by 1810.

Although Congress banned the slave trade in 1808, Georgia’s enslaved population continued to grow throughout the antebellum period. The growth was spurred by slaves coming from Maryland and Virginia to Georgia plantations, and the natural increase of the state’s existing slave population. By 1820, the slave

population of Georgia was almost 150,000, and by 1840 it was over 280,000. By 1860, on the brink of the Civil War, there were over 462,000 slaves in Georgia, accounting for 44 percent of the state's total population. At the end of the antebellum period, Georgia had more slaves and slaveholders than any other state in the lower South and was second only to Virginia in the South as a whole.

Cotton production and slavery was concentrated in the counties of the Georgia Piedmont, which ran across the north central third of the state in a broad band. Known as the Black Belt for its distinctively dark, rich soil, the region was the location of the largest, most productive cotton plantations in the state. During the antebellum period, about two-thirds of the state's total population lived in these counties. By 1860, the slave population of the Black Belt was 10 times greater than the slave population in the coastal counties, where rice was the most important crop.

### **The Civil War to 1900**

Georgia seceded from the Union on January 19, 1861, and joined the Confederate States of America less than a month later on February 8. On September 22, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation to set all slaves free from bondage effective January 1, 1863. Real emancipation, however, came with military victory and the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution. At the time of military reconstruction in 1867, nearly 465,000 blacks and 591,000 whites resided in Georgia. And 95,000 blacks and whites were eligible to cast ballots. Thirty-three blacks and 137 whites were elected in the ensuing elections to the constitutional convention, which met in Atlanta in 1867–1868. During the 1868 elections, four blacks were elected to the state senate and 29 to the House of Representatives. However, many white Democrats contended that the new 1868 constitution did not permit people of color to hold office, and in the summer of 1868, and all the black legislators were removed. In 1870, the U.S. Supreme Court ordered that the elected blacks be reinstated, which caused a setback to the conservative white Georgians. The withdrawal of military rule resulted in increased violence and intimidation of black voters to keep them from the polls in the subsequent elections. Vigilantes and lynch mobs terrorized black Georgians who threatened elite white Southerners with public displays of wealth, activism, or education.

In the midst of these difficulties, African Americans benefited from the helping hands of a few white moderates, especially in the areas of education and religion. For example, Lucy Craft Laney's Haines Normal and Industrial Institute, founded in Augusta in 1883, educated black youth in languages, math, science, and vocational training for nearly 50 years. It produced academic leaders like John Hope, who became the first president of the Atlanta University. Likewise, William J. White's Augusta Institute, founded in the basement of Augusta's Springfield Baptist Church in 1867, went through several name and place changes, and ultimately located in Atlanta when John Hope renamed it Morehouse College in 1913 in honor of Henry Lyman Morehouse (then secretary of the American Baptist Home Mission Society).

In September 1895, Booker T. Washington, the eminent black educator, leader, and founder of the Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University), addressed a racially segregated audience at the Cotton States International Exposition in Atlanta. In that speech, Washington asked blacks, “Cast down your bucket where you are,” and give up three things: political power, insistence on civil rights, and higher education of Negroes—all in a peacemaking effort with Southern whites. In return, he asked whites to support blacks in their quest for economic opportunity: “helping and encouraging them [blacks] as you are doing on these grounds, and to education of head, hand, and heart, you will find that they will buy your surplus land, make blossom the waste places in your fields and run your factories.” This speech later became widely known as the “Atlanta Compromise.”

The following year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that separate public facilities (e.g., restaurants, parks, theaters, restrooms, and public schools) could be provided for blacks and whites as long as they were equal. Justice Henry Brown wrote the majority opinion: “A statute which implies merely a legal distinction between the white and colored races—has no tendency to destroy the legal equality of two races. . . . The object of Fourteenth Amendment was undoubtedly to enforce the absolute equality of the two races before the law, but in the nature of things it could not have been intended to abolish distinction based upon color, or to enforce social, as distinguished from political equality, or commingling of the two races upon terms unsatisfactory to either.” Between 1901 and 1910, the Southern states (including Georgia) passed multiple, activity-specific Jim Crow laws as a part of a snowball effect of such legislation, and the “separate but equal” doctrine turned out to be a fiction because facilities for blacks continued to be inferior to those for whites. This systematic segregation continued until the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* and subsequent congressional civil rights acts of the 1960s.

### **The Early Twentieth Century**

The 1900s saw the revival of Ku Klux Klan in Georgia, race riots and lynchings to terrorize blacks. The notorious 1906 race riots in Atlanta were spurred by inflamed newspaper reports of black men attacking white women, which led to white mobs roaming through Atlanta and its suburbs, ritualizing violence, and killing at least three dozen blacks and injuring several blacks. A handful of whites were also killed in this riot. As a measure of repressive social control on the part of white Georgians, a total of 510 blacks were lynched between 1882 and 1927, making it the second most lynching state; that is, next to Mississippi with a score of 517 black lynchings (White 2001, 255, 256). One of the most sensational in a chain of heinous incidents was the lynching of Sam Hose on April 23, 1899, who allegedly murdered his white boss, a farmer in the Palmetto, Georgia. He was tortured and set afire in front of 2,000 people. Spectators carried Hose’s burned body parts, and an Atlanta shop exhibited his charred knuckles. For this reason, this period gained the title “the Lynch Era” from historians. In 1999, the Moore’s Ford Memorial Committee and the Georgia Historical Society erected a





African Americans were victims of racial terrorism at home. Members of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) burn a cross in Swainsboro, Georgia, ca. 1940. The KKK is a series of white supremacist organizations claiming lineal descent from the original KKK, which began in the U.S. South after the American Civil War of the 1860s. (Library of Congress)

historical marker commemorating the 1946 lynching of two young black sharecroppers at the Moore's Ford Bridge, the only known official marker for a lynching in Georgia.

Relentlessly, blacks continued their protests against racism and segregation, and resisted white mobs. W.E.B. Du Bois, J.W.E. Bowen, Reverend H.H. Proctor, and Henry McNeal Turner filed actions, including an unsuccessful complaint to the Interstate Commission. These actions resulted in the 1944 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Smith v. Allwright* that granted, "all citizens a right to participate in the choice of elected officials without restriction by any state because of race," while declaring that Texas's whites-only primary was unconstitutional. Following this decision, on October 12, 1945, federal judge T. Hoyt Davis ruled in *King v. Chapman et al.* that "the plaintiff do have and recover of the defendants the sum of \$100 . . . together with future interest thereon at the rate of 7 percent per annum, and the costs of this proceeding to be taxed by the clerk." This ruling boosted the efforts and confidence of not only of the plaintiff, Primus E. King, who challenged the white primary in Muscogee County, but also of other black leaders in Georgia, who had been protesting for full voting rights. The Atlanta Negro Voters League (ANVL) was formed as a bipartisan political organization in 1949; its new voter registration initiatives quickly added thousands of black voters

(amounting to at least 25% of Atlanta's registered voters) and resulted in the balance of power in local elections. The black political influence became significant in Atlanta's race relations, as major white officeholders began to acknowledge its presence. The league primarily endorsed white candidates, such as William B. Hartsfield for mayor, from 1949 to 1953, and in return, the African American community received some political rewards (e.g., new and improved lights, streets, garbage collections, sidewalks, and school buildings). In 1953, a coalition of black voters and wealthy white voters elected Rufus Clement, the president of Atlanta University, to the Atlanta Board of Education, who became the first African American to occupy a political office in Georgia since the early 1900s.

### **The Civil Rights Movement and the Later Twentieth Century**

On May 17, 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas*, that the principle of "separate but equal" was unconstitutional. On May 24, 1954, the Court rendered three more decisions against racial segregation in higher education. These Supreme Court decisions were followed by a disruptive and violent transitional interval (1955–1965), marked by massive Southern resistance in the form of demurrers, stalling, and physical force. These delaying tactics were countered by black marches and demonstrations, riots, and the escalation of federal intervention to enforce court-ordered desegregation. The Albany Civil Rights Movement is a crucial chapter in Georgia's civil rights history that lasted close to one year (October 1961–August 1962). Inspired by the success of the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott and Martin Luther King Jr.'s book about the effort, *Stride toward Freedom* (1958), the organizers of the Albany Movement utilized nonviolent demonstrations to end Jim Crow segregation in public facilities like libraries, restaurants, bus terminal waiting rooms, grocery stores, schools, and churches. Martin Luther King and Ralph Abernathy, of the Atlanta-based Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), also joined the picketers at the request of the Albany Movement's leaders (William Anderson, a black physician; Charles Sherrod and Cordele Reagon, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee [SNCC] field secretaries; and C. B. King, one of the few black lawyers at the time in Georgia, among others). The Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) provided the first initiative for the Freedom Rides. Atlanta became the staging area in the state of Georgia to these riders as they moved throughout the region including Savannah, Thomasville, and Albany. The Albany Movement further strengthened King, Abernathy, SNCC, and the SCLC—all centered in Atlanta, in their efforts to fight for peace, justice, and racial tolerance.

The fall of 1961 marked another significant civil rights milestone by integrating the University of Georgia, which denied the admissions of qualified African Americans, after days of rioting. Charlayne Hunter-Gault and Hamilton Holmes became the first African American undergraduates admitted to the school, assisted by a legal team led by the Atlanta-based civil rights lawyer Donald L. Hollowell. An African American graduate student, Mary Frances Early, also enrolled. The

integration of the Atlanta public schools, however, took place peacefully and received national commendation from President John F. Kennedy.

In the wake of the centennial of the Emancipation Proclamation, five major civil rights organizations—the Urban League, SCLC, NAACP, SNCC, and CORE—joined together to organize a peaceful but determined “March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom” to demand the unfulfilled goals of economic and racial justice. Organized by A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin with a budget of collected donations of \$120,000, nearly 250,000 people participated in the event on August 28, 1963, that took place in front of the Lincoln Memorial for eight hours. The 17-item-long program at the event is best remembered for Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech, especially for his resonating words, “I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a desert state sweltering with the heat of injustice and oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they

### ***Demands of “March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom”***

On August 28, 1963, a political rally organized by various civil rights and religious groups drew more than 200,000 Americans to Washington, D.C. Known as the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, the rally aimed to highlight the political and social challenges faced by African Americans across the country. The culmination of the event was Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. standing in front of the Lincoln Memorial, delivering his “I Have a Dream” speech calling for an end to racism. Listed below are the demands of the rally organizers and participants:

1. Comprehensive and effective civil rights legislation from Congress covering access to all public accommodations, decent housing, adequate and integrated education, and the right to vote for all Americans
2. No federal funds from all programs in which discrimination exists
3. Desegregation of all school districts in 1963
4. Enforcement of Fourteenth Amendment and a reduction in congressional representation for all states where citizens are disfranchised
5. A new executive order banning discrimination in all housing supported by federal funds
6. Authority for the attorney general to institute injunctive suits when any constitutional right is violated
7. A federal program to train and place all unemployed workers, regardless of race in meaningful jobs with good wages
8. A national minimum wage act for all Americans of at least \$2 per hour to provide a decent standard of living
9. A broadened Fair Labor Standards Act to include all areas of employment that are presently excluded
10. A federal Fair Employment Practices Act barring discrimination by federal, state, and municipal governments, and by employers, contractors, employment agencies, and trade unions

will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character,” which called for change to attain greater goals of social justice. His contributions to the grand success of this and prior events, along with his steadfast support of nonviolence in civil rights movement, were duly recognized when he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. Further, the 1963 March on Washington reminded the urgent need for a second Reconstruction for African Americans; and, Lyndon B. Johnson, who succeeded John F. Kennedy, made the passage of Civil Rights Act of 1964 a priority.

The Civil Right Act of 1964, however, did not come without white backlash. John F. Kennedy, the 35th president, was assassinated while traveling through Dallas, Texas, on November 22, 1963. Then Chief Justice Earl Warren issued a statement: “A great and good President has suffered martyrdom as a result of the hatred and bitterness that has been injected into the life of our nation by bigots” (Pierson 2013, 92). President Johnson told the nation that the most fitting eulogy would be swift passage of a civil rights bill—a quick reminder of President Kennedy’s earlier speech on June 11, 1963, on national television and radio, emphasizing that “this nation, for all its hopes and all its boasts, will not be fully free until all its citizens are free.” On July 2, 1964, President Johnson signed the new Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law with Dr. King and other civil rights leaders present. It created an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to address issues related to race and sex discrimination in employment. In the following year, President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act (VRA) into law on August 6, 1965, and called it “a triumph for freedom as huge as any victory that has ever been won on any battlefield.” Section 4 of the VRA 1965 is of particular significance, as it required Southern states, including Georgia, to secure approval from a federal authority (i.e., Department of Justice) before implementing any changes in their election laws. This clause had been in effect until the Supreme Court struck down in June 2013.

In Georgia, Lester G. Maddox, a controversial candidate with open hostility to the civil rights movement, became the governor in 1966, due to a bitterly divided Georgia Democratic Party. During his term in the office, Maddox continued his opposition to school desegregation and his views against civil rights. On the other hand, black leaders recognized that the gains of the civil rights movement would be worthless unless economic inequalities were adequately addressed. Therefore, in 1967, Dr. King announced the Poor People’s Campaign to advocate for economic justice for the nation’s poor that included all races. The campaign had three strategies: (1) to echo the 1963 March on Washington in a united voice to represent the poor of all races across the nation—blacks, Latinos, Native Americans, and white Appalachians; (2) to prepare for potential mass arrests, that would further dramatize the plight of the poor; and, (3) to declare economic boycott of the most powerful business in America. Dr. King’s empathy for the poor drew his attention to Memphis in 1968, where he marched with garbage collectors, who were demanding better living wages and reasonable working conditions. On April 4, 1968, Dr. King was assassinated. With the support of his widow, Coretta Scott King, and the SCLC, the campaign took place for 42 days (May 14–June 24, 1968) under the leadership of Ralph Abernathy. An estimated number of 2,500 poor

people lived in Washington, D.C., during this period, while self-policing and providing a model for interracial cooperation. Dr. King, however, was sorely missed.

Jimmy Carter was likely the first Georgia liberalist to run on a conservative platform to win the election for governor in 1971. Prior to the election, Carter campaigned as a conservative, appealing to the sentiments of whites who were resistant to change. Ultimately, once elected, he completely changed his platform and committed to using his term as governor to end racial discrimination in the state. Carter declared that, "No poor, rural, weak, or black person should ever have to bear the additional burden of being deprived of the opportunity of an education, a job or simple justice." This quote appeared on the cover of 1971 *Time* magazine, representing the political class of a "new South" that committed to end racial turmoil, and the cover also unveiled Martin Luther King Jr.'s portrait in the Georgia State House. To date, Carter is the only Georgian elected as the U.S. president.

Yet, some places in Georgia, like Forsyth County, remained all white even in the 1980s. Therefore, a civil rights march was held from Cummings to Forsyth Courthouse on January 17, 1987, to commemorate Dr. King's birthday by a small group (fewer than 100) of racially mixed protesters, organized by Dean Carter and Hosea Williams. However, the racial insults by local white militant segregationists prompted a second civil rights march on January 24, 1987, in which a much larger racially mixed group (close to 20,000) of protesters, including Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young, Gary Hart, Dick Gregory, Jesse Jackson, Coretta Scott King, U.S. senators Sam Nunn and Wyche Fowler, and U.S. Representative John Lewis, participated to embark on a journey of "worldwide brotherhood and understanding." In response, the Council of Conservative Citizens was founded in 1988, in Atlanta, of which Lester Maddox was a charter member, to publicly oppose interracial marriage, affirmative action, nonwhite immigration into the United States and to promote conservative Christian values and states' rights. This organization criticized Dr. King as a left-wing agitator of black communities, with notable ties to communism and unworthy of national recognition. Fortunately, this hate group was relocated to St. Louis, Missouri, in later years.

The 1996 Olympics in Atlanta put Georgia on the international map. The Centennial Olympic Park became the venue for athletes from 79 countries. In 2003, Governor Perdue signed the new Georgia flag legislation into law, after 71.3 percent voted in the referendum. The *Savannah Morning News* wrote, "The new flag, with its red and white stripes and state seal on a blue field, acknowledges the state's history without carrying the racist baggage of the battle flag. And it points the way forward for the state that stands as a symbol of the new South. Long may it wave" (July 4, 2015, <http://pseudoallele3.rssing.com/browser.php?indx=3385681&item=12200>).

## The Twenty-First Century

Beginning in the 1960s, Georgia experienced a great wave for foreign immigration. In 1970, the state's foreign-born population was about 33,000, or 0.7 percent of the total state population. By 2013, Georgia's foreign-born population

exceeded 970,000, or 9.7 percent of the total population. The largest and fastest-growing segment of this immigrant population was Latino. In 1980, Georgia's Latino population was approximately 61,000, or 1 percent of the total state population. By 2013, the state's Latino population stood at more than 919,000, or 9.2 percent of the total population, an estimation that is likely lower than the actual figure because of the difficulty experienced by the U.S. Census Bureau in counting undocumented immigrants. Although Georgia's Latino population represents nearly every country in Latin America, the great majority of the state's Latino immigrants come from Mexico. In 2011, Mexicans accounted for about 61 percent of Georgia's total Latino population.

By the late 1990s, informal family networks were well established across the state, ensuring that Latino immigration to the state would continue to grow. Sizable Latino communities emerged in cities like Augusta, Athens, Macon, and Savannah in the decade after 2000. By the end of the twentieth century, Georgia's agriculture industry, particularly in the southern counties, was heavily dependent on laborers from Latin America. The impact of permanent rather than temporary Latino settlement began to grow across the state, but was especially noticeable on the small rural communities of southern Georgia.

After 2000, social mobility increased within the state's older Latino communities, as more established immigrant families began to buy homes in the wealthier counties of Cobb and Gwinnett and to leave the Latino immigrant enclaves where they had first settled. In Gainesville, many middle-class homes were built after 2006 and marketed to upwardly mobile immigrants who had found good jobs in the city's poultry plants. The poultry industry has been one of the earliest to attach immigrant labor, but by 2000, Latinos had entered into most of the Georgia's large industries, including construction and meatpacking.

Although Latino workers were valued by their employers, Hispanic residents encountered resistance, both subtle and overt, from some native-born residents. In September 1989, the Ku Klux Klan held an anti-immigrant rally in Gainesville, and the North Georgia Klan actively protested immigration into the 2010s. In 1992, whites in DeKalb County caused controversy by angrily confronting Latino day laborers soliciting work on city streets. Atlanta witnessed a series of incidents between police officers and Latinos during the first decades of the twenty-first century. Racial violence in schools between white and Latino students and isolated attacks on Latino workers grew in both number and intensity. Such incidents and calls for crackdowns on illegal immigration began more frequently following the economic recession of 2008–2009. After the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, hostility toward immigrants in Georgia markedly increased, and a number of state politicians gained prominence by leading anti-immigrant campaigns. Because few recent immigrants were involved in state politics, anti-immigrant voices were often unchallenged.

Although fear of economic displacement and racial intolerance underlay much native-born resistance, the great influx of Latinos into Georgia in recent decades caused undeniable difficulties and problems. Often underfunded, Georgia's public schools had great trouble integrating non-English-speaking students, especially in poorer school districts. In Dalton, local leaders sought to solve this problem by

partnering with educators at the University of Monterrey in Mexico to create the Georgia Project. From 1997 to 2007, the program brought Spanish-speaking teachers to Dalton to help educate the large number of Hispanic students in the city's schools and sent Dalton teachers to Mexico to learn Spanish. Hospitals, churches, and similar institutions providing social services have also been heavily impacted by the large numbers of immigrants seeking their services. Undocumented immigrants, with no bargaining, were often exploited by employers who offered only low pay and few benefits for dangerous or difficult jobs. Founded in 2006, the Georgia Latino Forum brings together organizations with ties to the state's Latino population to wrestle with such issues as illegal immigration, education, health care, and political engagement.

By 2009, Latino population growth began to slow down in some parts of the state, such as Dalton and Atlanta. One reason for this trend may have been the passage of the Georgia Security and Immigration Compliance Act, which took effect in July 2007 and requires state residents to demonstrate legal residency status to work for a public entity or receive government benefits. This law, the recession of 2008–2009, and stronger federal efforts after 2009 to find and deport undocumented workers likely discouraged some Latinos from coming to or remaining in Georgia.

Although opponents of immigration emphasize the negative impacts of demographic change, particularly the fear that undocumented immigrants will take jobs from native-born workers, many others stress the positive contributions Latino immigrants have brought to Georgia. For instance, immigrant labor has revitalized some sectors of the Georgia economy, and the spending power of the state's Latino community is vital for the health of Georgia's economy. Immigrant cultural contributions—food, music, traditional celebrations—have certainly made Georgia a more diverse and multiethnic state.

## NOTABLE FIGURES

### **Carter, James Earl “Jimmy,” Jr. (1924– )**

James Earl “Jimmy” Carter Jr., the 39th president of the United States, was born on October 1, 1924, in Plains, Georgia, to a hardworking peanut farmer, James Earl Carter Sr. and a registered nurse, Bessie Lillian Gordy. The family was relocated when Carter was only four years old to a nearby rural town called Archery that was predominantly occupied by poor African American families. Carter had three siblings: Gloria, Ruth, and Billy. His mother crossed racial divides in the early 1920s and counseled black women on health care issues, which served as a moral example to young Carter. His father, who owned a peanut farm and a neighborhood store, maintained pro-segregation views; however, he did not prevent young Carter from befriending black children in the neighborhood, which helped him to have progressive views in his later life. As historian Douglas Brinkley said, Carter had a unique opportunity to come across the new liberal South attitude of his mother and the old South perception of his father at an early age. Moreover, Carter described in his book, *A Full Life: Reflection in Ninety*, about

the profound influence that his mother had on him, and how he admired his father even though he did not influence him.

Carter attended the all-white Plains High School from 1930 to 1941, despite his disbelief in school segregation. The majority of his black friends were taught at home or at church, but Carter continued his friendship with them. A diligent student, Carter began working at his father's store at the age of 10. He attended Sunday school at Plains Baptist Church, where his father occasionally taught, and listened to baseball games and politics with his father on a battery-operated radio. He was the first person to graduate from high school from his father's side.

The Carters benefited from the New Deal farming subsidies during the Great Depression, which enabled them to expand their farmlands enough to employ over 200 workers by late 1930s. The financial stability also helped Carter to pursue engineering at Georgia Southwestern Junior College. Afterward, he joined the Naval ROTC program to continue his engineering studies at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Upon his graduation from Annapolis in June 1946, he was assigned to the USS *Wyoming* out of Norfolk, Virginia. He married Rosalynn Smith, his childhood friend, on July 7, 1946. He was accepted into a six-month submarine officer training school in June, 1948, and was assigned to Pearl Harbor in March 1949 and to other places subsequently. He was honorably discharged from U.S. Navy on October 9, 1953, and his father died of pancreatic cancer around the same time. He returned with his wife Rosalynn to Georgia to save the family farm. Within a short time, he also became a deacon and Sunday school teacher in the Plains Baptist Church and served on local civic boards.

Carter was the only white man in Plains who refused to join the White Citizens' Council, a Southern segregationist group formed to protest the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* of 1954 to end the desegregation of public schools. The disgruntled segregationists put a sign that read "Coons and Carters go together" on the front door of his home. Carter became the Georgia state senator in 1962 and continued in that capacity for two terms, earning a reputation as tough and independent politician. He became the governor of Georgia in 1970.

Carter strongly supported civil rights, publicly opposed busing as a method of integrating public schools, and publicly called for an end to segregation. When Carter took charge as governor, only three African Americans were serving on state boards; but, by the time he left the office, this number increased to 53; the number of black state employees crossed the 2,000 mark, African Americans joined state patrol, and black officers served in his security force. Overall, Carter increased the representation of black officials in state government by 25 percent. He also promoted education and prison reform.

Following Richard Nixon's Watergate scandal, he ran against the Republican incumbent Gerald Ford, and became the 39th president of the United States in 1977. In his presidential inaugural address, he reminded America of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream:

That we had remembered the words of Micah and renewed our search for humility, mercy, and justice; that we had torn down the barriers that separated those of different race and region and religion, and where there had been mistrust, built unity,



with a respect for diversity; that we had found productive work for those able to perform it; that we had strengthened the American family, which is the basis of our society; that we had ensured respect for the law and equal treatment under the law, for the weak and the powerful, for the rich and the poor; and, that we had enabled our people to be proud of their own Government once again. I would hope that the nations of the world might say that we had built a lasting peace, based not on weapons of war but on international policies which reflect our own most precious values. These are not just my goals—and they will not be my accomplishments—but the affirmation of our Nation’s continuing moral strength and our belief in an undiminished, ever-expanding American dream.

After his one-term presidency, Carter turned to diplomacy and advocacy, authored several books (including *Our Endangered Values: America’s Moral Crisis*), worked extensively with Habitat for Humanity, founded the Carter Presidential Center to promote human rights across the globe, and was honored with Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

### **King, Martin Luther, Jr. (1929–1968)**

Martin Luther King Jr. was the well-known leader of the civil rights movement, SCLC, and an American Baptist minister in the 1950s and 1960s. He was born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia, to Reverend Martin Luther King Sr. and Alberta Williams King. Named as Michel King at the time of his birth, the infant King was renamed after the German reformer Martin Luther, following his father’s participation in the Fifth Baptist World Alliance Congress in Berlin, Germany, in 1934. The young King experienced racial prejudice since his early childhood. He was friend to a white boy, a neighborhood businessman’s son, until they were six years old, when they were separated by the prevailing segregated school system. Thereafter, King was not allowed to play with his white friend.

King attended Booker T. Washington High School, where he took active part in the school’s debate team and became popular among peers for his public speaking ability. At the age of 13 years, he was the youngest manager of a newspaper delivery station for the *Atlanta Journal*. Inspired for higher education, King passed his college entrance examination in the 11th grade and joined Morehouse College at the age of 15. In 1948, he graduated with a BA degree in sociology and joined Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania, where he was elected president of the student body, developed an “inner urge to serve humanity,” and earned his BDiv degree in 1951. Two years later, he married Coretta Scott on June 18, 1953. At the time, King was 24 years and Coretta was 26 years. The next year, in 1954, the 25-year-old King became the pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. The following year, he received his PhD degree in systematic theology from Boston University.

Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi’s ideology of nonviolent civil disobedience in India, King led the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955. The movement actually started with a 15-year-old school girl, Claudette Colvin, who refused to move to the back of the bus and give up her seat to a white person—a civil disobedience to the existing Jim Crow laws. Nine months later, Rosa Parks did the same thing on

December 1, 1955, and was arrested. The Montgomery Bus Boycott lasted for 385 days. King's house was bombed, and he was arrested during his campaign. Finally, the racial segregation on all Montgomery public buses ended with the U.S. District Court ruling in *Browder v. Gayle* (142 F. Supp. 707, 1956), which maintained that: "the enforced segregation of black and white passengers on motor buses operating in the city of Montgomery violates the Constitution and laws of the United States."

After this ruling, King expanded the nonviolent civil rights movement throughout the South. He led various desegregation efforts, but the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom on August 28, 1963, became very prominent. The first president of the SCLC, King joined five other influential African American leaders in this march: Roy Wilkins from NAACP, Whitney Young from National Urban League, A. Philip Randolph from Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, John Lewis from SNCC, and James Farmer Jr. from CORE. The march demanded the following: ending racial segregation in public schools, civil rights legislation, prohibition of discrimination in employment, protection of civil rights workers from police brutality, a \$2 minimum wage for all workers, and self-government for Washington, D.C. (as opposed to existing governance by congressional committee). This was when and where King delivered his famous 17-minute "I Have a Dream" speech, wherein he expressed "that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood." It was attended by over 200,000 persons and created a wave of civil rights protest that mobilized even Northern states. Efforts of this magnitude and intensity, led by the King, put the civil rights on the top of the National agenda and paved way to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Realizing that gains in civil rights did not improve the material conditions of life for many African Americans, King shifted his focus from civil rights to human rights and organized the Poor People's Campaign in 1968. He envisioned that: "America is at a crossroads of history, and it is critically important for us as a nation and a society to choose a new path and move upon it with resolution and courage. . . . In this age of technological wizardry and political immorality, the poor are demanding that the basic needs of people be met as the first priority of our domestic program."

It was carried out under Ralph Abernathy's leadership in the wake of King's assassination. This protest camp aimed to demand economic and human rights for poor Americans, regardless of their race, consisted of 3,000 persons, who stayed for six weeks at the Washington Mall. This effort was to energize the President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, which was declared in 1964 but had a dismal effect on poor. As a result, the "economic bill of rights" manifested with five components: meaningful job at a living wage; secure and adequate income for all those unable to find or do a job; access to land for economic uses; access to capital for poor people and minorities to promote their own businesses; and, ability for ordinary people to play a truly significant role in the government. Though the campaign did not take place until King's assassination, it represented King's efforts to

synthesize the struggles for civil rights and economic justice through a coordinated effort of group mobilization on a national scale. On April 4, 1968, amid the campaign effort, King was fatally shot at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee, while he was standing on the balcony. He was rushed to St. Joseph's hospital, where he was pronounced dead at 7:05 P.M.

King, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate in 1964 and the recipient of nearly 50 honorary degrees from various colleges and universities, continues to be held at the highest honor in America and abroad even today. An architect of the nonviolent civil rights movement, King left a lasting legacy behind not only for African Americans to continue the pursuit of economic and political justice, but to all Americans who hold themselves to high moral standards and believe in racial equality and justice. He is remembered each year on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, a U.S. federal holiday since 1986.

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## Hawai'i

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Ryan Hata

### **CHRONOLOGY**

**300–700 CE**

Polynesians, the original settlers, arrive from Marquesas

**1627**

The Spanish first visit Hawai'i

**1778**

Captain James Cook arrives in the Hawaiian Kingdom for the first time

**1810**

The Hawaiian Islands are united for the first time under King Kamehameha the Great

**1813**

The Spanish introduce coffee and pineapple to the Hawaiian Islands

**1820s**

American capitalists begin to dominate the sandalwood trade, and American missionaries begin arriving in the islands

**1826**

The United States enters into a treaty with Hawai'i on commerce and navigation

**1829**

The first coffee crops are planted

**1835**

The first sugarcane crops are planted

**1840**

Hawai'i adopts its first constitution

## **230 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

**1852**

The first “coolie laborers” from China are introduced to the Hawaiian Islands

**1866**

U.S. minister to Hawai‘i James McBride permanently stations a United States warship in Hawaiian waters

**1882**

The Chinese Exclusion Act is passed; the act is the first in U.S. history to limit immigration by a particular racial ethnic group

**1885**

The first pineapple crops are planted

**1887**

The Pearl River Lagoon is ceded to the United States through the Bayonet Constitution

**1888**

Three-quarters of all arable land is taken over by Caucasians for sugar plantation development

**1893**

The Hawaiian monarchy is overthrown

**1894**

The Republic of Hawai‘i is established

**1897**

Hawai‘i is annexed to the United States—Native Hawaiians essentially lost their identity, land, and culture

**1898**

Hawai‘i becomes a U.S. territory

**1924**

The Immigration Act limits the number of people who can immigrate from southern and eastern European countries and outright bans people of Arab and Asian descent

**1941**

Japan attacks Pearl Harbor in Hawai‘i, thus bringing the United States into World War II

**1959**

Hawai‘i becomes the 50th state of the United States of America on August 21

**1965**

The Immigration and Nationality Act abolishes the restriction of immigration based on a person’s race or ethnicity

**1972**

The Education Amendment of 1972 (Title IX), which seeks gender equality for women, is coauthored by Patsy Mink, who serves in the U.S. House of Representatives for the state of Hawai‘i

**1993**

The United States apologizes for its role in the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy

**2008**

Hawai'i-born Punahou alum Barack Obama becomes the 44th president of the United States; Obama carries Hawai'i with almost 72 percent of the vote.

**2010**

The final proposal of the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act (Akaka Bill) is introduced to Congress; it passes in the House, but not in the Senate

**2012**

Barack Obama is reelected for a second presidential term; Obama wins Hawai'i with over 70 percent of the vote

**2017**

United States District judge Derrick Watson from Hawai'i blocks President Donald Trump's travel ban

**2017**

After President Donald Trump pulls the United States out of the Paris Climate Accords, Hawai'i becomes the first state to enact a law that aligns with the Paris agreement, regardless of what the United States does on the federal level

**NARRATIVE**

The Hawaiian Islands were first discovered and inhabited by Polynesians roughly 1500 years ago, followed by the Tahitians 800 years later. These two ethnic groups shaped and formed what is today known as traditional Indigenous Hawaiian culture. The history of race and racism in Hawai'i dates back to the eighteenth century, when the British explorer James Cook (1728–1799) first arrived in the Hawaiian Islands, which he called the Sandwich Islands, in 1768. Although other Europeans had reached the isolated Hawaiian archipelago before Captain Cook, the impact of his arrival drastically changed the cultural and physical landscape of the islands and established the foundations of modern-day Hawai'i.

Captain Cook's arrival was devastating to the Hawaiian people because he opened the door to more extensive Western settlement in the islands, and those settlers brought with them a vastly different set of political, economic (e.g., capitalism), and religious (e.g., Christianity) ideas, as well as a number of foreign diseases to which the Hawaiians had little resistance. Capitalism and Christian ideology came to dominate Hawai'i by the 1820s. A multitude of factors, both religious and economic, helped Americans establish a strong influence within Hawai'i's government during the nineteenth century. This influence gradually shifted control of the islands from the Hawaiian monarchy to Europeans espousing Western ideals of government. The traditional Hawaiian way of thinking, in

terms of collectivism, was overpowered by Western individualism. The growing American presence pressured Hawaiian kings to take actions to protect land tenure and private property—concepts foreign to Hawaiians, who had never before considered land as “property” or “private.”

### The Bayonet Constitution (1887)

By 1888, Hawai‘i’s plantation community, which had been established by Western settlers, had expanded exponentially. In 1898, the United States officially annexed Hawai‘i. One of the main reasons for the annexation was the desire to secure American trade dominance in the islands. In 1875, King David Kalākaua (1836–1891) signed a treaty with the United States, which made it possible to sell sugar to the United States tax free. However, many Caucasians in the islands were distrustful of King Kalākaua and wished to establish full American control of the Hawaiian sugar trade. This desire led to the imposition upon King Kalākaua of the Bayonet Constitution, which was arguably the most influential law in the history of Hawai‘i.



Hawaii enjoyed a successful monarchy prior to its takeover by foreigners. David Kalākaua (1836–1891), king of Hawaii from 1872 through his death, was a staunch supporter of Native Hawaiian civil rights. His opposition to the white business community led to a rebellion. He was forced to sign a new constitution, relinquishing his powers as head of state. (Hulton Archive/Getty Images)

Acting under duress, King David Kalākaua signed the Bayonet Constitution on July 6, 1887. The constitution was drafted by *haoles*, or Caucasian businessmen, and lawyers who were part of a group called the Hawaiian League. The league wanted the kingdom of Hawai‘i to be part of the United States, thereby ensuring that its members would receive the immense benefits deriving from control of the trade in sugarcane and pineapple. With the help of an armed militia, called the Honolulu Rifles, the league forced the king to sign the new law.

By signing the Bayonet Constitution, King David Kalākaua effectively relinquished his role as ruler of Hawai‘i and became a mere figurehead. By stripping the king of all power and influence, the Bayonet Constitution initiated the downfall of the Hawaiian monarchy and changed the political landscape of Hawai‘i. The people were now



empowered to vote for their new rulers, as opposed to the tradition of hereditary monarchy, whereby new rulers came to power because they possessed royal blood or had been adopted into the royal family. However, the vote was restricted largely to the wealthy and landowners, which meant voters were primarily people of American, European, and Hawaiian descent. Laborers of East Asian ancestry were effectively without political power. Besides ending the reign of the Hawaiian monarchy, the Bayonet Constitution diminished the voice of Native Hawaiian people in government. By signing this document, King Kalākaua had to allow members of his cabinet to be non-Hawaiian people, thus laying the foundation for an American takeover of the islands.

The Bayonet Constitution effectively deprived the Hawaiian monarchy of any power over Hawai'i. After King Kalākaua passed away on January 20, 1891, his sister, Lydia Lili'u Loloku Walania Wewehi Kamaka'eha, ascended to the throne as Queen Lili'uokalani. The new queen sought to undo the Bayonet Constitution by negotiating with officials in both the Hawaiian and American governments, but she was unsuccessful in this effort and she was forced to surrender the Hawaiian Kingdom to the United States in 1893.

### **The Plantation Economy**

In the nineteenth century, the importation of Western capitalist ideals led to the development of extensive sugarcane and pineapple plantations in Hawai'i. By the later part of the century, such plantations were a highly profitable business and nearly three-quarters of the land suitable for harvesting crops were used for sugarcane fields. The people who owned and ran these plantations were Caucasians; people of other races and ethnicities were laborers on the plantations, working for Caucasian bosses. According to Jean Ryoo and Peter McLaren (2010), Hawai'i's history in the nineteenth century "reveals how contact with European [capitalism and imperialism] paved the way for the poverty and oppression experienced by the majority of Hawaiians, people of color, and hard-working laborers living on the islands today" (12). The plantations formulated and, inevitably, set up a class system with a racial hierarchy. Ryoo and McLaren define class as "an individual's social relationships that directly influence her or his social category and access to economic resources while simultaneously helping to explain the consequences of such categorization and relationships" (2010, 4).

The class system arising from the plantation economy resulted in two main classifications—the "local" and the "*haole*." These class legacies serve "not just as a classification system but also as an important marker for identity and privileges in both colonial and contemporary [Hawaii]" (Tan 2012, 4). Locals are defined as either indigenous Hawaiians or people who were born in Hawai'i from immigrant laborers. In contrast, *haole* is a Hawaiian term with its historical context and meaning derived from two Hawaiian words: *ha*, which equates to breathe, and *ole*, meaning "without." Initially, *haole* was a term used to describe foreigners or people who could not speak Hawaiian. Over time, this definition has evolved and taken on negative connotations; it now usually describes people of Caucasian heritage, especially "relatively affluent whites of Northern European and American

ancestry” (Bailey and Farber 1993, 818–19). Despite these two broad terms, the underlying narrative or meaning goes much beyond the context on the surface. According to scholar Eric Tan, the two main classifications of people in Hawai‘i “does not simply designate ethnic or cultural origins, but also has important definitions and meanings attached to it which are tied to social positioning, status, and perceptions” (Tan 2012, 2).

In the early days of the plantation economy, many Hawaiians worked on the plantations for *haole* owners. Working conditions were poor and wages were low. Hawaiians were paid between \$1.50 and \$2 a day, which was less than the wages of contemporary agricultural workers in California. Unfortunately, the Hawaiian population decreased by 90 percent over a 70-year period in the mid-nineteenth century, largely, it is believed, because of the foreign diseases brought to Hawai‘i by Westerners. With the drastic decline of Native Hawaiians, plantation owners were unable to find enough laborers to work their plantations. This labor shortage prompted plantation owners to employ the first “coolie laborers” who came to Hawai‘i from China. These people relished the opportunity to work abroad because they could make more money in Hawai‘i than they could in China. Despite the better pay, it took these immigrants a generation or two to move out of poverty. The plantation owners realized they could make more profit by giving their workers just enough incentive to stay.

In fact, the scheme to maximize profits from the plantations exploited many people from other countries as the owners started hiring workers from a variety of countries, including Japan, the Philippines, Korea, Portugal, and Puerto Rico. These owners carefully regulated the number of workers brought in from each country so as to ensure that workers from each country would not become too numerous or too concentrated and thus be enabled to communicate with each other and start an uprising for higher wages.

A special social class distinction was given to people of Portuguese descent. Unlike the other plantation laborers who come from what were classified as minority countries, the Portuguese were Europeans. However, they were not described as *haole*. Many scholars agree that this was because of their unique circumstances. The Portuguese entered Hawai‘i to work on the plantations rather than as plantation owners. Despite their nonclassification as *haole*, these Portuguese locals were often seen as being a tier above the other racial and ethnic groups, giving them a much higher status among the plantation population. The Portuguese received more significant roles and higher pay than their laborer counterparts. Unlike workers from Asia and Puerto Rico, many Portuguese laborers were offered land, a house, and managerial positions on the plantation. Therefore, the Portuguese were superior to most laborers on the plantation, but inferior to the *haole* plantation owners. Even for unskilled Portuguese laborers working on plantations, the base rate was \$24 a month, higher than their minority peers received (“Labor Conditions in Hawaii” 1916, 47).

A tier below the Portuguese laborers were laborers from East Asia. These groups included people mainly from China, Japan, and Korea. Laborers from China were first brought to the islands to work on the plantations because they did not cost plantation owners much money. The first Chinese coolies arrived to

Hawai'i in January 1852, with hundreds more brought in the following years. In 1864, 1,700 Chinese laborers were brought to Hawai'i. However, government officials feared Hawai'i would turn into a Chinese colony and the Chinese population would come to dominate the islands (Smith 1942, 36–37).

With this rising angst, owners needed to find laborers from another country to help with the upkeep and rapid expansion of their plantations. Again, they found able bodies in East Asia, but this time from Japan. Although the first Japanese laborers arrived in Hawai'i in 1868, the main incursion of Japanese workers came in the 1880s, with more than 62,000 Japanese arriving in the islands in 1886 alone. Plantation owners enjoyed a steady flow of laborers from Japan until the early twentieth century, when Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 temporarily stopped the flow. Plantation owners then recruited people from Korea. Initially, 515 Koreans came to Hawai'i in 1903. That number grew to 7,296 by 1905. However, after the Russo-Japanese War ended, owners again hired Japanese coolies again, thus ending the boom in Korean immigration to Hawai'i (Smith 1942, 37).

Overall, the average pay for unskilled Asian laborers working on plantations was a little above \$20 a month. Over time, laborers from these groups established themselves in Hawai'i and received education from the Western school system. After a generation or two, some people in these groups were able to exploit the system to acquire preferred positions in the government and the professions. Many became retail store owners or worked in grocery-related businesses. Others who continued to work on the plantations benefitted from legal support provided by the Hawaiian Organic Act of 1900, which allowed laborers to negotiate their work hours, pay, and other working conditions.

In late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, two acts of Congress forced Hawai'i plantation owners to search for laborers who did not come from East Asia. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 prohibited all immigration of Chinese workers, and the Immigration Act of 1924 restricted immigration from many groups, but outright banned the immigration of workers from Asia. Also, many Chinese, Japanese, and Korean workers already in Hawai'i strove for upward mobility out of the plantation system; they used their right to strike and challenged low wages and poor working conditions on the plantations. Forced to seek people from other racial and ethnic groups to replace Asian workers, plantation owners turned mainly to laborers from Puerto Rico and the Philippines. Puerto Ricans came to Hawai'i under unique circumstances. Because Puerto Rico became a U.S. territory in 1898 as a result of the Spanish-American War, Puerto Ricans were not foreigners. Despite their status, the wages for Puerto Ricans were still very low. Men working for the plantations in the city as laborers received 30 cents per day. Women in similar positions received even less. It was far worse in the countryside, where men were most likely to receive goods like food, metals, or clothing as payment. When men were able to receive cash, they only got between 15 and 30 cents per day (Souza 1984, 160–61).

The final major group of plantation laborers were the Filipinos, who came into Hawai'i in the early twentieth century, when the Philippines was a U.S. possession and Filipinos, like Puerto Ricans, were not foreign workers. Responding to Japanese and Chinese laborers who were organizing strikes and demanding higher

wages and better benefits, plantation owners hired many older Filipinos because most, if not all, were illiterate. As this population was aged, they did not benefit from compulsory education laws and requirements. In addition, they could not effectively communicate with other laborers and were less likely to join forces and demand improved working conditions. Unfortunately, many Filipinos were working for less net income than they would have made in the Philippines. The plantation company store's monopoly over the sale of basic necessities to their workers further stripped them of their hard-earned incomes.

Since the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893, many people from various countries have immigrated to Hawai'i, mainly to work on the plantations. Arguably, people of Japanese and Chinese descent have benefitted the most from their residence in Hawai'i. These groups of Asian descent became one of the most economically successful segments of the Hawaiian population in the twentieth century, ranging between 38 percent and 50 percent of the population on all of the Hawaiian Islands. This success was mostly because they were the first laborers to come to Hawai'i, and they later benefitted from Hawai'i's compulsory education requirements. They were able to achieve upward mobility and escape from lower-tier plantation jobs, becoming grocery store owners, doctors, lawyers, and, eventually, officials within Hawai'i state government. Unfortunately, few other groups, despite their growing population, were not able to escape lower-tier jobs because Hawai'i's state government "licenses certain professions and thus is in a position to prevent Filipinos [and people from other backgrounds] from serving as dentists, physicians, or in certain other occupations" (Haas 1984, 48; Office of Hawaiian Affairs 2011). Overall, this shaped the job opportunities, economic wealth, and social status of various racial groups throughout the twentieth century and even into the twenty-first century.

### **Military Presence in Hawai'i**

Another major reason for the overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy in 1893 was the need for an American military presence in the Pacific Ocean. U.S. involvement in the Spanish-American War of 1898, which was fought in part in the Philippines, led some Americans to believe that the United States needed to establish a military base in Hawai'i. In addition to providing a key spot for fueling naval vessels, such a base would create an American military presence closer to Asia than to the continental United States. This American military presence would eventually become a key component in the overall racial structure of Hawai'i.

Although initially purposely excluded from coming to the islands to work on the plantations, after annexation, around 30 African American families were recruited to work on sugar plantations on the island of Maui. Hawai'i's African American population increased more significantly in the early twentieth century due to black soldiers and sailors being stationed in the islands. As Hawai'i became a strategic base in the Pacific for the United States, "[African Americans] were brought to the Islands as members of the Army or Navy; in 1913 the 25th Infantry Regiment of all-black males served in Hawai'i" (Nordyke 1988, 245). As a whole,

African Americans were seen to live in peace and harmony on a public scale. However, on a personal, social, and economic level, African Americans were mistreated. This was mainly because this racial group came to Hawai'i much later than their minority counterparts. Scholar Shirley Abe explained:

If things had gone on naturally, without any introduction of the Mainland pattern of race relations, [African Americans] would very likely have been gradually accepted and absorbed into the community, just as the Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese, and Filipinos have become a part of the community, each one starting toward the bottom of the social scale and working its way up. (1945, 36)

Unfortunately, the racism experienced by many African Americans on the Mainland was extended to the islands. Some racism was in overt forms, such as refusal of service in a bar or restaurant. Other discriminatory actions were subtler, like not getting job interviews or black military men not being able to attract any girls to dance with at the local clubs.

At the same time the United States shifted its primary base in the Pacific from the West Coast of the mainland to Hawai'i, Japan began seeking dominance in Asia. On December 7, 1941, Japan successfully launched a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, the naval base on the island Oahu. Although Hawai'i was under martial law following the attack, and many people did not trust Japanese Americans, who had to speak English rather than Japanese for fear of being considered Japanese spies, conditions for Japanese Americans were better in Hawai'i than on the mainland. This was because there was no internment of Japanese Americans, in part because people of Japanese ancestry made up about one-third of the population of the Hawaiian Islands. However, just like on the mainland, Japanese Americans were not allowed to serve in the U.S. military until 1943, when the famous 442nd, an all-Japanese American unit, was established. These soldiers served with distinction in Europe. One of the members of the 442nd, Daniel K. Inouye, was elected in 1959 as Hawai'i's first representative to the U.S. House of Representatives. In 1962, he became the first Japanese American to be elected to the U.S. Senate, where he served for 50 years.

### **Contemporary Hawai'i**

Hawai'i is one of the most racially diverse places in the world. According to a 2015 U.S. Census Bureau report (updated in 2017), the Asians alone constitute 37.3 percent of the total population of Hawai'i. Caucasians account for 26.7 percent, Hispanic or Latinos 10.4 percent, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders 9.9 percent, African Americans 2.2 percent, and American Indians or Alaskan Natives 0.5 percent. However, since Hawai'i is known as a "cultural or racial melting pot," it is not surprising that people who identify as having two or more races make up 23.0 percent of the total population of Hawai'i (United States Census Bureau 2017).

Despite this diversity, racial and cultural appropriation still takes place today, especially as it pertains to Native Hawaiians, the Hawaiian culture, and the state of Hawai'i. Many people outside Hawai'i would call people "Hawaiian" or group

people as “Hawaiians” without realizing the racist connotations of these perceptions. People assume if you are from Hawai‘i, you are ethnically Hawaiian, which is not always the case. Many racial and ethnic groups make up the total population of Hawai‘i; over 90 percent of Hawai‘i’s population is not ethnically Hawaiian. Despite these numbers, it is possible to understand why people outside Hawai‘i might call someone “Hawaiian” simply because they live in the islands; it equates with calling a person a “Californian” if he or she is a person from California. However, it is important to note that these subtle connotations make a huge difference when it comes to the authenticity or racial appropriation of certain groups of people and cultures.

For example, in contemporary Hawai‘i, the capitalistic appropriation of Hawaiian culture occurs primarily in the tourist industry. Professor Haunani-Kay Trask (1993) describes this cultural appropriation as “cultural prostitution.” For example, the *hula* is traditional Hawaiian dance accompanied by *mele* (song) or *oli* (chant), which depicts a story passed on from generation to generation. Today, the *hula* is exoticized, essentially mocked in Hawai‘i and abroad for tourist purposes (17).

Other means of cultural appropriation can be attributed to Halloween costumes from prominent Disney movies, such as *Lilo and Stitch* (2002) and, more recently, *Moana* (2016). The former mocks the *hula*, and the later attacks sacred body tattoos, which were traditionally received to indicate a person’s tribe, status, or personal achievement. Above all, tattoos told a story and are very symbolic to the people of Polynesian ancestry.

To conclude, race and racism is vastly different for the state of Hawai‘i; it is not merely a black and white issue because Hawai‘i has always been a state where people of minority descent were the majority. Instead, the overlying racism is directed toward Native Hawaiians. Over 300 years ago, the landscape of Hawai‘i was vastly different than it is now. However, the arrival of Captain Cook in 1768 led to social and cultural changes that led to the racial diversity of the modern-day American state of Hawai‘i.

## **NOTABLE FIGURES**

### **Akaka, Daniel (1924–2018)**

Born in Honolulu, Daniel Akaka was a member of the Army Corps of Engineers during World War II. After the war, he earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Hawai‘i. A high school teacher and later a program planner for the Department of Education, Akaka was first elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1976 for Hawai‘i’s Second Congressional District. In 1990, he was appointed to the U.S. Senate on the death of Senator Spark Matsunaga. Akaka was later elected to three full terms. In March 2011, he announced that he would not run for reelection in 2012 and left office on January 3, 2013.

Serving alongside Senator Daniel Inouye, a fellow military veteran, Akaka was also a strong proponent of civil rights. He served on numerous committees, including the Veteran Affairs and Indian Affairs committees. The only senator of Chinese

and Hawaiian ancestry, Akaka fought for Native Hawaiian parity with Native Americans and Native Alaskans. As Minnesota senator Al Franken put it, “[Daniel Akaka] cares about the native population in [Hawaii]. He’s an enormous champion for them [there is] no greater champion for his people than Danny Akaka” (“Senator Daniel Akaka’s Legacy as He Retires” 2012, 1).

There are two defining pieces to Akaka’s legacy. The first is his success in persuading the U.S. government to issue a formal apology for the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom. The second is the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act also known as the “Akaka Bill.” If passed, it would have created for Native Hawaiians similar rights to those of Native Americans. Native Hawaiians would have been able to take land back from the state of Hawai'i and possibly from the federal government. It would have also allowed Native Hawaiians to be exempt from state taxes, along with creating separate civil and criminal jurisdictions for Native Hawaiians. It also had the potential of taking back land currently owned by the state and federal governments. Although the bill passed several times in the House, it never passed in the Senate.

### **Inouye, Daniel (1924–2012)**

Daniel Ken Inouye was born in Honolulu, Hawai'i, on September 7, 1924. His parents, Hyotaro and Kame Imanaga Inouye, were Japanese immigrants. Daniel was the eldest of four children. He was raised with traditional Japanese culture and values, as well as with American customs. He attended McKinley High School during the day, followed by a traditional Japanese school in the evening. When Inouye was a senior in high school, Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Because there was no Japanese American internment in Hawai'i, Inouye was able to graduate from McKinley High School on May 21, 1942, and enroll at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa as a premedical student.

On February 1, 1943, the famous 442nd Japanese American *Nissei* (or second-generation Japanese American) regimental combat team was formed. The following month, Inouye was the second to last member to be accepted to this historic unit. This unit’s motto was “Go for Broke.” The unit fought valiantly in the European Theatre; Inouye lost his right arm in battle.

In May 1947, Inouye was honorably discharged as a captain and came back to Hawai'i with numerous accolades, including the Distinguished Service Cross, Bronze Star Medal, two Purple Hearts, and 12 other medals and citations. Because of his lost arm, Inouye needed to change his long-term career plans of being a surgeon. He graduated from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in 1950 and immediately pursued a law degree from George Washington University, which he obtained two years later. After graduation, Inouye returned to Honolulu and began working as a public prosecutor. While back on O'ahu, Inouye and other *Nissei* war veterans realized that they were victims of discrimination. Frustrated, they decided to stand up for their rights as service veterans and demanded to be treated as first-class citizens.

Driven to spark change for his fellow war veterans and himself, Inouye pursued a political career. In 1954, Inouye was elected to the territorial house of

representatives before moving to the territorial senate. On August 21, 1959, Hawai'i became the 50th state of the United States. Two days later, Inouye was sworn in as Hawai'i's first representative to the U.S. House of Representatives. In 1962, he was elected as the first Japanese American U.S. senator.

Despite moving to Washington, D.C., and serving as a senator for Hawai'i for 50 years, Inouye never forgot his home or his initial mission of advocating for social justice. In 1993, Inouye played an integral part in returning Kaho'olawe, the smallest of the eight main Hawaiian Islands, to the state of Hawai'i. During his time as chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, he was also known for urging for better health care and education for children, while also making sure there were enough jobs for the people of Hawai'i. Senator Inouye also made sure the U.S. military had the best possible defensive strategies, including the latest technology and training. In addition, Inouye continued to fight and push for better treatment and quality of life for people, and their families, serving in the U.S. military. Inouye was also a strong proponent of Native American, Native Hawaiian, and Native Alaskan rights.

Inouye was also a member of the Senate Watergate committee and was named chairman to numerous committees. He was also appointed President Pro Tempore of the Senate (the third in line to be the U.S. president), which made Inouye the highest-ranking Asian American government official. Senator Daniel Inouye summed up his life and career by stating, "I represented the people of Hawai'i and this nation honestly and to the best of my ability. I think I did OK" (Bash and Barrett 2012, 3).

### **Queen Lili'uokalani (1838–1917)**

Lydia Lili'u Loloku Walania Wewehi Kamaka'eha was born on September 2, 1838, in Honolulu, Hawai'i. Her parents were Caesar Kapa'akea and Analea Keohokālole. One of her brothers, David Kalākaua, was appointed king in February 1874. At the same time, another brother, William Pitt Leleiohoku, was named heir to the throne. However, in April 1877, William passed away. On April 10, 1877, Lydia was named heir to the throne.

In 1891, King Kalākaua passed away, and Lili'uokalani ascended to the throne. As one of her the first duties as queen, Lili'uokalani sought to amend the Bayonet Constitution, which had been imposed on her brother in 1887. The Bayonet Constitution stripped the monarch of all power and influence and gave wealthy Western plantation owners and businessmen control of Hawai'i's government and economy. However, Queen Lili'uokalani's plan to undo the Bayonet Constitution frightened many plantation owners and businessmen, who looked to overthrow her and protect the profits generated by trade in the commodities grown on their plantations, mainly sugarcane and pineapple. With the help of the U.S. Marines, the plantation owners and businessmen successfully forced Queen Lili'uokalani to surrender the Kingdom of Hawai'i to the United States in 1893. Shortly after the overthrow, the Republic of Hawai'i was established.

Distressed at the overthrow of the monarchy, some Hawaiians sought to lead a counterrevolution in an attempt to regain control of their home. After their failed



attempt, Queen Lili'uokalani was imprisoned on suspicion of leading the rebellion. However, she was never found guilty and later received full pardon. Determined to continue to fight for her people, Queen Lili'uokalani flew to Washington, D.C., to meet with President Grover Cleveland regarding Hawai'i's future. Cleveland was sympathetic, but he left office in 1897, and his successor, President William McKinley, officially annexed Hawai'i to the United States in 1898. After returning home, Queen Lili'uokalani was visited by many of her loyal subjects and presented with gifts as a sign of appreciation for her actions and devotion to the Kingdom of Hawai'i.

In her spare time, Queen Lili'uokalani was an avid writer and composer. She was well educated and wrote numerous songs based on American and European cultural influences. She also wrote and composed many traditional Hawaiian chants and songs. Overall, she wrote more than 150 songs, with her most famous work being *Aloha 'Oe*, which is still symbolic in contemporary Hawai'i.

Queen Lili'uokalani also wrote *Hawaii's Story*, which was published in 1898. *Hawaii's Story* encapsulates Queen Lili'uokalani's own history, including her childhood, accession to the throne, overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, her efforts to restore power to the Kingdom of Hawai'i, and the efforts to overthrow the Republic of Hawai'i. In addition to giving her side of the story, the queen was also able to respond to her critics in the United States. *Hawaii's Story* is a well-crafted, complex work, in which Hawai'i's only queen provides a counter-narrative of events to those written and told from an American perspective.

Queen Lili'uokalani died on November 11, 1917, due to a stroke. Although Queen Lili'uokalani did not have any biological children, she had a deep affection toward the *keiki* or children of Hawai'i. The Lili'uokalani trust was established eight years prior to her death in 1909. The main goal of the trust was to benefit orphan and destitute children of Hawai'i, giving preference to those of Native Hawaiian ancestry. Today, the trust directly serves more than 12,000 people and indirectly serves another 76,000 (Lili'uokalani Trust 2017). One of the trust's main projects is the funding of children centers, which provide counseling and financial assistance to children and their families, put on group workshops for children and their caregivers, and work to strengthen the Hawaiian community so that others can help take care of orphans and destitute children. Another key project is the upkeep of property, such as Keahuolū in Kona on the island of Hawai'i, which provides a camp where Native Hawaiian children are allowed to go and experience their culture.

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# 13

## Idaho

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Kristin Haltinner, Leanna Keleher, and Annysia Hoffman

### **CHRONOLOGY**

**c. 10000 BCE**

The first settlers enter present-day Idaho

**1805**

The Corps of Discovery, led by Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, enter present-day Idaho

**1810**

White settlement in Idaho increases with the demands of the fur trade

**1812**

White explorers enter southern Idaho, first led by Wilson Price Hunt

**1830s**

Missionaries enter Idaho seeking to Christianize indigenous populations

**1835**

Idaho's first trading post opens at Fort Hall in Shoshoni Territory

**1842**

The Nez Perce adapt the American system of criminal law

**1842**

Present-day Idaho becomes part of the Oregon Territory

**1853**

Present-day northern Idaho becomes part of the Washington Territory

**1855**

The creation of the Flathead Reservation leaves the Kootenai of Idaho landless

**1855**

The Stevens Treaty cedes a substantial portion of Nez Perce land and establishes two Nez Perce reservations

**1859**

The remaining part of present-day Idaho becomes part of the Washington Territory

**1863**

The Idaho Territory is formally created on March 4

**1863**

Signed on June 9, treaty of 1863 reduces the size of the Nez Perce lands

**1863**

The Massacre at Bear River kills 490 Native Americans

**1867**

The Idaho Territory passes anti-miscegenation laws making marriages between white people and “Mongolians, negroes, or mulattoes” illegal

**1867**

The territorial Suffrage Act extends the right to vote to black people in Idaho

**1868**

The Fort Bridger Treaty creates a reservation for the Shoshone and Bannock people

**1873**

School segregation ends in Idaho

**1877**

The Nez Perce War erupts between the U.S. government and nonreservation bands of the Nez Perce

**1880**

The Fort Hall Boarding School opens, seeking to “civilize” Native children

**1887**

The Bannock War between the U.S. government and the Bannock people is fought in Idaho

**1887**

Congress passes the Dawes Act, which divides reservation land into individual parcels

**1889**

The Idaho State Constitution is ratified

**1890**

Idaho becomes the 43rd state on July 3

**1890**

Noncitizens are prohibited from participating in public works projects

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**1891**

The white residents of Clark Fork drive out the local Chinese population

**1892**

The white residents of Bonners Ferry drive out the local Chinese population

**1892**

Whites drive out the Japanese residents of Nampa, Caldwell, and Mountain Home

**1899**

Idaho bars Native Americans from carrying weapons outside hunting season

**1906**

Idaho passes an anti-miscegenation law prohibiting marriage between Chinese and white residents

**1909**

The white residents of Moscow drive out the local Chinese population

**1917**

Congress passes the Immigration Act of 1917, which includes literacy tests for immigrants

**1919**

Idaho passes two laws requiring applicants for certain professional licenses (dentistry and optometry) to list their race on their applications

**1920s**

Ku Klux Klan grows in Idaho

**1923**

Idaho passes Alien Land Laws, which restrict access to land for noncitizens

**1934**

Congress passes the Indian Reorganization Act, relocating people to reservations and reorganizing Native structures of government

**1942**

On August 10, the first Japanese American internees arrive at the Minidoka Internment Camp; the last resident leaves the camp in October 1945

**1943**

The Kooskia Internment Camp opens; the camp, which houses Japanese American men, many of whom are long-time citizens, closes in 1945

**1943**

The sale of alcohol to Native Americans becomes illegal

**1947**

Idaho passes a law that requires teachers to be U.S. citizens or be eligible for citizenship

**1961**

The Idaho Fair Employment Practices Act is passed

**1977**

The Aryan Nations, an influential white nationalist organization, begins in northern Idaho.

**2000**

Local and national human rights lawyers bankrupt the Aryan Nations, forcing it to disband

**2012**

Shaun Patrick Winkler, an adherent of Christian Identity Movement and a former member of the Aryan Nations purchases over 17 acres of land in northern Idaho to construct a white nationalist compound

**2016**

In Dietrich, Idaho, three white high school football players abuse and rape a disabled black teammate, following ongoing racist harassment by white players; they are ultimately sentenced to only 300 hours of community service for the attack

**2017**

Idaho dairy industry representatives estimate that 85–90 percent of workers in southern Idaho’s booming dairy industry are foreign-born, with many of them undocumented; farmers are fearful that President Donald Trump’s strict immigration policies might deprive them of laborers willing to take jobs that only few American citizens will take

**NARRATIVE****Race and Racism before Statehood**

The first human residents in present-day Idaho are thought to have come to the region approximately 11,000 years ago. By the time of white settlement, eight groups of indigenous peoples inhabited present-day Idaho including the Kootenai, Katispel, Skitswish (Coeur d’Alene), Paleuse, Nimiipuu (Nez Perce), Shoshone, Bannock, and Northern Paiute. Given the nomadic nature of some populations, additional groups of people had also entered and left the region.

The first white explorers entered northern Idaho in 1805 as part of President Jefferson’s Corps of Discovery. Led by Captain Lewis and Captain Clark, this group sought to find a “northwest passage” to the Pacific Ocean and document people, animals, plants, and land they encountered en route. The Corps entered Idaho via present-day Lemhi Pass on August 12, 1805. With them, the Corps had the wife of a hired translator, a Shoshoni woman named Sacagawea. Sacagawea proved immensely important to the success of the Corps, as she helped them navigate the landscape, find food, and communicate with Native communities.

In 1805, Lewis and Clark became the first white people to visit the Nez Perce, whom they called the Chopunnish. The Nez Perce resided in western Idaho, along the Salmon and Snake Rivers. Their federally recognized name originated from French fur trappers and translated to “pierced nose” due to the supposed appearance of the group members when the trappers first encountered them. The Nez

Perce call themselves Nimiipuu, which translates to “we, people.” At the time Lewis and Clark encountered the Nez Perce, they estimated the community to have about 6,000 members.

Wilson Price Hunt led the first group of white explorers into southern Idaho in 1812. Nathaniel Wyeth opened the first trading post in Fort Hall, Idaho, in the Shoshone-Bannock area in 1834, and it quickly became a famous rest and trade stop. The Shoshones and the Bannocks were initially two separate groups with distinct languages. Over time, their members intermarried and became known as the Shoshone-Bannocks.

White settlers began entering Idaho around 1810 as the fur trade expanded. One significant settler was Andrew Henry, employed by the Missouri Fur Company, who established Fort Henry near present-day St. Anthony. Additional companies entered the region, including the Hudson Bay Company, North West Company, and Pacific Fur Company, increasing the white population.

The first white men to appear in Kootenai lands were French fur traders in the 1830s. Following the arrival of fur trappers were missionaries who sought to “save” the indigenous populations. Within the next 10 years, Jesuit missionaries arrived on Kootenai, followed closely by settlers and homesteaders.

Missionaries also targeted other indigenous groups. One of the more famous missionaries was Reverend Henry Spalding, and his wife Eliza Hart Spalding, who lived near Lapwai, within Nez Perce land. Once there, they established a Presbyterian mission. They began to teach “spirit law” to the Nez Perce people along with farming. They also created a mission school for children. Their goal, shared with the federal government and other missionaries at the time, was to “civilize” the Nez Perce people and force them assimilate to the white American way of life.

This obligatory assimilation and evidence of white cultural influence can be seen further in the 1842 Nez Perce adoption of the American system of criminal law and election of a national head chief without the consent of the band chiefs. This action went against their traditional tribal customs.

The governor of the Washington Territory, Isaac Stevens, was focused on westward expansion for the United States but was growing increasingly concerned over the conflicts arising between white settlers and various Native groups in the area. For the Nez Perce, fur trapping companies were threatening their way of life by depleting the amount of fur-bearing animals available as food and clothing. The white settlers and cattlemen also created tension due to their fences cutting off the Nez Perce from prime grazing lands and natural springs.

In 1853, Governor Stevens held a council in the Walla Walla Valley in an attempt to convince the Nez Perce, Cayuse, Walla Wallas, and the Umatillas to move to a single reservation, which would be located in Nez Perce country. This action was met with such opposition from the Native groups that Governor Stevens had to abandon his plan and agreed to let the indigenous people stay.

This resolution was short-lived, as two years later, the Stevens Treaty of June 11, 1855, had the Nez Perce cede a large portion of their land to the United States and established a reservation area to include the Lower Nez Perce Wallowa Valley in Oregon for the Lower Nez Perce and a large area in western Idaho for the Upper



Nez Perce. In return, the Nez Perce were promised that the government would build two schools, two blacksmith shops, two mills, one tin shop, and one hospital on the reservation while also paying the Nez Perce \$200,000 over 20 years to further improve the reservation. According to the Nez Perce people, none of these promises was kept.

The discovery of gold in Idaho increased the number of white settlers entering the Nez Perce land, as established in the 1855 treaty. In response, Governor Isaac Stevens held another council, leading to the Treaty of 1863 on June 9, 1863. The 1863 agreement drastically reduced the size of the Nez Perce land to just 550 square miles located in Lapwai. This land restriction, coupled with unfulfilled promises of reservation improvements from the 1855 treaty, resulted in great opposition from the Nez Perce.

The Nez Perce were consequently separated into two distinct groups, those who signed the 1863 treaty and those who did not. The U.S. government decided that since the principal chief, who was selected without the consent of all chiefs, had signed the treaty, all the Nez Perce people would be bound by it.

In the years after, the Nez Perce, who refused to sign or relocate, experienced growing tensions with the white settlers. This tension culminated in two settlers killing a Nez Perce member in the summer of 1876. This event led the Indian Bureau agent at the Lapwai Nez Perce Reservation, John B. Monteith, and other government officials to declare that the non-treaty Nez Perce needed to be moved to the reservation. General Oliver O. Howard, a Civil War hero, was called upon to complete this task. The non-treaty Nez Perce were ordered to leave their land by no later than April 1, 1877.



A view of the Nez Perce Agency in Idaho in 1879. The Nez Perce lived in what is now Idaho, northeastern Oregon, and southeastern Washington. The Nez Perce repeatedly found themselves forcibly displaced by white ranchers and miners in the nineteenth century and, eventually, relocated to reservations. (National Archives)

However, not all the non-treaty Nez Perce agreed that they should move to the reservation. Some, such as Chief Whitebird and Toohoolhoolzote and their bands, refused. On June 13, 1877, three young members of Chief Whitebird's band rode to the Salmon River and killed three or four men, stealing their horses and guns, in retaliation. This violence escalated and led to violent retribution on the part of the U.S. government leading to the Nez Perce War.

Of all the chiefs, Chief Joseph is one of the most recognized for the role he played in the war. Known as Chief Joseph to white people, his name was Hinmaton Yalatkit, which translates to "Thunder rolling in the Heights" (Somerset 2000). The Wallowa Valley in Oregon was the land where he was born and the area his father, who was the chief before him, was buried. He was adamant that his people would not leave the Wallowa Valley for any reason.

As with the Nez Perce, Governor Stevens held a council regarding the land held by the Kootenai people in 1855. This council was held at Hellgate, Montana, and was conducted to jointly settle the previously nomadic Salish and Kootenai despite the fact that they had distinct languages and cultures. The treaty left the Kootenai people, effectively, landless. Over the next decade, the Kootenai of Idaho resisted all attempts to be relocated to the Flathead Reservation. The U.S. government argued that the Kootenai of Idaho belong on the Flathead Reservation, per the treaty, but the Kootenai of Idaho still do not recognize the area as their reservation. Currently the Kootenai live in a place known as "the mission" on 12.5 acres near Bonners Ferry.

Further south, the Coeur d'Alene were also affected by land restrictions as whites continued to pour into northern Idaho. Prior to white settlement, the Coeur

### ***The Nez Perce War of 1877***

On June 16, 1877, soldiers, led by Captain David Perry, approached the Nez Perce camp near Whitebird Canyon as 65 Nez Perce warriors rode out to meet them (Haines 1954). Six Nez Perce warriors approached the soldiers under a white flag, while the rest halted and hid behind them. As the troops approached, they immediately opened fire on the six Nez Perce warriors. One of the six warriors, Two Moons, shot back and killed Trumpeter Jones of F Troop, First Cavalry. A fierce battle ensued. The battle at Whitebird Canyon led to a Nez Perce victory after the troops retreated toward Grangeville.

The great retreat of the Nez Perce covered a total of 1,500 miles, ending at Bear Paw Creek in Montana, just shy of the Canadian border. There they suffered defeat after a five-day battle with U.S. soldiers. Chief Joseph surrendered conditionally on October 5, 1877, after the death of the other chiefs. Whitebird escaped with a few others over the Canadian border.

After the Nez Perce surrender, the surviving tribal members were brought to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, where they expected to spend the winter before returning to their homes in Lapwai as they had been promised. However, General Howard violated the promises made to the Nez Perce and, rather than sending them to Lapwai, relocated the group to present-day Oklahoma.

The Nez Perce found the terrain to be so alien that many died. Chief Joseph tried to have his people returned to Lapwai. Finally, in 1883, 33 women and children were relocated to Lapwai followed by 118 the next year. In 1885, the remaining members of the Nez Perce, including Chief Joseph, were taken to the Colville Reservation in Washington.

d'Alene Territory began at the Palouse (Pelouze) River extending to the Pend d'Oreille Lake, then east to the Coeur d'Alene Lake. Self-named the Skitswish, meaning "Discovered People," the group was called Coeur d'Alene (meaning pointed heart or awl-shaped heart, referring to their shrewd trading skills) by French fur trappers. As more and more white settlers entered the region, treaties were developed that generally restricted tribal movements and access to land. In the mid-1800s, the Coeur d'Alene people became increasingly dissatisfied with the pressures from the U.S. government and united with the Spokane, Palouse, and Yakima nations to resist white trespassing and treaty violations. In May 1858, the Native forces launched an attack against U.S. troops, defeating the soldiers. This defeat resulted in an increase of federal forces from the U.S. government that forced Native people back to reservations and permitted white passage through said land.

Similar tensions arose in the southern part of present-day Idaho. In 1863, the U.S. government forces attacked a group of Shoshone near Bear River in retaliation for recent skirmishes between local indigenous populations and white settlers. In the attack, 490 indigenous people were killed along with 14 U.S. soldiers. This was the largest massacre in U.S. history.

Five years later, the Fort Bridger Treaty of 1868 specified 1.8 million acres of land for the Shoshones with the promise of a separate reservation in the future for the Bannocks although that portion of the treaty never came to fruition. This was the last reservation treaty made by the U.S. government; after this event, treaties were made by executive order.

As more white settlers entered the area, tensions rose among the Shoshone-Bannock. The settlers were overhunting the buffalo that the Shoshone-Bannocks relied on for food, and the cattlemen were destroying the land where the camas bulb, a significant food source for the community, grew. Because the Shoshone-Bannocks were no longer able to gather food in the ways they were accustomed, many members began to starve. The destruction of the camas bulbs was seen as the "last straw" for the Shoshone-Bannock people, and they declared the Bannock War of 1878 against the U.S. government. This war was devastating for the Shoshone-Bannock. They were defeated, rounded up, and placed in the Fort Hall Reservation.

Starting in the 1880s, as in other parts of the country, Native American children in Idaho were forcibly relocated to boarding schools run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs to further the federal government's mission to assimilate indigenous Americans. The Fort Hall Reservation was home to one such boarding school whose curriculum intended to resocialize Native children. The Shoshone-Bannocks resisted the construction and continuation of the boarding school but were forced to send their children. Conditions at the school were dismal, the children were underfed, punished with violence, and forced to abandon their tribal traditions. In 1904, the Shoshone-Bannocks succeeded in having the federal government build a school closer to the community where they could express and enforce their concerns about education and the treatment of their children more directly. Nonetheless, coercion and concerning practices continued at the school until the 1930s.

In 1887, the U.S. government, in their continued attempts to assimilate the indigenous people of America, passed the General Allotment Act, or the “Dawes Act.” This act allowed the government to divide tribal lands into individual parcels and then sell any “surplus” land to white settlers. For the Shoshone-Bannocks and Kootenai, the Dawes Act gave 160-acre plots of land to each male head of household and 80 acre plots to children. In order for the tribal members to fully claim ownership of the land, they were required to cultivate it. However, the Kootenai and Shoshone-Bannocks were nomadic hunters and gatherers, and as they did not receive any assistance or instruction on how to keep a farm, their attempts at cultivating the land failed. Over time, the land was taken back from the Kootenai tribe of Idaho and leased to white settlers. In further attempts to assimilate the Shoshone-Bannocks, the men were offered wagons if they would cut off their braids. If they refused, they were jailed.

As conflict over land intensified between Native communities and white settlers, the same industries attracting white people led to migration by additional populations, such as the Chinese. Throughout the 1860s and 1870s, Chinese people filled jobs mining silver and other minerals or in industries supportive of mining: running stores, laundromats, and restaurants. An additional 15,000 Chinese workers also constructed the Northern Pacific Railway through Washington, Idaho, and Montana. Other Chinese residents held specialized positions and worked as physicians, ran hotels, or did garden work.

By 1870, Chinese people made up nearly one-third of Idaho’s total population and over half of the state’s miners. Following the passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act nationally, anti-Chinese sentiments continued to rise in Idaho and ultimately peaked around 1885 or 1886 when a large anti-Chinese convention was held in Boise; violence erupted across the state against Chinese residents. White residents drove out Chinese people in Clark Fork in 1891; Bonners Ferry followed suit the following year; and Moscow forced out its Chinese population in 1909. By 1910 only 859 Chinese residents remained in Idaho.

Not only did Native American and Chinese people experience structural and violent racism by white settlers, both enslaved and free blacks also lived in Idaho either because they were forced to by their owners or they chose to partake in the new economic employment opportunities of the west. Idaho was “free” as part of the Oregon Territory. However, white people often illegally enslaved black people, and following the *Dred Scott* decision, black slaves were brought to the West legally. Additionally, employment opportunities drew free black settlers to present-day Idaho, particularly the mining industry that took off in the 1860s. Black settlers were often barred from coal mining due to racial prejudice but were put on duty when white workers went on strike.

Some states, like California, drew a substantial number of black migrants during the gold rush; states such as Idaho developed small numbers of black residents throughout the 1800s. In 1870, there were 60 black residents in Idaho. Idaho’s gold rush began and flourished throughout the 1860s, and by 1870, there were 14,999 black residents in the state.

Following the passage of the 1867 Territorial Suffrage Act that gave black residents in Idaho the right to vote, black residents faced intense racism from white

settlers in the region. Many of the early white migrants to Idaho came from the southeastern United States via steamboat up the Missouri River. As a result, many held Confederate-aligned positions toward black people. This racism led to a sharp drop in the black population to 53 in 1880 (Taylor 1998).

As ranching became more popular in the late 1800s, cowboys became common in Idaho Territory. “Negro Cowboys” made up nearly 25 percent of the total number of cowboys in the west. One “Negro Cowboy” who dominated the Idaho horse racing circuit in the 1870s was “Silver” Walker, a horse racer and barber in Silver City. Walker had a collection of horses he raced throughout the state. Walker had been born a slave, and upon earning his freedom, worked for a Missouri politician named Edward Butler. His reputation as a horse racer grew, and he was recruited by E.J. (Lucky) Baldwin. Walker was resistant to moving because he felt affection and loyalty toward Butler and also because he was afraid of Native Americans. Baldwin and Walker traveled throughout California, before he ultimately settled in Idaho. Walker was a rare black horse owner, though black people helped facilitate the development of horse racing throughout Idaho and the west.

Jim Crow laws pervaded Idaho in areas of public accommodation, housing, and employment. However, school segregation ended in 1873; as the black population was so small, it was not practical to continue.

Prior to statehood, competition for land and economic opportunities fueled and fostered racial tensions in present-day Idaho. These factors continued to affect local populations following Idaho’s acceptance into the Union.

### **Race and Racism during Statehood**

Idaho became the 43rd state on July 3, 1890. As a territory, Idaho limited voting rights to free white men until the federal government passed the 1867 Territorial Suffrage Act, and when the state constitution was ratified in 1889, it did not contain any such restrictions. However, the Constitution did prohibit “Chinese or persons of Mongolian descent, not born in the United States” as well as Native Americans who had not forsaken their “tribal relations and adopted the habits of civilization” from voting, serving on juries, or holding public office. In 1950, the state amended this law and removed the provision for Native Americans. Idaho’s State Constitution has always provided education for people of all races and religions. However, in 1947, the state passed a law requiring that all teachers be U.S. citizens or applicants for citizenship.

Statehood did not resolve struggles between indigenous Idahoans and the new state’s citizens. Federal law prohibited the sale of arms and munitions to “hostile” Indians. Beginning in 1899, Idaho prohibited Native Americans from possessing firearms, outside hunting season. This law was repealed in 1949.

In 1934, the U.S. government passed the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA), which sought to reverse the historical policy of forcible assimilation and relocated Native populations, once again, to government-created reservations. It also called for indigenous communities to reorganize their governing structures. As a result of the IRA, the Coeur d’Alene follows a constitution and bylaws that were approved in 1949 and amended in 1961. It is also governed by a general council form of

government with elected members serving three-year terms. The Nez Perce is governed by the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee, which was established through their constitution adopted in 1948. The Shoshone-Bannocks are governed by a Tribal Business Council, which consists of seven elected members. The Kootenai of Idaho voted not to follow the IRA. Yet, they, too, developed a constitution and bylaws that were ratified on April 10, 1947, and approved by the Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs on June 6, 1947. The Kootenai Tribal Council operates with members selected by the general membership and a chief who attains the position through tradition.

In the 1940s, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game forbid the Kootenai of Idaho to hunt on their traditional lands. The state government believed that they owned the land and initiated hunting regulations at that time. In 1976, a tribal member was arrested for hunting on federal “private” property that had been traditional and customary land for hunting. This led to an important ruling by the Idaho Supreme Court that found that Kootenai hunting rights were guaranteed under the Hellgate Treaty of 1955 on “unoccupied lands.”

In the 1940s, Idaho also passed a series of laws to both limit the rights for indigent Idahoans while, hypocritically, instituting holidays to celebrate indigent Idahoans. In 1943, a law was passed that prohibited the sale of alcohol to “Indians.” In the same year, a law was passed dedicating the fourth Friday of September as “American Indian Day.”

Statehood also failed to provide greater protections for Asian residents in Idaho. In addition to the widespread violence that drove Chinese residents from their places of residence, Chinese workers also faced other forms of discrimination. For example, Chinese miners were forced to pay taxes of \$4 per month levied solely on them. In 1890, Idaho passed a Constitutional Amendment prohibiting noncitizens from employment on public works projects. This primarily targeted Asian residents.

In 1906, the state passed an anti-miscegenation law prohibiting marriage between Chinese and white residents. This law remained intact until the Supreme Court outlawed all anti-miscegenation laws in 1967. This, coupled with the fact that few Chinese women had immigrated to the United States, led to what was called the “bachelor society.” Over time, the laws relaxed, and Chinese residents were able to bring their families to the United States. Initially, residents were restricted to Chinatowns throughout the state.

Throughout the early part of the 1900s, Idaho also had a small and relatively consistent level of Japanese residents. In 1900, there were 1,291 residents, and by 1920, this number reached a high of 1,539 (Ishihashi 1932). Residents largely were involved in agriculture. Sugar beet crops led to the importation of Japanese residents who were growing nearly 40 percent of the crop by 1913 (Ishihashi 1932). However, in 1923, Idaho passed an Alien Land Law prohibiting Japanese residents from owning land. They were, however, able to lease land from white landowners for up to five years. This law remained in place until 1955. Other residents worked on railroads.

As was the case with Chinese residents, Japanese residents were viewed by white people as a threat to their economic stability and, subsequently also faced discrimination in Idaho. In 1892, white residents ran Japanese railway workers out

of Nampa, Caldwell, and Mountain Home due to anti-Japanese sentiments. Less-organized incidents also led to Japanese residents being the victims of theft and violence at the hands of white residents.

Japanese residents in Idaho sought to maintain elements of their Japanese culture and to teach such practices to their children. At the same time, as their children were American citizens, they concurrently sought to encourage their kids to explore elements of American culture.

Throughout the Great Depression of the 1930s, white residents continued to resent economic competition from populations of color. This tension erupted following the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. After this event, on February 19, 1942, President Roosevelt passed Executive Order 9066, which allowed Secretary of War DeWitt to create military zones along the West Coast. This led to the forced removal of all Japanese residents living in said zones. On March 18, Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9102, which established the War Relocation Authority—the body in charge of relocating Japanese residents. Milton Eisenhower, the first program director, planned to relocate Japanese Americans to communities in which they could participate in industry and agriculture. However, western governors were so fearful of Japanese residents that the program instead placed people in internment camps. One such camp was Minidoka, located in Hunt, Idaho.

The plans for the Minidoka Internment Camp began on April 23, 1942. Idaho citizens, including Governor Chase Clark, resisted the plan due to their fear of Japanese residents. The federal government was able to move forward with the plan when they offered to remove agricultural restrictions and increase the sugar beet harvest using interned Japanese residents as labor. The plan to build the Minidoka Camp was secured quickly. On April 29, Secretary DeWitt informally approved the plans.

Construction of the camp started on June 4, 1942, and employed 3,000 people. Its construction cost \$5,807,000 and involved over 2 million hours of labor. The first arrival at the camp was on August 10, 1942, when the camp construction was not yet completed. Conditions were poor, and internees had to live without consistent electricity, sewage, or heat. Poorly planned, the camp was built on desert landscape, which, not cleared of brush, was prone to intense dust storms. The true conditions of the camp were likely bleaker than formal documents suggest. At its peak in 1943, it reached 9,397 residents. The final resident left the camp on October 28, 1945.

However, the closing of the camp did not mean an end to anti-Japanese racism. For example, when those interned in Minidoka were finally released, the Idaho State Grange suggested a policy preventing Japanese people from owning land in the state.

In addition to Minidoka, Idaho also hosted Kooskia, an internment camp for nonnaturalized U.S. residents of Japanese descent. Unlike Minidoka and other War Relocation Authority camps, Kooskia was run by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS). Kooskia was open for two years, from 1943 to 1945.

Kooskia held 256 male residents, most of whom had been community leaders prior to their internment. Some residents were people of Japanese descent who

were living in Latin America and relocated to the United States for internment and forced labor: 27 internees were from Peru, 11 from Mexico, and two from Panama (Wegars 2010). These men were captured by the U.S. government in the hopes of making trades for U.S. POWs with Japan. The Federal Bureau of Investigation forcibly relocated other residents to the camp, after separating them from their families.

As an INS-run camp, Kooskia had to follow the Geneva Convention; however, conditions were still less than ideal. The camp was located in the remote mountains of Idaho at a former prison work camp and Civilian Conservation Corp camp—on land that had previously been hunting and camping grounds of the Nez Perce. The internees at Kooskia were used as labor in the region and constructed portions of Highway 12, which runs through northern Idaho.

Concurrent to the migration of Chinese and Japanese labor to Idaho was Mexican immigration. At the turn of the twentieth century, Idaho had fewer than 100 residents who identified as Mexican. With the explosion of railroad development in the early 1900s, areas like Nampa and Pocatello in southwest Idaho experienced an influx of Mexican citizens seeking employment.

By the end of the 1920s, the United States entered the Great Depression. As economic competition increased, new laws were established to give employment advantages to white settlers. For example, the Immigrant Act of 1917 included a provision that all immigrants pass a literacy test. The law was not regularly enforced until the late 1920s. Between 1929 and 1940, these tests accounted for approximately one-third of Mexican immigrant deportations in Idaho. More than half of those deported were legal citizens of the United States.

With the beginning of World War II, Idaho again experienced a shortage of laborers. Therefore, there was a demand for agricultural workers. This led to the creation of the “Bracero” program, which imported Mexican workers to the United States for a limited amount of time. The conditions faced by laborers were often difficult, and many workers returned to Mexico prior to their original term. Braceros sought greater equality, and in the 1940s, they demanded fair wages and often protested against mistreatment in the workplace. Following World War II, Idaho was taken off of the Bracero-certified list due to the discrimination that migrant farm workers experienced.

Not only were Latino migrant workers met with institutionalized racism, but many faced physical violence as well. It was a result of hate crimes and unequal treatment that the Idaho Fair Employment Practices Act was passed in 1961. This act protected people from discrimination in employment and public accommodations. Although this was a monumental step for Idaho, limited and unwilling law enforcement made it difficult to implement the law.

Like black residents, Latino people experienced community-wide discrimination in some parts of Idaho. For example, in Canyon County, it was not uncommon for white residents to hang signs that declared that no Mexicans, as well as other populations of color, were allowed in their establishments. It was not until 1964 that people of color were protected against this type of discrimination. With the passage of the Civil Rights Act, it became illegal to discriminate against a person based on race, color, religion, or national origin in public accommodations.



Although there was legal representation against discrimination based on race, there were still many private business owners that refused to serve locals of color.

Black residents faced similar forms of discrimination. Black people were often run out of town, harassed, or exhorted by erroneous claims of vagrancy. In 1893, a black man in Pocatello, Colonel Steptoe, a small business owner in the town, challenged a vagrancy charge up to the state Supreme Court. He lost the appeal and was incarcerated for firing a gun while protecting a black sex worker.

Like many other places in the United States, Ku Klux Klan chapters spread throughout Idaho during the organization's growth in the 1920s. In 1923, the Klan nearly elected multiple candidates in the city elections of Twin Falls. The city hosted a sizable Klan rally the next year.

World War II brought an influx of hundreds of black men serving in the military to Idaho, particularly to the airbases in Boise, Mountain Home, and Pocatello. Many soldiers made Idaho home and created families. In Pocatello, the black population almost doubled between 1940 and 1950, and reached 1.6 percent of the population, the highest in the state. These soldiers and their families lived in segregated neighborhoods. In Pocatello, this was known as the "Triangle." There was a lack of affordable housing in the area and the city sought to renovate army barracks into homes for black veterans, but white residents fought this effort. One veteran, Willis Evans, was threatened with a note that said, "Move out or be moved out on a stretcher," and had his car vandalized when he temporarily stayed in these barracks in 1950.

Following World War II, sundown towns, towns in which it was unsafe for black people to remain overnight, arose throughout Idaho. For example, Wallace, Idaho, reportedly had a sign that said "N\*\*\*\*r, Read This Sign and Run" at the edge of town.

Pocatello's white residents also fought hard to maintain segregation. For example, even though the national YMCA was integrated and the club in Boise permitted some local black children access, Pocatello completely denied access to black people. This led to the creation of the Pocatello League for Negro and Other Minority Rights, which ultimately was able to desegregate the YMCA and also fought for equal access to housing, public accommodations, and treatment.

Economic downturn in the 1970s once again increased the racial tensions in northern Idaho. People who had some sort of financial stability before were now suffering from the nation's recession; locals that depended on silver mining were now without work. From this economic recession emerged Idaho's most notorious organization, the Aryan Nations. Richard Butler created the Hayden-based anti-Semitic organization in 1977. At the time, Butler served as minister of the Church of Jesus Christ Christian and already had an assembly of followers. Butler created the Aryan Nations with the goal of creating a white homeland in the Pacific Northwest.

Hate groups continue to operate in Idaho, with organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan openly recruiting in parts of the state. In 2017, Idaho was host to 12 active hate groups targeting immigrants and domestic populations of color.

While de jure segregation and discrimination are no longer in operation in Idaho, their legacy continues to impact populations of color. For example, black

***Idaho's Aryan Nations***

Richard Butler founded the Aryan Nations in Hayden, Idaho, in 1977, as a political arm of his church, the Church of Jesus Christ Christian. The Christian Identity Movement formed the ideological framework for these organizations. Christian Identity Movement fuses biblical fundamentalism with white supremacy. Members of the Aryan Nations believed they were God's soldiers, acting as ground troopers, fighting corrupt government and locals. The goal of the group was to create a whites-only nation in the Pacific Northwest.

The 1980s was a period of intense recruitment and growth for the Aryan Nations. Butler recruited people outside the state and encouraged them to relocate their families to northern Idaho. As part of his recruitment and political efforts, Butler created the Aryan World Congress, which he hosted on his 20-acre property in Hayden.

The event that brought down the Aryan Nations occurred in 1998, when guards at the compound pursued and assaulted a woman and her child whose car had backfired nearby. The guards believed that they had heard gunshots. The victim secured lawyers from the Southern Poverty Law Center, an organization that seeks to eradicate hate nationwide, and the local Kootenai County Task Force on Human Rights. Tony Stewart, Norm Gissel, and Marshall Mend created the Task Force in 1981, following anti-Semitic and racist events in Coeur d'Alene.

As a result of this legal action, Butler was sued and forced to pay \$4.8 million to the mother and her child. This impoverished the organization, and Butler was forced to sell his 20-acre compound and file bankruptcy. A wealthy supporter of Butler bought him a home in Hayden. In 2004, Butler died at the age of 86. Today, weakened Aryan Nations sects continue to operate throughout the United States.

Idahoans are two to three times more likely to experience incarceration than that of their white counterparts: Idaho is ranked fifth nationwide for having the highest proportion of incarcerated black people, despite being 93 percent white. Latinos in Idaho disproportionately face poverty and a lack of educational opportunities. Racial tension in Idaho ebbs and flows, like it does in much of the nation, with economic pressures. Competition for land, minerals, and employment have fostered racism throughout Idaho's state and territorial history.

**NOTABLE FIGURE****Sacagawea (1788–1812)**

Born in 1788 in present-day Lemhi County, Idaho, Sacagawea is renowned by Americans as the woman who helped Lewis and Clark reach the Pacific Ocean as part of the Corps of Discovery. The Corps of Discovery was a team of explorers and researchers hired by President Jefferson to find the hypothesized "northwest passage" to the Pacific Ocean and to thoroughly document the people, animals, plants, and lands they encountered en route.

When Sacagawea was 12 years old, she was captured in battle by members of the Hidatsa-Mandan tribe of North Dakota, an enemy of her tribe, the Shoshone, and relocated to Bismark. At 13, she was sold to Toussaint Charbonneau, a French-Canadian fur trapper, as a "wife" (slave) along with another woman. In 1804,

Lewis, Clark and the other members of the Corps of Discovery arrived and built Fort Mandan nearby. Sacagawea gave birth to her first child, a son named Jean-Baptiste Charbonneau, on February 11, 1805, at the Fort.

In spring, when the weather improved, Sacagawea, her husband, and their two-month-old son went off with the Corps of Discovery, the parents serving as interpreters on the journey. Sacagawea proved an indispensable member of the Corps. She was able to help the team find food by recognizing edible plants. When near her homeland, she was able to navigate trails she recognized from her childhood. She also helped ease tensions with Native communities they encountered. As noted by Captain Clark, her presence assured such populations that the Corps was not a threat because military units did not travel with women and children. Jean-Baptist was nicknamed “Pompy” by Captain Clark due to his predilection toward dancing and frolicking.

On May 14, 1805, the Corps of Discovery was traveling by water when a gust of wind nearly capsized the boat in which Sacagawea rode. She retained her composure and rescued the documents Lewis and Clark had maintained for President Jefferson along with important supplies. Captain Lewis found her calmness in the face of such difficulty to be very impressive.

Sacagawea’s key action in saving the Corps was yet to come. In August 1805, after passing the Continental Divide, the team was exhausted and struggling to find enough food. Lewis and three scouts went ahead and found a group of Shoshones. On August 17, when Sacagawea caught up to the team, it was discovered that the leader of this group, Chief Cameahwait, was her brother. The two had an emotional reunion and the Shoshones agreed to provide the Corps of Discovery with horses and other supplies.

On November 24, 1805, the expedition met the Pacific Ocean. There the team made a decision regarding where to winter and, remarkable for the time, Sacagawea (along with Clark’s slave, York) was given a vote in the matter. They spent the winter near what is now Astoria, Oregon, in Fort Clatsop. Further evidence of the respect Sacagawea earned among the Corps was the fact that she was permitted to visit the ocean and see a beached whale upon her personal request to do so.

As the Corps of Discovery returned eastward, Sacagawea again helped the team navigate the wilderness. On August 14, 1806, they returned to the Hidatsa-Mandan village, where Sacagawea, Charbonneau, and Jean-Baptist remained. Despite her contributions toward the success of the mission, Sacagawea received no reward. Her husband was given \$500.22 and 320 acres of land.

In 1812, Sacagawea had another child, a daughter, Lisette. Sadly, Sacagawea died soon after, on December 22 of that year, at Fort Manuel, a trading post in present-day South Dakota. Scientists believe she died from a long-term medical illness that was likely aggravated from giving birth. She was only 25 years old.

The following July, Captain Lewis formally adopted both Jean-Baptist and Lisette. Jean-Baptist was given a formal education and, upon reaching the age of 18, went to Germany where he had a child who died in infancy. There is no documented history regarding Lisette, leading many to conclude that she died in infancy. Twenty years later, Jean-Baptist was recorded as the father to second child, Maria Cantarina Charguana.

There is some controversy regarding the spelling and meaning of Sacagawea's name. When written by Captain Clark and Captain Lewis phonetically, it appears to be pronounced as: Sah-cah' gah-we-ah. Some argue that her name emerged from her time with the Hidatsa and means bird (sacaga) woman (wea), spelled Sakakawea. Others suggest that her name originates from her childhood among the Shoshoni and, spelled Sacajawea, means boat-pusher.

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# 14

## Illinois

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Jenice L. View and Akashi Kaul

### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **500 BCE–900 CE**

Indigenous Northeastern Woodland culture peoples, including Anishinaabeg, Potawatomi, Ho-Chunk (Winnebago), Illiniwek, Cahokia, Kaskaskia, Miami, Mitchigamea, Moingona, Peoria, Tamaroa, and Kickapoo, occupy the region that would later become the state of Illinois

#### **900–1500 CE**

The indigenous Mississippian culture develops near present-day East St. Louis; the Mississippians built Cahokia, one of the largest cities in North America, and larger than many European cities; Cahokia was a political and religious center of Mississippian life

#### **1680**

Robert Cavalier Sieur de LaSalle and Henri de Tonti establish the first European settlement in Illinois, on the east bank of the Illinois River

#### **1763**

Following the French and Indian War, the British take control of the Illinois Territory from the French

#### **1778**

American militia captures the village of Kaskaskia from the British

#### **1779**

Jean Baptiste Pointe du Sable settles in Chicago as the first permanent nonindigenous resident; he is of African descent, marries Kitihawa, a Potawatomi woman, and becomes one of the wealthiest men in the region through fur trading and dry goods sales to European travelers

**1787**

The U.S. government claims western lands that include the present-day state of Illinois from Britain

**1803**

In the Treaty of Kaskaskia, Indians from Kaskaskia, Mitchigamia, Cahokia, and Tamaroi cede their homelands to the U.S. government in exchange for “immediate care, patronage, and protection” by the U.S. government

**1804**

Lewis and Clark begin their journey exploration across the Louisiana Purchase from Wood River, Illinois

**1818**

Illinois becomes the 21st state on December 3

**1819**

Kickapoo Indians withdraw from Illinois to Kansas under duress

**1824**

Slavery is outlawed in the state of Illinois

**1830**

The Indian Removal Act authorizes President Andrew Jackson to force Southern Native tribes in Georgia, Mississippi, and other states to relocate to federal territory west of the Mississippi River in exchange for their ancestral homelands; this forced westward removal puts pressure on Native tribes in Illinois to share or cede their ancestral lands

**1832**

The Black Hawk War is fought against the U.S. by Sauks, Meskwakis, and Kickapoos to reclaim Indian lands from the U.S. government; with the war lost, most of the remaining Indians are driven out of northern Illinois

**1836**

New Philadelphia, the first U.S. town registered by an African American and created by Frank McWhorter, a free black man, is today the city of Barry, Illinois

**1837**

White abolitionist, minister, and newspaper publisher Elijah Lovejoy is murdered by a proslavery mob in Alton for his work to end slavery and racism in churches; after his death, his brother, Owen Lovejoy, enters politics and becomes the leader of the Illinois abolitionists

**1839**

American Indian tribes from the Southeast pass through southern Illinois as part of the Trail of Tears, the forced removal of Indians from their ancestral homes that resulted from the 1830 Indian Removal Act

**1846–1848**

The Mexican-American War, an armed conflict between the United States and Mexico, ends with all or part of the future states of California, New Mexico,

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Arizona, Texas, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas, and Oklahoma ceded to the United States; this Mexican cession sets the stage for ongoing political and economic tensions over the issue of slavery expansion into these territories

### **1853**

Free blacks are barred from entering Illinois

### **1861–1865**

The U.S. Civil War is fought, with more than 250,000 troops from Illinois fighting on the Union side; beginning in 1863, colored (African American) troops join 22 distinct military units from Illinois

### **1865**

On February 1, Illinois becomes the first state to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery

### **1867**

Illinois ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment granting citizenship to former slaves on January 15

### **1869**

Illinois ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment granting voting rights to black men on March 5

### **1876**

John W.E. Thomas (a Republican from Chicago) is elected as the first black Illinois state representative, serving a total of four terms

### **1882**

The Chinese Exclusion Act imposes a national 10-year moratorium on labor immigration from China and restricts the movements of Chinese living in the United States, including the hundreds living in Illinois

### **1885**

The Illinois Civil Rights Act is passed forbidding racial discrimination

### **1890s**

Sundown towns first emerge; these towns are so named because they require blacks and other people of color to get out of town by sundown

### **1891**

Provident Hospital in Chicago becomes the first black-owned hospital in the United States

### **1896**

In its *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision, the U.S. Supreme Court upholds state racial segregation laws as long as public resources are “separate but equal”; Illinois does not enact such state laws until 1927, when restrictive housing covenants against the selling of homes to people of color are legalized

### **1908**

The Springfield Race Riot, the first race riot in the North in the twentieth century, results in seven deaths and the destruction of 24 black businesses and 40 homes



**1909**

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is formed, partly as a result of the Springfield Race Riot

**1910–1920**

The Mexican Revolution, a civil war, contributes to the weakening of U.S.–Mexico relations and leads to an out-migration of Mexican civilians into the U.S. Southwest, a region that had historically been part of Mexico; many of these migrants eventually come to Chicago to seek work

**1914–1918**

World War I includes African American soldiers from the 370th Infantry Unit, who returned from fighting to “make the world safe for democracy” with a renewed sense of urgency to end racial segregation in the United States

**1916**

The first Great Migration of millions of African Americans from the South to Northern states begins; seeking to escape racial violence and economic poverty, many come to Chicago, especially by way of the Illinois Central Railroad

**1917**

The East St. Louis Race Riot, described as a massacre and the worst labor-related riot in the United States in the twentieth century, results in the killing of about 150 blacks and about 6,000 blacks burned out of their homes

**1919**

The Chicago Race Riot, considered the worst of approximately 25 race riots around the country during this Red Summer of antiblack violence, produced eight days of murder, looting, and arson against black people led largely by Irish gangs

**1924**

American Indians are granted U.S. citizenship after the Fourteenth Amendment explicitly excluded native-born Indians from having voting rights; many indigenous people are mistrustful and concerned that U.S. citizenship means cultural assimilation and loss of sovereignty

**1929**

The Great Depression begins with the crash of the New York Stock Market; because Illinois enjoys a diverse agricultural and industrial economic base, the Depression’s full impact is not felt in the state until late 1930, when thousands of industries and banks fail and millions of Americans lose their jobs, farms, and homes as a result; as one of the nation’s largest cities, Chicago, and the rest of Illinois, benefit from significant federal aid

**1940s**

The second Great Migration of African Americans from the South to Illinois and other Northern states occurs; the second migration of Latinx/Hispanics, mainly from Mexico and Puerto Rico, to Illinois occurs

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### **1941**

The United States enters World War II; the 99th Pursuit Squadron of the Tuskegee Army, one of the units of African American airmen trained for combat, is activated on September 11, 1941, at Chanute Field in Rantoul, Illinois

### **1950s**

The second migration of Asians from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and mainland China to Illinois occurs

### **1950**

Gwendolyn Brooks, a poet and essayist, becomes the first African American to win a Pulitzer Prize for her book of poetry *Annie Allen*

### **1954**

The U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* desegregates public schools nationwide

### **1965**

The Voting Rights Act prohibits racial discrimination in voting

### **1967**

Peoria begins a community-led effort to desegregate its schools based on a self-study

### **1968**

The Young Lords, a Puerto Rican community group, forms in response to efforts to displace Chicago's Puerto Rican community in Lincoln Park; the groups provide childcare, breakfast programs, and community organizing in Chicago

### **1968**

Black Panthers (African American), the Young Lords (Puerto Rican and Mexican), Students for a Democratic Society (white), and the Blackstone Rangers (African American) form the "Rainbow Coalition" to push for economic and racial equality in Illinois

### **1969**

Black Panther Fred Hampton is murdered by Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents for his charismatic organizing, including his leadership in the Rainbow Coalition

### **1970s**

Third migration of Asians to Illinois occurs; the migration comprises ethnic Chinese, Vietnamese, Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Sri Lankans, Nepalis, and Bhutanese

### **1973**

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is formed by President Richard Nixon to be a single federal agency for the enforcement of federal drug laws

### **1983**

Harold Washington is elected Chicago's first African American mayor

**1986**

President Ronald Reagan's crime bill results in skyrocketing incarceration rates for black and brown youth nationwide; in Illinois, state statistics mirror national patterns

**1987**

The Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum opens in Chicago

**1989**

Pekin begins to actively confront its legacy as a sundown town by forming the Coalition for Equality

**1992**

Carol Moseley Braun of Chicago is elected the first African American woman U.S. senator

**1994**

President Bill Clinton's crime bill contains a "three-strikes" provision that leads to increased racial disparities in arrests and convictions and an explosion in the nation's prison population, including mandatory imprisonment for petty crimes; Illinois does not create a state version of the federal law, one of 22 states to make that choice

**1995**

Sandra Cisneros, Chicana author of *The House on Mango Street*, receives a MacArthur Fellowship (popularly known as a "genius award")

**1999**

The Illinois Republican National Hispanic Assembly is formed in southern Illinois to foster Republican Party principles in the Hispanic community across the state; historically, the vast majority of Hispanic/Latinx voters in Illinois vote for the Democratic Party

**2007**

The University of Illinois board of trustees eliminates "Chief Illiniwek" as the sports team mascot because of its racist depiction of indigenous people

**2008**

Barack Obama, a resident of Illinois and U.S. senator from Illinois, is elected the first African American U.S. president; Obama wins Illinois with almost 62 percent of the vote

**2009**

Chicago ROAR (Regional Organizing Against Racism) begins as a regional program of the national Crossroads Anti-Racism Organizing and Training group based in Matteson, Illinois

**2010**

Several Illinois colleges and universities rank poorly in a national report in terms of African American graduation rates compared with whites (including Dominican University, Concordia University, Illinois College, and Bradley University)

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### **2010**

The Illinois Disproportionate Justice Impact Study Commission report to the state General Assembly demonstrates that African Americans, Hispanic/Latinx, and American Indians are more likely to be arrested, convicted, and imprisoned under state drug laws, despite nearly identical drug possession and usage by whites

### **2012**

In Tinley Park, 18 white organizers of Anti-Racist Action (ARA) violently confront eight members of Stormfront, a white supremacist organization at a restaurant, leaving one ARA member injured; ARA is a small yet militant white movement that has been waging war on right-wing extremists for decades and began branching into Illinois

### **2013**

The University of Chicago is ranked 21 among predominately white universities that graduate Hispanic/Latinx at a rate of 92 percent

### **2014**

We Charge Genocide group submits to the United Nations Committee Against Torture a report entitled “Police Violence Against Chicago’s Youth of Color”; among the facts the report documents are the following: between 2009 and 2011, 92 percent of police Taser uses were against black and Hispanic/Latinx youth, and black citizens were 10 times more likely than white citizens to be shot by a Chicago police officer

### **2016**

The Chicago Policy Accountability Report, issued by an appointed task force, uses city police statistics to document decades of racially targeted police brutality

### **2017**

The Southern Poverty Law Center documents 56 incidents in Illinois of racial bias between the November 2016 presidential election and the end of March 2017, showing that hate crimes against African Americans, Jews, Hispanics/Latinx, and Muslims and Arabs had reached a five-year peak; state-elected officials introduce and pass hate crime legislation, including House Bill 3711, which adds cyberstalking, stalking, and intimidation to the list of behaviors constituting a hate crime

## **NARRATIVE**

The history of race and racism in Illinois is largely told through the in- and out-migrations of populations, driven largely by economic conditions as well as by physical violence and legal force. The many indigenous nations that occupied the land that became Illinois were first documented at 500 BCE. The most recent occupants are people who have immigrated in the early years of the twenty-first century. In between were the Europeans (mainly the French and British), enslaved and free Africans who came with the Europeans, Asians (initially from China), and the ethnic groups referred to as Hispanic/Latinx (mainly Mexicans) who

experienced American-style racism. This narrative focuses on each of the populations as they entered and exited Illinois and gives a sense of their contemporary geographies within the state.

### **Indigenous Peoples**

The present-day state of Illinois contained the tribal territories and homelands of several tribes, including the Illini, the Iroquois, Ojibwe, Ottawa, Potawatomi, Kickapoo, Kaskaskia, Miami, Shawnee, Sauk, and Fox tribes.

At the time of European contact in 1720, the territory of the Illini consisted of a large section of the central Mississippi River valley. This territory shrank dramatically during the 1700s and early 1800s, as the population declined because of warfare and European diseases. In the nineteenth century, a belief held by many white Americans that they were especially charged with overtaking the entire North American continent was known as Manifest Destiny. All Indian lands were targeted for hostile takeover. For example, the Kaskaskia (1803), the Kickapoo (1819), and the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi (1829) ceded nearly all of their lands to the United States through treaties that were unfavorable to Indians. By the early 1830s, only five principal tribes remained—the Cahokia, Kaskaskia, Michigamea, Peoria, and Tamaroa—and most of whom were forcibly removed by the Indian Removal Act. The Black Hawk War of 1832 was a failed attempt by Sauk and Fox Indians to reclaim lands they had ceded in 1804. It had the effect of strengthening the U.S. government pressure on Indians to move westward. It is not known how many of the 3,600 Indians who fought for the Union in the Civil War were from Illinois; however, many perceived the war as another opportunity to take back or protect their ancestral lands.

Between the late 1890s and the 1960s, indigenous peoples struggled to maintain sovereignty and to insist that treaties with the U.S. government be honored. By the 1960s, the American Indian Movement formed to organize indigenous peoples across tribal affiliations, with a chapter in Chicago. Members of the American Indian Movement joined with Fred Hampton of the Black Panther Party and others to press for more progressive economic, social, and political policies in Illinois.

In the twenty-first century, the counties with the largest indigenous populations are those surrounding Chicago, Brown, Cass, and Fulton Counties (near the sun-down county of Schuyler) and Bond Pope and Logan Counties. Chicago ranks third as having the largest population of urban Indians in the United States.

### **Whites**

The persistence of ethnic European identities is evident well into the twenty-first century, in communities such as Skokie, Chicago, Norridge, and Niles and festivals such as Swedish Days, Gaelic Park Irish Festival, and the German American Festival. Nevertheless, ethnic Europeans had become politically, socially, and economically “white” by the late nineteenth century as distinct from the indigenous peoples and the black, Mexican, and Chinese people of Illinois.

The French and the British first arrived between 1673 and 1763. They engaged in wars with Indians and each other before eventually claiming the land for the U.S. government in 1787, following the end of the Revolutionary War. Over the subsequent decades, Europeans from Ireland, Germany, Italy, Poland, Hungary, and Russia arrived in Illinois from the eastern part of the United States to claim land that had been Indian land for farming. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, Illinois population grew more than 20 percent every decade, comprising largely Germans and Irish, with Swedes and British following. As Illinois became an important agricultural state, the manufacturing and support industries that emerged became the source of financial wealth for some of the nation's most powerful white men. The Chicago Commodities Futures Exchange and Board of Trade traded in the goods and commodities generated by industries such as mining, iron and steel, meatpacking, clothing and garments, and printing and publishing, railroading, and electrical machinery. People from all over the country and the world sought to provide labor for the growing industries. As a result, many working white people struggled with people of color over issues of labor, employment, housing, political, and civil rights for all, to the point of legal and extra-legal violence against people of color. The American Federation of Labor craft unions were solidly opposed to racially integrating the workplace. The white racial identity was forged throughout the centuries by struggles with the issues of indigenous sovereignty, African enslavement, and immigration from Mexico and Asia. There were progressive and liberal whites such as newspaper publisher and abolitionist Elijah Lovejoy who was murdered by a mob in Alton, Illinois, in 1837, for publishing antislavery materials. In the twentieth century, whites such as Jane Addams of Hull House and John Dewey of the University of Chicago and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (labor unions) allied with people of color through social movements to create political and economic equality. During the social movements of the late 1960s, groups of progressive and radical whites—such as Rising Up Angry, the Young Patriots Organization, and Jobs or Income Now (JOIN)—joined forces with the Black Panther Party and the Young Lords to help form the Rainbow Coalition to create a more equal Illinois society.

However, race riots and lynchings aimed at people of color, and the creation and sustaining of sundown towns has maintained a legacy of housing discrimination, wealth disparities, police and community violence, poverty, educational disparities, and anti-migrant/immigrant attitudes throughout the state. In 2016, a Brookings Institute report indicated that Chicago was the third most racially segregated city in the nation.

### **African Americans**

The first persons of African descent arrived in 1720 as crew, servants, and enslaved people with Europeans. The first nonindigenous person credited with establishing a permanent presence in Chicago in 1779 was a freeman of African descent, Jean Baptiste Point du Sable, who became a wealthy trader.

Illinois gained statehood in 1818, yet slavery was not finally outlawed until 1824. Nevertheless, many people escaped Southern slavery via the Underground

Railroad by crossing into towns such as East St. Louis, Cairo, and Springfield. Quinn Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church was founded in 1844 in Chicago and served as an important stop on the Underground Railroad. “Free Frank” McWorter, a formerly enslaved man who purchased the freedom of 13 family members, moved to Illinois in 1830, and founded New Philadelphia in 1836, the first U.S. town platted and registered by an African American. The southern part of the state maintained proslavery sentiments through the Civil War. Yet, African Americans continued to migrate to Illinois from the South after the Civil War. Towns such as Virden, Pana, and Carterville experienced serious racial violence in the 1890s due to competition for jobs between African American and white workers in the factories and mines.

By 1908, a larger percentage of the population of Springfield was African American than that of any other city in Illinois. Vocal about their civil and employment rights, many in the “Badlands” community owned businesses. Whites grew even more hostile to the Springfield Negro who was ready to “argue that he was as good as a white man” (Charities and the Commons 1909). A false rape accusation of a black man by a white woman led to white mob violence in August that claimed the life of two African American men, over 100 people of both races hospitalized, over 40 African American homes burned to the ground, and more than two dozen black businesses destroyed. One by-product of the riots was the creation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909. However, the NAACP could not prevent subsequent antiblack riots in Illinois in

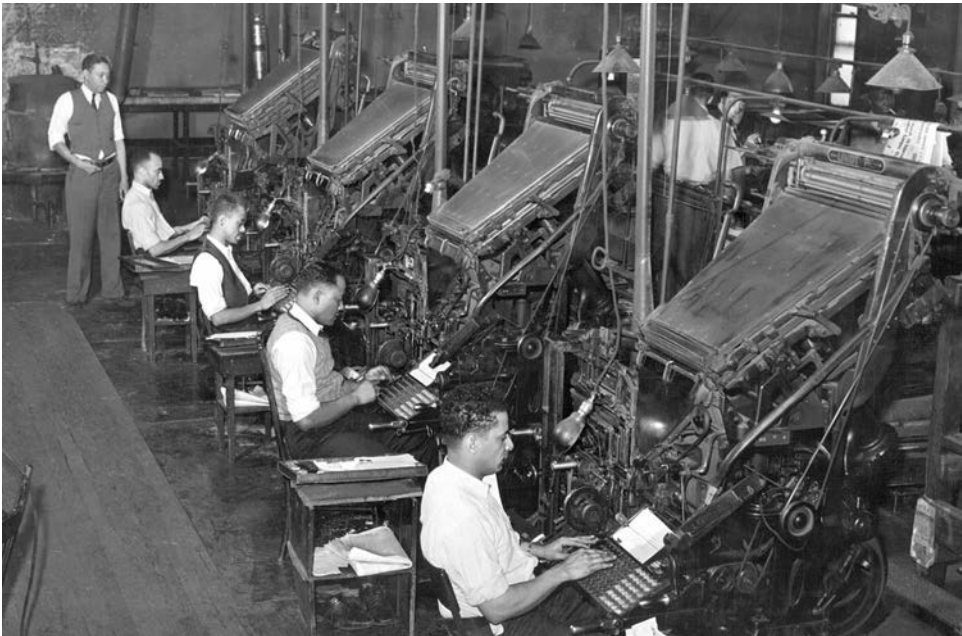
### **Sundown Towns**

A sundown town refers to communities that excluded nonwhite populations by force, law, or custom. The name comes from signs at city limits stating, “N\*\*\*\*r, Don’t Let the Sun Go Down on You in (name of town).” In beginning research for his 2006 book, *Sundown Towns: A Hidden Dimension of American Racism*, James W. Loewen states on his website that expected perhaps 10 sundown towns in his home state of Illinois and perhaps 50 across the country. Instead, he found about 507 in Illinois and thousands across the United States. While most targeted African Americans, some also excluded Latin American, Jewish, Asian, and other people of color. From 1890 through suburbanization in the 1950s and 1960s, thousands of towns across the United States became formal sundown towns and informal sundown towns through restrictive housing covenants and bank loan redlining. Some employed real estate agents to exclude people; others used intimidation by law enforcement officers and citizens alike, including violence and lynching. The number of sundown towns declined following the 1968 Civil Rights (Fair Housing) Act, yet Loewen suggests the difficulty of knowing accurately how many sundown towns existed at any point of time in history and that *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 actually saw the creation of new sundown towns. The *Negro Motorist Green Book*, published every year from 1936 to 1966, advised African Americans about which towns to avoid based on stories of violence, lynchings, and disappearances. Sundown towns existed in every region of the United States; identifying them requires an in-depth study of census data and city ordinances, of which there are limited records. Maria Marulanda’s 2010 article in the *Fordham Law Review* argued that immigration laws and ordinances create similar circumstances in some municipalities even now.

Cairo (1909), East St. Louis (1917), Chicago (1919), and Cicero (1951; the first to be broadcast on television), and the many lynchings in sundown towns.

Nevertheless, the Great Migration from poorer and more repressive Southern states—and the rapid growth of Illinois industries—increased the black population by 81 percent from 1920 to 1930. More African Americans were elected to public office and attained jobs where no others had before in Illinois, or in many other places around the nation. African Americans were the largest population of people of color in Illinois in the twentieth century. It was also during this time that the Ku Klux Klan reemerged nationwide and rose to high elected positions such as the assistant secretary of state and governor within the state of Illinois. The Klan declared that its role was to control African Americans, Catholics, immigrants, and Jews and to support Protestants, whites, Prohibition, and law and order. Illinois membership in the Ku Klux Klan was more than 200,000. This allowed for groups such as the Chicago Real Estate Board to promote a racially restrictive covenant to YMCAs, churches, women’s clubs, PTAs, Kiwanis clubs, chambers of commerce, and property owners’ associations, in addition to private homes. At one point, as much as 80 percent of the city’s area was included under restrictive covenants. These practices had the effect of severely limiting where African Americans could live and establish businesses and community organizations.

Yet, African Americans in Illinois transformed the politics and culture of the state, with as many as 3,000 arriving weekly during the 1940s from the South.



Typesetters work at their keyboards at *The Chicago Defender*, an African American newspaper founded in Chicago in 1905. The *Defender* was the most influential African American newspaper in the United States during the early and mid-twentieth century and played a major role in the migration of African Americans from the South to the North. (Library of Congress)



There are published histories of the African American populations throughout the state, including Bloomington, Cairo, Carbondale, Champaign-Urbana, Cicero, Decatur, East St. Louis, Edwardsville, Evanston, Jacksonville, Rockford, Springfield, Coles, and McLean Counties. Yet, the largest and strongest impact of African Americans occurred in Chicago. The Black Belt, a string of black neighborhoods on the South Side of Chicago where 75 percent of African Americans lived, was the site for overcrowded dwellings, often lacking plumbing and adequate garbage collection, leading to severe health disparities and despair. Post World War II, the Chicago Housing Authority developed high-rise apartments in the Black Belt and the West Side to ease overcrowding, leading in many cases to an even higher concentration of the social ills that accompany poverty.

The Black Belt also contained a high concentration of politically and culturally active African Americans, many of whom were middle class and affluent, who created or sustained houses of worship including Quinn Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church (1844) and the Nation of Islam (1934/1962), businesses such as Johnson Products (1954) and Third World Press (1967), community organizations such as the DuSable Museum of African American History (1961), and media such as the Chicago Defender (1905) as well as new forms of music (such as Chicago blues and Chicago jazz) and other arts (including visual arts, poetry and fiction) with self-consciously black-positive messages that transformed national culture.

Native-born Illinois African Americans broke important racial barriers during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. They include Ellsworth Dansby Jr. of Decatur, Illinois, who was the second black man to be sworn into the Army Air Force and the first enlisted man in the group to receive the rank of master sergeant during World War II. He served with the 99th Pursuit Squadron of the Army Air Corps that was activated at Chanute Field in Rantoul, Illinois, and was later moved to Tuskegee, Alabama, to form the famed Tuskegee Airmen. The Tuskegee Airmen, a squadron of black fighter pilots and other support personnel, challenged the racist notion that African Americans lacked the talent or courage to effectively defend the United States during World War II.

Anthropologist, dancer, choreographer, author, educator, and social activist Katherine Dunham, of Glen Ellyn, Illinois, was one of the first black entertainers in the 1930s who took a stand against performing for segregated audiences. Her Ballet Negre, formed in Chicago in 1930, was the first African American ballet company in the United States. An innovator in African American modern dance, Dunham created the Dunham technique that fused European ballet with Afro-Caribbean dance styles. The Katherine Dunham Dance Company was the only self-supported American black dance troupe for over 30 years and was one of the twentieth century's most successful dance company in the United States and Europe.

Comedian and actor Richard Pryor of Peoria, Illinois, became one of the most influential comedians in the history of comedy for his intimate and graphic storytelling about the impact of poverty and racism on his life and community.

Politician and lawyer Carol Moseley Braun was born in Chicago. She was many "firsts"—the first female African American senator in U.S. history, the first

African American U.S. senator for the Democratic Party, the first woman to defeat an incumbent U.S. senator in an election, and the first female senator from Illinois. She also served as the United States Ambassador to New Zealand.

Michelle LaVaughn Robinson Obama of Chicago is an American lawyer and writer who became the first African American First Lady of the United States. Prior to her husband's election as the nation's first African American U.S. president, she worked as a lawyer, an associate dean of student services at the University of Chicago, and served as the vice president for community and external affairs at the University of Chicago Medical Center.

Other African Americans who migrated, or whose parents migrated, to the state as part of the Great Migration also made significant contributions to Illinois and U.S. history and culture. They include Oscar De Priest, the first African American to be elected to Congress from outside the Southern states and the first in the twentieth century, who also introduced national anti-lynching legislation and desegregated federal employment programs; Robert Sengstacke Abbott, who founded the *Chicago Defender* newspaper, which disseminated news of racialized violence and African American resistance and grew to have the highest circulation of any black-owned newspaper in the country; publisher John Johnson, who founded the Johnson Publishing Company, which published *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines, among the most influential African American media businesses in the second half of the twentieth century; media mogul Oprah Winfrey, a multibillionaire

### **Black Panthers in Illinois**

Revolutionary and activist, Fred Hampton was born in Summit, Illinois, and grew up in Marywood, Illinois. His parents, who had moved North from Louisiana, both worked at the Argo Starch Company. Hampton was gifted both in the classroom and as an athlete. Graduating from Proviso East High School with honors in 1966, he enrolled in Triton Junior College in River Grove, Illinois. He majored in pre-law to familiarize himself with the legal system to effect change for oppressed populations. Although best known for his involvement with the Black Panther Party as a state and national leader, Hampton started his activism with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) where he was the leader of the Western Suburban Youth Council and met other like-minded organizers. They hoped to bring about social change through nonviolence, activism, and community organizing. They saw that racial and ethnic infighting would only serve to maintain institutionalized racism and keep young people in poverty. To develop multiethnic class-consciousness, Hampton and Bobby Lee united the various black movements with the Puerto Rican Young Lords and the white Young Patriots Organization to create the Rainbow Coalition. Hampton also sought to unite the Native American struggle with the black and Latinx movements. As a result, he was monitored and killed in a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) raid in 1969. His death exposed the FBI's illegal tapping of activists' phones and interference with the radical and pacifist civil rights movements, known as the Counter-Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO). In 1982, \$1.85 million was awarded to his family and to those of his comrades killed in the raid, the largest amount ever awarded in a civil lawsuit, due to the manner in which the federal government had infringed on his and others' rights.

and considered the greatest black philanthropist in American history; and the first African American U.S. president, Barack Obama.

### Latinx

While not a distinct “race,” people of all races from Latin American countries have been racialized as a distinct group other than white and experienced racism in Illinois, particularly those with darker skin. The largest group of Latin Americans migrated to Illinois from Mexico in the 1910s, spurred by the Mexican Revolution. Many worked in the Chicago railroad yards. Some were brought by the steel and meatpacking industries to break labor union strikes and to serve as a buffer between African American and white workers. Agricultural workers from the U.S. Midwest and from Central Mexican states first settled in neighborhoods such as the Calumet, Near West Side, and Back of the Yards. Many began worshipping at the Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Francis of Assisi. Muralists brought art to Pilsen and Little Village, which still exists in the twenty-first century.

Between the 1920s and the 1950s, the Mexican population fluctuated due to changes in immigration, labor, and economic policies. While most of the lynchings of Mexicans occurred in the South and west, Illinois likely also witnessed racial violence against Mexicans. By 1950, the Spanish-speaking population (Mexicans and Puerto Ricans) in Chicago had grown to 35,000.

In 1968, Jose “Cha-Cha” Jimenez formed a political action group, the Young Lords Organization, out of what had been a Puerto Rican street gang. The group later spread to New York City, and they organized to achieve economic, political, and social betterment for Puerto Ricans who faced poverty, discrimination, and political disenfranchisement as a U.S. territory. The Young Lords in Illinois also embraced Mexicans to push back against the evictions of Latinx communities to “redevelop” and to increase real estate taxes while cutting services to people in need.

Another notable Hispanic/Latinx from Chicago is writer Sandra Cisneros, author of *The House on Mango Street* (inspired by her years living in the Humboldt Park neighborhood in Chicago) and *Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories*. Among other awards, Cisneros received one of the 1995 MacArthur (“genius”) Fellowships. Comedian Horatio Sanz and his brother, actor Carlos Sanz, are of Chilean parentage and also grew up in the Humboldt Park neighborhood.

By 1970 of all major U.S. cities, Chicago had the fourth-largest Spanish-speaking population. More than half of the Latinx population of Illinois lives in the suburbs outside the city of Chicago. U.S. Census data show that the Hispanic/Latinx share of Illinois’s population grew from 7.9 percent in 1990 to 12.3 percent in 2000 to 16.4 percent (or 2,118,514 people) in 2013. The Latinx population now exceeds that of African Americans in Illinois, comprising Mexicans (79%), Puerto Ricans (9%), Central Americans (4%), South Americans (3%), Cubans (1%), Dominican Republicans (less than 1%), and other Latin Americans (4%).

An increasing number of Latinx people are engaging in electoral politics and in creating businesses and community-based organizations to address the needs of the population. Over 10 percent of the electorate in Illinois were Hispanic/

Latinx, constituting over 1 million eligible voters. By 2007, there were over 55,000 Latinx-owned businesses in Illinois, with over \$10 billion in sales and employing over 77,000 people. The 2014 purchasing power of Illinois's Latinx totaled \$47.2 billion—an increase of 435 percent since 1990. By 2017, there were 14 members of the Latino Caucus of the Illinois state legislature.

Nevertheless, Hispanic/Latinx people in Illinois face increasing racialized violence with the rising anti-immigration rhetoric. Nationwide, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reported in 2009 that Hispanic/Latinx people experienced more (and an increasing number of) hate crimes than other racial, ethnic, and religious groups over the period between 2003 and 2007. In addition, Latinx youth face a disproportionate share of police violence in Illinois.

### **Asian Americans**

The first Chinese arrived following the completion of the first transcontinental railway. The earliest Cantonese immigrants to Chicago managed one tea shop and 18 laundry businesses by 1874. The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act was the first federal law restricting immigration into the United States. It placed a 10-year ban on any new Chinese workers entering the country. It also restricted freedom of travel for existing Chinese, forcing those in Chicago to stay put and the undocumented to be deported. The 1900 U.S. Census recorded 1,462 Chinese in the city, yet the Chinatown Museum suggests that “there must have been others who avoided government notice.”

Once the Chinese exclusion laws were repealed in 1943, and the People's Republic of China was established in 1949, Taiwanese, Hong Kong, and mainland immigrants arrived in the 1950s and 1960s throughout Chicago and the suburbs. The 1965 Immigration Act and the Fall of Saigon in 1975 brought ethnic Chinese, Vietnamese, and other groups from Southeast and South Asia.

The 2000 U.S. Census indicates there were almost 74,000 Chinese in Greater Chicago as well as other Asian populations concentrated in the Champaign-Urbana area. Of all ethnic groups, South Asians are the fastest growing in the Midwest as of 2017, constituting nearly 250,000 in Illinois. Of the nearly 600,000 Asian Americans in Illinois, more than 80 percent live in just four counties including Cook, DuPage, Kane, and Lake. Four Asian Americans won local elected office in 2017, adding to the historic number of Asian Americans in elected office in Illinois. It included the first Cambodian American woman elected to public office anywhere in the United States. In 2016, for the first time in history, Illinois elected Asian Americans simultaneously at federal, state, and county levels of government. As the population grows, more Asian Americans are engaging in the larger educational, governmental, and business communities outside these racial-ethnic enclaves.

Nevertheless, a joint 2013 report by the South Asian American Policy and Research Institute (SAAPRI) and the Asian Americans Advancing Justice Chicago (AAAJC) shows that Illinois's South Asian population is struggling to translate high levels of education into higher incomes. For Asians with lower levels of education and income, there are barriers to receiving culturally and linguistically

appropriate social services. For example, more than 92,000 Asian Americans in Illinois are presently without health insurance. There is more than a 40 percent rate of limited English proficiency among Chinese, Korean, Laotian, and Pakistani, which contributes to the gap in services. Perceptions of Asians as a “model minority” contribute to the racialized neglect of these populations by Illinois state agencies.

### **Recent Refugees and Immigrants**

Since 2007, Chicago and its suburbs have witnessed the placement of refugees from several Muslim-majority countries, including the seven nations President Donald Trump sought to ban in 2017: Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. Other nationalities represented among the refugees include people from the Congo, Burundi, and Eritrea. As darker-skinned people, these populations are often perceived as “other” or racially different from whites. In most cases, these are populations fleeing warfare and persecution in their home countries only to face racialized discrimination in the United States. Nearly one in seven Illinoisans are foreign-born and nearly one in five are Hispanic/Latinx or Asian voters.

A 2015 report of the American Immigrant Council using data from the U.S. Census Bureau indicates that the foreign-born share of Illinois’s population rose from 8.3 percent in 1990 to 14 percent in 2013, or 1,807,468 immigrants, which is more than the total population of Philadelphia. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, the Chicago Council of Global Affairs reported that 53.8 percent of the Chicago metro area’s population gain was attributable to immigration. Other metro areas in Illinois witnessing population increases due to immigration include Bloomington (30.3% change due to immigration), Champaign (47.9% change), Kankakee (16.8% change), Peoria (21.1% change), and Rockford (27.2% change). By 2013, the 852,962 people who immigrated to Illinois were naturalized U.S. citizens and eligible to vote.

These immigrants have been an asset to the Illinois economy adding billions of dollars (including taxes) and thousands of jobs to the state economy. As students, immigrants excel academically and contribute to Illinois institutions of higher education. Yet, due to the color of their skin and their religions, they are often perceived to be “other” and experience the same kind of racialized violence as other people of color in the United States. In Illinois, according to 2011 data from the FBI, the perception of race is the primary motivation for hate crimes. In the Chicago area, the Council on American-Islamic Relations reported 400 hate crimes in 2016 and has counted 175 incidents as of February 2017.

### **Race and Racism in Illinois in the Twenty-First Century**

As of spring 2017, the state of Illinois has operated without benefit of a formal state budget to run the government. Major businesses and industries such as mining and manufacturing have lost revenues and employees due to the Great Recession of 2009, and the hardest-hit workers have been African American men. The state has led the nation in the largest population decline in recent years, with most

of the out-migration to the surrounding states of Wisconsin, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, and Florida. The crime statistics for the city of Chicago have been among the highest in the nation. Racial tensions, particularly between youth of color and law enforcement, have been heightened, partly as a result of economic conditions and limited investment in schools and other public resources. As the white population of Illinois decreases and the various populations of color increase, the state faces the challenge of overcoming discriminatory policies of the past to create prosperity for all Illinoisans.

## **NOTABLE FIGURES**

### **Brooks, Gwendolyn (1917–2000)**

Gwendolyn Brooks was born in Topeka, Kansas. Her family moved to Chicago when she was only six months old as part of the Great Migration. Brooks stated in a 1994 interview, “Living in the city, I wrote differently than I would have if I had been raised in Topeka, Kansas. I am an organic Chicagoan. Living there has given me a multiplicity of characters to aspire for. I hope to live there the rest of my days. That’s my headquarters” (“Evening with Gwendolyn Brooks”).

While famous as the first black writer to win the Pulitzer Prize in 1950, Brooks is an important figure in African American history for many reasons, first and foremost of which is her representation of working-class African American life in poetry and prose. Prior to her, African Americans from neighborhoods like hers were largely ignored in the creation and consumption of literature. She shone a light on her surroundings, showing that art belonged there, and it could be created in and based on neighborhoods and cultures other than affluent white spaces.

At age 13, she published her first poem, “Eventide,” in a children’s magazine, *American Childhood*. At her mother’s suggestion, she sent her poems to Langston Hughes and James Weldon Johnson, both of whom wrote back encouraging words. Hughes would later become her friend and supporter. She attended the integrated yet predominantly white, prestigious Hyde Park High School before transferring to the all-black Wendell Phillips High School and then finally to the integrated Englewood High School. Her high school experiences echoed the racial climate of her times, and she experienced racism and racial injustice that contributed to her understanding of U.S. systems and institutions. By age 16, Brooks had published approximately 75 poems and was a regular contributor to the “Lights and Shadows” column of the *Chicago Defender*, an African American newspaper. Her style ranged from traditional ballads and sonnets to blues rhythms in free verse. She graduated from Wilson Junior College (now Kennedy-King College) and chose to forego a bachelor’s degree. She was very clear that she was a writer who wanted to write and perceived a four-year degree as unnecessary. She worked as a typist to support herself while pursuing her dreams.

Her first anthology was published in 1945, titled *A Street in Bronzeville*, the popular nickname for Chicago’s South Side. Published by Harper & Row, she garnered significant praise for her mastery over the language of poetry and for her chosen subjects. Paul Engle wrote in the *Chicago Tribune* that Brooks’s poetry

was no more “Negro poetry” than Robert Frost’s was “white poetry.” She received the Guggenheim Fellowship in 1946 and was awarded a grant from the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1947. In 1949, she published her second volume, *Annie Allen*, a portrait of a Bronzeville girl as a daughter, wife, and mother, who experienced loneliness, loss, death, and poverty. Here, she used an experimental form that she called the sonnet-ballad and was widely praised for it. It was for this work that she received the Pulitzer Prize.

In 1953, she published the novel, *Maud Martha*, which received very little attention due to her reputation as a poet and to comparisons with other sociopolitically themed novels such as *Invisible Man* and *Native Son*. In 1956, she published a collection of children’s poetry, *Bronzeville Boys and Girls*, followed by *The Bean Eaters* in 1960 and *Selected Poems* in 1963. By then at the height of her career, she was regarded as one of the most prominent writers in the United States. It was also during this time that her poetry shifted focus to encompass all the “Bronzevilles” across the country, especially in light of the murder of Emmett Till 1955 and racial tensions in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957.

The most significant change in her writing style and tone came after she attended a black writers’ conference at Fisk University in 1967, where she heard Amiri Baraka, Ron Milner, and other revolutionary poets. She perceived these poets as proud and committed to their people, and they encouraged her to do the same. Returning to Chicago, she began a poetry workshop that included members of a Chicago street gang, the Blackstone Rangers and younger poets like Sonia Sanchez and Nikki Giovanni. She became part of the Black Arts Movement that incorporated the political concept of black power with the arts. Her next volume of poetry, *In the Mecca* (1968), was deemed by some critics as her “declaration of independence” from the “integrationist” tone of her previous work. This volume had poems about Malcolm X and the Blackstone Rangers and used clipped tones to express her new voice. Her next volume of poetry, *Rio*, published in 1969 marked her departure from Harper & Row and a shift to Broadside Press, a small Detroit-based, black-owned press. This, she said, was in accordance with her desire to support black businesses and writers and also to reach out to black audiences. However, since she was no longer with a major publisher, her subsequent works did not get the mainstream attention of her previous works.

In 1968, she became the poet laureate of Illinois, and in 1976, she was the first black woman to be elected to the 250-member National Institute of Arts and Letters. In 1989, she received a lifetime achievement award from the National Endowment for the Arts and another from the National Book Foundation in 1994. The Gwendolyn Brooks Chair in Black Literature and Creative Writing was established at Chicago State University in 1990. Western Illinois University created a Gwendolyn Brooks Center for African American Literature, and there is a Gwendolyn Brooks Junior High School in Harvey, Illinois. In 1994, she was selected by the National Endowment of the Humanities as its Jefferson Lecturer and received the National Medal of Arts in 1995. In these lines quoted in her *New York Times* obituary, Brooks best described her literary work: “I wrote about what I saw and heard in the street. I lived in a small second-floor apartment at the corner, and I could look first on one side and then the other. There was my material” (Watkins 2000).

**Washington, Harold (1922–1987)**

Born on April 15, 1922, in Chicago's Cook County Hospital, Harold Lee Washington was the 41st mayor of Chicago and the first African American, elected in February 1983.

His mother had moved to Chicago from Centralia, Illinois, to become a singer. His father, a lawyer and Methodist minister, was one of the first precinct captains in the city. His half-brother from his mother's side, Ramon Price was an artist who eventually became the curator of Chicago's Du Sable Museum of African American History. Washington grew up in Bronzeville, a Chicago neighborhood considered a mecca for black culture in the Midwest in the first half of the twentieth century. He attended the racially segregated Du Sable High School, but dropped out between his junior and senior year, feeling unchallenged by the schoolwork, to work at a meatpacking plant. He was a good athlete, placing first in the 110-meter high hurdle and second in the 220-meter low hurdle events at the 1939 citywide track meet. In 1942, he was drafted into the U.S. Army and was sent overseas with the racially segregated unit of the U.S. Army Air Corps unit of Engineers, rising to the rank of First Sergeant.

At age 24, a war veteran, Washington enrolled in Roosevelt College (now University), among students denied admission to other local colleges due to race and religion. At college, he was named to a committee that supported the efforts to remove "restrictive covenants" in housing that stopped minorities (blacks and, to a lesser extent, Jews) from buying real estate in predominantly white neighborhoods. In 1948, Washington was elected the third president of Roosevelt's student council, and it was in this position that he came to be known for his ability to keep cool and remain stable. He intentionally avoided "extremist activities," including street actions and sit-ins, although he and more radical activists maintained a mutual respect. He graduated with a BA in 1949 and was admitted to Northwestern University School of Law. He was active as treasurer of the Junior Bar Association in his final year. However, unlike at Roosevelt, his years in law school were largely devoid of political and social activism. He was the only black student in his class, which also started with six women.

Upon receiving his JD in 1951, he worked with Ralph Metcalfe, the 3rd Ward alderman and former Olympic athlete. It was under Metcalfe that Washington began organizing the 3rd Ward's Young Democrats (YD), pushing for multiple policies on behalf of African American constituents. Richard J. Daley, who would become Washington's lifetime political rival, was elected the Democratic Party chairman in 1952, and the 3rd Ward was critical to Daley's 1955 mayoral campaign. Over time, the 3rd Ward became an example for other black YD wards who sought Washington's advice. Voted into the Illinois House in 1965, Washington eventually fell out of favor with Metcalfe, who had protected him from Daley, over Washington's support for Renault Robinson's Afro-American Patrolmen's League (AAPL), an organization set up for the purpose of stopping discrimination against minority officers by the predominantly white police department. In 1967, Washington was ranked by the Independent Voters of Illinois (IVI) as the fourth-most independent legislator in the Illinois House and named Best Legislator of the Year.



His years in the House included his work on the Fair Housing Act and strengthening the state's Fair Employment Practices Commission. In addition, he worked on a state Civil Rights Act, which would strengthen employment and housing provisions in the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964. During his time in Roosevelt College, Washington relied on parliamentary tactics to enable him to bargain for more concessions.

Washington also founded the Chicago League of Negro Voters in 1960, one of the first African American political organizations in the city, with Lemuel Bentley, Bennett Johnson, Luster Jackson, and others. By 1967, independent candidates had become popular with the black community, resulting in the YDs slowly losing influence in the party, so much so that by 1983, the League of Negro Voters was instrumental in Washington's run for mayor.

At the insistence of an African American party loyalist Cecil Partee, Washington was elected to the Illinois Senate in 1976, in spite of Daley's opposition. In the Senate, Washington's main focus was to pass the 1980 Illinois Human Rights Act; the passage of this act was attributed to his noncombative nature. In 1980, Washington was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in Illinois's first congressional district; however, he spent most his time campaigning for reelection, anticipating Democratic opposition in 1982, for which he was criticized later during his mayoral campaign. He spent most of his time in the House fighting to extend the Voting Rights Act by exposing measures like closing registration early, literacy tests, and gerrymandering to restrict Southern black voters, eventually leading to the passing of the Voting Rights Act Extension. He secured his congressional reelection and turned his attention to the Chicago mayoral election, where he beat the incumbent Democratic mayor and the son of Richard Daley in the primaries, almost assuring his victory, only to learn that many high-ranking Democratic officials supported the Republican candidate instead. Washington's campaigns were engulfed by accusations of failing to file his taxes. Nevertheless, he won in 1983 and went on to create Chicago's first environmental affairs department. He faced stiff opposition from the Democratic aldermen, evident when all of his bills were sent to committee or tabled. He was forced to rule through the power of his veto. He established the Political Education Project to further his legislative goals and support like-minded political candidates.

Following reelection, he died at his desk in 1987. His funeral was very heavily attended due to his popularity with Chicago's African American population and his many progressive allies.

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# 15

## Indiana

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Jennifer Sdunzik

### CHRONOLOGY

**1787**

Congress enacts the Northwest Ordinance, which bans slavery in the northwestern territories, an area that includes present-day Indiana

**1800**

Congress organizes the Indiana Territory on May 7

**1816**

Indiana enters the Union as the 19th state on December 11; the new state establishes voting rights for white males over the age of 21

**1818**

Indiana bans interracial marriage and outlaws African American testimony against a white defendant

**1829**

The Indiana Colonization Society is formed to facilitate black migration to Liberia despite little interest on the part of African Americans to emigrate

**1831**

Black Codes are passed, requiring Indiana blacks to post bond of \$500 to guarantee good behavior and not become a public charge

**1836**

The Bethel AME Church is established in Indianapolis

**1838**

The Trail of Death, the forced removal of approximately 900 Potawatomi Indians from Indiana to present-day Kansas, is a 660-mile walk that takes more than two months and costs many lives due to disease and the stress of involuntary removal

## **284 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1843**

The Revised Laws of 1843 provide that public schools are open to the white children of the state

### **1845**

John Tucker is murdered while attending Independence Day celebrations in Indianapolis; his death is the earliest account of mob violence against African Americans in the state; in total, between 1845 and 1930, there were at least 17 recorded incidents in the state during which 27 black men died at the hands of vigilantes

### **1848**

Founded in 1845, the National Horse Thief Detective Association is given authority to arrest and other extraordinary policing powers by the Indiana legislature; as a civic organization and law enforcement agency, the association's white supremacist agenda becomes evident when the group joins forces with the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in the 1920s, an alliance that leads to its demise, with its special law enforcement powers being revoked by 1933

### **1851**

Indiana ratifies a new constitution, which officially excludes African Americans from settling in the state; the constitution also fines employers who hire blacks who have illegally entered the state

### **1855**

Instead of providing education to black children, Indiana enacts a law exempting property owned by blacks from taxation for school purposes

### **1864**

The 28th Indiana Colored Infantry Regiment, the only black regiment formed in Indiana during the Civil War, is mustered in at Camp Fremont on March 31; the regiment sees action in Virginia, losing over 200 men

### **1865**

Two black men accused of robbing and assaulting a white woman in Evansville are lynched

### **1865**

On February 13, Indiana ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

### **1867**

On January 23, Indiana ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing full civil rights to African Americans

### **1869**

On May 14, Indiana ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting black male citizens the right to vote

### **1871**

Three black men falsely accused of murdering a white family in their house are lynched in Charlestown

**1872**

A black man accused of stealing is lynched in Monroe County

**1874**

The Sisters of Charity, an African American self-help organization, is founded in Indiana

**1877**

The state school law is amended to give local authorities the right to allow black children to attend white schools if no black school exists

**1878**

Five African Americans are lynched in Mount Vernon—four are hanged outside of the jail and one is butchered while in custody

**1879**

The *Indianapolis Leader*, Indiana's first African American newspaper, is founded

**1882–1895**

White's Manual Labor Institute in Wabash serves as Indian boarding school

**1886**

A black man named Holly Epps, who is accused of murdering his employer and attempting to rape his wife, is lynched in Vincennes

**1888–1896**

St. Joseph's Indian Normal School in Rensselaer serves as an Indian boarding school

**1900**

Three black men who allegedly murdered a white barber are lynched in Rockport

**1901**

A black man named George Ward, who is falsely accused of shooting and killing a white school teacher in Terre Haute, is lynched

**1902**

James Dillard, a black man falsely accused of assaulting two white women in Sullivan County, is lynched

**1903**

A week-long race riot in Evansville in early July is sparked by the murder of a policeman by a black man; hundreds of blacks are driven out of town

**1912**

A chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is organized in Indiana

**1919**

A steel strike leads corporations to recruit Mexican strike laborers; this action results in large numbers of Mexicans migrating to the United States and Indiana over the next decade

**1920s**

Indiana becomes a major stronghold of the KKK, with the Klan infiltrating Protestant churches, social organizations, and political parties; Klan membership in Indiana by 1923 is estimated between a quarter and half a million, amounting to as much as 30 percent of the state's white male population

**1922**

The Indiana legislature passes a bill creating Klan Day at the Indiana State Fairgrounds, although the bill is vetoed by the governor

**1927**

The Indianapolis Board of School Commissioners designates Crispus Attucks School as a school for all black children; Gary also mandates blacks attend a separate high school

**1930**

Thomas Shipp and Abe Smith are lynched in Marion for allegedly murdering a white man and attempting to rape his fiancée; this is the only lynching that had a survivor, as the mob stopped before lynching James Cameron

**1931–1935**

The Repatriation Campaign during the Great Depression leads to the forced repatriation of thousands of people of Mexican descent to Mexico; 60 percent were U.S. citizens—Indiana loses about 75 percent of its Mexican population

**1942**

The Federal Bracero Program brings many Mexican nationals to Indiana's farms and factories to fill the void Hoosier men left behind when going to war

**1954**

Operation Wetback is a federal immigration law enforcement initiative created in response to the Bracero Program and to curb illegal immigration from Mexico; it results in arrests and deportation of hundreds of U.S. citizens, with estimates ranging between 1 and 4 million

**1958**

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivers a speech in Indianapolis calling for racial harmony on December 12

**1961**

On November 24, death threats are made against Dr. Martin Luther King when he returns to Indianapolis for a Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) fund-raiser

**1963**

On February 19, Indiana ratifies the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing the poll tax

**1965**

Indiana abolishes its anti-miscegenation law, two years before such laws are overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court (*Loving v. Virginia*)

**1967**

Richard Hatcher is elected the first black mayor of Gary

**1968**

Bobby Kennedy addresses an African American audience upon hearing news of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King; riots erupt in many other U.S. cities, but Indianapolis remains quiet

**1968**

A young black woman, Carol Jenkins, is killed in Martinsville for being in town after dark

**1971**

The debut of the Indiana Black Expo occurs on June 19; the expo is a celebration of the cultural and educational contributions of blacks in Indiana history

**1980**

An assassination attempt is made against Vernon Jordan, president of the National Urban League, in Fort Wayne

**1997**

Julia Carson becomes the second African American woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Indiana

**2008**

Andre Carson, the grandson of Julia Carson, is elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Indiana

**2008**

On November 4, Barack Obama, the first African American presidential nominee of a major party narrowly carries Indiana with about 50 percent of the vote; Obama's victory marks the first time a Democrat has won Indiana since 1964

**2011**

The Indiana legislature enacts a bill requiring business owners to use an E-Verify program to confirm legal status before hiring workers

**2014**

According to the *Indy Star*, about 200 undocumented children who came unaccompanied to the U.S. border are placed with Indiana families

**2015**

Goshen sets example on how to deal with its bigoted and racist past when the city council adopts a resolution recognizing and apologizing for the town's past efforts to suppress minorities; the proposal would make Indiana's penalties among the toughest in the nation

**2015**

An estimated 10,000 school children from undocumented families are enrolled in Indiana public schools

**2016**

Senate Bill 285 is introduced into the Indiana legislature; the bill would allow a judge to strip Indiana employers of their business license if they “knowingly” hire undocumented immigrants three times

**2017**

According to the American Immigration Council, about 5 percent of Indiana’s total population is foreign-born, with over 30 percent of that number from Mexico

**NARRATIVE**

**History of Race Relations in Indiana**

In terms of race relations and civil and human rights, Indiana has been neither a leader nor a role model. James Madison, a historian who has published extensively on the history of Indiana, writes that change in Indiana has “been evolutionary rather than revolutionary” (Madison 1990, xiii). Although change has moved in a positive direction, Indiana history is full of incidents wherein the civil and human rights of minorities have been infringed. In the 200-year history of the state, Native Americans and African Americans—if not driven out—were merely tolerated; Mexican Americans and other immigrant groups of color are to this day exploited for their labor.

Although the United States is moving toward becoming a minority–majority nation, Indiana remains an overwhelmingly homogenous state, with 85.1 percent of its population identifying as white in the latest census. The 2010 census lists African Americans as the largest minority group, making up 9.1 percent of the state’s inhabitants. Native Americans, in contrast, account for merely 0.3 percent of the state’s population. Between 2000 and 2010, Indiana witnessed a large increase in its Hispanic population, which grew by 82 percent, and continues to grow, constituted 6.0 percent of the state’s total population in the latest census. The U.S. Census Bureau classifies Hispanic or Latino as an ethnicity, which means that Hispanics can be of any race. Yet, their linguistic and cultural background often causes Hispanics to be designated as “people of color” and “non-white” in everyday societal discourse. The majority of Indiana’s Hispanic population, 76 percent, is of Mexican descent. Historically, the majority of Hispanics in the United States have been of Mexican ancestry, a fact that was reinforced by the U.S. Census Bureau when it created “Mexican” as a distinct racial category in the 1930 census. The fact that people of Mexican origin were categorized as “white” unless “visibly Indian or Negro” (García 2017, 23) in previous and subsequent census counts points to the arbitrariness and social construction of racial categories that do not encompass the diversity of humankind, and to a hierarchical system resulting from the race construct that privileges some and disadvantages others.

Indiana offers a prime example of the need for further exploration of race and racism now and in the past for two reasons. First, it is officially a Northern state. However, being also a border state, it has been shaped by Southern cultural traditions and ideologies through early white Southern arrivals. Second, and maybe



partially a result of the first aspect, it exemplifies the fact that institutional and individual racism are mutually constitutive. Indiana is known for playing a key role in the rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in the twentieth century and as a hot bed for discriminatory organizations like the White Cappers and the National Horse Thief Detective Association in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These organizations were strong advocates for white supremacy and were invested in protecting white privilege. Yet, to only blame these organizations for an increase in prejudice and discrimination after World War I is too simple, as the state's 1851 constitution already had defined citizenship in the state as white.

In fact, Indiana has had two constitutions, both of which reinforced the belief of statesmen that this is a white state. The first constitution, ratified in 1816, provided the right to vote only to white male citizens. The second constitution of 1851 made belief in the state as a "white republic" more obvious. Article XIII openly banned African Americans from settling in the state. Following are snapshots of the Indiana experiences of three groups: Native Americans upon Indiana's inception as a state, African Americans throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and Mexicans/Mexican Americans in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Each of these groups experienced hardship and discrimination in a state whose pioneer generation defined democracy for white men only and made that doctrine a principle for later generations to follow.

### **Native Americans in the Land of Indians**

Indiana became the 19th state to enter the Union in 1816 and thus just celebrated its bicentennial in 2016. In his foreword to *Indiana at 200*, former Indiana governor Mike Pence heralds the fact that Indiana became the first state added to the Union after the War of 1812, praising "our forebears [who] were builders and farmers—people of fortitude and courage, men and women who chose to brave harsh weather and hardship to build both their futures and a new state in an untamed land" (Indiana Bicentennial Commission 2015, 7). The statement is vague in terms of which ancestors he is referencing; yet, the fact that he considered Indiana before statehood "untamed" territory suggests that he might not consider Native Americans as ancestors who had cultivated the land for thousands of years before European settlement. Archeological records trace Paleo-Indian settlement back to c. 9,500–8,000 BCE. Pence's cursory reference to the War of 1812 also demands more attention, as that conflict led to the destruction of at least 25 Native American villages and towns in Indiana (Glenn and Rafert 1996, 400). The War of 1812 "is remembered as a relatively minor conflict in the United States and Britain, [yet] it looms large for Canadians and for Native Americans, who see it as a decisive turning point in their losing struggle to govern themselves" (History 2009).

The push for removal of local tribes began as soon as the state increased in population, and particularly after the passing of the national Indian Removal Act in 1830. "In the decades before the Civil War," pioneer historian of African Americans in Indiana Emma Lou Thornbrough writes, "the assertion that the United States, especially the state of Indiana, was a 'white man's country' became a well-worn cliché in the mouths of a certain brand of politicians" (Thornbrough 1957, 55).

Indiana's adolescent years as a state meant destruction, land loss, and adjustment for many local tribes in the region. This trend culminated in the Trail of Death in 1838, which was the forced removal of the Potawatomi from Indiana to present-day Kansas. By 1840, the Miami were the last Indians left in the Land of Indians because treaty provisions allowed a small number of the tribe to remain in the state (126 individuals) even though they had ceded all their land to the U.S. government. Sixty-four percent of the allotted \$550,000 paid in return for the land went to pay the tribe's debt to the government ("Summary" 1990, 41). Negotiations that had been going on with the Miami since shortly after Indiana became a territory in 1800 had been divisive in nature. A split in the Native leadership was used to trick the Miami into further treaties and eventually resulted in half of the Miami, the Western Miami, removed to present-day Kansas and Oklahoma, and half remaining in Indiana, exempted from removal. For territories to gain statehood, they had to abide by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which, among other stipulations, outlawed slavery. Indiana, upon statehood, eventually complied with the prohibition of slavery, yet successfully eschewed Article 3 of the Ordinance, which prohibited taking Indian land and property without consent or infringing upon Indian rights and liberty.

The settlement of the former Native land by white families resulted in an end to the mobility of the Miami. Being contained on reserves in the northern part of Indiana resulted in a change in the Miami's subsistence patterns to an increasing reliance on fishing in the rivers due to the scarcity of game in the area. Tents, tepees, and bark-covered shelters were fully replaced with log houses by the 1860s.

Indiana means the Land of Indians, yet there is no federally recognized tribe in the state today. The Miami, who received federal recognition in 1854, were stripped of their status in 1897 due to a legal error. In the second half of the nineteenth century, county governments started taxing tribal lands, which Miami leaders fought successfully, culminating in the judicial and legislative reaffirmation of nontaxation in 1891. Descendants of the Meshingomesia Miami were declared citizens in 1881, which made their land taxable. However, that stipulation did not apply to the remainder of the Miami. Yet, when the case regarding whether or not to pursue litigation for Miami reimbursement was presented to the Department of the Interior in 1897, Assistant Attorney General Willis Van Devanter, who had been born in Marion, Indiana, based his decision on the 1881 legislation that declared only one faction of the tribe citizens and applied it to all the Indiana Miami. Devanter concluded that as citizens, they were ineligible for tribal recognition. The consequences of this decision were drastic—the Miami could no longer exercise treaty rights or attend federal Indian schools. The decision also slowly but surely ended their subsistence activities. Their struggles worsened during the Great Depression of the 1930s. With hunting and gathering again vital for the Miami to survive, state game laws were more rigorously enforced. Any assertions of Miami hunting and fishing rights in court were rejected because the tribe did not hold federal recognition. All attempts by the Miami tribe to regain federal recognition have been rejected. Efforts to receive statewide recognition have also been so far unsuccessful.

Ironically, even though Indiana does not have a federally recognized tribe, there is evidence that some of the more than 460 Indian reeducation schools were

located in the state. Research in this regard is sparse, but information is available on two such reeducation schools: White's Manual Labor Institute in Wabash and St. Joseph's Indian Normal School in Rensselaer. Josiah White, a Quaker, founded the White's Manual Labor Institute to offer manual labor education to students regardless of race. From 1882 to at least 1895, the federal government funded the school as an attempt to eradicate Native American culture through boarding schools; students were not allowed to wear traditional clothing or speak their native tongue. Zitkala-sa, writer, activist, and cofounder of the National Council of American Indians, is probably its most famous graduate. The Catholic Indian Mission operated St. Joseph's from 1888 to 1896, also in an attempt to transform Indian students into white men. More research is needed in this regard.

The Miami today are one of at least 16 tribes residing in the state. Native Americans account for 0.3 percent of the total state population. Slightly more than 1,400 individuals declared affiliation/belonging to the Miami tribal group in 2010—a testimony to their resilience over the centuries as the division into two tribes led to an 1850 population of only 250 Miami in the state.

Yet, books commemorating Indiana's 200-year history as a state do not see the necessity to reflect on this part of the state's history—no mention of the Battle of Tippecanoe, the War of 1812, or the Trail of Death. Half a page in a 248-page volume celebrating Indiana's statehood is dedicated to a member of the Delaware tribe, who educates Hoosiers about the ongoing contributions to the state and the legacy of his tribe in the state (see *Indiana Bicentennial Commission 2015*, 43). Featuring one Native American voice in fewer than 200 words does not do justice to the history of Native Americans in the region—not just for the past 200, but 10,000 years.

### **African Americans in a White Republic**

As part of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, Indiana adopted the prohibition of slavery in its constitution (Article XI) upon becoming a state. However, this clause did not pertain to owners of slaves before the state was founded. Those slaves remained in bondage. The 1820 census lists 1,420 blacks in the state, and 13.4 percent of this number, or 190 individuals, were listed as slaves.

Many of Indiana's early white settlers came from the South, a fact that has shaped Indiana's culture, attitude, and politics. Emma Lou Thornbrough described the "dominant attitude in Indiana as neither proslavery nor antislavery but as anti-Negro," attributing it to black-white competition in the labor market and an overall antipathy toward blacks (Thornbrough 1965, 13–14). However, although slavery and indentured servitude were outlawed in the state, white Hoosiers attempted to restrict black settlement in the state as soon as the 1816 constitution passed. According to Darlene Clark Hine, "White Hoosiers resented the new black arrivals. . . . They steadfastly believed this to be a white man's country and fought to preserve Indiana as a white man's state" (Clark Hine 1981, 10). The fight resulted in severe limitations of black civil rights in the state. Indiana's first constitution granted the right to vote exclusively to white male citizens 21 and older (Article VI) and pronounced that the state's militia should "consist of all free able bodied male persons;

Negroes, Mulattoes and Indians excepted” (Article VII). Indiana’s first legislative meeting in 1818 resulted in the prohibition of intermarriage between whites and blacks and barred individuals with a quarter or more of Negro blood from giving “testimony in court in a case involving a white party” (Thornbrough 1963, 2). White Hoosiers continued to restrict rights and movement of blacks in the state and excluded them from white society over the next three decades—with, for example, the formation of the Indiana Colonization Society in 1829, the passing of the Black Codes in 1831, and the official designation of public schools as being for white children in 1843.

The Indiana Colonization Society was an auxiliary of the American Colonization Society, intended to “repatriate” blacks to the African continent, specifically to Liberia. Proponents of the movement joined for a variety of reasons. Some were concerned about blacks’ welfare in the United States (not being compatible with white society). Others were intent on safeguarding the institution of slavery. Still others wanted to rid the country and the state of free blacks, striving for racial homogeneity. The enactment of the Black Codes in 1831 required black newcomers to the state to register with a clerk in their county of residence and place a bond of \$500 to assure good behavior and guarantee that they would not become a public charge (Madison 1990, 107). The exclusion and colonization efforts culminated in the passing of Article XIII in Indiana’s second constitution in 1851, in which both agendas were reinforced. The new constitution openly banned African Americans from settling in the state and imposed fines on anyone employing or helping blacks to settle in the state (Article XIII). Another section of the article supported colonization efforts, setting aside money for a state agent to encourage blacks to emigrate to Africa. Article XIII was the subject of an independent vote and was more popular among white Hoosiers than the rest of the constitution. Additionally, the state legislature enacted a law in 1852 mandating that all free persons of color register in the county of their residence. Article XIII was declared invalid by the state Supreme Court in 1866. Three years later, in line with the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment, Indiana officially granted suffrage to black men.

The impacts of the new rule of Hoosier land was drastic: the total ban of black migration into the state resulted in a net increase of 166 persons in Indiana’s black population between 1850 and 1860, and almost 90 percent of the 83 identified black emigrants from Indiana to Africa left between 1850 and 1854 in the immediate wake of the passing of the constitution.

The simple fact that Indiana enacted various laws that limited the rights of African Americans in the first three decades and reinforced them in its new constitution of 1851 is astonishing in light of the fact that the state’s black population had never exceeded one percent of the total population before 1870 (Thornbrough 1957, 206; 1965, 14).

Scholars have connected the early settlement pattern of blacks in the state to Indiana’s Quaker population due to their antislavery and humanitarian stances. Besides settling in or near Quaker communities, there were several rural communities made up entirely of black Hoosiers. The majority of the 61 black farming communities identified by the Indiana Historical Society are in the southern

### **Lyles Station**

One of the oldest and largest of Indiana's 61 black rural settlements is Lyles Station in Gibson County in southern Indiana. Lyles Station is named for Joshua Lyles, who settled in Gibson County in the late 1830s. Although Lyles was said to be a freed slave, Arlene Blanks Poll, a direct descendent of a Lyles Station settler, debunked the myth about the Lyles family being former slaves. The journey of the Lyles family indicates why Southern blacks, freed or enslaved, considered Indiana a promised land, despite its various discriminatory policies and attitudes. Originally from Virginia, the family settled in Tennessee in the early 1810s due to cheaper land and lower taxes for free black people. However, in the following decades, racial animosity grew in both the North and South. Although Indiana did not allow free black men to vote, the state allowed blacks to worship freely and bear arms. In 1834, the new Tennessee state constitution denied blacks the right to bear arms.

Lyles Station flourished between 1880 and 1913, when it had a railroad depot, a post office, a school, two churches, general stores, and about 800 residents. When it was hit by a flood in 1913, destroying much of the town, most of its residents left for economic reasons.

What makes Lyles Station noteworthy is the fact that out of approximately 100 Midwestern African American rural settlements that sprang up during the nineteenth century, Lyles Station is probably the only one that still houses an active farming community, of whom the majority descended from the original settlers. Despite preserving its history in the restored school building, which currently serves as a local museum and community center, the National Museum of African American History in Washington, D.C., highlights the ongoing legacy of Lyles Station, Indiana.

two-thirds of the state, reaffirming the importance of the proximity to Quaker settlements. Besides the Quaker-dominated safe havens/regions, black in-migration to the state, especially since the 1890s, illustrates the industrialization of the state on the one hand and the rise of discrimination and racism on the other. The fact that by 1950, 95 percent of Indiana's black population lived in urban areas such as Fort Wayne, Evansville, Gary, and Indianapolis—though segregated—had less to do with the fact that blacks were city folks, as many migration scholars have argued, but more with the fact that socially sanctioned measures, not necessarily the law, prevented blacks from settling in the more rural areas. Sundown towns were prevalent in all of Indiana's 92 counties. Despite amendments to the school law in 1877 to allow black students to attend white schools where no black schools existed and the Civil Rights Law of 1885 that repealed the ban on jury duty and prohibited discrimination in public accommodations, white Hoosiers continued to openly discriminate against their fellow black citizens since the laws were not rigidly enforced and penalties were never invoked. Thus, the climate of open hostility and policy of segregation was prevalent in the state long before the Ku Klux Klan was on the rise, and its candidates took office in the 1920s.

However, the racial hostility was conducive for organizations like the Ku Klux Klan, the National Horse Thief Detective Association, and the White Supremacy League to have a voice and exert political and social influence. Besides racism, the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s is marked by nativism and Americanism. Many white Protestants in the region feared the prospect of losing their agrarian small-town

culture and traditions to the industrial development that marked Indiana, and the nation, by the early twentieth century. Thus, beyond nativist sentiments and antagonism toward minorities, the Klan appealed to average citizens because of its populist resistance to changing community relations and values. Nevertheless, to many black Hoosiers, the Klan epitomized race hatred prompting them to organize via the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Due to a rape and kidnapping scandal, which resulted in a second-degree murder conviction of Grand Dragon D.C. Stephenson, the Klan started to dwindle in Indiana after 1925 (Moore 1991). However, the supremacist ideologies that spread across the entire state of Indiana during the Klan era did not dwindle, as the double-lynching of Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith in Marion, Indiana, in 1930 or the explosion of sundown town policies prove.

The impact of the overall hostile climate toward African Americans in the state is still noticeable today: 56 out of 92 counties in Indiana still house a black population of less than 1 percent.

### **Mexicans/Mexican Americans in Indiana**

Upon arrival in Indiana, all immigrants faced various challenges; yet immigrants from Europe have generally been granted with the potential of becoming white by assimilating in the prevalent culture. The same privilege, however, has not been extended to newcomers from non-European nations.

#### ***Sundown Towns***

Sundown towns are purposely all-white communities that undermine racial and ethnic minority settlement and integration through socially sanctioned measures, ranging from threats to violence. Historian James Loewen suspects that some 500 Indiana communities were once sundown towns. Some Indiana counties, such as Washington and Vermillion, went entirely sundown, driving out their black population and registering no minorities for decades. The term “sundown” derives from signs posted at city limits warning African Americans to “not let the sun go down on you here.” Other measurements of exclusion included restrictive covenant deeds and denial of service in public amenities.

Theories of a connection between the spread of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and sundown towns are unsubstantiated. Although the KKK in Indiana dwindled by the late 1920s, sundown policies did not. One example is the murder of Carol Jenkins, a 20-year-old African American saleswoman who sold encyclopedias door-to-door in Martinsville in 1968. She did not follow the unspoken rule of getting out of town by sunset and paid with her life when two individuals stabbed her to death with a screwdriver. No one was ever convicted of the crime.

Nationwide, sundown policies faded in the 1970s. However, in much of Indiana, that was not the case until the 1990s. As recently as 2015, the Goshen City Council adopted a resolution acknowledging and apologizing for its history of undermining minority settlement. Goshen’s proactive behavior in denouncing bigotry and hatred has resulted in a diversification of the city and its county in recent years (Elkhart County had a Hispanic population of 14.1% and a black population of 5.7% in 2010). Goshen could serve as an example for many towns in Indiana to attract more minorities.

Mexicans/Mexican Americans have been coming to the state for at least a century, but only over the last four decades have their numbers become more prominent, resulting in more outward hostility from Indiana Natives. Like other migrants and immigrants, World War I and its demands for steel attracted many Mexicans and Mexican Americans to the northern region of the state. Companies like Inland Steel preferred to hire Mexicans/Mexican Americans to African Americans (cheap labor without having to go too far down the color line or provide separate facilities to accommodate de facto practices of segregation), and thus actively recruited Mexicans as strikebreakers (Innis-Jimenez 2013, 26, 77). Their lack of legal citizenship status prevented formations of unions, complaints about low wages, poor working conditions, and/or job assignments, which were usually the dirtiest and the most dangerous jobs in the mill. Additionally, Mexicans were among the first to be let go when the economy stagnated. Their brown skin, religious affiliation, and citizenship status also made them a prime target for the Ku Klux Klan, which promoted a creed of racism, anti-Catholicism, and nativism. Like their black counterparts, Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans were also confined to the most miserable rundown neighborhoods.

The discrimination that people of Mexican ancestry experienced is similar to that experienced by blacks in Indiana, penetrating all spheres of life: employment, housing, policing, segregated seating or denial of any service in public entities, such as theaters and hotels, and separate churches. People of Mexican ancestry, like African Americans, were hit the hardest during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The motto “last hired, first fired” applied to both groups. Laid off by the hundreds during the Depression, Mexicans returned—voluntarily and involuntarily—to their “nation of origin.” However, the forced “repatriation,” which affected hundreds of thousands of people of Mexican ancestry across the United States, included U.S. citizens—approximately 60 percent of the deportees. The Midwestern states of Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan, which only housed 3.6 percent of Mexican nationals, provided over 10 percent of the “repatriates” (Betten and Mohl 1973, 379). While initially leaving “voluntarily” because of alleged job opportunities in their “homeland,” the majority was coerced into repatriation by being cut from welfare rolls, signing papers that allegedly qualified them for welfare aid turned out to be documents to “agree” to repatriation, and implementing proof of citizenship as a prerequisite to a job. The removal of Mexicans at that time was as voluntary as the removal of the Miami from the northern part of the state in 1838.

However, World War II and the resulting labor shortage in the factories and on the farms brought many Mexicans and Mexican Americans back to Indiana. The Bracero Program, created in 1942, brought mainly Mexican guest workers to harvest crops and provide labor to war-related industries. Mexican immigration to the state has continued steadily ever since because employers preferred hiring them for lower wages paid for the hard farm labor that many locals were unwilling to do. In more recent decades, Indiana’s manufacturing industry increased its focus on meatpacking and food-processing plants, which became a particular driver for migration to the smaller cities and towns across the state. Unlike the seasonal agricultural migrants of the post–World War II era, the more recent immigrants decided to stay, and Hispanic communities are flourishing across the state. Even

though Indiana's Hispanic population, according to the 2010 census, "only" constituted the second-largest minority group with 6.0 percent of the state's total population (compared to 9.1% who identified as black), there are some interesting patterns when comparing these two groups: there are currently eight of Indiana's 92 counties that have a Hispanic population of less than 1 percent in contrast to 56 counties that house African Americans to the same negligible extent.

However, the growing diversity in many of Indiana's smaller towns has intensified the hostility of some Hoosiers. The antagonistic rhetoric toward Mexicans and Mexican Americans of today resembles the rhetoric of the 1930s—from lacking language skills to being on government relief to be unwilling to assimilate to saving jobs for "true" Americans.

While Hispanics have shaped the state for almost a century, *Indiana at 200* includes no images of influential Mexican Americans and in fact marks the presence of Mexican-descended Hoosiers with but one image of a Dia de los Muertos celebration from 2005 (Indiana Bicentennial Commission 2015, 37). The gaps of ethnic and racial minority histories in the state of Indiana have yet to be filled.

Yet, there is hope for Indiana. The Indiana Historical Society started a project in 2014 identifying early black rural settlements in the state, resulting in locating 61

settlements in 43 counties of the state. The fact that more than half of the counties do not have a major story on African Americans shall be overcome.

On another note, Indiana has become home to many refugees over the last decade. Seventy-five percent of the refugees are from Myanmar who have mainly settled in the Indianapolis and Fort Wayne areas. Since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war, a few hundred refugees from Syria have also been relocated in Indiana, despite attempts of former governor Mike Pence to prevent settlement of Syrian refugees. Pence's proposition was met with protests across the state and a lawsuit, filed by Exodus Refugee Immigration, the main resettlement agency for refugees in the state. Like Mexicans/Mexican Americans, the Syrians are non-European immigrants. Moreover, they are refugees from



Myanmar immigrant father with his young daughter in their two-bedroom apartment in Fort Wayne, Indiana, 2009. Indiana has become a welcoming home for Myanmar refugees. (Bryan Mitchell/AFP/Getty Images)



a part of the world with which the United States has had a particularly vexed relationship since at least 1991, when the first Gulf War began, and certainly since 2001. While racially “white,” at least according to the U.S. Census category, many Middle Easterners, because of other markers of ethnicity such as dress, religious practice, and language, experience hostility similar to that experienced by Mexicans and Mexican Americans in Indiana. However, the protests against Pence's suggestion and the fact that he was the only governor to be sued over his opposition of housing refugees (unlike the other 29 governors who expressed opposition toward Syrian refugee settlement in their respective states) suggests that more open-minded Hoosiers are finding their voices of welcome. With the spike in hate crimes across the state and the nation, coupled with the ongoing negative rhetoric of the Trump administration, such positive actions by state residents are more important than ever.

## NOTABLE FIGURE

### Thornbrough, Emma Lou (1913–1994)

In 2015, Linda Gugin and James Clair featured seven historians in their edited volume *Indiana's 200: The People Who Shaped the Hoosier State*. Among those seven were Emma Lou Thornbrough and her younger sister Gayle Thornbrough (1914–1999), who was historical editor at Indiana's Historical Society, which houses a premier research library on the Old Northwest and Indiana.

Emma Lou Thornbrough was a leader and a role model in terms of race relations and civil and human rights. In 1957, she broke the silence on race in Indiana with her book *The Negro in Indiana. A Study of a Minority*, a meticulously researched account of black life in nineteenth-century Indiana. In her lifetime, Thornbrough published 10 books and 14 essays, most of which are dedicated to the struggles of African Americans within the boundaries of her state. At her death in 1994, she was about to finish the manuscript for her eleventh book. Edited and provided with a concluding chapter by Lana Ruegamer, *Indiana Blacks in the Twentieth Century* was published posthumously in 2000. This volume and her earlier publication *The Negro in Indiana Before 1900* are considered seminal state-level studies that contribute greatly to our understanding of race relations outside of Dixie and in the nation at large.

Thornbrough was born into a Republican family in Indianapolis in 1913. Her father, Harry C. Thornbrough, was an engineer and an inventor. She received her bachelor's and master's degrees from Butler University in Indianapolis in 1934 and 1936, respectively. During her doctoral studies at the University of Michigan, Dr. Dwight L. Dumond, well-known historian of the antislavery movement, sparked her interest in the legal and constitutional aspects of African American history. Consequently, she completed her dissertation “Negro Slavery in the North: Its Legal and Constitutional Aspects” in 1946, and shortly thereafter accepted a position in the History Department at her alma mater, Butler University. At Butler, where she taught until her retirement in 1983, she received many honors, including the Outstanding Professor Award in 1965; the Butler Medal, the university's highest honor in 1981; and an honorary doctorate in 1988.

Thornbrough focused on investigating how the law was used to justify gross inequalities by analyzing the Fugitive Slave Law in Indiana, the Ku Klux Klan in Indianapolis in the 1920s, and the legal history of Indianapolis school segregation. However, the manuscript that resulted from these studies, “The Indianapolis Study: School Segregation and Desegregation in a Northern City,” remains unpublished.

Her lifelong commitment to civil rights was not only on paper in her research, but also in real life. Thornbrough participated in several national and local historical organizations. In the late 1950s, she helped organize the Indianapolis Human Relations Council and chaired its education committee. Thornbrough also served on the executive boards of the Indiana Civil Liberties Union and the Greater Indianapolis NAACP. Her professional awards range from the Martin Luther King Award from the Indianapolis Education Association in 1976 to the Roy Wilkins Award from the Indianapolis Urban League in 1991 to the American Historical Association’s Scholarly Distinction Award in 1993. The *Indiana Magazine of History* also annually recognizes one article with the Thornbrough Award.

Emma Lou Thornbrough was a pioneer in her field. In post–World War II America, relatively few women historians had established themselves in academia. Moreover, even fewer historians (of either sex) dedicated their research to what was then called Negro history. In her lifetime, she witnessed the rise and decline of the Ku Klux Klan in Indiana; she was alive when Thomas Shipp and Abe Smith were lynched in 1930, when university campus dormitories became desegregated in the late 1940s, and when *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* ended segregation in America’s public schools. Yet, she also bore witness to the spread of sundown policies and restrictive covenants preventing minorities from settling in various places. By the time she finished her first Indiana monograph, *The Negro in Indiana before 1900*, in 1957, Indiana still banned intermarriage of blacks and whites in the state. Thornbrough became an agent herself in the civil rights movement—not only during the mid-twentieth century peak of the movement, but also for the long civil rights movement, working on unearthing Indiana’s racist past. She left behind a legacy of historical scholarship and remains a role model for engaged academics. Her community engagement exemplifies how scholars today can become engaged working together with community leaders to end discrimination and expand opportunities.

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# 16

## Iowa

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Stan Weeber

### **CHRONOLOGY**

**c. 10000 BCE**

Aboriginal people appear in the region today known as the state of Iowa

**c. 500 BCE**

An indigenous group called the Mound Builders arrives in eastern Iowa

**c. 1500 CE**

A late prehistoric tribe, the Iowa, move southwest into area that is modern-day state of Iowa

**1788**

Fox Indians allow French Canadian settler Julien Dubuque to mine lead on their land in northeast Iowa

**1832**

In the Black Hawk War, U.S. government troops defeat Indians led by Chief Black Hawk, a Sauk leader

**1833**

Dr. John Emerson's slave Sam, later known as Dred Scott, lives on a plot of land near modern-day LeClaire, Iowa

**1834–1852**

Slaves perform service-related work at U.S. Army bases at Fort Des Moines, and in Wapello County, Ringgold County, and Warren County; sojourning ownership of slaves is allowed in Iowa; state black laws limit, and then bar, black settlements; the antislavery movement begins in Iowa

**1846**

Iowa enters the Union on December 28 as the 29th state

**1855**

Iowans abide by the Fugitive Slave Act—white supremacist attitudes are common, though some state abolitionists contribute to the Underground Railroad

**1857**

Iowa voters reject a referendum to enfranchise black men

**1860**

Wealthy Iowans continue the practice of slavery uncontested

**1866**

Iowa ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery on January 15—the amendment had already taken effect the previous December

**1868**

Ulysses S. Grant, hoping the state would be the first to enact African American suffrage, declares Iowa “the bright radical star”; Iowa ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment granting citizenship to former slaves on March 16

**1870**

Iowa ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment granting black men the right to vote on February 3

**1879**

Alexander G. Clark Jr., a black man, graduates from the University of Iowa

**1910**

Majority-black Buxton, Iowa, boasts a population of 5,000

**1918**

Iowa governor William Harding issues the Babel Proclamation, which prohibits the use of all languages in the state except English

**1934**

University of Iowa running back Ozzie Simmons, an African American, is violently assaulted by the University of Minnesota players during a college football game in Iowa City; a traveling trophy, Floyd of Rosedale, is initiated to soothe racial tensions between the two schools

**1936**

Fanny McConnell, future wife of African American novelist and critic Ralph Ellison, graduates from the University of Iowa

**1941**

The Ellis Park pool incident, involving racial segregation at a public pool in Cedar Rapids, leads to the formation of a National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) chapter in Cedar Rapids; the pool is not integrated until 1960

**1951**

A white player for Oklahoma A&M attacks Drake University All-American candidate Johnny Bright, an African American, during a college football game in

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Stillwater, Oklahoma; the attack, captured in a journalist's photo, becomes known as the Johnny Bright incident

### 1959

African American writer Ralph Ellison turns down an offer to join the University of Iowa Writer's Workshop

### 1993

Severe flooding along the Mississippi and other rivers causes much damage in Iowa, with significant impact on urban minority neighborhoods

### 2000–2017

Blacks, Southeast Asians, and Latinos move to central Iowa and begin to talk about experiencing racial discrimination from Iowa's white population; these complaints throw into question the "Iowa Nice" narrative—that is, the supposed tendency of Iowans to listen carefully to a variety of viewpoints without being confrontational—that the state had been promoting since the 1970s

## NARRATIVE

### Aboriginal Peoples and Early European Exploration

Aboriginal people may have migrated to the land area known today as the state of Iowa as early as 12,000 years ago, as glaciers began to recede northward from the Mississippi valley during the Paleo-Indian period. These hunting and gathering Natives were mobile, hunting large mammals such as giant bison, mammoth, and mastodon. The appearance of fluted stone tools made of exotic raw material from afar suggested that Paleo-Indians frequently traveled over vast territories.

By 500 BCE, Early Woodland-era Indians, sometimes called the Mound Builders, settled in eastern Iowa. Archeological research suggested that Early Woodland subsistence patterns in Iowa probably involved procurement of mammals, birds, and aquatic species. Early Woodland peoples had interactions with other Midwest Natives, as evidenced by artifacts made of exotic raw materials. By the Late Woodland times (300 CE–1000 CE), the regular social interactions between communities and tribes continued, with population levels increasing rapidly. Late Woodland peoples in Iowa resided in small, geographically dispersed settlements, with interior valleys and uplands being preferred settlement sites. Evidence suggests that Natives coalesced regularly in the Mississippi valley to exploit the vast array of seasonally available resources. Diversified hunting and gathering, supplemented by native crop horticulture, were the most common subsistence patterns through most of the period.

In the Late Woodland period, the construction of effigy mounds was a prominent cultural feature. Mounds of earth in the shapes of birds, bear, deer, bison, lynx, turtle, panther, or water spirit were the most common images, and they were considered to be sacred ceremonial sites. Archeologists speculate that the effigy mounds served the function of marking the best hunting and gathering grounds. Hunting was enhanced by the bow and arrow, which was introduced into the Midwest by Late Woodland peoples.

Around 1500 CE, a late prehistoric tribe called the Iowa moved southwest into Iowa as measured by today's boundaries. The state of Iowa is named for this tribe, which was located in central Iowa along the Des Moines River as the earliest explorers arrived. In their tongue, the Iowa referred to themselves as "Dusty Noses" or "Pachouta," a name that may apply in the dry seasons of the state's Continental climate (Clark 1903, 83). In a close approximation of the tribe's native language, Jacques Marquette named them on his map as the Pahoutet (Pahouta). It was the tribe's archrival, the Algonquins, who called them the Iowa, meaning "beautiful land."

Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet's 1673 voyage marked the first time that white people visited the region of Iowa. The Frenchmen recorded in their journals that Iowa appeared lush, green, and fertile. Thousands of white settlers came to Iowa in the next three centuries, validating the opinion of these early pioneers, and confirming that its soil was highly productive.

Nine years after Marquette and Joliet discovered Iowa, explorer Sieur de La Salle traveled down the Mississippi River, claiming the entire Mississippi River valley, including Iowa, for France. La Salle named the land Louisiana, after Louis XIV, the King of France. During the 1700s, very few white people visited the area. In 1788, the Fox Indians gave permission to French Canadian pioneer Julien Dubuque, the state's first white settler, to mine lead on their land near the present-day city of Dubuque. The region called Louisiana became part of the United States in 1803 when France sold it to the United States.

In the 130 years before Iowa became part of the United States, an estimated 17 different Indian tribes resided in the state at various times, including the Iowa, Sauk, Mesquakie, Sioux, Potawatomi, Oto, and Missouri. By 1830, three tribes, the Missouri, the Oto, and the Potawatomi, sold their land to the federal government. The Sauk and Mesquakie, who remained in the Iowa region, were informed by the government that, in 1845, they must vacate villages in western Illinois and move westward into Iowa. Due to the Treaty of 1804, the federal government laid claim to Illinois. Highly respected Sauk leader, Chief Black Hawk, disagreed and, in 1832, returned to reclaim the Illinois village of Saukenauk. This effort was the precipitating event in the Black Hawk War. The Illinois militia, in the next three months, fought Black Hawk's army, pushing them to the north in Illinois along the east side of the Mississippi River. When the Indians suffered casualties, reducing their numbers to 200, they surrendered in Wisconsin. As punishment for resisting orders, the federal government required the Sauk and Mesquakie to vacate some of their lands in eastern Iowa. This prime land, known as the Black Hawk Purchase, was a strip 50 miles wide, lying along the Mississippi River, stretching from Fayette and Clayton Counties in northeastern Iowa to the Missouri border.

In June 1833, the Black Hawk Purchase was home to the first official white settlement in Iowa. Soon, early settlers began migrating to Iowa from Michigan, Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, New York, Virginia, Kentucky, and Indiana. The majority of newcomers arrived in family units; most of them had already lived in one or more states before coming to Iowa. Not all settlers chose to remain, as some moved on to the Dakotas or the Great Plains. Later, immigrants arrived

from Germany, Great Britain, Norway, and the Netherlands. Irish miners came to work in the lead mines near Dubuque. Early arrivals in Des Moines, the future state capital, included Germans, Norwegians, and Swedes; later in the eighteenth century, they were joined by an influx of Russians, Greeks, Mexicans, and East Europeans, mostly drawn to the city's mining and meatpacking industries.

### **Statehood and Slaves and the Civil War**

Shortly after Iowa was declared a territory, native Southerners dominated the new legislatures. In 1838, over half its 39 members had been born in states where slavery would persist until the Civil War. Ten were Virginians, eight hailed from Kentucky, two were from North Carolina, and one each from Maryland and Tennessee (Dykstra 1993, 23). With this proslavery orientation, the new legislatures failed to support the Wilmot Proviso and enacted a series of Black Codes whose purpose was to block or discourage free black in-migration to the state. Drawing on similar legislation from Michigan and Indiana, Iowa first limited in 1839, and then barred in 1851, black settlements. The power of enforcement was wholly local; not only were local judges authorized to determine the racial identity of anyone against whom the law might be directed, but according to the 1851 statute, local law enforcement officers were empowered to force new black immigrants out of the state. Additionally, the laws disenfranchised black men and prohibited African Americans from testifying against whites in court and from serving in state militias or practicing law. Schools were segregated, and interracial marriages were banned.

There was much northern tolerance for slavery as African Americans were conveyed, uncontested, to the Midwest by U.S. Army officers assigned to upper Mississippi valley military outposts. These officers included slave owners as well as those who took advantage of the military's special allowance to purchase, lease, or hire servants. At least through the 1840s, enslaved people were used to perform a broad range of service-related work at Fort Snelling (St. Paul, Minnesota), Fort Crawford (Prairie du Chein, Wisconsin), Fort Des Moines (Montrose, Iowa), and the Sac and Fox Indian Agency (Wapello County, Iowa). The largest slave owners found fellow officers and their wives more than willing to purchase or hire the surplus African American laborers they brought to the forts. Officer residences needed cleaning and upkeep; they were used, at times, to house various dignitaries in transit to the forts and beyond for official business. Slaves were so essential that sometimes they traveled with the officer's household during part or all of the officer's military career. In one famous example, a slave woman came to Iowa in 1834 with the family of army officer Stephen Watts Kearney. Another notable example was Henry Triplett, a slave who was living in Wapello County, in George Wilson's household. Wilson, while a slaveholding officer at Fort Crawford, received Triplett as a wedding gift from the Fort's Indian agent Joseph Street. Triplett moved with the Wilsons to Wapello County, Iowa, when Street was assigned to be the Indian agent there. Other slaves in the Street's Wapello County household included Charles Forrester and two women purchased in Missouri.



***Dred Scott in Iowa***

Dred Scott (Sam Blow), who waged one of America's most famous legal battles to gain his freedom, lived in Iowa from 1833 to 1836. In 1819, his owner, a farmer named Peter Blow, moved to Huntsville, Alabama, and then to Missouri. In St. Louis, Peter Blow died, leaving many debts. To meet creditor claims, Sam Blow was sold at auction for \$500. The winning bidder was a St. Louis physician, John Emerson. Dr. Emerson took his wife, his daughter, and his new black manservant along with him when reporting for duty as post surgeon at Fort Armstrong, Illinois, in the winter of 1833–1834.

After the Black Hawk War, the Fox Indians were forced to surrender a part of Iowa called the Black Hawk Purchase, a cession that included the site of Chief Poweshiek's village opposite Fort Armstrong. In the summer of 1833, Poweshiek's people had peaceably vacated the land; before leaving, they insisted that the ground on which their village stood be gifted to Antoine LeClaire, their interpreter. Dr. Emerson preempted 640 acres of shoreline a few miles upstream from LeClaire's reserve. Years later, old-timers remembered that the doctor's slave, Sam, occupied the claim on his master's behalf.

In the spring of 1836, War Department orders closed Fort Armstrong and sent Dr. Emerson north to Fort Snelling in Wisconsin Territory. Sam went with him, never to return to Iowa. In 1843, Dr. Emerson died after a brief illness. Emerson's wife, who inherited the bulk of his estate, returned to St. Louis, where three years later the slave she had known as Sam insisted that she sell him his freedom. Mrs. Emerson refused and would not call him by his new name, Dred Scott, thus beginning the legal case for which Scott would gain notoriety.

The practice of owning enslaved labor spread beyond the military families stationed at the forts. From the 1830s to the 1860s, enslaved men and women and their family members were taken to Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin by some of the region's most prominent figures. Judges, senators, governors, and other territorial officials were joined by more pedestrian types—farmers, ministers, and settlers—in conveying their own slaves to the area. For instance, a large number of slaves were brought to Keokuk from Kentucky by Judge Frank Ballinger to construct his stone mansion in 1853; and a 12-year-old girl and a 14-year-old boy were transported to Ringgold County, Iowa, by North Carolinian L.P. Allen in 1852. Ex-Congressman John Chambers of Kentucky, appointed governor of the Iowa Territory by President William Henry Harrison, disembarked at Burlington, in 1841, accompanied by a small troop of slaves. O.H.W. Stull of Maryland, appointed to the territorial secretary ship, apparently shared with Chambers seven or eight blacks who were flogged and mistreated (Dykstra 1993). Territorial Delegate George Jones owned about 12 slaves; he brought them all to Dubuque. Less-well-known citizens, following the lead of the upper class, soon adopted the practice of slaveholding or indentured servitude; John L. Curtis of Iowa City claimed two black girls as indentured servants. He claimed this, yet traveled on to Memphis where he netted \$1,300 from the sale of the girls. Lydia Applewhite, born into slavery in Missouri, was sold to a family who took her to Keokuk, separating her from the members of her family; only in womanhood did she gain her freedom. In the early 1830s, Isaac Campbell's slave John, whose owner was a

wealthy Indian trader and merchant at Keokuk, was “hiring out his own time,” the phrase typically applied to slaves whose owners allowed them to work for wages and keep all or part of the proceeds. The first recorded death at the town of Bentonsport, founded on the Lower Des Moines in 1839, was that of Shapley Ross’s slave “Aunt Mornin.” In adjoining Decatur County, a middle-aged black man named George, owned by John McDaniel’s family since boyhood, was held to service for about 12 years. In 1852, his owner formally freed him and relocated to Oregon (Dykstra 1993; Schwalm 2009).

Iowa became the nation’s 29th state in December 1846 and was considered to be a Northern Free State, though dominated by proslavery Democrats. At this time, Iowa’s Democratic Party tended to sympathize, as territorial legislators had before them, with Southern rights and were unopposed to slavery in the South. Responsive to the proslavery wing of their party, Iowa’s two Democratic senators, Augustus Caesar Dodge and George Wallace Jones, joined Senator Daniel Sturgeon of Pennsylvania in casting the only senatorial votes from nonslave states in support of the Fugitive Slave Act.

Despite this unwelcoming cultural milieu, a black community managed to emerge in Dubuque in the 1830s, whose lead mining industry had attracted newcomers ever since pioneer settler Julien Dubuque was allowed to work the mines there. Agriculture was a major draw as well; Dubuque was said to be a booming frontier village built around a large cornfield that had been worked by Mesquakie women who sold maize to white traders in Wisconsin. Prominent politician George Jones owned slaves there, and in 1840, 42 percent of all black Iowans lived in Dubuque. Ten years later, only 9 percent of black Iowans lived there (Dykstra 1993, 11).

The new capital of African American Iowa in 1850 was Muscatine, a Mississippi River settlement 80 miles to the south. In contrast to late 1840s Dubuque, Muscatine’s blacks were able to make the transition to an authentic community. Free blacks found their way to Muscatine and, despite xenophobic efforts to discourage in-migration, established one of the antebellum upper Midwest’s oldest and most politically active communities of free blacks. While many of them were former slaves, it helped that jobs were plentiful. The town was a flour and milling center with several factories, and Muscatine was also blessed with stopover ferry and steamboat traffic on the Mississippi. By 1842, the town was home to Alexander G. Clark, a barber before the war, who would go on to distinguish himself as Iowa’s most prominent black leader and political activist. Spurred, at least in part, by Muscatine’s growth, the upper Mississippi valley continued to attract blacks, some slave and some free. On the eve of the Civil War, Keokuk, in southeastern Lee County on the Mississippi River, boasted the largest black community with 245 residents. Overall, 1,069 blacks lived in the state (Dykstra 1993, viii).

As slaves discovered that they were residing in a free state, some fled their masters and braced for the judicial consequences. In legal battles between slaveholders and abolitionists, Midwestern courts often (but not always) ruled for the plaintiffs, contesting the law which allowed them to be kept as slaves. For instance, Rachel Bundy had been sold at auction in New Orleans and transported by her

new owner to Burlington, Iowa. Four years later, she fled and sought refuge in the household of Burlington's mayor. When the owner attempted to use the courts to regain custody, the mayor defended her, and the territorial Supreme Court affirmed her freedom.

As more people moved to Iowa between 1830 and 1860, the influx of newcomers from Ohio, Illinois, New England, and New York included Evangelical Christians and other abolitionist elements from which distinct pockets of resistance to slavery would develop. An arc of small settlements spreading beyond Burlington in the southeast became the nucleus of early protests against Iowa's black laws. Further southwest, in Lee County, the village of Denmark, which had been founded by men from New Hampshire, became another focus of antislavery. Abolitionism also centered in the village of Salem, a largely Quaker settlement in Henry County. This first settlement of Friends in Iowa dated from approximately 1836, when three Quaker frontiersmen preempted the site and partitioned it off into streets and blocks. Additional Quaker families followed, mainly from eastern Indiana. In June 1842, the Seceders of Washington, a village in southeastern Iowa, played host to an antislavery convention, most probably called to organize the country's first abolition society. These groups did much more than holding protests and meetings. Importantly, they sent petitions to the legislature, formed political parties, and helped slaves escape from Missouri to Kansas, Illinois, or Canada. Iowa's abolitionists offered arms, supplies, and men in support of a northern land route for the Kansas Free State settlers who were hoping to prevent the spread of slavery to the states of the North.

Just before the Civil War, Iowa politics underwent a profound transformation. A Republican, James Grimes, won a narrow victory as governor, and the Democrats lost their majority in the legislature, which they would not regain for 35 years. This development ensured the loss of the Democrats' two candidates for the U.S. Senate when the legislature next met to select their successors, and the seats would be in Republican hands for the next 70 years. Democrats blamed their losses, in part, upon religious abolitionists who opposed their agenda. The state transformed from a proslavery, solidly Democratic state to a Republican one that hosted stations along the Underground Railroad. By November 1868, presidential candidate Ulysses S. Grant expressed hope that Iowa, which he called the "bright radical star," would be the first state to approve black suffrage. Soon thereafter, voters approved amendments to the Iowa Constitution that eliminated racial designations and allowed black males the right to vote.

### **The Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries**

Following the Civil War, Iowa's strong population growth continued as the number of residents grew to 1,194,020 by 1870. The ethnic group composition of the population also changed. The black population expanded from 1,069 before the Civil War to 5,762 in 1870, and 9,516 by 1880 (Dykstra 1993). White ethnic immigration also grew due to an organized effort by the state to boost immigration. The state printed in 1869 a 96-page booklet entitled *Iowa: The Home of Immigrants*, which was published English, Dutch, Swedish, Danish, and

German; the publication gave physical, social, educational, and political descriptions of Iowa for future immigrants to consider.

As Dorothy Schweider (1996) notes that coal mining was a major occupation of Iowa's black migrants in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Pioneering miners were initially hired as strikebreakers by Iowa coal operators, but in later decades, coal companies hired black miners as regular employees. Ben Buxton, president of Consolidation Coal Company (CCC), established the town of Buxton as a company town to house newly arriving miners from Virginia and West Virginia mines. Beginning as a multiethnic village in Monroe County, Buxton reportedly had a black majority, with African Americans comprising about 54 percent of its total population, which was put at about 5,000 people (although there were estimates of almost 10,000). Believed to be the only black-majority community in the state, Buxton was also Iowa's largest unincorporated town. The town, which lacked a municipal government, police force, and maintenance department for roadways and streets, was run by CCC, which hired security guards to protect the company's investments. However, CCC pursued a number of progressive policies. The company treated blacks and whites as equals in terms of employment and housing, and schools were fully integrated, with black and white students being taught together by both black and white teachers. Many black professionals lived and worked in the town. Because there was no overt segregation and no Jim Crow, Buxton was sometimes called "the Black Promised Land." Black residents of Buxton were often shocked by the severe discrimination they faced when they left the town and moved to other communities in both the North and the South. Buxton flourished from 1900 to 1922 when coal seams around the area were depleted. Black families then moved on to Waterloo, Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, and to places out of state.

The Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution were supposed to grant important rights to Iowa blacks, but history documents active resistance in the form of prejudicial attitudes as well as discriminatory behavior. Several prominent families that moved from majority-black Buxton to Cedar Rapids experienced such discrimination firsthand after settling into the Oak Hill-Jackson section in the southeast quadrant. A well-known example was the Ellis Park Pool incident of 1941. Black kids who lived in Oak Hill enjoyed swimming during the summer months as did most children on summer break, but the Ellis Park pool was on the northwestern side, a 4-mile trek on foot or bike for the kids living in Oak Hill. Plus, Oak Hill kids had to wait until late evening to get into the pool. After regular swimming hours, when all the whites had finished swimming for the day, the pool was reopened to allow blacks to swim from 10 P.M. until midnight. After midnight, the pool was cleared and cleaned for the white kids to use the next day. A controversy arose when a young black man, Bob Johnson, applied for a swim ticket at Ellis pool during daytime hours when the pool was off limits to blacks. The ticket seller, acting on his instructions, denied him admittance. Johnson protested to Otto Ambroz, chairman of the Playground Commission in Cedar Rapids, who had full management of the pool. The dispute went to the mayor's office, yet the issue of segregation at the pool went unresolved. However, the incident was one of the sparks that led to the establishment

of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in Cedar Rapids, an organization which gave blacks a formal, institutional mechanism to push back against such blatantly discriminatory practices. The pool, unfortunately, did not become fully integrated until about 1960.

Two more incidents, both involving college football players, further illustrated the severe discrimination suffered by Iowans of color in the first half of the twentieth century. As universities slowly began to integrate, it was not long before black athletes appeared in prominent positions, playing before large crowds. Such was the case in 1934, when Minnesota's football team traveled to Iowa City to play the Iowa Hawkeyes. Iowa's star running back, Ozzie Simmons, was the victim of several vicious hits that were so obvious that the University of Iowa crowd became unusually raucous over the dirty plays and poor sportsmanship of the Golden Gophers, who beat Iowa 48–12 to solidify their top national ranking. The following year, Minnesota returned to Iowa, and remembering Minnesota's dirty play of a year earlier, Iowa's governor admitted publicly that the Iowa fans might not permit any more misconduct—a gesture which many interpreted as a veiled threat that Iowa's fans could riot or otherwise force a stoppage of play. With tensions running high before the game, Minnesota governor Floyd Olson tried to lighten the mood by betting Iowa's Governor Clyde Hering a pig on the outcome of the match. Iowa's crowd was loud during the game, but did not get out of line, despite watching their team lose again, 13–7. Hering settled the bet by delivering a prize hog from Rosedale, Iowa, to Governor Olson. In subsequent years, a bronze pig, called Floyd of Rosedale, became the traveling trophy awarded to the winner of the annual game. Importantly, the real purpose of the prized trophy was to downplay and cover up the violence against Ozzie Simmons with something lighter, a traveling award, and to reduce down tensions between the two schools.

The second incident occurred in 1951, at a game in Oklahoma between Drake University of Des Moines and Oklahoma A&M (later, Oklahoma State University). Drake star and All-American candidate Johnny Bright was violently assaulted on the field by a white player for Oklahoma A&M named Wilbanks Smith; the injury marked the end of Bright's career. It was significant because it was the first time that Drake, with a high-profile black athlete on the roster, played an important game in the South, this game being played on A&M's home field in Stillwater. Also, Bright's injury highlighted the racial tensions of the times and became famous when it was captured in a widely disseminated Pulitzer Prize-winning photo. Unlike the neglect that collective memory gave to Ozzie Simmons, the picture of Bright's injury came to be prominently known as the "Johnny Bright incident."

Although neither the Constitution nor federal law codifies English as the nation's official language, Americans of European descent have enacted measures to suppress the public use of minority languages. This suppression has been used as an exclusionary tool to marginalize and alienate certain ethnic groups from full participation in civil society, including the right to vote or to seek public education. Historically, ethnic groups singled out by established European groups included French and Scandinavians in the nineteenth century, southern and eastern Europeans in the 1900s, and Germans before and after World War I. In Iowa,

***The Ellisons in Iowa City***

Fanny McConnell (the future Fanny Ellison) graduated from the University of Iowa with a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Dramatic Art in 1936. The university's first black female graduate, she hoped to promote little theater as a college instructor and also to teach theater practices that students needed to create powerful acting and staging of plays.

Fanny Ellison believed the art of drama could meaningfully impact the position of African Americans in the United States, and her conviction found crucial support at the University of Iowa. Ms. Ellison was at the vanguard of future artists seeking to develop African American drama by studying at Iowa. After Fanny Ellison had completed her degree, some African American students enrolled in graduate studies in the Department of Speech and Dramatic Art. A cohort of future dramatists matriculated through this program from the late 1930s through the 1950s, going on to become major forces in African American theater.

Fanny Ellison's husband, writer Ralph Ellison, was offered a teaching job at the prestigious Writer's Workshop at the University of Iowa in 1959. He turned down the high-profile job, in part, because of Fanny's report that her life in Iowa City was not all positive. She felt that Iowa City was full of prejudice, and her matriculation at one of the state's flagship universities, a short two-year stay, was very awkward.

Trying to re-create his writing voice after producing the seminal work *Invisible Man*, Ralph Ellison, though not a faculty member, attended special events and developed warm, collegial relationships with scholars in residence at the Writer's Workshop. He particularly enjoyed his role as a mentor to young blacks such as Alan McPherson who spent time in residence at the Writer's Workshop before settling into a more permanent position at Iowa in 1981.

such English-only trends have roots in the Babel Proclamation issued by Iowa governor William Harding in 1918. The proclamation required English to be the official language to be used in the state. Anti-German sentiments were high in the aftermath of World War I, and the law's primary focus was to prohibit German culture from expanding, as Germany was America's bitter enemy in the war. The anti-German sentiment peaked when people speaking German on the street were attacked and rebuked, as was the case in one remarkable case in Lowden, Iowa, on Armistice Day. A German minister was assaulted and forced to carry an American flag down the street while being accosted and cursed by an angry mob. Harding's proclamation, based on nativist patriotic impulses, required that English be the only language of instruction in public and private schools. Conversations in public places and by telephone must be in English; public speeches also had to be in English. If religious services were not conducted in the English language, the group would have to worship privately in their homes. Harding was the only governor in the nation to outlaw the public use of all foreign languages.

In the early 1990s, flooding led to serious hardship in Iowa. Unrelenting torrential rains caused many rivers, including the Mississippi and Missouri, to overflow their banks. In 1993, severe flooding damaged billions of dollars' worth of crops, homes, buildings, and other property. That year President Bill Clinton declared the entire state of Iowa a disaster area. The federal government set up programs to help people who had lost their homes and property during the flood,

but minorities suffered more than others. As was the case in New Orleans a decade later, majority black communities in Iowa were built in flood zones because it was cheaper than living elsewhere, and there was demand for affordable housing. Natural disasters such as floods and hurricanes, wherever they occur, widen the gap between the rich and poor; the poor, unlike the well-off, lack the resources needed to escape and ride out the disaster. Furthermore, those living in poverty do not have the proper insurance and other precautions required to put themselves back on their feet after the event.

### **The Twenty-First Century**

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Iowa faced a situation, not unlike that after the Civil War, when state leaders thought it a good idea to boost immigration. This time, immigrants were sought to offset the decline of the rural economy due to globalization and the outflow of young Iowans who moved outside the state seeking nonagricultural employment. The state got its wish but dealt awkwardly with the aftermath. Immigrants arrived from big cities in the Midwest, from Mexico, and also from Southeast Asia, especially Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. While the influx was welcome, the type of conformity adopted by the newcomers was not what Iowans had hoped for. The Asian immigrants, for example, displayed a “Salad Bowl” type of assimilation in which they genuinely enjoyed the opportunity and benefits of living in Iowa and contributing to the state’s economy, but mostly tended to themselves socially, even to the point of speaking their own native language and not English. This irritated white Iowans, who did not understand or appreciate this clannishness and did not like being around people who spoke foreign languages. In a distinct echo from the 1918 Babel Proclamation, in 2002, Governor Thomas Vilsack signed into law the Iowa English Language Reaffirmation Act, which formally reestablished English as the official language of government in Iowa. Iowa was not alone in declaring English the official language; 26 other states approved similar measures.

Asians immigrants, through anecdotal accounts on the Internet and in social media, complained of suffering prejudice and discrimination at the hands of Iowa’s white population. This Asian backlash could be considered one of the beginning points for the possible deconstruction of an Iowa-preferred narrative called “Iowa Nice.” This story began in the 1970s in the aftermath of the Iowa Caucuses, an early primary that boosted some unknown neophytes to political prominence and helped establish Iowa as a winnowing ground for potential national candidates. Though a large responsibility, the nation appeared more than willing to grant Iowa such power in the political process. Iowa’s reputation as a place with a vibrant public sphere, participatory democracy, and engaged citizenry blossomed in the 1970s. With an excellent K–12 educational system and a high graduation rate for secondary students (supplemented by moderate rates of university graduation), Iowa’s well-educated, civil citizenry appeared to be a decent lot that would not be suspected of harboring negative attitudes toward minorities. This was part of the “nice” portion of the narrative, and more precisely, Iowa Nice was about the supposed tendency of Iowans to listen carefully to

a variety of viewpoints without being confrontational. As the Iowa Nice narrative spread throughout the upper Midwest, it became the basis for an informal competition among states to see which state had the nicest people. The Asian backlash, then, stood as a strong counterpoint to the thrust of the narrative. The backlash did not appear to involve events as disturbing as the types of discrimination that blacks encountered in the 1830–1860 period, which was the Black Code era. Nonetheless, anecdotal evidence gathered from social media in particular indicated strong xenophobic reaction to the influx of Asians as well as discriminatory social behavior. The 2002 law designating English as the state’s official language originated, at least in part, from a white backlash to the appearance of Asians and Latinos in central Iowa.

Despite the growing diversity of the state, Des Moines (where many immigrants congregated) and the rest of Iowa remained majority white throughout the state’s history. According to recent population statistics, Des Moines was 74 percent white, and Iowa, overall, was the fifth whitest state in the Union (U.S. Department of Commerce 2012; Dulberger 2013, 11).

The history of race and racism in Iowa suggests that Iowans have been ambivalent in their orientations toward the ethnic groups that chose to relocate to the state. The people of Iowa have displayed dispositions that are sometimes welcoming and sometimes not welcoming toward newcomers who are ethnically different from the white majority. Slavery was allowed to exist mostly uncontested in a state that was supposed to be a free, legal place for blacks to live. Abolitionists protested, at times winning battles against this unjust circumstance. Iowans voted to disenfranchise blacks, and then to enfranchise them, with a relatively short period of time in the mid-nineteenth century. Ugly, inexcusable, discriminatory acts occurred in Iowa towns alongside the paradisiac Buxton, a place free of Jim Crow–style discrimination. Iowa’s reputation as a place where nice, nonconfrontational people live in harmony with ethnic minorities has been put to the test by the lived experience of some minorities in the state as told in social media. Iowa has work to do to live up to the narrative preferred by its white majority, but that narrative is a vision for the state that can still be attained.

## **NOTABLE FIGURE**

### **Clark, Alexander G. (1826–1891)**

Alexander G. Clark, the man who would be known as Iowa’s most prominent black leader and political activist, was born on February 25, 1826, in Washington County, Pennsylvania. His father, John Clark, was the emancipated son of a mulatto woman and her Irish master. His mother, Rebecca Darnes Clark, was African. Alexander was released from slavery while an infant.

After a limited education, Alexander Clark was trained for two years as a barber by an uncle, William Darnes, in Cincinnati, Ohio. Clark continued his schooling in Cincinnati, but left at age 15 on a steamer, serving as a bartender.

At age 16, in 1842, he arrived in Muscatine, Iowa, and followed his trade as a barber until his retirement in 1868. A shrewd saver and investor, Clark invested in



timberlands and sold timber to steamboat companies; then, he reinvested the proceeds into real estate. Tax records showed that by 1860, he held properties valued at \$10,000.

Clark married Catherine Griffin of Iowa City on October 9, 1848. Miss Griffin, of Indian and African descent, was born into slavery in 1823, in Virginia, but was freed at age three. The couple resided in Muscatine and would get involved in the controversial case of Milton Howard and his parents, who were kidnapped from Muscatine in 1854 and sold into slavery in Alabama. Along with Reverend Harvey Cain (a future bishop of the AME Church), Clark joined with successful barber Thomas Motts in 1855 to submit to the state legislature the first petition from African Americans challenging the law that banned the migration of free blacks into Iowa.

In 1867, Clark filed suit against Muscatine's public school district to allow his 12-year-old daughter to attend one of the city's elementary schools for white children instead of forcing her to participate in the school designated for black children. The Iowa Supreme Court, in 1868, ruled in Clark's favor, arguing that separate schools for blacks and whites were unconstitutional, this more than 80 years before the U.S. Supreme Court reached the same conclusion in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Clark was active in several organizations, including his work as chairman of the Colored Men's Convention in 1868. In this role, he was responsible for petitioning the Iowa legislature to request the political rights of black men, and in December 1868, after this appeal, voters approved a clause to the Iowa Constitution granting political rights to Iowa's black men. This was two years before the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

In 1868, Clark was elected deputy grand master of the Grand Lodge of Missouri and became grand master after the death of H. McGee Alexander. His jurisdiction extended over Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Mississippi. He was instrumental in the establishment of Black Masonic Lodges in Iowa, Illinois, and states west of the Mississippi.

Alexander Clark's son, Alexander Jr., graduated from the University of Iowa in 1879, becoming the first black to graduate from one of Iowa's flagship universities. At age 57, Alexander Clark Sr. entered the University of Iowa's Law School, graduating in 1884, eighth in a class of 80. Father and son went on to practice law together in both Iowa and Illinois.

In 1890, President Benjamin Harrison appointed Alexander Clark minister and consul general to Liberia at an annual salary of \$4,000, plus stipend, a high salary for that era. He formally took office in November 1890 but died the following year. At his funeral, he received full state military and diplomatic honors. He was buried at Greenwood Cemetery in his adopted hometown of Muscatine.

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# 17

## Kansas

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Barbara Harris Combs

### CHRONOLOGY

#### 11000–7000 BCE

The territory now known as Kansas is inhabited by nomadic Paleo-Indians

#### 1541 CE

The first Europeans arrive in the territory of present-day Kansas; they find the territory occupied by descendants of Paleo-Indians, including Kaw, Osage, Comanche, Arapaho, Kiowa, and Pawnee

#### 1803

The United States purchases the Louisiana Territory from France; the Louisiana Purchase includes land that now forms Kansas

#### 1830

President Andrew Jackson signs the Indian Removal Act into law on May 28

#### 1838

The Potawatomi Trail of Death ends in territory that will be part of Kansas on November 4

#### 1854–1861

A series of violent conflicts between antislavery and proslavery groups occurs in Kansas; the conflict is known as “Bleeding Kansas”

#### 1854

Signed by President Franklin Pierce on May 30, the Kansas-Nebraska Act creates the territories of Kansas and Nebraska

#### 1856

The Pottawatomie Massacre occurs on May 25 at Pottawatomie, Kansas; the incident involves the killing of five proslavery settlers by an antislavery group led by abolitionist John Brown

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### **1860**

On February 23, the Kansas state legislature passes a bill abolishing slavery in Kansas over the governor's veto

### **1861**

Kansas women are given the right to vote in school elections; Kansas enters the Union as a free state on January 29

### **1863**

The U.S. Congress authorizes the removal of all Indians from Kansas

### **1863**

On August 21, William Quantrill's band of pro-Confederate raiders attack Lawrence, Kansas; the resulting "Lawrence Massacre" leaves 200 men and boys dead

### **1865**

Kansas ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery on February 7

### **1867**

White male voters in Kansas reject black suffrage by a vote of 2–1; women's suffrage is also rejected; on January 17, Kansas ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment granting citizenship to newly freed slaves

### **1867**

The first recorded Indian attack in Kansas occurs against the military post at Henshaw Station on June 5; the Indians kill four white men

### **1867**

Indians raid a small Kansas settlement known as Brookville

### **1870**

On January 19, Kansas ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment granting suffrage to black men

### **1872**

Kanza (Kaw) Indians are removed to Oklahoma; within 16 years, starvation and disease reduce the tribe to fewer than 200 persons

### **1877**

On February 27, the town of Nicodemus is founded by black settlers from Kentucky

### **1879**

The Kansas legislature permits separate elementary schools for different races

### **1884**

Haskell Institute is founded to provide college education for Indians

### **1887**

Kansas women are granted the right to vote in local matters

### **1890**

On January 15, the U.S. Supreme Court overturns the Civil Rights Act of 1875; one of the consolidated cases under review originates in Hiawatha, Kansas

**1901**

On January 15, a black man, Fred Alexander, is lynched in Leavenworth for the alleged assault of a white woman

**1915–1923**

The Kansas governor's office prohibits the showing of the racist film *Birth of a Nation*

**1920s**

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) revives in Kansas; KKK membership in Kansas eventually reaches 100,000 members

**1922**

The Kansas attorney general charges the KKK with being a Georgia company doing business in the state without a license

**1925**

Four Mexican students, including two brothers and their parents, fight to attend all-white Argentine High School in Kansas City

**1926–1927**

Mexican students at Argentine High School reenroll for the 1926–1927 school year; the school officially becomes integrated

**1927**

The KKK is prohibited from doing business in Kansas

**1930s**

Students (black and white) at the University of Kansas demand an end to discriminatory practices in the state university system

**1941**

On the basis of its decision in *Graham v. Board of Education* (153 Kan. 840), the Kansas Supreme Court rules Topeka's separate junior high school system unconstitutional

**1954**

On May 18, the U.S. Supreme Court hands down a ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, which orders school desegregation

**1955**

In a new school desegregation case referred to as the "Brown II" decision, the Topeka public schools were again a defendant; the Supreme Court ruled that local courts could oversee the implementation of local desegregation plans

**1989**

In *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education, Shawnee County* (892 F.2nd 861), known as the "Brown III" decision, the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals found that school segregation still existed in Kansas

**2008**

Members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Youth Council lead hundreds of people on a nine-block march memorializing the Wichita Dockum Drug Store sit-in

**2011**

Kansas lawmakers enact legislation requiring law enforcement agencies to adopt policies against bias-based policing

**2016**

On November 21, Lili Gagin, a Kansas University cheerleader, is suspended from the squad for posting an image on Snapchat saying “KKK go Trump”

**2017**

On February 22, Srinivas Kuchibhotla, an engineer from East India, is shot and killed in Olathe in an apparent hate crime

**2017**

A noose is found hanging from tree at the Manhattan campus of Kansas State University on May 8

**NARRATIVE**

**Early History**

Native American Indians inhabited the territory now known as Kansas thousands of years prior to its statehood. The Paleo-Indian period lasted from 11,000 to 7,000 BCE. The Paleo-Indians were the first people to inhabit the Americas, and they came during the end of the Ice Age. It is believed that these earliest inhabitants came from Asia and entered North America by crossing the Bering land bridge to Alaska. During this period, they operated as a hunter-gatherer community. The precise time and route of the Paleo-Indians migration to America is subject to dispute, but a number of archeological sites have been found in Kansas that verify their presence, including speared tips that they used to hunt.

During the Archaic Period (7,000 BCE–1 CE), warming brought the Ice Age to an end, and the Indian people became less nomadic. Permanent settlements emerged, and the Indians began to cultivate the natural resources of the area and continued to develop technology such as spears for hunting and created ceramic objects. The Woodland Period (1–1000 CE) brought the advent of the Hopewell Indians and greater cultivation of the local agriculture, but these Native Indians still existed largely by hunting and gathering. The Woodland era gave way to the Village Gardener Period (1000–1500 CE), and during this period, usage of the bow and arrow became common and allowed the Native Indians to rely on bison hunting to supplement their subsistence. They also relied on trade with groups like Puebloan Indians in the Southwest, and their settlements grew larger and their technology continued to develop.

The Prehistoric Period (1500–1800 CE) brought great changes. During this period the Apache, Pawnee, Kansa, and Wichita tribes resided in the area. These tribes existed by a combination of agriculture and hunting, and as a result, some tribes were still forced to be nomadic. The year 1541 marked the beginning of the Historic Period, and Spanish conquistadors led by Francisco Vázquez de Coronado arrived. Approximately 200 years later, the French arrived and formed an

alliance with the Kaw Indians in the area. Economic opportunities made possible by the emerging fur trade began to make the area attractive to whites. In the early 1800s, Americans began to arrive, but while official settlement did not proceed until decades later, it was a contentious time for the Indian population—native and emigrated.

### **Indian Removal: The Precursor to White Expansion**

In 1810, President Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) wanted to free up the eastern part of the country for additional settlement locations by whites, and with the acquisition of the Louisiana Purchase (1803), the plan was to move Indians to the new territory. During Jefferson’s tenure (1801–1809), the movement was “voluntary,” but some 20 years later, the Indian Removal Act (May 28, 1830) made relocation compulsory. The removal policy was largely one-sided, and it is widely agreed that tribes gave up more than they gained.

During the 25-year period from 1825 to 1850, more than 25 tribes relocated to the territory that would become Kansas, including the Iowa, Delaware, Kansa, Miami, Potawatomi, and Sac and Fox. In 1832, the Kickapoo were relocated from Missouri. In 1835, the Iowa were relocated from the Great Lakes area. In 1838, the Potawatomi were relocated from northern Indiana, and in 1846, the Miamis came from another part of Indiana, but the Delaware were the first to sign a treaty.

In 1829, the Delaware gave up their land and moved in exchange for 2,000,000 acres in Kansas and the right to hunt buffalo on the land, but when the Kansas Territory opened to whites, the Delaware—who had established themselves in the new territory—were again forced to move, this time to a new Indian territory in what would become Oklahoma. The Oklahoma reservation land was supposed to be permanent; however, years later, they would again be forcibly relocated. One historical brief notes, “Forty years after moving to Kansas, the Delaware were again asked to move, this time to Indian Territory in Oklahoma. The U.S. government gave the Delaware an ultimatum: move to Oklahoma or no longer be recognized as Delaware. To preserve the tribe, the bulk of the Delaware moved to Oklahoma. A handful of Delaware, for various reasons, decided to stay in Kansas” (Kansas Historical Society 2017). Through various means, Indian tribes left the Southeast and moved westward. Various tribes comprising the Potawatomi nation were forcibly relocated from Indiana and Michigan to Kansas and other territories. In fact, “On September 4, 1838, the mounted militia removed 859 Potawatomi people at gunpoint . . . they were forced to walk more than 600 miles to Kansas” (Kansas Historical Society 2017).

Several tribes, including the Arapaho, Cheyenne, Comanche, Kansa, Kiowa, Osage, Pawnee, and Wichita, are indigenous to present-day Kansas, but over the years, a number of additional tribes migrated to Kansas following its designation as Indian Territory. These emigrant Indians were displaced from eastern parts of the United States and forcibly moved westward. Indian removal was always contentious. In fact, the Indian Office of the U.S. government (later to become the Bureau of Indian Affairs), which is now part of Department of the Interior, was

originally created as a part of the War Department. Today, four Indian reservations still remain in Kansas.

Indian removal made way for white settlement. In 1827, Fort Leavenworth military post opened. Fort Leavenworth, which sits on the Missouri River, formed a border between Kansas (which would enter the Union as a free state) and Missouri (a slave state). The military establishment was there to keep peace between the remaining Native Americans and new settlers and to keep merchant travelers' safe. In 1854, the Kansas Territory was established and officially opened to white settlers. This incorporated territory of the United States existed from 1854 until January 29, 1861, when the eastern portion of the territory was admitted as the state of Kansas.

Life was difficult for relocated tribes and different. Nomadic tribes could not operate that way any longer. Under the new system, each tribe was assigned a tract of land, and Native American children were educated about white society. After the Civil War, immigrants also flooded to Kansas intent on using the sweat of their labor to develop the prairie land. By 1867, all but four tribes in Kansas—native and emigrated—were relocated to make room for white settlers. Only the Sac and Fox, Iowa, Kickapoo, and Potawatomi retained their reservations.

In short, this large land acquisition known as the Louisiana Purchase had widespread implications. It extended the slavery debate beyond the South into the new territories. It also renewed a fiery debate about the indigenous population that, almost three decades later, would result in the Indian Removal Act that permitted the forcible removal of Indians from their land to be resettled in newly acquired western territories.

### **Slave State or Free State**

Kansas's entry into the Union was perhaps one of the most tumultuous of all states, and the motto of the great state of Kansas, *Ad Astra per Aspera*, which translated from Latin means "To the Stars through Great Difficulties," seemed to predict such a fate (Leiker 2002, 214). The Kansas-Nebraska Act, signed on May 30, 1854, created the states of Kansas and Nebraska. This negotiated act allowed the people in the new territories to decide whether or not slavery would be permitted in its borders. Using popular sovereignty to decide the increasingly heated slavery dispute led to almost immediate conflict, including a prolonged period of dispute (1854–1861) that has come to be known as Bleeding Kansas. The factions were fighting about whether the territory should enter the Union as a free state or slave state. The factions came to be identified by names like "border ruffians" (a name given to proslavery forces arriving from the slave border state of Missouri) and Jayhawkers (a name given to antislavery forces mainly from the East). On January 29, 1861, Kansas was formally admitted to the Union, but some argue that Bleeding Kansas, the term given to a period of violence that erupted between free staters and those who were proslavery, ushered in the Civil War. Additionally, the land in Kansas was becoming increasingly attractive to white settlers (the territory had been closed to white settlement in the 1820s), which caused Congress to authorize the removal of all Indians from Kansas. In the backdrop of the Civil War,



Indian resistance to removal began to mount, and some say Indians attacked frontier settlements as early as 1864, but the first recorded attacks occurred in 1867. According to James Leiker, “Race, in a sense, has defined Kansas from the start” (2002, 214). As is often the case, in many respects, the story of Kansas’s development and its racial history is not linear, so the reader should be careful to be attentive to the ebbs and flows of history that are often best understood by briefly hearkening back to earlier moments.

The Wyandotte Constitution was adopted in 1859, during the convening of the state’s fourth Constitutional Convention. Despite the veto of the governor, the legislature passed a bill abolishing slavery in the state of Kansas. At that time, the territory was controlled by those who wanted Kansas to be a free state. Prior to this vote, owning slaves was legal in Kansas Territory, but it was uncommon. On February 23, 1860, the territorial legislature of Kansas voted to abolish slavery; this occurred despite the objection of the governor of the territory. It was the end of the slavery debate in the Kansas Territory, but it intensified the debate in the nation.

Next, the decision about Kansas’s admission to the United States went to Congress, but there was some opposition by Southern states to the admission of a new free state. As a result, the Kansas-Nebraska Act was passed by the U.S. Congress on May 30, 1854, repealing the earlier Missouri Compromise. The people of Kansas would decide whether slavery would exist in each state. Southern states began to grow increasingly unsettled about the slavery question. Soon, Southern states began to leave the Union. Ironically, the exit of a number of Southern senators meant less opposition to Kansas’s admission. Lincoln was inaugurated as president on March 4, 1861, less than two months after Kansas was admitted as the 34th state. The first shot on Fort Sumter was fired April 12 of the same year. The battle that surrounded Bleeding Kansas would soon engulf the entire nation.

The division that surrounded Kansas’s entry into the nation persisted throughout the Civil War, and the strategic position of the state—across from slave state, Missouri—increased the opportunities for conflict. The Lawrence Massacre (August 21, 1863) was one such event. William Clarke Quantrill (July 31, 1837 to June 6, 1865) fought for the Confederate Army leading a small group that came to be known as Quantrill’s Raiders. On August 21, 1863, Quantrill led a group of approximately 450 raiders into Lawrence, Kansas. Lawrence was pro-Union territory and the home of Senator James H. Lane—a strong supporter of the earlier free-soil movement in Kansas. Quantrill and his forces chased Lane, who escaped, but it is reported that the raiders brutally killed nearly 200 men and boys and burned the city. But some on the other side of the border subscribe to a radically different view of the events (Hulbert 2013). William Quantrill died at the hands of Union forces in the last battles of the Civil War.

### **Racial Violence and Conflict in Kansas**

Despite Kansas’s reputation as a free state, acts of political and physical violence against racial minorities erupted on several occasions. In 1867, Indian attacks reached their height in Kansas, when nearly 130 settlers were killed. The

same year, white voters rejected black suffrage by a margin of 2:1. According to James Leiker, “The defeat of black voting rights coincided with an overall growth of the African American population from a mere 627 in 1860 to more than 12,000 by 1865” (2002, 222). By 1879, the state legislature of Kansas permitted separate elementary schools for blacks and whites. Decades later, this decision would set the contextual groundwork for one of the landmark decisions of the United States—*Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. To many, it seemed that the battle over Kansas’s soul and identity continued.

On January 15, 1901, black Spanish American war veteran Fred Alexander was taken into custody in Leavenworth, Kansas, after being accused of following a white woman. After his arrest, and without evidence, Mr. Alexander was also charged with the unsolved murder of another white woman. A vigilante mob that consisted of thousands broke into his cell, attacked Alexander with a hatchet, dragged him from his cell, mutilated parts of his body, and they chained the dying man to a post where they burned him alive. It is reported that 22 gallons of kerosene were poured on Fred Alexander’s body before he was burned alive. The Equal Justice Initiative reports that the lynching of Fred Alexander was one of 19 recorded lynchings in Kansas between 1877 and 1950. After Fred Alexander’s lynching, blacks in the area formed the Afro-American Council. Journalist T. Thomas Fortune was one of the organizers of the Council.

### The Early Twentieth Century

During the period of 1915–1923, the Kansas Board of Review of Motion Pictures, a newly created arm of the governor’s office of the state of Kansas, successfully prohibited the showing of *The Birth of a Nation*. The inflammatory film, which the PBS documentary *The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow* notes, “falsified the reality of Reconstruction by presenting blacks as trying to dominate Southern whites and sexually force themselves upon white women,” was first screened by then president Woodrow Wilson inside the White House (Benbow 2010, 509). The film incited riots all across the nation and spawned a resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), whose membership reportedly peaked soon after the movie was declared the nation’s first ever blockbuster hit.

In the 1880s and 1890s, Kansas had been a great center of the Populist Movement. Populism, a political movement that promoted the needs of the common man, rose in Kansas, especially after the droughts of the 1880s and 1890s caused great economic distress for Kansas farmers. In the years following these economic hardships, a number of Populists were elected to high-level state offices. Populists tended to be rural Americans, and it was attractive to many in the West, especially farmers. Both populism and progressivism were reform traditions. The later success of the Progressive Party would not have been possible without the earlier Populist Movement. Populists supported ideas like voting rights for women, direct election of senators, and campaigns against monopolies and trust. The movement was received with great enthusiasm in Kansas. In *Tyranny of Change*, John Chambers writes, “The progressive leadership [in Kansas] came primarily from the urban and small-town middle and upper classes, particularly well-educated and

socially secure white Anglo-Saxon Protestants” (2000, 138). Populism gave rise to Progressivism in the state, which, until around 1916, was on the rise. These political and social forces made Kansas a fertile ground for battles such as the debate over Griffith’s incendiary cinematic representation of slavery, *The Birth of a Nation*. Gerald Butters notes that from 1900 to 1915, Kansas was “confronted with the explosion of modern urban society and technology” (2016, 27). It was representative of this developing technology. He argues further that it was a hallmark of Progressive thought that government should be used “to combat what they believed were social abuses, inequities, or immoral activities” (Butters 2016, 27).

In *A Standard History of Kansas and Kansans*, Volume 2, Ralph Price writes, Kansas had a “long and proud tradition of anti-slavery sentiments . . . [in fact], . . . A larger percent of her [Kansas’s] citizens joined the Union Army than any other state or territory” (1918, 925). This tradition of social justice continued during the height of the Populist and later Progressive Movements. Governor Arthur Capper’s successor, Henry J. Allen (Republican), also used his influence as governor to prohibit the film’s showing. However, Allen’s successor, John W. Davis (Democrat), cleared the way for the film to be viewed in the state of Kansas. Initially, Davis followed the tradition of Capper and Allen, but in an about face, Governor Davis later told members of the state board of film review that he had seen the film—in a special screening arranged in Kansas, Missouri—and he said, “I thought it could be censored and admitted to Kansas. I told them, however, to use their own judgment in the matter” (Butters 2016, 98). Some speculate that Davis was bribed (Butters 2016).

### **The Birth of a Nation in Kansas**

D.W. Griffith produced and adapted the film *The Birth of a Nation* from a novel written by Thomas Dixon Jr. called *The Clansman*. The film painted black men as beasts and savages who wanted to rape white women and justified slavery as a benevolent arrangement bestowed upon ignorant blacks. The film also chronicles events, such as the Civil War and the assassination of Lincoln, and takes a decidedly pro-Confederacy stance, painting the Confederacy as noble and the Ku Klux Klan as valiant defenders of white society. As Butters notes, “*The Birth of a Nation* rewrote American history, and it made the US citizenry dwell on . . . the sectional differences that still divided the nation more than a half a century after the end of the Civil War” (1991, 2). The film board used its authority to prohibit the film’s showing in Kansas. Many still remembered the legacy of Bleeding Kansas, and they did not want to see the state torn apart again. The review board cited historical inaccuracies, a tendency to incite hatred, and immoral/sexual impropriety in the content as reasons for its denial. The film company appealed the decision, but *The Birth of a Nation* was again rejected as improper. Although less than 5 percent of the population of Kansas was Negro, the film company accused state censors of pandering for Negro votes. Republican governor Arthur Capper had great influence over the board, and it is reported that he refused to allow his “good” Negro citizens to be depicted in this way. Governor Capper was in office from 1915 to 1919, and during his term, *The Birth of a Nation* was not shown in the state. The film was shown in Kansas City, Missouri, and some Kansans crossed the border to see it there.

According to Gerald Butters, then governor Capper wrote, “We have a large Negro population in Kansas. As a rule, they are good citizens who are attending strictly to their own business, and I am opposed to exhibitions of this kind which excite racist prejudice” (2016, 89). Early on, Governor Allen’s election renewed hope in those distributing *Birth of a Nation*; however, Governor Allen was not swayed, and Kansas soon stood alone as the only state not to allow the viewing of the film. Despite pressure, Allen remained firm in his conviction not to allow viewing of the movie in Kansas. At the same time, the growth of the KKK in the state prompted him to remain strong in his conviction to ban the controversial movie. *The Birth of a Nation* was attacked by some opponents as part of a campaign to stimulate the growth of the KKK in Kansas. Gerald Butters reports that, “By the early 1920s, one out of every four Kansans was African-American, Jewish, or Catholic, and they all found themselves under increased harassment by the Klan” (Butters 2016, 93–94).

### **The Growth of the Black Population in Kansas**

Although the black population in Kansas was modest, it had grown steadily in the years after the Civil War. Kansas’s reputation as a free state persisted after the Civil War. Even before the first and second waves of the Great Migration, blacks flocked to the state. Kansas saw the migration of nearly 26,000 African Americans who fled the Deep South after President Hayes’s removal of federal Union troops from the area. They would come to be known as Exodusters. Historian Nell Irvin Painter calls this internal migration of thousands of African Americans “Kansas Fever,” and she writes, “the great drawing card of the Kansas Fever exodus was free land” (1992, 68).

Black tenant farmers wanted to be independent from their former masters and the tenant sharecropping system that expanded after slavery, and landownership would provide that independence. They were looking for political and economic freedom. Thousands of blacks from Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Texas—many of whom were former slaves—journeyed to Kansas. It is actually the first major migration of African Americans from the South. Shawn Alexander notes, “During the period between 1870 and 1880, the black population of Kansas increased to more than 40,000” (2007, 118). Kansas entered the Union as a free state, and it was the land of John Brown; these facts, together with the possibility of owning your own homestead through the Homestead Act, made the territory very attractive to the Exodusters.

Like the Jewish Exodus in the Bible, the Exodusters believed they were going to their promised land. Many of the African American residents of Kansas today can trace their roots back to these Exodusters. One group, largely comprising ex-slaves from Kentucky, formed an all-black settlement along the northern part of the Solomon River in Graham County. They named the town Nicodemus. This black settlement, west of the Mississippi River with physical proximity to water for the tilling of crops and maintenance of livestock, was strategically situated to provide a livelihood for its residents. However, without resources to



Residential segregation was the norm for those formerly enslaved. A view of Washington Street in Nicodemus, Kansas, ca. 1885, a town settled by African Americans following emancipation. (Library of Congress)

buy necessary equipment to farm the land, many of the new black residents found life in Nicodemus hard.

Moreover, the lore of John Brown, a fierce abolitionist who believed armed resistance was the only way to defeat slavery in the United States, likely also contributed to blacks' perceiving Kansas as a good place. Along with about 40 others, Brown had successfully defended himself against an attack by what some estimate as a group of up to 600 proslavery Missourians. One of the bloodiest of the Bleeding Kansas battles occurred on May 19, 1858, at the Marais Des Cygnes River at Pleasanton in Linn County, Kansas, where proslavery forces and free-stater abolitionist forces clashed violently.

### ***John Brown in the Kansas Territory***

White abolitionist John Brown (1800–1859) joined the antislavery movement after the death of Elijah Lovejoy (1802–1837), a journalist and abolitionist who was killed by an angry proslavery mob in Illinois that also destroyed Lovejoy's press and antislavery materials. After the passage of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act, Brown organized a militia group to help escaped slaves evade capture. The Fugitive Slave Act (a variety of congressional acts) made such actions illegal. These actions angered proslavery advocates. As debate about the Kansas Territory heated up, Brown left Ohio and ventured west. Some of John Brown's sons were already in the Kansas Territory, and Brown learned about the violent confrontations between his sons and proslavery advocates. On May 21, 1856, proslavery forces staged attacks in Lawrence, destroying printing presses used for antislavery

literature. Brown and his colleagues were angered by this, and they sought revenge. Their actions, widely denounced by proslavery and antislavery forces alike, came to be known as the Pottawatomie Creek Massacre (May 24–25, 1856), one of the bloodiest Bleeding Kansas battles. Armed with knives, rifles, and swords, it is alleged that Brown or his compatriots beheaded a number of the residents of the proslavery town of Pottawatomie Creek, including children. John Brown was now a wanted fugitive. Armed conflicts continued, including one in which Brown lost his son. He fled Kansas, but he returned to lead a number of raids. In the early part of 1859, John Brown returned east to plan a raid on the arsenal at Harpers Ferry in Virginia. The raid on Harpers Ferry is considered by many to be an important catalyst for the Civil War. Brown was tried for treason, convicted, and hanged for his part in the raid.

Finally, the factors that drew blacks (and later Mexicans) to Kansas likely incensed the white population and may have contributed to the growth of KKK. In the early 1920s, the Kansas branches of the KKK boasted over 100,000 members. This coincided with a time of large numbers of Mexicans settling in Kansas. The attorney general of Kansas successfully brought action against the organization, charging them with being a Georgia corporation doing business in the state of Kansas without a license. The KKK appealed the lower court's ruling all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. The legal action took years (during which the KKK continued to operate in Kansas). Finally, in 1927, the Supreme Court refused to hear the case, which allowed the appellate court's ruling to stand. For a time, the KKK was expelled from the state.

### **School Segregation: From the Civil Rights Act of 1875 to the *Brown* Decision**

Kansas is well-known for its association with the 1954 Supreme Court decision of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, but a full understanding of *Brown* is not possible without hearkening back to an earlier decision, which also involved a case that originated in Kansas. On January 15, 1890, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the Civil Rights Act of 1875, and after the Supreme Court's ruling, discrimination (e.g., segregation) in public accommodations throughout Kansas increased.

The Civil Rights Act of 1875 forbade discrimination in public transportation and accommodations like trains, hotels, and other public places, including theaters and clubs. It also prohibited exclusion from jury service. It was a radical Reconstruction act, and the protections it offered instilled fear in many whites. The act was not consistently enforced, and it faced mounting challenges. One of the consolidated cases before the Court originated in Hiawatha, Kansas. Although prosecutions under the act were rare, five prosecutions were consolidated for appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court, and these commonly became known as *the Civil Rights Cases*, 109 U.S. 3 (1883). One of the five cases, *United States v. Murray Stanley*, arose out of an incident at a hotel in Hiawatha, Kansas, where it was

reported that an African American man named Bird Gee regularly stayed at a hotel in Hiawatha run by a man named David Stanley. Gee took his meals with the other guests, and one complained about sharing the table with a black man. Stanley's son asked Mr. Gee to leave the dining room. Bird Gee filed a complaint with the U.S. commissioner. The case went before the district court, and Stanley was indicted for his treatment of Gee. Justice Bradley, writing for the majority, held that the Fourteenth Amendment did not authorize Congress to regulate private exchanges such as the one between Stanley and Gee.

The language of the act sought to "protect all citizens in their civil and legal rights," but according to historian John Hope Franklin, President Ulysses S. Grant failed to enforce the act, and, as a result, "The Civil Rights Act was never effectively enforced" (1974, 235). In the *Stanley* case, the federal government argued that the Thirteenth Amendment not only abolished slavery but it bestowed all the rights of citizenship on the former slaves and that the Fourteenth Amendment gave Congress the power to protect those constitutionally guaranteed rights through appropriate enforcement legislation. However, in an 8–1 decision, the Court disagreed. The decision opined that the act's prohibition on discrimination by local and state governments was too far reaching and that the federal government did not have any authority to prevent discrimination at the hands of individuals and organizations; the Court ruled that the Thirteenth Amendment was never intended to prohibit discrimination by race in public accommodations. Because not all public accommodations were government owned and operated, the Court ruled the act was too far reaching. The Court's ruling restricted the power of the federal government to enforce the equal protection to African Americans; in fact, it increased discrimination not only in public accommodations, but private ones as well. The Court's act in overturning the Civil Rights Act of 1875 opened the door for the later *Plessy* decision. It would be almost 70 years before the next federal Civil Right Act would go into effect—the Civil Rights Act of 1957.

While Kansas did not have the extensive Black Codes and Jim Crow legislation present in many Southern and Northern states, restrictions arose. Prior to the 1940s, there were several attempts to develop three separate school systems in Kansas—one for whites, one for blacks, and one for Mexicans. However, eventually, efforts focused on a dual system, with Mexicans collapsed in with blacks.

In the mid-1920s, several Mexican students registered to attend Argentine High School, an all-white high school in Kansas City, for the 1925–1926 school year. Mexican communities began to form along the railroad lines in the West and Midwest that the immigrants helped to build. Western land was being marketed as a "racial utopia." One of these communities existed in Kansas City. The students were admitted, but white parents began a series of protests. No state law prohibited integration, but the Kansas City Board of Education sought to appease both groups. The Board of Education offered to educate the Mexican American students in a separate classroom in the school with their own teacher. In addition, the Board of Education offered to pay for the students to be educated in a Mexican American school across state lines in Kansas City, Missouri. With the aid of federal officials (in Mexico and the United States), Mexican

parents resisted these efforts and continued to fight for their children's right to attend the all-white school. Despite opposition, the next year, Argentine was officially integrated.

The coming years would see additional efforts to integrate various schools in Kansas, and as with the dispute over inclusion of Mexican American students in the all-white school in Kansas City, there would be opposition. In the 1930s, a racially diverse group of students at the University of Kansas demanded that the State Regents System bring an end to discriminatory practices. Their protests were largely in response to increasing segregation efforts in state regents' institutions. In 1941, the Kansas Supreme Court dealt another blow to the maintenance of separate schools in the state. A challenge was brought alleging that Topeka's separate junior high school system (one for blacks and one for whites) violated the law because the separate facilities for the two groups were not equal. In 1941, in the case of *Graham v. Board of Education of the City of Topeka* (153 Kan. 840), the Kansas Supreme Court agreed. For years, small numbers of blacks had lived in Topeka. After *Graham*, only the elementary schools in Topeka could legally remain separate. These earlier challenges paved the way for the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (hereinafter, *Brown*).

*Brown* involved a challenge to a Kansas statute that permitted segregation in elementary schools. In 1950, several Topeka, Kansas, parents signed a petition requesting an end to segregation in elementary schools. The school board refused, and the *Brown* case became consolidated with several other cases being argued before the U.S. Supreme Court. These cases were class actions brought on behalf of large groups of students and their families. The consolidated cases involved petitions from South Carolina, Virginia, the District of Columbia, and Delaware. At the time of the oral argument (December 9, 1952), 17 U.S. states maintained compulsory, separate schools for blacks and whites, and four (including Kansas) permitted—but did not mandate—segregation. The decision would have national implications. The entire nation waited for the decision.

In the original *Brown* case, the parents of a black child who was denied access to a white school in Topeka sued on the basis that the black and white schools in Topeka were not equal and could never be made equal. On that basis, plaintiff's counsel argued that the schools should be desegregated. The lower court disagreed, but Brown did not give up. Like the slavery debate decades earlier, this issue had the potential to divide the nation. The Supreme Court justices were so torn on this matter that a rare, re-argument was scheduled. In the interim, then sitting chief justice Fred Vinson died. Earl Warren became the new chief justice. Oral arguments on the rescheduled *Brown* cases began December 7, 1953. On May 18, 1954, the Warren Court published a unanimous decision that the doctrine of separate but equal, which had been the law of the land since the 1895 decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (163 U.S. 537), had no place in education. The United States follows the common law legal system, and one of the hallmarks of that legal family is a reliance on precedent. *Plessy* had been precedent for decades, and, unless overturned (or distinguished), this meant that similar cases should be decided in similar way.



The Plessy Court had held that as long as the separate facilities for blacks and whites were equal to each other, the equal protection clause was not violated. The Brown Court found that racial segregation in public schools was a violation of the guarantee of equal protection under the law found in the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The Equal Protection clause states, “No State shall make or enforce any law which shall . . . deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” As a result, schools were ordered to desegregate “with all deliberate.” The language in the decision was hopeful, but desegregation was slow to happen. *Brown II* was supposed to address the implementation of *Brown*; however, the Court also heard arguments from jurisdictions seeking relief from the earlier decision. The case was argued before the Supreme Court during April 11–14, 1955. This time, the Supreme Court opined that since the matters under consideration were local matters, the local courts should decide the final resolution of these matters. While the Supreme Court maintained jurisdiction over the *Brown* case, it noted that Topeka had already made “substantial progress” toward desegregation. Many argued that this was problematic because the cases would be sent back the same recalcitrant courts that had necessitated the cases being brought before the Supreme Court to start. In 1989, a case that some refer to as *Brown III* was argued before a three-judge panel of the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals. The court found that vestiges of segregation still existed in Kansas. Appeal to the Supreme Court was denied. Since that time, Topeka schools have worked to meet the standards on racial balance set by the court.

### **Social and Racial Conflicts**

Topeka was not the only school system in Kansas that faced segregation challenges. While the state of Kansas did not mandate public school segregation, Wichita established a dual system in 1906. A few years later, in 1914, the local school board started transporting black students residing in neighborhoods classified as predominantly white to these schools. The practice continued until 1951. The next year, Wichita stopped formal segregation, but stopping the practice did not reverse school segregation. As a result, segregation continued through the early 1970s. The Wichita Board of Education appointed a panel to make a plan for desegregating secondary schools in Wichita. Rioting associated with civil rights–related protests happening across the nation were one the primary incentives for convening this panel. Not surprisingly, the initial plan relied largely on the busing of black students. Then, during the 1971–1972 school year, the district approved a cross-busing plan. The plan was voluntary, but concomitantly several predominantly black schools were closed. Black and white parents alike decried the plan but to no avail. It was implemented.

The laissez-faire pattern observed by the state of Kansas in local education matters can be observed in other contexts, and over the years, this has led to some intense racial conflicts across the state. In 1955, a 12-year-old black boy, Wray Jones, drowned in the Kaw (Kansas) River. Rusty Monhollon writes, “Jones was swimming in the Kaw that day because there were no safe places in Lawrence for him—or any blacks—to swim” (1997, 140). Yet, in both 1945 (prior to the incident)

and 1956 (after the incident), Lawrence residents voted against issuing bond to construct a (public) municipal pool. Whites in Lawrence could attend the private Jayhawk Plunge—for a fee, with or without a member, but blacks could not. The city of Lawrence was seen by some as complicit in maintaining segregation, as it often sponsored public events in the private pool, which was closed to its black citizens. Finally, in 1969, a public municipal pool opened up in Lawrence. The intervening decade and even the pool opening itself was rife with racial tension.

### **Conclusions**

This brief history of race relations in Kansas shows that despite Kansas's entry to the Union as a free state, and a lack of overt laws codifying racial discrimination, discriminatory practices and attitudes did exist among some citizens of the state. Nowhere is this clearer than in the dispute over integration of the public school system in Topeka. In 1950, Topeka, Kansas, was home to approximately 79,000 people; of that number, approximately 5,000 were black. The social system in Kansas was layered. Even integrated schools often accepted layers of segregation in sports and other activities. During this period, Topeka had a school district superintendent and a separate director of black education, and as the *Brown* case was under review, black teachers in the Topeka area learned that their jobs were in jeopardy as the new superintendent surmised that “the majority of people in Topeka will not want to employ Negro teachers next year for white children” (Jones 2000, 191). Kansas had a vested interest in portraying itself as neither discriminatory nor racist, so when the Brown Court handed down its decision, officials in Topeka praised the decision and claimed that the city was already bringing an end to segregation in Topeka, Kansas.

The *Brown* case was not the only time that Kansas would lead the way in matters of race relations, or play a pivotal role in the modern civil rights movement. In 2008, a group of young people affiliated with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Youth Council paid homage to those who participated in the 1958 Dockum Drug Store sit-in. After a month of student-led protests against the segregated practices of the eatery at the drug store, the owner acquiesced to integration because he was “losing too much money” (Kansas Historical Society 2014). This successful sit-in inspired students across the nation—including the group in Greensboro, North Carolina—to do the same.

Kansas still struggles with the legacy of *Brown*. According to the Census Bureau, Kansas is not as racially segregated as many other communities still are, yet school district lines are drawn in such a way that most black students, nearly 55 percent, are clustered into just three districts: Wichita, Kansas City, and Topeka. Data from the Kansas Department of Education show that while schools have made significant strides in raising the achievement level of minority students, blacks are still roughly three times more likely than whites to score below the state standards in reading and math.

In an era where there has been increased attention on police and other state-sanctioned violence against racial and ethnic minorities, especially, blacks, Kansas lawmakers took the bold initiative of passing legislation in 2011 requiring law enforcement agencies to adopt policies against bias-based policing and to file an

annual report with the Attorney General's Office on complaints. Reporting is required even if no complaints were received. But recent years have also uncovered simmering racial tensions among some residents of the state. In 2016, Lili Gagin, a Kansas University cheerleader, was suspended from the squad for posting an image on Snapchat saying "Kkk go Trump." Ms. Gagin conceded that the image was posted on her Instagram, but denied posting the image herself. Later, she resigned from the squad. Then, in 2017, a noose was found hanging from a tree at Manhattan campus of Kansas State University. Those incidents were largely local in their reach, but an incident in early 2017 rocked the nation. Srinivas Kuchibhotla, a 33-year-old engineer from India working at an American technology company in Kansas was killed after being allegedly shot by Adam Purinton in a crowded bar. Two other men—one Indian and the other an American—were also targeted when they came to Kuchibhotla's assistance. In an article for *Bloomberg News*, Romesh Ratnesar reports that Purinton, an older white man, shouted, "Get out of my country!" before opening fire (2017). The incident is being prosecuted as a hate crime.

## NOTABLE FIGURES

### **Allen, Henry J. (1868–1950)**

Born on September 11, 1868, Henry J. Allen served as the 21st governor of Kansas from 1919 to 1923. Like his predecessor, Governor Arthur Capper, he was a politician and a newspaperman. Allen was born in Pennsylvania, but his family moved to Kansas in the 1870s. He became influential as the editor and publisher of the *Wichita Beacon*, which he owned.

During World War I Allen served as "head of communications for the American Red Cross" (Kansas Historical Society 2017) and was still in France when the Republican Party of Kansas nominated him as their candidate for governor. During his two terms as governor, Allen pushed for reforms and even called for the expulsion of the KKK from the state. When the state Supreme Court ruled the Klan a "foreign corporation," the way was cleared for the legal ouster of the group from the state and made "Kansas the first state to take such a stand" (Kansas Historical Society 2017).

Allen also continued the ban on the showing of *The Birth of a Nation* in Kansas that had been begun by Governor Capper. After leaving the governorship, Allen was appointed U.S. special commissioner for Near East Relief in Armenia, Turkey, Greece, and Russia. In 1928, he was director of publicity for the Republican National Committee. In 1929, Allen was named to fill the U.S. Senate seat from Kansas vacated by Charles Curtis when he became vice president under Herbert Hoover. Allen failed to win election to the seat in his own right and left office in 1930. Allen died on January 17, 1950.

### **Capper, Arthur (1865–1951)**

Arthur Capper was a politician and newspaperman who, like his successor Henry Allen, played a key role in the successful nine-year ban on the showing of D.W. Griffith's 1915 film *The Birth of a Nation* in Kansas. Capper was born in

Garnett, Kansas, to Herbert and Isabella Capper on July 14, 1865. From 1915 to 1919, he served as the 20th governor of the state. He also served as a U.S. senator from 1919 to 1949. After graduation from high school, Capper became a typesetter at the *Topeka Daily Capital*. He worked his way up at the newspaper, later becoming its editor. Early in his career, Capper also served as a newspaper correspondent for both the state legislature and the U.S. Congress. Capper later purchased two Kansas newspapers—the *Mail* and *Breeze*. However, he was asked to return to the *Daily Capital* as editor and publisher when the paper began to struggle. His influence and stature as both a politician and a newspaper publisher extended beyond Kansas, and he was even featured on the cover of *Time* magazine in 1926.

Born just a few months after the close of the Civil War, Capper was raised in a family of abolitionists. His father, Herbert Capper, was a radical Republican who moved to Kansas for the express purpose of providing “one more vote” for the abolition of slavery. Similarly, Arthur Capper’s mother, Isabella (nee McGrew), also came from a family tradition of social justice. Isabella’s family was Quaker, and while her father was against violence, he kept guns for the express and exclusive purpose of defending against proslavery militants. Capper continued the same social justice tradition of his parents. According to Capper’s biographer, Homer Socolofsky, Capper served as the first president of the Topeka chapter of the NAACP; he also served on its national board for approximately 30 years. On November 25, 1892, Arthur Capper married Florence Crawford, the daughter of former Kansas governor Samuel Crawford.

As governor of Kansas from 1915 to 1919, Capper enforced a ban on showing the racist film *The Birth of a Nation* in Kansas. The ban was continued by Capper’s successor Governor Henry Allen. As U.S. senator from Kansas from 1919 to 1949, Capper’s influence extended beyond his state. As chair of the District of Columbia Committee, Senator Capper was instrumental in the formation of the District of Columbia’s first Housing Authority. In the 1950s, a 700+ household project in the District of Columbia was built in his name. Senator Capper did not seek reelection in 1948; he died on December 19, 1951.

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## Kentucky

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Rhonda Erica Celey

### CHRONOLOGY

#### **Sixteenth century CE**

The beginning of European exploration and settlement in North America initiates the displacement of Native Americans from the territory of present-day Kentucky; Indians had lived in Kentucky since about 9500 BCE

#### **1751**

Christopher Gist explores the Ohio valley, including parts of present-day Kentucky; he is accompanied by at least one enslaved person

#### **1790**

The first U.S. Census in Kentucky records approximately 12,000 blacks and approximately 61,000 whites living in the territory

#### **1792**

Kentucky enters the Union on June 1 as the 15th state; its first state constitution protects slave ownership

#### **1798**

Kentucky adopts its first slave code to regulate the movement of enslaved blacks

#### **1811**

The Kentucky Slave Code is amended to mandate the death penalty for slaves who use poison to kill, rape a white woman, conspire with other slaves, and raise rebellion

#### **1833**

The Kentucky legislature prohibits the importation of enslaved persons into the state

#### **1848**

The legislature repeals the law prohibiting the importation of enslaved persons into Kentucky

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#### **1862**

During the Civil War, the U.S. Congress passes the Second Confiscation Act, which states that any civilian or military official of the Confederacy who did not surrender within 60 days would have their slaves freed in criminal proceedings

#### **1863**

On January 1, President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation takes effect; because it frees slaves only in Confederate-controlled territories, slaves in Kentucky remain in bondage

#### **1865**

On February 24, the Kentucky legislature refuses to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution outlawing slavery

#### **1866**

The Kentucky General Assembly passes a constitutional amendment relegating African Americans to subordinate citizenship; this action serves as the catalyst for legal segregation, which stipulates that blacks and whites cannot be taught in the same classrooms

#### **1867**

On January 8, the Kentucky legislature rejects ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting citizenship to African Americans

#### **1869**

On March 12, the Kentucky legislature rejects ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting the vote to African American men

#### **1871**

The Kentucky legislature rejects laws against mob violence

#### **1882**

In *Commonwealth of Kentucky v. Jesse Ellis*, a U.S. circuit court rules that white and black schools must receive taxes collected equally

#### **1886**

The State Normal School for Colored Persons opens for African American students in Frankfort and is later renamed Kentucky State University

#### **1897**

African Americans are elected to local offices in Kentucky for the first time—Edward Glass is elected to the City Council of Hopkinsville, James L. Allensworth is elected as the county coroner in Christian County, and John W. Knight is elected as constable in North Hopkinsville

#### **1911**

Lynchings occur in Shelbyville leading to the deaths of Eugene Marshall and Wade Patterson

#### **1913**

A temporary branch of the Louisville National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) founded to combat a local residential segregation ordinance



**1914**

The first permanent Kentucky branch of the NAACP opens

**1914**

Kentucky courts rule that housing segregation by race in Louisville is legal

**1917**

A Kentucky judge overturns the Louisville segregation ordinances that Kentucky courts had ruled constitutional in 1914

**1919**

A race riot occurs in Corbin in southeastern Kentucky; some 200 African Americans are forced to leave the city, which then becomes a sundown town

**1944**

Kentucky's House of Representatives votes 41–38 to allow black students to be taught with white students

**1949**

A judge desegregates the University of Kentucky's graduate programs and admits Lyman T. Johnson to them

**1950**

The Day Law is repealed in Kentucky statewide so that individual colleges can make their own determinations about educating blacks and whites together

**1951**

The University of Louisville begins to accept black students

**1954**

The U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* legally ends school segregation in the United States

**1956**

Louisville schools are desegregated

**1959**

The Kentucky state police force opens to African Americans

**1963**

On June 27, Kentucky ratifies the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing the poll tax

**1964**

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. leads a civil rights march in Frankfort, with about 10,000 people participating

**1964**

A civil rights bill fails in the Kentucky General Assembly

**1966**

With the passages of the Kentucky Civil Rights Act, Kentucky becomes the first Southern state to legislatively end discrimination in employment and public accommodation

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**1967**

Georgia Davis Powers becomes the first woman and the first black person elected to the Kentucky State Senate

**1968**

Violence between African Americans and whites erupts throughout Kentucky; riots in Louisville last nine days and result in hundreds arrested and injured and two people killed

**1975**

Antibusing demonstrations take place in Louisville and Jefferson County

**1976**

On March 18, the Kentucky legislature ratifies both the Thirteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, over 100 years after those amendments took effect to abolish slavery and grant black men the vote

**1976**

On March 30, the Kentucky legislature ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment, more than 100 years after it took effect

**1980**

Kentucky becomes the first state to receive a grant under a new federal program to enforce fairness in housing

**1993**

High school students leave class because of a “rebel” flag protest

**1997**

Mexican immigration into Lexington evokes mixed community responses

**1999**

The Ku Klux Klan offers to provide support to a white family whose young son was allegedly killed by a black man

**2015**

According to data from the Pew Research Center, undocumented immigrants account for less than 1 percent of Kentucky’s total population and about 1.2 percent of its workforce, with most such immigrants being from Mexico

**2016**

African American judge Olu Stevens receives a 90-day suspension after accusing a prosecutor of seeking all-white juries

**2017**

The Jefferson County Board of Education passes a resolution to provide protection for immigrant students against unlawful questions and threats from immigration officials

**2017**

Mayor Jim Gray of Lexington said plans were underway to remove statues of two Confederate figures—General John Hunt Morgan and Confederate Secretary of War John C. Breckinridge—from in front of a former courthouse to a city park

## **NARRATIVE**

Most literature on race and racism in Kentucky focuses on the black/white experience. However, other groups in Kentucky history have experienced racism, including Native Americans, and, in recent decades, Hispanics and other immigrants.

### **Native Americans in Kentucky**

Indigenous people inhabited the land known now as Kentucky for centuries prior to European settlement. Scholars believe Native Americans lived in Kentucky as far back as 9500 BCE. The indigenous people of Kentucky developed a rich culture, which included elaborate burial processes, works of art, unique architecture, and adherence to spiritual rituals. Although originally hunters, the Native people of Kentucky created farming systems that incorporated generations of innovative farming tools, such as the use of mussel shells and deer/elk scapula to till the soil. In an attempt to resolve disputes and avoid devastating confrontations, the indigenous people implemented a sophisticated system of mediation.

In the sixteenth century, the exclusive occupation of Kentucky by indigenous people ended as the Spanish, French, and English explored and settled ever larger portions of North America. From the late 1680s to the early 1730s, Kentucky's indigenous population declined tremendously as a result of forced occupation by the Europeans. In addition, the Europeans brought diseases, such as small pox, to which the indigenous people had no natural immunity. These European pathogens thus proved to be devastating to Kentucky's indigenous population. The largest tribes in Kentucky by the time American settlement began in the area in the 1770s were the Shawnee, the Cherokee, and the Chickasaw. The Shawnee were eventually driven out of much of Kentucky by the Iroquois and by the pressure of white settlement. The Chickasaw, Cherokee, and other groups lost most of their land through unfair treaties and forcible dispossession by whites in the early nineteenth century, as the U.S. government sought to move Indians from the lands east of the Mississippi to territories in the west, primarily Oklahoma.

### **European Settlement of Kentucky and Slavery**

After the removal or destruction of Kentucky's indigenous population, the area was simultaneously settled by blacks and whites. While some settlers made the arduous journey by land, others used the various waterways that surround Kentucky to migrate to the area. For example, the Ohio River served as a conduit for new settlers. During the early seventeenth century, white explorers moving westward into this new frontier brought their black slaves with them from states such as Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas. The journey from the coastal states to Kentucky was hazardous due to hostile Natives and mountainous terrain. It is unclear when slavery was introduced to Kentucky, but it is known that in 1751 Christopher Gist journeyed across the Ohio valley with at least one slave. In 1775, a black male child was born to an enslaved woman owned by Dr. N. Hart of

Boonesborough, Kentucky. Present-day Boone, Kenton, and Campbell Counties, located in the northern region of the Kentucky, are thought to have been the initial settling places of enslaved persons in the state. The Ohio River connects to the three aforementioned counties, so this path of migration is probable.

In 1790, there were approximately 11,944 blacks in Kentucky; of that number, 11,830 (99.05%) were enslaved persons. At this time, the total population of Kentucky was 73,077; thus, blacks constituted 16.2 percent of the total population of Kentucky in 1790 (Lucas 2003, 1–10). Slaves were property in Kentucky, as elsewhere in the United States, and slaveholders actually held title to their slaves just as one would hold title to a vehicle today. Kentucky became the first state to enter the Union on June 1, 1792; Kentucky's first state constitution, like the U.S. Constitution at the time, protected slave ownership.

Chattel slavery in Kentucky was brutal. African Americans were used by whites for many tasks, including farm labor, household work, and child-rearing. In 1798, the Kentucky Slave Code was passed; it stipulated how enslaved blacks were to be treated and what they were permitted. It dictated when and how blacks could move about within the state. The code allowed for whipping of slaves as an appropriate punishment for a number of transgressions. However, the Kentucky Slave Code of 1798 did not outlaw reading and writing for slaves. Thus, Kentucky was one of just three states that did not make it a crime for enslaved persons to read and write. The Kentucky Slave Code was continuously updated. By 1811, death was the prescribed punishment for four crimes committed by slaves: using poison to kill, raping a white woman, conspiring with other slaves, and raising rebellion. Seven more capital offenses were later added to the code. In the mid-nineteenth century, the state recognized 11 capital offenses for slaves, but only four for white people. The Kentucky legislature appears to have mixed feelings about slavery and abolition. For example, on February 2, 1833, the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky passed a law prohibiting the importation of enslaved persons to the state. However, in 1848, this law was repealed.

With the state of the Civil War in April 1861, Kentucky, although a slave state, did not secede from the Union. However, an estimated 25,000 to 30,000 white Kentuckians served in Confederate armies. On July 17, 1862, the U.S. Congress passed the Second Confiscation Act, which gave the president the power to take enslaved persons from their owners and use them to suppress the rebellion. In return for their military service, the slaves were freed. About 28,000 black men in Kentucky fought with the Union Army during the Civil War, winning freedom for themselves and their families (Wright 1996, 20). However, slaveholders had the right to claim compensation for slaves confiscated by the government. For example, a surviving claim for compensation record from the state of Kentucky indicates that a Joseph Ward requested a sum of \$300 to compensate him for a slave he owned who was enlisted into the 104th Regiment U.S. Colored Troops. In exchange for receiving compensation, Ward agreed to free his slave from bondage.

Kentucky slaves were freed through other means as well. According to his last will, Kentucky slaveholder Isaac Wright freed four slaves at his death: William, Henry, Margaret, and Lydia. In addition, Wright ordered his estate to pay them \$400 each of them at the time of his death. For two other slaves who were minor,

Clara Alice and Martha, Wright stipulated in his will that their freedom should be granted on their 18th birthdays, when both were also to be paid \$400.

### **Reconstruction Era (1863–1877)**

In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation freed enslaved persons in Confederate territories. Because Kentucky had not seceded, the proclamation did not apply to slaves within the state, who remained in bondage. In December 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery throughout the United States, was passed in the U.S. House of Representatives and ratified by the states. The Kentucky legislature rejected the Thirteenth Amendment on a vote of 56–18, and the state did not ratify the amendment until over a century later in 1976. In the 1860s, some Kentucky slaveholders were also slow in following the amendment; there were reports that slavery was still occurring in parts of Kentucky, such as Boone County, as late as May 1866.

With slavery legally ended, the white power structure in Kentucky needed a way to legally disenfranchise its African American citizens. Thus, in 1866, Kentucky passed a constitutional amendment that legally relegated black Kentuckians to second-class citizenship. This amendment created legal segregation and ensured that blacks would not have the same rights as whites in Kentucky. For example, blacks and whites could not be educated in the same classrooms. Although, the white power structure did not consider blacks to be equal citizens, Kentucky collected taxes from its black residents in amounts equal to whites. The majority of taxes allotted for schools that were collected from black taxpayers went to white schools, and very miniscule amounts went to black schools. Segregated black schools received very little funding from the state; yet, the parents of black children were subsidizing the education of white students, while the needs of their own children remained grossly neglected. Not only did the Kentucky legislature inequitably distribute taxpayer dollars for education, but also it dishonorably used resources, such as lumber from black people, to contribute resources such as furniture to white schools at a time where black schools had bare minimum furnishings. The legality of this tax inequality was overturned in 1882 by the U.S. circuit court case *Commonwealth of Kentucky v. Jesse Ellis*. However, it is important to note that black communities have long recognized the importance of education. For example, historical records indicate that even as far back as 1847, blacks in Kentucky had been operating their own schools to educate black children.

The Reconstruction era was a tumultuous time for African Americans in Kentucky, who crafted petitions to the federal government asking for protection from the terrorist acts of white Kentuckians. African Americans were also still being denied both civil and human rights. In fact, black people did not vote for the first time until 1870. Although black people were disenfranchised by both local and state governments in Kentucky, groups of private individuals created terrorist groups with the sole purpose of intimidating, harming, and killing African Americans through organized criminal acts. Even as late as 1871, the Kentucky legislature rejected laws against such mob violence. However, some Kentucky government officials did attempt to humanize the interactions between blacks and



This African American school in Anthoston, Kentucky, appears to be missing a number of students, likely due to the fact that during peak (tobacco) harvesting periods students were sent to the plantations to work. (Library of Congress)

whites. For example, Preston H. Leslie, who was governor from 1871 to 1875, signed legislation making it a crime to use threatening notices, which were frequently employed by terrorist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). In addition, Governor Leslie criminalized “conjuring with disguises,” which was a signature representation of the KKK. Still mob violence was prevalent in Kentucky. White terrorist groups continued to assault, lynch, rape, disfigure, and murder blacks in the state. These terrorist groups also used a wide variety of tactics to force African Americans to relinquish their property. When those tactics did not work, the terrorists resorted to theft and larceny of property owned by African Americans. However, blacks fought this oppression and were the victors in some instances. For example, in Stamping Ground, which is a subsection of Scott County, Kentucky, blacks killed and destroyed the property of those who committed violence against them. Unfortunately, in some parts of Kentucky, white terrorist organizations were actually more powerful than the local governments, leaving blacks very little recourse in their attempts to obtain social justice.

### **African American Contributions to the Horse Racing Industry**

Between 1875 and 1902, African American riders won the Kentucky Derby 57 percent of the time, 16 of 28 races. In 1875, riding a horse named Aristides, Oliver Lewis won the inaugural Kentucky Derby. Lewis was born in Fayette, Kentucky, in 1856. In 1877, William Walker won the third Kentucky Derby. In 1895, James “Soup” Perkins won the Kentucky Derby, riding a horse called Halma. Perkins was just 15 years old at the time of the win; he started riding at the

age of 13, winning 16 of his first 26 races. Another African American who claimed great success in horse racing was Isaac Murphy. He won the Kentucky Derby in 1884, 1890, and 1891. While his birthplace is debatable, having been attributed to Clark, Franklin, Fayette, and Bourbon Counties, his horse racing expertise cannot be questioned. Finally, in 1901, Jimmie Winkfield of Chilesburg, Kentucky, won the Derby with a horse named His Eminence. Winkfield won again in 1902, riding a horse named Alan-a-Dale (Giles 2015, 10–16).

### **Jim Crowism in Kentucky (1877–1960)**

Kentucky African Americans remained resilient while fighting against racial oppression on various fronts, including in the courtroom, in schools, on the streets and in neighborhoods. In 1886, the State Normal School for Colored Persons opened in Frankfort Kentucky, admitting African Americans. This school would later be named Kentucky State University. As African Americans started to gain some rights, whites in Kentucky became increasingly resentful. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Kentucky saw much violence against blacks and various attempts to install fear in the state's African American population.

Like in many other states, lawless Kentucky residents used the horrendous tactic of lynching to maintain social control. Lynching is the punishment, often by hanging, of individuals for alleged crimes by mobs or informal groups with benefit trials or any other legal proceedings. Both white and black people in Kentucky faced death through this method. Estimates of the number of lynchings in Kentucky differ among scholars. According to George C. Wright, approximately 353 people were lynched in Kentucky in this period, though, as Wright acknowledges, other sources put the number of lynching victims in the state at about 205. Even the lesser number makes Kentucky the ninth most murderous state via mob violence in the nation during this period (Wright 1996, 1–50). On January 15, 1911, 50 masked terrorists entered the small town of Shelbyville, where they disabled the electric power and cut the telephone wires. The terrorists then entered the local jail and seized three black men: Jim West, Wade Patterson, and Eugene Marshall. Afterward, the mob took the three men to the Chesapeake and Ohio Bridge to hang them. Wade Patterson and Eugene Marshall perished at the bridge as planned, but the noose around Jim West's neck broke and he fell into the waters below. West escaped and went on to serve in the U.S. Army, fighting in World War I. When West died, his remains were returned to Shelbyville where he was hailed as a hero by the town's African American community.

In 1914, the Kentucky courts ruled that housing segregation was not a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment. A few years later, this ruling was overturned. The first permanent branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was established in Kentucky in 1914 during the height of mob violence and lynching in the state. The NAACP petitioned the federal government for help in the fight for human and civil rights. The year 1919 is known in American history as the "Red Summer," with somewhere between 24 and 27 race riots occurring in the United States (Voogd 2008, 165). One such riot occurred in Corbin, Kentucky, on October 30, 1919, when some 200 blacks were forced to leave town at gunpoint.

### **Corbin Race Riot**

On October 30, 1919, a mob of whites in Corbin, a small town in southeastern Kentucky, forced more than 200 blacks to the train station at gunpoint. Angered by rumors that a local white man had been assaulted by two black men, Corbin's white residents forced almost all blacks living in the town to board a freight train and leave Corbin with only the clothes on their backs. According to one of the men who, with his wife, was forced to board the train, the whites "swore at us and said: 'By God we are going to run all Negroes out of this town tonight'" ("Kentucky Town Re-Examines Its Racial History"). Most of the men expelled from Corbin that night worked in the local railroad yard or as baggage handlers. When a few of them came back a short time later to resume their jobs, they were threatened again and left town permanently. Although there is no record of anyone dying in the 1919 riot, Corbin thereafter became a sundown town for much of the twentieth century, and the town still has few African American residents in the early twenty-first century. A later criminal investigation into what transpired in Corbin found that several local whites stood up to the mob, and other whites sheltered some black residents in their homes and businesses. The story of the riot, as it was known among later generations of white residents of Corbin, was that the disturbance was not that severe, that the railroad company had moved out some of its black workers, and that some of them were allowed to come back later. Only many decades later has the true story become more widely known and accepted in Corbin.

At the onset of the modern-day civil rights era in the mid-twentieth century, blacks scored a number of legal victories. In 1944, Kentucky's House of Representatives voted 41–38 to allow black students to be taught with white students. In addition, the University of Kentucky's graduate programs were desegregated with the admittance of Lyman T. Johnson in 1949. In 1950, Kentucky colleges were given legal authority to make their own decisions about admitting black students to white programs. In 1951, the University of Louisville began accepting black students for its various programs.

### **Civil Rights Movement Era (1954–1968)**

The beginnings of the civil rights movement in Kentucky saw both setbacks and successes. In 1956, schools in certain Kentucky districts, such as Louisville, were officially desegregated in light of the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court. In 1950, the Kentucky State Police opened to African Americans. On March 5, 1964, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. worked with the local Kentucky African American community to organize a march for civil rights in Frankfort, but that same year, a civil rights bill failed in the Kentucky General Assembly. However, in 1966, Kentucky became the first Southern state to legislatively end employment discrimination, along with discrimination in public accommodations.

In 1967, Georgia Davis Powers became the first woman, and the first black person, to be elected to the Kentucky State Senate. Powers contributed tremendously to the cause of civil rights in Kentucky. She helped organize civil right



protests in the South, and she also worked on two Kentucky political campaigns prior to her election. On May 27, 1968, a race riot erupted in Louisville. According to the *Herald-Leader Louisville*, the Black Unity League of Kentucky organized a rally to address racial disparities. The rally started at the intersection of 28th Street and Greenwood Avenue, and then at some point, a group of blacks began to protest the dehumanization of African Americans. The youth roamed through the Parkland neighborhood setting fires, breaking windows, and confronting local law enforcement. In response, 1,900 National Guard members were deployed to the area. Several hundred people were arrested, a couple hundred received medical care for injuries, and two black teenagers died. Fourteen-year-old James Groves Jr. was killed by a police officer near what was known as the Rose Grocery Store. Matthias Washington Browder, age 19, was killed by the owner of a liquor store on South 34th Street after Browder broke a window and reached for a bottle.

Along with groups such as the Black Unity League of Kentucky, the NAACP played an instrumental role in securing human and civil rights for African Americans in Kentucky. For example, the Louisville branch of the NAACP coordinated demonstrations to protest segregation in theaters, restaurants, and other businesses. Many NAACP leaders worked in Kentucky to eradicate racism for its residents. According to an article by the *Herald-Leader*, Dr. Benjamin Hooks, the executive director of the NAACP, was instrumental in leading the fight for civil rights in Kentucky. Hooks worked with the NAACP and local Kentucky citizens to increase the number of black legislators in Kentucky and to help black people register to vote. During a visit to Kentucky in February 1984, Dr. Hooks spoke to the Kentucky Senate at the state capitol about advancing the civil rights for Kentucky's blacks. In addition, Dr. Hooks spoke with Kentucky citizens in various cities, including more than 500 people at Kentucky State University's Black History Month program. The event was sponsored by the Kentucky State University Student Government Association. Dr. Hooks declared that "the most important weapon that any free people can have is the simple right to vote" (Robinson 1984, 18).

A few decades later, Georgia M. Powers praised the NAACP as being the most effective civil rights organization in Louisville. Powers pointed out that at one time the Louisville NAACP chapter was the fifth-largest branch in the nation. Critics argued that while the NAACP was instrumental during the civil rights movement, the organization was actually not independent enough to face the challenges that really hindered African Americans. According to the *Courier-Journal*, a former general counsel of the NAACP stated "the organization has lost its credibility, it has lost full support of the community, and it has lost its cohesiveness" (Carter 2001, 1).

### **The Contemporary Era (1969–2017)**

Despite the gains made during the civil rights era, blacks still continued to fight for freedom in Kentucky, as racial violence and tension persisted. During the 1970s, busing as a means of desegregating public schools was a volatile issue in

Kentucky, as in other states. Public education was not the only contentious issue at the time, as progress was being sought in other areas. According to a state newspaper, in 1980, Kentucky became the first state to receive a fair housing grant dispersed by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. This grant had an array of purposes, including a stipulation that some of the funds could be used to process housing discrimination complaints. For example, the grant provided \$1,500 to Fern Reynolds, a black woman who alleged that she was refused an apartment. The remittance was offered to Reynolds as compensation for the embarrassment and humiliation that she endured. Subsequently, some apartment owners begin implementing affirmative action policies. Imperial Garden Apartments, for example, adopted an affirmative action policy that called for a black occupancy rate of 12.5 percent.

During the early part of the 1990s, several racially motivated issues continued to plague Kentucky residents. Fifty white students at Woodford County High School left class because they were angry about the school's decision to ban Confederate flag articles in the school. The white students argued that the Confederate flag represented their history and that just as black students were allowed to wear clothing with Malcolm X symbols, so should they be able to wear clothing bearing the flag.

On October 16, 1999, seven-year-old Jerry "Justin" Napier, who was white, was allegedly killed by Darryl Lockett, a black man, in Middlesboro, Kentucky. Lockett maintained that the death was a tragic accident, claiming that the handgun he had in his belt fell and inadvertently discharged. In response to Jerry's killing, along with the murder of a white man by a black teenager one year prior, the KKK offered to rally on behalf of the white families involved. According to a local Kentucky paper, Napier's mother Juanita Marsee responded "it's disgusting to use the loss of a young man's life for such a petty thing" (Associated Press 1999, B1). In addition, the Klan's proposed march was rejected by the Middlesboro City Council during a vote. Leaders of the KKK argued that the group had a constitutional right to march and protest.

Racial tension still persists in Kentucky today. In 2016, a black Kentucky judge, Olu Stevens, received a 90-day suspension for accusing a prosecutor of seeking all-white juries. Critics of Stevens argue that his allegations, particularly his online postings, may have been inappropriate.

### **Recent Immigrants**

Starting in the 1990s, Kentucky began to receive an inflow of Hispanic immigrants, most of whom came from Mexico. Within a decade, the Hispanic population of Kentucky increased by 500 percent. This large ethnic population, which is racially classified as comprising both whites and people of color, has often been treated in Kentucky with the same disdain that African Americans have endured throughout their history in the state. While these immigrants contribute to the state's economy and have certainly shifted the social fabric, their settlement into Kentucky has caused some racial tensions. Many Latino immigrants in Kentucky felt both invisible and ignored by the city's black and white residents alike. Organizations such as the Lexington Hispanic Association were charged with speaking

for the Latino community when their voices were not being heard by the community at large. Given the social resistance and potential violence faced by many of these groups, the Jefferson County Board of Education, in February 2017, passed a resolution aimed at protecting immigrant students from unlawful questions and threats by immigration officers. In the summer of 2017, debates raged in Kentucky, as in the rest of the country, regarding the removal of Confederate and other possibly racist monuments. In Lexington, the mayor announced that plans were being discussed to remove the statues of two Confederate figures—General John Hunt Morgan and Confederate Secretary of War John C. Breckinridge—from in front of a former courthouse to a city park.

## NOTABLE FIGURE

### **Powers, Georgia Davis (1923–2016)**

Georgia Montgomery Davis Powers was born on October 19, 1923. In her autobiography, she wrote that she was born in Jimtown, a settlement of mainly poor black sharecroppers. Formerly known as Jim Crow Town, Jimtown was located 1 mile east of Springfield, Kentucky. Her parents, Frances (Walker) Montgomery and Ben Montgomery, both grew up in rural Kentucky—her mother was raised in Springfield and her father in Bloomfield. Although Georgia Montgomery's family was mostly poor, her aunt Celia owned 500 acres of land in Kentucky and a very large house.

Her family moved to Louisville, Kentucky, in 1925 after a tornado destroyed their home in Jimtown. Louisville, at the time, had several neighborhoods, including an area called “Little Africa.” Louisville also included black businessmen and women who were well versed in banking, retail merchandising, real estate, and other industries. The Montgomery family home was loving, nurturing, and very religious. As a family, the Montgomerys read the Bible and attended Triumph the Church and Kingdom of God in Christ. Not only did Georgia have a supportive home environment, but her immediate neighborhood was also reassuring and vibrant. The community where Montgomery lived included black lawyers, politicians, and doctors. Surrounded by so many live role models as a child, she saw and understood the possibilities for her life. Although the home and neighborhood environment were supportive for Montgomery, an oppressive racial caste system pervaded Louisville. African Americans fought against social conventions that either excluded them or segregated them in most areas of life. Montgomery recalled segregation in Louisville vividly. She once worked in a factory that had separate stairwells for black and white people. Montgomery also worked in a restaurant where she was allowed to serve black patrons, as long as they were taking out their meals because they could not eat on the premises. She attended all-black Louisville schools, including Virginia Avenue Elementary, Madison Junior High, and Central High School.

Many notable female leaders started their political careers by first working in grassroots organizations that fought for human rights in America. However, Georgia Montgomery, who married Norman Davis in 1943 and then James L. Powers

in 1973, began her political career in 1962 working for the U.S. Senate campaign of Wilson Wyatt. During the 1960s, she also participated in numerous civil rights demonstrations. After an endorsement from the AFL-CIO, she ran for the Kentucky State Senate in 1967, winning endorsements from the Kentucky Medical Association, the Kentucky Educational Association, the Louisville Education Association, and the Louisville Chamber of Commerce. According to her autobiography, she faced three major challenges during her bid for the Kentucky State Senate seat. One challenge was location. Georgia Davis was from the city of Louisville and had spent nearly all of her life there, but Kentucky was predominately rural. The second challenge was that she was black; no nonwhite person had ever been elected to a Kentucky State Senate position. Lastly, she was female; the Kentucky political area was dominated by males. Nonetheless, she won the election and took office in January 1968.

In the state senate, Georgia Davis worked in collaboration with Representatives Mae Street Kidd and Hughes E. McGill to introduce and pass the first open-housing law enacted in a Southern state. Georgia Davis was instrumental in passing the Kentucky Fair Housing Act in 1968, and she also worked on a bill to provide low-cost housing to those in need. Georgia worked on the Equal Rights Amendment Resolutions and was instrumental in passing a resolution that removed the requirement of race on Kentucky's driver's licenses.

During the 1970s, Georgia Davis Powers proposed an ultimately unsuccessful antimask bill that would have eliminated the use of masks by white supremacist groups. For this action, she and her family became the targets of violent threats. In 1974, she introduced legislation that made Kentucky the second state to inaugurate a state holiday to celebrate the life and contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. In 1978, she ensured passage of a bill that set quotas, stipulating that Kentucky state contractors must hire a certain portion of black workers. She also advanced extended civil rights in Kentucky, by offering amendments that protected women and people over 45 from employment discrimination. She died on January 30, 2016.

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# 19

## Louisiana

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Liza Treadwell

### **CHRONOLOGY**

**1724**

The Louisiana Code Noir is introduced by the French to regulate slave–master relationships

**1764**

The all French Code Noir is replaced with more lenient Spanish slave law

**1803**

Modern-day Louisiana is part of the Louisiana Purchase, whereby France sells 530 million acres to the United States for \$15 million

**1804**

Congress establishes the Territory of Orleans and its government

**1806**

Based on the Code Noir of 1724, a Black Code is enacted in Louisiana and remains in force for 60 years

**1811**

Beginning on January 8, Charles Deslondes leads 200–500 slaves in the largest slave revolt in American history in LaPlace, Louisiana

**1812**

Louisiana becomes the 18th state to enter the Union on April 30

**1825**

The Louisiana Civil Code of 1825 establishes anti-miscegenation laws, denies property rights to slaves, prohibits slaves from receiving religious instruction, segregates militias, restricts employment, and makes it a crime to teach slaves and free blacks to read

**1847**

A new Law of Slavery is enacted in Louisiana containing provisions that allow masters to “sell” and “dispose” of slaves at will; slaves “can do nothing, possess nothing, nor acquire anything”; all a slave possesses belongs to the master; all children born to a slave mother are considered slaves; slaves are forbidden from contracting based on “incapacity”; and slaves are forbidden from entering “public office or private trust . . . cannot be a tutor, curator, executor . . . attorney . . . a witness . . . [or] a party in any civil action”

**1850**

New Orleans is the largest slave market and richest city in North America; approximately, 300 slave traders operate in 25 downtown markets, including the finest hotels

**1861**

Louisiana secedes from the Union on January 26

**1863**

Taking effect on January 1, President Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation specifically exempts 13 parishes in Louisiana and New Orleans—slavery continues in those areas

**1864**

The new Louisiana Constitution becomes the model for Reconstruction by abolishing slavery, granting voting rights to black Union veterans and others, and establishing a free public school system for all children

**1865**

Louisiana ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery on February 17

**1865**

The Louisiana Black Code prohibits the free travel of “Negros” without special permits, restricts housing, directs employment by whites, restricts assembly, restricts preaching to black congregations, and forbids ownership of weapons or firearms

**1868**

Louisiana ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment granting citizenship to African Americans on July 9

**1869**

Louisiana ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment granting voting rights to black men on March 5

**1872**

On December 9, P.B.S. Pinchback, a Republican and the son of a former slave, becomes the first African American governor in U.S. history

**1875–1877**

Charles Edmund Nash, a Republican, becomes the first African American to represent Louisiana in Congress



**1890**

New Orleans establishes a “Separate Car Law” prohibiting blacks and whites from riding in the same cars on passenger trains

**1894**

Although permissible from 1870 to 1894, marriages between a white person and a “person of color”—defined as persons with “Negro blood”—are not valid; the marriage of a person with “Negro blood” and an “Indian” is also “null and void,” although marriages between whites and Indians (who are not considered persons of color) are permissible

**1896**

In *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the U.S. Supreme Court addresses the “Separate Car Law,” sanctioning the “separate but equal” accommodation

**1907**

State law declares “concubinage between a white person and black person” to be a felony

**1910**

In *State v. Treadaway et al.*, the Louisiana court holds that black, not white, blood determined the ethnicity of an individual

**1913**

The Louisiana Constitution explicitly provides for the separation of people by race (white and black), including establishing public schools for the white and colored races

**1924**

State law requires residential segregation based on race as applied to white and “Negro” communities only

**1927**

In *Harmon v. Tyler*, the Supreme Court, on March 14, overturns Louisiana’s *Tyler v. Harmon*, holding that required residential segregation based on race is unconstitutional

**1927**

The Great Flood of 1927, along with subsequent discriminatory abuses, drives thousands of African Americans out of their Louisiana farming communities seeking a new way of life “up north”

**1953**

The Baton Rouge Bus Boycott becomes the model for boycotts during the civil rights movement

**1954**

In *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, the U.S. Supreme Court overturns *Plessy* finding that “separate but equal” is “a denial of equal protection” and is “inherently unequal”

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### **1956**

In *Bush v. Orleans Parish School Board*, the federal court in New Orleans incorporates *Brown*, holding that Louisiana's racial discrimination in public education is unconstitutional

### **1956**

In defiance to federal courts, the state legislature passes Act 319 and continues to "freeze the existing racial status of public schools in Orleans Parish and to reserve to the legislature the power of racial reclassification of schools"

### **1960**

On November 14, Ruby Bridges, age six, becomes the first African American child to integrate an all-white school in New Orleans's Ninth Ward

### **1970**

Pursuant to Act 46 of 1970, Louisiana revives the "one drop [of Negro Blood] rule" where having any more than 1/32 "Negro" blood designates a person as being "Negro" or "a person of color"

### **1970**

All school systems in the New Orleans area and surrounding parishes are under court order to desegregate

### **2005**

African Americans constitute 65 percent of New Orleans's population, but 94 percent of the public school population

### **2005**

On August 29, Hurricane Katrina causes catastrophic damage, particularly in New Orleans and St. Bernard Parish; although generally a nondiscriminating storm, in New Orleans, it becomes evident that African Americans suffer disproportionately in some areas, particularly in the Lower Ninth Ward (85% black) and in the suburbs, like St. Bernard Parish, where predominantly whites were affected (92% white)

### **2006**

After Hurricane Katrina, St. Bernard Parish issues discriminatory housing Ordinance SBPC#670-09-06, known as the "blood relative ordinance" restricting housing occupancy

### **2012**

The New Orleans Police Department enters into a consent decree with the Department of Justice leading to important reforms to reduce crime, ensure respect for the Constitution, and enhance public confidence

### **2013**

On May 10, St. Bernard Parish settles claims of racial discrimination resulting from the "blood relative" ordinance, which, after Katrina, restricted occupancy of some residences to family member related by blood

## NARRATIVE

### French and Spanish Colonialism and the Laws of Slavery

Louisiana's history of race relations differs from other states of the Union. Even during the period of slavery, the laws regarding the societal relationships were much less harsh in the Louisiana Territory and other areas west of the Mississippi. Unlike the British colonies, to the east, the Louisiana Territory was under French rule in the 1700s; thus, the French Code Noir of 1724 in the Louisiana Territory regulated the relationships between slaves and masters and provided for a status of free blacks, although it prohibited marriage and sexual relations between those of African descent and European descent. Forty years later, the Spanish controlled the region and, in 1764, instituted Spanish Code Noir. More lenient than French codes, Spanish custom permitted slaves to purchase their freedom over their masters' objection. These customs were legalized in 1795. Spanish code persisted in the Louisiana Territory until the United States purchased it from the French in 1803—nearly three decades following the American Revolution.

Not only was slavery regulated differently in the Louisiana Territory, it was different from the British and American versions. Although some indigenous people (Indians) were enslaved, they were never enslaved as numerous as Africans (approximately 5,000 African slaves compared with 229 Indian slaves c. 1764); and the roles of Indian slaves were unlike those of the Africans. Indian slaves were guides, hunters, interpreters, and servants; whereas African slaves were primarily used for hard labor including plantation work and levee building. Moreover, the manner in which Indians became enslaved in Louisiana was distinctive from the Africans. Indians were enslaved as spoils of war from conflicts with the French; whereas Africans were kidnapped as free persons during the transatlantic slave trade and held in perpetuity as a result of white supremacist ideology. With the Spanish takeover in 1764, any Indians in bondage were released since the enslavement of Indians was long abolished by the Spaniards in 1542. In the later 1700s, at least 13 Indian slave cases came before the courts in the Louisiana Territory in demand of freedom based on the Spanish prohibition of Indian slavery. Since, there were no restrictions on marriage or societal roles for Indians, many established unions with whites and Africans, free persons and slaves, and became absorbed into those populations. Runaway slaves could find refuge within empathetic Indian settlements.

The Louisiana Territory was also home to a significant influx of Haitians from the 1790s through 1809, following the Haitian Revolution, an insurrection of slaves against white landowners. Spain had already banned the importation of slaves from Haiti to the Louisiana Territory in 1760. Thousands of Haitian refugees—white, black, free people of color, free men, and slaves—were welcomed, particularly, given the commonality of the French language and Haitians' ability to bring the sugarcane industry to Louisiana, a more valuable crop than cotton or tobacco. The migration contributed to the ethnic diversity not found in other areas of the neighboring United States. With the loss of its colony

of Haiti, France had no need to retain the Louisiana Territory and decided to sell its lands to the United States.

The backdrop of French and Spanish colonialism is significant in Louisiana because it supported more liberal attitudes among the inhabitants: slaves could become free, racial mixing was common, and the influence of Catholicism made slavery less harsh. Louisiana was a novelty in terms of race relations given the status of “free people of color” and its unique cultural mix. Since life in the territory was not as “black and white” as the neighboring United States, attitudes were much less ethnocentric. This predates American ownership (1803) and Louisiana statehood (1812). The transfer of national ownership created uncertainty and anxiety for many native Louisianans who would prove to be rightly concerned that westward expansion and the following Anglo-American migration would change its unique social composition and relationships.

### **Free People of Color**

Louisiana’s cultural mix made the state a novelty in the nineteenth century. Unlike other Southern states, Louisiana’s French and Spanish roots allowed for a more lenient social structure regarding race and slavery. During French and Spanish colonialism, Louisiana was home to a significantly diverse population. This permitted the existence of a class of persons known as “les gens de couleur libres” translated as “free people of color”; and by 1840, they represented 20 percent of the population of New Orleans alone. Free people of color had high levels of acceptance from the community, were financially prosperous as artisans and professionals, owned property or plantations, and some owned slaves. Mary Gehman, in *The Free People of Color of New Orleans: An Introduction*, described them as having “their own identity in a caste that was neither black nor white, neither slave nor entirely free”—separate and distinct from “Negros.” According to the 1860 census, 29 percent of Louisiana families were slaveholders. Nearly half (47%) of the total population of Louisiana was enslaved. Hundreds of free people of color had significant real estate holdings worth over \$10,000 each (worth more than \$280,000 in today’s market).

The identity of free people of color differed from “free blacks,” African descendants who were freed from slavery either by purchasing themselves or granted free by their masters. Free people of color were those that were born into freedom or entered Louisiana Territory as free people. Unlike black slaves, they were entitled to a host of privileges and civil liberties, including petitioning the courts, the right to contract and inherit, and the right to own and devise property. Post-Civil War, they were identified as Creoles to include those with French, Spanish, German, or Isleño (Canary Islands) descent who had roots in Louisiana from the French and Spanish colonial periods.

The Louisiana Purchase, in 1803, doubled the size of the United States, eventually becoming 15 states. Indians in the territory included Alabama, Koasati (Coushatta), Choctaw, Houma, and Tunica-Biloxi. The purchase changed the United States; and it also changed Louisiana. A year later, Congress established the Territory of Orleans and its government. The international slave trade continued legally

in the United States until 1808, while the domestic slave trade continued through the Civil War period. The federal government officially recognized tribal lands belonging to a number of indigenous groups in the territory, like the Chitimacha, and provided protection pursuant to the Indian Nonintercourse Act (substantially the same today). Still, anxious to expand, the United States distributed unclaimed lands that were previously held by the Spanish and French, triggering lawsuits from tribes. Not all tribes were included under federal protection, and still others maintained tribal independence, all insulated from Louisiana jurisdiction. It is not clear these territorial actions were a result of racial animosity from the federal government as opposed to maintaining the autonomy of the Louisiana Indians. Furthermore, in *Adelle v. Beauregard*, 1 Mart. 183, 184 (La. 1810), the Louisiana Supreme Court presumed Indians to be free unlike “Negros.” By the 1970s, Louisiana tribes developed their own constitutions governing their lands. Louisiana maintains the second-largest population of Native Americans in the eastern United States.

Following the Louisiana Purchase, westward-bound Anglo-Americans brought their more severe racial animosity with them changing the dynamics in Louisiana. Race-based slavery took its toll on American society as evidenced by the abolitionist movements and several slave revolts. In 1811, the largest slave revolt occurred in LaPlace, Louisiana, when Charles Deslondes led 200–500 slaves in a rebellion with a mission to capture New Orleans and build a Black Republic. The mission eventually failed, and dozens of revolutionaries were tried, convicted, and executed by a firing squad. Their heads were impaled onto spikes along a 60-mile stretch from New Orleans to LaPlace to serve as a terrorizing deterrent to other slaves. These types of events coupled with the fight to keep slavery out of the newly acquired territories pushed the United States closer to Civil War. Slave owners who relocated to the new territory refused to be dispossessed of their property—their slaves.

Slavery was key to the economic wealth of the South but particularly so in Louisiana. By 1850, New Orleans was the richest city on the continent. Louisiana’s terrain and climate made it a near ideal place to develop valuable sugarcane plantations. In addition, the region’s susceptibility to hurricanes not only contributed constant need for free labor to rebuild but also provided a different residential landscape than other areas in the Deep South. In 1831, The Great Barbados Hurricane devastated Last Island and other areas through the south of New Orleans killing 1,500 people and destroying the sugarcane crops. In 1856, the Last Island Hurricane in Terrebonne Parish, also known as the Great Storm of 1856, reached Category Four status and killed more than 400 people. As such, living space was limited; and with many low-lying areas and marshland, a “backyard pattern” developed—blacks lived in the backyards of whites; and so, there was not the typical segregation of entire neighborhoods as would develop in other areas of the country. The limited space also led to a regular series of laws restricting residential accommodations for blacks—a precursor to Jim Crow laws.

The Civil War changed the landscape in Louisiana forever. Following Abraham Lincoln’s election to the presidency (without one vote from Louisiana), Louisiana seceded from the Union and transferred its allegiance to the Confederate States of

America. Within a year of the war, Union forces captured New Orleans and instituted Martial Law before moving up the Mississippi River to control the state capital at Baton Rouge. By early 1863, Union forces controlled the Mississippi River and completely occupied Louisiana. Still, there was a dichotomy since Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation specifically exempted 13 parishes in Louisiana and the city of New Orleans; so, runaway slaves were returned to their masters and slavery continued. Once the richest state in the country, Louisiana was stripped—a result of war and army plundering, the destruction of plantations and crops, lawlessness, the disruption of trade, and confiscation of goods and materials. Louisiana continues to be among the poorest states in the Union. It would never recover economically. And Louisiana's formerly liberal tones regarding race relations would give way to discriminatory rules, almost exclusively, targeting "Negros."

### **Post-Civil War Life and the Development of Jim Crow**

Post-Civil War, Louisiana would prove to be somewhat fortuitous in its 1864 constitution, which abolished slavery, gave voting rights to black Union veterans



Isaac and Rosa, emancipated slave children from the free schools of Louisiana, ca. 1864. (Library of Congress)

and others, and established a free public school system for all children—a model for Reconstruction policies and later the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

As part of the nation's Reconstruction policy, in 1865, the War Department established the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (the Freedmen's Bureau) to administer relief and educational programs to transition the newly freed slaves. It also kept reports related to acts of terrorism by whites against free blacks. In 1867, the Freedmen's Bureau reported that in Louisiana, 86 free blacks were killed by whites, while 210 were "shot at, whipped, stabbed, beaten." Only one white was murdered by a free black. Murders of free blacks occurred in more than two dozen towns. Lynchings and other violent attacks were not

uncommon. On November 22, 1887, the Thibodaux Massacre—a mass lynching campaign—was perpetrated by local white vigilantes against African American sugar plantation workers. Approximately 10,000 workers organized a three-week strike effectively shutting down sugar production in Lafourche, Terrebonne, St. Mary, and Iberia parishes. The vigilantes hunted the workers down, rounded them up along with their families, and killed at least 35 but as many as 300 African American workers. The events illustrate the societal difficulties and racial tensions involved in transitioning out of an era of slavery. Landowners lost their sources of free labor, and poor whites now had competition for jobs and housing. Historically, this massacre is considered one of the bloodiest labor disputes in American history.

In 1869, Straight University and New Orleans University were among the first black colleges established in New Orleans. Leland University would open the following year followed by Southern University. These schools were also open to white students. Yet, other areas of life were becoming more segregated, including railroad cars. When Homer Plessy challenged New Orleans's Separate Car Law, he was arrested; and his case, eventually, was heard by the Supreme Court of the United States in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896). Unfortunately, he lost; the Court held that “separate but equal” accommodations passed constitutional muster, and, moreover, there was a property right in being a “white man.” *Plessy* provided a green light for de jure segregation. The lone dissenter, Justice Harlan, argued that the “Constitution is color-blind” and segregation was the equivalent of “a badge of servitude.” In response to *Plessy*, segregationist policies known as “Jim Crow laws” were instituted with a fervor throughout the country, particularly in the South, discriminating against Mexicans, Chinese, and Indians. But Louisiana Jim Crow focused on those of African descent.

Louisiana Jim Crow required separate public accommodations in busing, restaurants, and hotels. Race-based de jure segregation included the residential segregation of white and “Negro” communities, bans on intermarriage with “Negros,” and separate public schools for white and colored, all based upon its legal principle designating race by ancestral blood, known as the “one-drop” rule, which determined social and legal status. Louisiana drew a sharp distinction—“colored” groups meant those persons who had “African” or mixed “Negro blood” and did not include “persons of color,” Native Americans, Asians, etc., unlike other states (i.e., in Nevada, Comp. Laws, § 4853). “One drop” of “Negro” blood (as little as 1/32) designated a person as black subject to varying degrees of hybridization (“mulatto,” “quadroon,” “octoroon,” etc.) and submitted them to restrictions embedded in segregationist policy. The racial tension was palpable—an arbitrary separation of the races was coupled with a growing number of white supremacist groups insistent on the subjugation of African Americans, if necessary, by terror.

In 1900, New Orleans was the site for one of the worst race riots in history. Robert Charles, an African American, shot three police officers, killing two, and then fled the scene. A manhunt began; and an all-white, hostile crowd gathered near the scene. Police arrested black men who appeared to be supportive of Charles. An estimated 5,000 whites rioted in the streets and committed violence against black residents for four days (July 24–27). The mob violence resulted in

more than 50 injuries and the deaths of three blacks. On July 27, the incident culminated in a violent shootout between Charles and the police. The two-hour siege attracted thousands of whites, many of whom participated. Charles fired back and shot nearly two dozen people, severely injuring seven and killing two more before he was killed. The mob was insatiable and continued to batter Charles's corpse; and then, in seeking other black victims, they killed two innocent men; and burned down a "Negro" school. Several lynchings occurred that year related to the race riot; and 10 other blacks were arrested and charged with first-degree murder as accomplices to Charles for their known associations.

Similarly, another mob lynching occurred in 1933, demonstrating the extent of racial tensions against African Americans. Freddie Moore, a 16-year-old, was lynched by a mob of 30–100 people and hung from a bridge in Assumption Parish. The body of Anna Mae LaRose, a white girl, her throat cut, was found three days earlier in a sugarcane field near Moore's home. LaRose's stepfather accused Moore of raping and killing her. Moore was subsequently arrested and held in jail. The following day, the mob, using keys obtained from a deputy, kidnapped Moore, beat him, hung him from the bridge with a sign that stated in part: "Niggers let this be an example," and left his body there until the next day. Moore's parents filed a lawsuit against the sheriff charging him with negligence for failing to protect Moore against the lynch mob. Evidence showed the deputies assisted in turning Moore over to the mob and participating in the beating. An all-white jury found in favor of the parents and awarded them \$2,500, the first case of its kind. LaRose's stepfather later confessed to the murder.

Nature often played a major role in exacerbating Jim Crow in Louisiana. The Great Flood of 1927 wreaked havoc. The Mississippi River swelled from unusually high rainfall that spring. When New Orleans received 14 inches of rain on one day, the pumps that drained the city failed; and the water remained in the city locked in by the levee system. Officials determined it was necessary to dynamite a specific section of the levees at Caernarvon to avoid a levee failure at the wrong location. Ten thousand people were evacuated prior to the blasting, were brought to a warehouse in New Orleans, and segregated by race—white and black. The floods caused \$35 million in damages. Flooding in other parishes left 60,000 displaced and homeless, thousands of livestock dead, and farms turned into lakes. Most of the farmers were African Americans (95%) with nearly all living in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Arkansas. Sixty-nine percent of the evacuees sent into camps were African Americans. The combination of nature's devastation and the discriminatory abuses meted out within the camps led to a new wave of migration with thousands of African Americans moving north toward Chicago to start a new life.

### **Dismantling Jim Crow**

By the mid-twentieth century, Jim Crow was in full effect. Louisiana, and 16 other states, prohibited the cohabitation of whites and blacks and intermarriage of whites with nonwhites (miscegenation). All of life was segregated. Legal challenges to Jim Crow occurred around the country, and there were small victories along the way. Baton Rouge segregated its buses by designating the first 10 rows



as reserved for whites, leaving blacks standing even if white rows were available. Riders organized a boycott in 1953, which became a national model. The newly created United Defense League reached a compromise with the city council to leave just the first two rows reserved for white passengers given that ridership was 80 percent African American.

The most significant challenge against segregation would present itself before the Supreme Court of the United States in 1954 in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*. Though not a Louisiana case, the Court officially overturned its decision of *Plessy v. Ferguson* and held that segregationist policy is “a denial of equal protection” and is “inherently unequal.” For the first time, the Court considered and accepted social science findings on the negative effects of segregation in addition to legal precedent along with the inferiority of the black schools to support its decision. It acknowledged the emotional and mental destructiveness of racial oppression. The ruling would be met with “massive resistance” in Louisiana and two dozen other states. In defiance to the Supreme Court’s decision in *Brown*, the same year, the Louisiana legislature enacted a series of proposals: segregating elementary and secondary schools as a state policy and granting parish school superintendents the authority to assign students to specific schools.

On March 12, 1956, 101 congressmen, including Louisiana’s senators and representatives, signed the Declaration of Constitutional Principles. Also known as the “Southern Manifesto,” the declaration did not have the force of law but rather served to repudiate *Brown* as a “clear abuse of judicial power” and commended those states which intended “to resist forced integration by any lawful means.” Twenty-six states had segregationist policies. As late as the 1950s and early 1960s, Louisiana continued to pass segregationist policies including authorizing the governor to close any schools—particularly those ordered to desegregate. The state legislature in its resolutions articulated that the state “has always maintained a policy of segregation of the races and its intent to continue to do so.”

The opposition to the desegregation of schools in Louisiana and elsewhere resulted in protracted litigation. Forced to integrate, on November 14, 1960, four young, African American girls would be the first to attend all-white schools in New Orleans at William Franz and McDonough 19 elementary schools. Hostile mobs congregated in opposition; all but two white parents removed their children from William Franz Elementary School. The following day, Louisiana state senator William Rainach and Leander Perez (a political boss of St. Bernard and Plaquemines parishes) addressed a group of 5,000 at a White Citizens Council meeting and advocated civil disobedience. Perez stated, “Don’t wait for your daughter to be raped by these Congolese. Don’t wait until the burrheads are forced into your schools. Do something . . . now.” The next day a mob of approximately 2,000 people marched on the school administrative buildings, shattered bus windows, and severely beat two “Negroes.” Perez established a private school in St. Bernard Parish to accommodate the boycotting families. Vicious mobs continued to demonstrate daily. The violence terrorized white and black citizens, students, and teachers.

The legal challenges against other areas of Jim Crow that followed *Brown* over the next decade finally broke the back of the caste system including *McCain v.*

*Davis*, 217 F. Supp. 661 (E.D. La. 1963) holding that Louisiana's criminal statute that permitted hotels to deny accommodations to "Negroes" was unconstitutional; and in *Davis v. East Baton Rouge Parish School*, 214 F. Supp. 624 (E.D. La. 1963), after nearly a decade of noncompliance, the court ordered the school system to submit plans to transition "to a racially non-discriminatory school system." In 1975, Louisiana officially repealed its anti-miscegenation statute, eight years after the *Loving v. Virginia* decision. Louisiana made other changes. In 1983, Louisiana repealed its "one drop [of Negro Blood] rule," after the legislature recognized that the specific designation of race on official documents dating back to the 1700s was to "[keep] control over land ownership, to keep the landowner from having to share his land with his illegitimate children who were family members."

### **De Facto Segregation**

By 1970, all schools in New Orleans were under court order to desegregate; and, as a result, white residents abandoned the city to move to the suburbs taking their children, businesses, and financial capital with them—22 percent of the entire New Orleans population packed up and left. Discriminatory practices continued without necessitating legal sanctuary including redlining African Americans neighborhoods, leaving residents unable to secure land and business financing. Despite federal laws to the contrary, privately held housing facilities continued to deny African Americans entry, contributing to an increasing African American population in New Orleans, apart from places like the French Quarter. In an effort to combat housing discrimination, in 1995, the Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center (GNOFHAC) was created; today, it serves the entire state. The federal government also sought to stop housing discrimination in Louisiana. In 2004, Department of Justice (DOJ) sued the owners of Foster Apartments in St. Bernard Parish for discouraging black renters while encouraging white renters. The following year, the department settled a lawsuit with the owners and managers of more than 120 apartments in Chalmette (90% white) and Violet, Louisiana. African American renters were told no apartments were available for rent, but whites were told apartments were available or steered to black neighborhoods.

During the 1990s, African American trust in the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) deteriorated as a result of public corruption and police brutality: two rogue cops turned out to be murderers, officers roughed up African Americans dressed in elaborate costumes on St. Joseph's night, and two officers beat another man and then brought him to the hospital. Terrorist acts against the African American community diminished somewhat, likely the result of federal hate crime laws first passed in 1968 and an overall change in societal outlook. Accordingly, with the passing of 18 U.S.C. § 245, it became a crime to threaten to use force against anyone because of their race, color, religion, or national origin when the person is participating in a federally protected activity such as voting, public education, employment, jury service, traveling, or using public accommodations. Similarly, the adoption of 42 U.S.C. §3631 criminalized the interference with housing rights based on race, color, religion, or national origin. Still, incidents

occurred in Louisiana and most other states, and perpetrators were prosecuted under federal law. In 2003, five Klansmen pled guilty and were convicted in federal court in Louisiana for burning a 5-foot cross at an African American home in Longville with the purpose of “getting rid of them from the neighborhood.” The leader was sentenced to 13 years in prison. In 2008, Jeremiah Munsen was indicted for intimidating African American marchers participating in a civil rights rally in Jena. According to DOJ, “Munsen and his co-conspirators fashioned two nooses out of extension cords . . . attached the nooses to a truck . . . and repeatedly drove slowly” passing the group. The march was in protest of the arrests of six teenage boys from Jena High School accused of the attempted murder of a fellow student who was white. The same year, Johnny Mathis fired gunshots at the home of three Hispanic men living across the street because of their ethnicity. Mathis pled guilty to two federal crimes and was sentenced to 15 years in prison.

Each time a natural disaster inundated the low-lying areas of Louisiana, African Americans suffered disproportionately. In 1965, Hurricane Betsy, a Category Four storm, made landfall at Grand Isle, Louisiana, driving storm surge into Lake Pontchartrain. The levees failed at Florida Avenue and along the Industrial Canal. Gentilly, the Upper and Lower Ninth Wards of New Orleans, Arabi, and Chalmette in St. Bernard Parish were besieged. Seventy-five people were killed, and more than 160,000 homes were completely flooded. It took 10 days for the waters to recede causing \$1 billion in damages. Approximately, 250,000 people were evacuated. The event would lead to the establishment of the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Hurricane Protection Program—a system of levees to prevent a future catastrophe; however, lack of funding; failure to consider the soil conditions; and inconsistent designs, materials, and qualities resulted in building a levee system that was disjointed and unable to sustain even a Category Three storm in the future.

Hurricane Katrina dramatically changed the landscape of Louisiana—geographically, socially, and politically. The natural disaster revealed the toll of race-based policies. On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina, pummeled Louisiana as a Category Three storm, brought a storm surge of 28 feet and waves as high as 55 feet causing at least 50 major breaches in the Hurricane Protection System (unfinished from the time of Betsy). The costs of Katrina were astronomical—\$100 billion. In New Orleans, it became evident that African Americans suffered disproportionately, particularly in the Lower Ninth Ward, with a population that was 85 percent black. However, in the suburbs, like St. Bernard Parish with a predominantly white population of 92 percent, they too were affected. The media referred to whites as the victims of Hurricane Katrina, while the displaced African Americans were described as refugees, a term reserved for noncitizens. During testimony at a congressional hearing that December, New Orleans’s Mayor Nagin described the extent of Katrina’s impact on the city’s infrastructure. He stated: “Primary and secondary power sources, sewerage and drainage systems and communication and power lines were incapacitated.” Of the 64 parishes in the state, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) declared 31 parishes, nearly half, as eligible for disaster aid. The flooding was particularly acute in Orleans and St. Bernard parishes. More than 80 percent of New Orleans was

submerged affecting 77 percent of the population; nearly the entire population of St. Bernard Parish suffered. Both parishes had standing water of 4–25 feet; it took approximately 40 days for the area to dry out. In a matter of hours, more than 100,000 people became homeless. “Hurricane Katrina disproportionately impacted communities where the poor and minorities, mostly African-Americans, resided” (Gabe et al. CRS-14). Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, “the three states where communities were damaged or flooded by the hurricane rank among the poorest in the nation” (Gabe et al. CRS-14). It was determined that the impact of the storm in New Orleans “took a disproportionate toll on African Americans. An estimated 310,000 black people were directly impacted by the storm, largely due to flooding in Orleans Parish. Blacks are estimated to have accounted for forty-four percent of storm victims. In Orleans Parish, an estimated 272,000 black people were displaced by flooding or damage, accounting for seventy-three percent of the population affected by the storm in the parish” (Gabe et al. CRS-16). More than one-third of displaced blacks were poor. In contrast, an estimated 101,000 nonblack people in Orleans Parish were displaced by flooding or damage, accounting for about 63 percent of the nonblack population living in the parish; still a high proportion affected, but somewhat less than that experienced by blacks” (Gabe et al. CRS-16). But, overall, the storm was nondiscriminating—the number of blacks and whites that found themselves in the impact zone was nearly the same.

Habitable housing was at crisis levels post-Katrina, with hundreds of thousands displaced and unable to rebuild. Approximately, 50 houses were available in St. Bernard, but all but eight were rendered uninhabitable. The White House reported that nearly 160,000 homes in Louisiana were destroyed and 90 percent of the public schools in New Orleans were damaged or destroyed as was the infrastructure in the area—hospitals, the court system, utility services, and emergency services. Still, St. Bernard Parish sought to restrict new construction and rehabilitation of multifamily housing after Katrina and, eventually, issued Ordinance SBPC#670-09-06, known as the “blood relative ordinance” restricting occupancy to persons related by blood—no person could “rent, lease, loan, or otherwise allow occupancy or use of any single-family residence” unless it was a family member related by blood “without obtaining a permit.” It was reminiscent of the long-forsaken Jim Crow. Chairman Lynn Dean, who voted against the ordinance, admitted the intent was “to block the blacks from living in these areas” while others stated that it was “to preserve the parish history of mostly owner-occupied neighborhoods” and “to maintain the demographics.”

Three weeks later, GNOFHAC filed a lawsuit arguing the ordinance amounted to racial discrimination. The litigation was protracted for years, a result of St. Bernard Parish revising the regulation to require a permit approval process (PUP) for single-family rentals, prohibiting the construction of multifamily dwellings, defying court orders, and interfering in making electricity available to a housing developer constructing a multifamily project. In 2012, DOJ joined GNOFHAC by filing suit against the parish for racial discrimination alleging its “multi-year campaign to limit rental housing opportunities for African-Americans . . . under the pretext of post-Hurricane Katrina recovery planning,” in violation of the Fair Housing

Act. The plaintiffs eventually won a summary judgment eliminating the need for a trial. In May 2013, the parish agreed to a settlement with GNOFHAC for \$900,000, and a separate settlement with DOJ and nine individual plaintiffs, which included the development of an Office of Fair Housing, a Fair Housing Marketing Plan and Campaign, a Rental Land Grant Program, refraining from making housing unavailable or denying housing based on race, fines to the U.S. Treasury, and over \$1 million in compensation to individuals harmed as a result of discrimination.

Post-Katrina, New Orleans is vastly different. Before Hurricane Katrina, 14,000 people lived in the Lower Ninth Ward; in 2013 only 4,000 remained. Large tracts of the Ninth Ward were bulldozed, a result of cleanup, and were never rebuilt. As of 2008, 80 percent of the public schools are now run by 29 different operators—27 of the 29 are charters; 57 percent of students attend charter schools—more than any other urban area in the country; and parents can send their children to any public school where they can gain admission regardless of where they live. However, the majority of the students are overwhelmingly poor and 95 percent of the students are minorities—predominantly African Americans. In 2012, the NOPD entered into a consent decree with the Civil Rights Division of DOJ. Mayor Mitchell J. Landrieu had invited DOJ to conduct an independent review, which would lead to important reforms for the NOPD. The consent decree focused on three goals: (1) reducing crime; (2) ensuring respect for the Constitution, and (3) enhancing public confidence in the NOPD.

The history of race-based policies in Louisiana resulted in homelessness, displacement, lost revenue for businesses, and increased risk of poverty. There were no winners in the fight to maintain segregation. The costs exceeded the financial expenses and reduced property values. Such policies also taxed the citizens on a civil, mental, and emotional level.

## NOTABLE FIGURES

### Landrieu, Maurice “Moon” (1930–)

Maurice “Moon” Landrieu is revered as a patriarch of Louisiana. A New Orleans native, Landrieu spent a lifetime as a public servant—as a state representative (1960–1966), an at-large member of the New Orleans City Council (1966–1970), and mayor of New Orleans (1970–1978). President Jimmy Carter appointed Landrieu as the U.S. secretary of Housing and Urban Development (1979–1981). He continued in public service as a judge on the Louisiana 4th Circuit Court of Appeals from 1992 to 2000.

Moon Landrieu was born on July 23, 1930, to Joseph G., a grocer, and Loretta Landrieu. He graduated from Loyola University College of Business Administration in 1952, its school of law in 1954, and served three years with the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General. Thereafter, Landrieu went into private practice until 1970.

In 1960, desegregation orders were underway in Louisiana following the *Brown* decision. Governor Jimmie Davis called a special session of the legislature to pass

at least 17 anti-integration bills to include the dismissal of school board members who were in favor of integration and authorized the firing of white teachers who would teach black children. Landrieu explained in a 1974 interview *Documenting the American South*: “The legislature really divided itself, the vast majority being for the old southern way of life and segregation, while a few of us, not actively advocating integration . . . didn’t want to close the school system. The legislation got very bitter and often it ended up with Sam . . . and I being the only two guys left voting on one side.” Landrieu, a member of the state house of representatives, was the only legislator to vote against all of the bills. According to Landrieu, “when the segregation fight came up, I measured it and said to hell with it . . . I do what I’ve got to do. And if I don’t ever get elected again, I just don’t get elected.” He did, indeed, win other elections, including councilman at-large in New Orleans. Upon his arrival, Landrieu sought the removal of the Confederate flag from the Council Chambers. He was met with resistance but was able to gain support to pass a motion, which permitted only the flag of the United States to be permanently stationed in the chambers. Decades later, upon reflection, Landrieu said, “It was just something that had to be done.”

Landrieu’s position as an anti-segregationist, despite the challenges, never cost him an election—he won the Democratic runoff for mayor by 12,800 votes (90% of the African American votes and 40% of white votes); he won the election by over 30,000 votes. In 1974, Landrieu was reelected. He attributed his success in part to his campaign approach, and explained, “for the first time a candidate openly solicited, met with, discussed black votes in an openly, publicly, televised and a dramatic change in the political forces in the city” and that he had no major opponent. He often had to balance his “deep commitment to racial equality,” a personal philosophy, with requests for change framed as racial equality, understanding it was not possible given a number of realities: (1) when it comes to political positions, people have to wait for a vacancy to run for election or an appointment, (2) there are overlapping terms, and (3) not all people have equal education, skill, ability, availability, interest and ambition so that, publicly, life appears to have equal or even proportional representation.

Landrieu’s leadership as mayor of New Orleans set the city on course by improving fiscal policies, developing tourism as an industry, and making a commitment to historic preservation. His ability to secure federal funding to support revitalization projects were critical in developing the French Quarter, Jackson Square, the riverfront (including Moonwalk Promenade), and the business district making the Crescent City a major travel destination. To commemorate the life of jazz legend Louis Armstrong, Landrieu established a committee, which developed Armstrong Park and preserved Congo Square, the site of African American music and spiritual practice from the days of slavery. Moreover, he appointed the first African Americans to executive positions within the city and granted contracting jobs to African Americans.

In 1974, Landrieu received the B’nai B’rith Humanitarian Award and was named by *Time* magazine as one of the Nation’s 200 Outstanding Young Leaders; and in 1976, *U.S. News and World Report* magazine named him as the second most influential mayor in America. When Landrieu was appointed by President

Carter as secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, high inflation rates were affecting home purchasing. The president's policies limited Landrieu to being a cost cutter to work within the budget limitations. Landrieu is a unique American politician since he served in the executive, legislative, *and* judicial branches at the local, state *and* federal levels of government. In 2004, he was inducted into the Hall of Fame by the Louisiana Political Museum.

Although Landrieu is retired, several of his nine children carry the torch of his legacy: Mary, a former U.S. senator; Madeline, a former Louisiana 4th Circuit Court of Appeal judge and dean of Loyola College of Law; and Mitch, a former Louisiana governor and mayor of New Orleans.

### **Tureaud, Alexander Pierre (1899–1972)**

Arguably, A. P. Tureaud made the most significant impact on achieving civil rights for African Americans in Louisiana, and later the nation. A Louisiana native, Tureaud, for at least a decade (1937–1947), was the only African American attorney in the entire state. He was the lead attorney of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) New Orleans chapter focused on breaking the back of Louisiana's Jim Crow. Tureaud handled nearly all of the Louisiana civil rights cases from the 1940s to the 1960s. His work would spark the civil rights movement of the twentieth century. Tureaud was born on February 26, 1899, in New Orleans (just three years after the *Plessy* ruling). A descendant of free people of color, his father, Louis, was a carpenter, and his mother, Eugenia, was a domestic. He spent his formative years in New Orleans's Seventh Ward, a black Creole community. His father left the family when Tureaud was 11; however, by the time Tureaud was 17, on a free train ticket to Chicago, he took a job in the rail yards making \$1 per hour. By the time he was 19, he secured a position with the Justice Department as a library clerk and attended St. John's College at night. Tureaud enrolled at Howard University Law School in 1921; and it is there that he was inspired by the NAACP. In 1929, he earned his law degree from Howard University in Washington, D.C., and then returned to Louisiana.

Early civil rights cases pursued by the NAACP were handled exclusively by white attorneys; however, after a series of losses, Tureaud and others took leadership of the New Orleans chapter and then reached out to Thurgood Marshall to pursue cases involving unequal pay among teachers. Marshall designated Tureaud to handle the local cases; his first case, filed in 1940, was *Joseph P. McKelvin (and others similarly situated) v. Orleans Parish School Board*. McKelvin was earning \$360 less than his white counterparts with the same credentials. The case, a victory for the plaintiffs, was settled out of court. Despite the win, the client refused to pay Tureaud's \$3,500 bill giving him a watch instead, but after a public embarrassment by the local news, the client paid him \$2,000.

In 1946, Tureaud led the NAACP's investigation of the lynching of an honorably discharged World War II veteran, Corporal John C. Jones. The lynching occurred in Minden, Louisiana. Jones was accused and arrested for "prowling"

the house of a white woman. Police released Jones and his cousin Albert Harris to a mob who drove the two to a creek, stripped them, forced them to lie naked, and beat them with sticks. Jones died at the scene, but Harris survived to tell of the ordeal. It was the first time a federal investigation would occur in such a case, but, with an all-white jury, it “failed to achieve any prosecutions.”

Tureaud handled the majority of the discrimination cases including *Willie Robinson v. LSU Board of Supervisors et al.* and other similar cases to desegregate Louisiana State University (including on his own son’s behalf, who became the first to attend); *Bush v. Orleans Parish Schools* to force desegregation of the schools in the parish; *Edward Hall v. T. J. Nagel, Registrar of Voters* to press for voting rights; the equal public school facility case *Clayton Guillory v. St. Landry Parish School Board*; and similar cases in Iberville, Jefferson, St. Charles, and Orleans parishes. At one point, he filed 16 suits within a seven-year period. Tureaud’s victories gained him a sense of notoriety among segregationists; and for a period of time, in 1956, the Louisiana Supreme Court prohibited the NAACP from conducting regular business. Not to be deterred, Tureaud continued to litigate against segregationist policies, including *Garner v. Louisiana*, 368 U.S. 157 (1961), which overturned the convictions of students who participated in sit-ins as a protest. Not decided as a racial discrimination case, *Garner* hinged on violation of due process rights since there was no evidence the students were guilty of “disturbing the peace.”

In 1957, in addition to his significant case load, Tureaud, along with Ernest Morial (who eventually became Mayor of New Orleans) and several others, founded the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society of Louisiana, for professional support, but more importantly, “to encourage interchange of ideas, promote legal scholarship, advance the science of jurisprudence, promote the administration of justice, uphold the order and ethics of the courts and the profession of law and promote the welfare of the legal profession in Louisiana.” The organization continues the mission today. The namesake for the organization was to honor an African American pioneer in the legal profession who orchestrated Homer Plessy’s arrest for violating the Separate Car Act.

Tureaud retired from the practice of law in 1971 after a 40-year career that was nothing less than legendary. On January 22, 1972, Tureaud died following a battle against cancer. Supreme Court justice Thurgood Marshall gave the eulogy at his friend’s funeral and said, “That man’s courage was unbelievable. In this age of civil rights we got where we are today by the efforts and dedication of men like A.P. Tureaud.” His home at 3121 Pauger Street in New Orleans was added to the National Register of Historical Places in 2006.

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# 20

## Maine

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Dorothy Drinkard

### **CHRONOLOGY**

**1498**

Following John Cabot's voyages of exploration, England lays claims to the territory of present-day New England, which includes Maine

**1524**

France claims the present-day New England Territory, including Maine

**1622**

The name "Maine" first appears in writing

**1652**

Massachusetts formally asserts its authority over Maine

**1783**

The Treaty of Paris ends the American Revolution; the people of Maine begin a campaign to separate themselves from Massachusetts

**1819**

The Massachusetts legislature agrees to the separation of Maine

**1820**

President James Monroe signs the Missouri Compromise legislation on March 6; the measure calls for the admittance of Maine to the Union as a free state and Missouri as a slave state, thus maintaining the balance between slave and free states in the Union

**1820**

Maine enters the Union as a free state on March 15

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### **1826**

John Brown Russwurm becomes the first black graduate of Maine's Bowdoin College

### **1830s**

Large numbers of Irish Catholics begin immigrating to Maine

### **1837**

Elijah P. Lovejoy, a white abolitionist from Maine, is killed in Alton, Illinois, while defending his abolitionist journal, the *Alton Observer*

### **1851**

Irish immigrants see the passage of the Maine Liquor Law instituting Prohibition in the state as an attack on Irish culture

### **1854**

Angered by an influx of Irish immigrants working on railroad and canal projects around the state, a mob in Bath destroys the homes of Irish immigrants and burns a building being used by them as a Catholic Church

### **1860**

Hannibal Hamlin, a white abolitionist from Maine, is elected vice president of the United States on the Republican ticket; Hamlin advises President Abraham Lincoln to abolish slavery and recruit black soldiers

### **1862**

Congress passes the first Morrill Act to give federal land grants to states for building public colleges

### **1863**

On January 1, President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation takes effect, freeing slaves on paper only in the rebel states

### **1865**

On February 7, Maine ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which abolishes slavery in the United States

### **1867**

On January 19, Maine ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which defines citizenship and removes all doubt about the citizenship of black Americans who are born or naturalized in the United States

### **1869**

On March 11, Maine ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which states that no citizen can be denied the vote because of race, color, or previous condition of servitude

### **1875**

James A. Healy is named bishop of Portland, becoming the first black Catholic Bishop in the United States

### **1912**

The interracial residents on Maine's Malaga Island are forcibly evicted from their homes for racial and economic reasons

**1921**

A chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is established in Bangor; the chapter organization is due mainly to the presence in the area of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK)

**1923**

The KKK parade at Milo is the first Klan parade to occur in broad daylight

**1972**

Gerald Talbot becomes the first black American to win election to the Maine House of Representatives

**1988**

William Burney becomes the first elected black mayor of Augusta, Maine

**1993**

John Jenkins becomes the first black person elected mayor of Lewiston, Maine

**1996**

John Jenkins becomes the first black person to win election to the Maine State Senate

**c. 2000**

Attracted by the state's low crime rate, good schools, and inexpensive housing, Somali immigrants begin settling in Maine

**2001**

United Somali Women of Maine (USWM), a nonprofit organization seeking to empower Somali women and girls throughout the state, is founded in Lewiston

**2002**

Lewiston mayor Laurier T. Raymond addressed an open letter to the local Somali community, asking its leaders to discourage further Somali immigration to the town so as to prevent a degradation of Lewiston's social services

**2006**

The severed head of a frozen pig is thrown into a Lewiston mosque during prayer services

**2008**

John Jenkins becomes the first elected black mayor of Auburn, Maine

**2010**

Two naturalized Somali immigrants run unsuccessfully for seats in the Maine legislature

**2010**

On April 7, the Maine legislature formally issues a statement of regret for the forcible eviction of the interracial community on Malaga Island in 1912

**2010**

According to the Federal Census Report, African Americans make up 1.12 percent of Maine's total population

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### **2012**

Craig Hickman, a black man, is elected to the Maine House of Representatives

### **2014**

Maine Republican governor Paul LePage leads an effort to ban towns from spending state funds on emergency aid for illegal immigrants

### **2015**

The Passamaquoddy and Penobscot Indian tribes remove their nonvoting representatives from the Maine House of Representatives to protest injustice and disrespect for tribal sovereignty

### **2016**

Somali and other East African immigrants make up about 15 percent of the population of Lewiston

### **2016**

Rachel Talbot Ross becomes the first black woman elected to the Maine House of Representatives

### **2017**

Latinos make up just over 1 percent of Maine's population

## **NARRATIVE**

### **Early History**

Before Maine became a state on March 15, 1820, it was part of Massachusetts. The area that is referred to as Maine today was first settled by American Indians. Europeans and Africans followed much later. From the beginning, these three groups of people had different cultures and languages that would make it very difficult for them to respect each other and to live together as one. This racial struggle in the United States, in general, and Maine, in particular, still remains in spite of the fact that much progress has been made.

According to historical and geographical accounts, approximately 25,000 years ago, an ice sheet covered all of present-day New England. As a result of global warming, the coastal area of the region began to melt about 14,000 years ago. During the next 2,000 years, the ice moved north and forests slowly emerged in the area. It is believed that Native Americans moved into the Maine area from the South or West approximately 11,000 years ago and established an economy based on farming, hunting, and gathering.

It was not until 1492 that Christopher Columbus made his voyage to the New World and Europeans gradually settled in all parts of the Americas and competed with each other for territories. In 1498, the present-day New England area was claimed for England; and in 1524, the same area was claimed for France. These claims set the stage for two centuries of fighting between England and France for complete possession of the New England area.

The name, Maine, first appeared in writing in 1622, as a province. There are several explanations for the name. Three of these are: (1) the name was given in honor



of the queen of Charles I, Henrietta Maria, who was said to be the owner of the province of Maine in France; (2) there was a small village on the coast of England once named Maine; and (3) the name served as a way of distinguishing the bulk of the territory from the numerous islands around it. This is the prevalent explanation for the name. In 1652, Massachusetts formally asserted authority over Maine.

As previously stated, England and France fought for control of New England for a very long time. During the 1756–1763 fight for control of the area, France received more support from American Indians than England. Thus, the French and Indian War, also known as the Seven Years' War, served as an early example of two racial groups of the colonial era working together, primarily in the name of self-interest. Among the Indians who fought on the side of France were the Algonquin, Hbenaki, Shawnee, Lenape, Ottawa, Wyandot, and Mohawk. There were a few Indians who fought with the British during the war. The Cherokee Indians, who were part of the Iroquois linguistic family, initially fought with England. The Catawba also supported England during the war.

England's victory over France was recognized by the Treaty of Paris in 1763. France surrendered all its claims to the Northeast Territory and left North America. England's race relations with the American Indians varied from colony to colony until the English colonies gained independence as a result of the American Revolution, 1775–1783.

### **The American Revolution and Its Impact on Slavery**

During the colonial war for independence or the American Revolution, Maine was still part of Massachusetts. Black Americans played important social, political, and military roles to help Maine and other sections of Massachusetts win independence. Even before actual fighting began, Crispus Attucks, a runaway slave who was described as a mulatto, led a group of protestors to demonstrate against the presence of British troops who guarded a British Customs House in Boston on March 5, 1770. Members of the interracial group, led by Attucks, threw hard-packed snowballs at the troops who guarded the Customs House. The British troops responded by firing on the protestors. Crispus Attucks was killed, along with four other demonstrators. The event became known as the "Boston Massacre." The British soldiers were tried. Only two were found guilty, and they were released after they were branded on the thumb. This was one of the major events that led to the American Revolution. Blacks, whites, and Indians interacted during the war. Most blacks fought in predominately white regiments. Massachusetts had one of the few all-black regiments (Franklin and Higginbotham 2011, 87).

The issue of black slavery could not be ignored during the colonial fight for independence. Throughout different areas of Massachusetts, including Maine, there were arguments about the obvious contradiction of slavery and the colonial fight for independence. Slaves made their voices heard in a variety of ways. In 1773 and 1774, blacks presented five freedom petitions to the Massachusetts legislature. Blacks also sued in court for their freedom. Historians Franklin and Higginbotham report that during the two decades before the colonies won independence in 1783,



African Americans were involved in the fight for the nation's freedom. Crispus Attucks, an African American victim of the Boston Massacre (1770), became a symbol of the American struggle for independence. (Library of Congress)

30 black male and female slaves sued their slave owners for their freedom in the Massachusetts courts. Of the 30 cases, there was only one unfavorable court decision.

Even before the American Revolution began in 1775, black slaves and white New Englanders assimilated, according to William D. Piersen, the author of *Black Yankees*. As children, many blacks worked in the homes of whites, and they learned to read English so that they could read the Bible. One example of racial assimilation during this time period in Massachusetts was Phillis Wheatley, a renowned poet whose works are still read and studied today.

After colonial independence was achieved in 1783, race relations in the Northeast improved, and there was a stronger move-

ment to abolish slavery. Thirty-seven years after the American Revolution, Maine became independent of Massachusetts. This action was included in the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which was enacted by Congress to maintain a balance of power between slave states and free states. The compromise was made necessary because of the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, when Thomas Jefferson was president of the United States. The purchase of the territory doubled the size of the United States. At the same time, the purchase raised the balance of power issue because many new states would be created out of the new U.S. territory, which extended from the upper North to the lower South. One of the important provisions of the compromise was the admission of Missouri to the Union as a slave state and the entry of Maine to the Union as a free state on March 15, 1820. Maine became the 23rd state in the Union. Thus, an even number of slave states and free states was maintained by the compromise. Before the compromise, there were 11 slave states and 11 free states. This balance of power was considered necessary in order to reduce sectional conflict in the Union. The compromise also provided for the division of the new territory by the 36°30' parallel line. No slavery was permitted in states carved out of the territory above the line, but slavery was permitted in states created out of the territory below the line. This was an effort to keep the Union together. However, as long as slavery existed anywhere in the country, there would be division in the Union because slavery was inconsistent with equality and freedom, which were the objectives proclaimed in the 1776 Declaration of Independence, which explicitly states: "We hold these

truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

### **Black Rights and Racial Equality**

During the first half of the 1800s, Maine, along with other New England states, honored black Americans’ basic rights, such as equal suffrage. By 1843, black men in Maine, along with those in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, and New Hampshire, had the unrestricted right to vote. As a group, women of all races did not have this right until the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1920. Prior to the latter Amendment, only 15 of the 48 states in the Union recognized full voting rights for women. Most of the 15 states, where women had full voting rights before 1920, were in the West.

Other early rights that black men, in particular, enjoyed in Maine during the early 1800s included high educational opportunities. In 1826, John Brown Russwurm, who was racially mixed, became the first black graduate of Bowdoin College. Although he was a native of Jamaica, he was raised in Portland, Maine. Other black students at Bowdoin followed Russwurm long before most U.S. colleges integrated. Maine’s colleges, such as Colby College and Bates College, admitted all students, regardless of race, shortly after they were opened. Colby College was founded in 1813, and the first black student was admitted in the 1840s. Bates College, a private liberal arts college, was founded in Lewiston, Maine, by prominent abolitionists in 1855. Classes began in the 1860s, and black students were admitted in the 1870s (Mills 2009, 1).

Prior to the Civil War, Colby College produced one of the nation’s best-known white abolitionists, Elijah Parish Lovejoy, who was born in a frontier farmhouse near Albion, Maine. He was the first of nine children in his family. He established educational standards for his siblings when he attended Colby College in Waterville, Maine. Lovejoy graduated at the top of his class in 1826. After graduating, he embraced the ministry and the Abolitionist Movement. He left Maine and later established an abolitionist press in St. Louis, where he also served as a public school teacher. After his press was attacked in St. Louis, he moved to Alton, Illinois, a free state. His presses in Alton were also attacked by proslavery groups. His abolitionist journal in Illinois was called the *Alton Observer*. On November 7, 1837, a proslavery mob attacked the warehouse where Lovejoy’s fourth pending press was located. Lovejoy, with his supporters who tried to help protect his press, exchanged fire with the mob. Lovejoy was shot five times and killed—just two days before his 35th birthday. Shortly after his death, Lovejoy was held as a martyr in Maine as well as in other states around the country and world. The leadership role of Elijah Parish Lovejoy in the Abolitionist Movement, three decades before the Civil War, is discussed in most current standard U.S. history books. This is an indication of Lovejoy’s significant contribution to the Abolitionist Movement.

Today, there are many ways by which Lovejoy, the martyr for freedom, is honored. One of them is the Lovejoy Health Center that is located in Albion, Maine, where Elijah Parish Lovejoy was born on November 9, 1802. In accordance with the Health Reach Community Health Centers’ advertising, the Lovejoy Health

Center “does not discriminate, exclude people, or treat them differently on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.” This is the hospital’s philosophy, which is also an expression of Elijah Parish Lovejoy’s belief in equality.

Seven years after Lovejoy graduated from Colby College in 1826, students at the college formed the United States’ first college-based antislavery society in 1833.

The openness and progressiveness of Colby College is also demonstrated by the fact that, after the Civil War, it became the first all-male college in New England to accept female students in the fall of 1871.

At the start of the Civil War in 1861, Maine, a state with a mostly white population, had initiated a crusade against slavery and taken many steps to recognize racial equality. One of the first steps taken, prior to the Civil War, was Maine’s support of the new Republican Party. It was organized with the help of Israel Washburn, who was a Maine congressman. The state’s early and overwhelming acceptance of the new Republican Party in 1854 was an example of the many measures taken by the state to support the Abolitionist Movement in the United States. The new political party opposed slavery and with support from antislavery Democrats, as well as from Whigs, Free Soilers, and Know-Nothings, the Republicans succeeded in getting Abraham Lincoln elected as the first U.S. Republican president (Clark 1977, 122–24).

Lincoln’s first vice president was Hannibal Hamlin who, like Congressman Israel Washburn, was from Maine. Hamlin was born in Paris Hill, Maine, on August 27, 1809, and died on July 4, 1891. Before joining Lincoln in the White House, he had served in the Maine state legislature and the U.S. Congress. He also served briefly as governor of Maine in 1857. Prior to these achievements, he studied law in Portland, became a member of the bar in 1833, and set up a law office in Hampden. He was also an educator, businessman, and a U.S. diplomat. For 20 years, he headed the Board of Regents for Colby College. In 1881, he became minister to Spain. Hamlin is an excellent example of Maine’s early leaders who fought for the abolition of slavery and equal rights for all races. While he served as vice president during Lincoln’s first term, it is recorded that he was one of the first to pressure Lincoln to emancipate the slaves and recruit black soldiers to fight in the Civil War. Slaves in the rebel states were freed, on paper, by the Emancipation Proclamation, which took effect on January 1, 1863. Slavery in the Union’s border states of Kentucky, Missouri, Delaware, West Virginia, and Maryland was not abolished by the proclamation. In reality, the Emancipation Proclamation did not free any slaves because the rebel states did not consider themselves part of the Union. They recognized Jefferson Davis as their president, not Abraham Lincoln. Hamlin’s support of the use of black regiments in the Union’s military was realized. One hundred sixty-six black regiments fought in the Civil War to end slavery in the United States and to save the Union.

### **Politics in Maine after the Civil War**

For more than a half century after the Civil War, the Republican Party remained Maine’s dominant political party, which continued to support legislation and

constitutional amendments to guarantee equal rights for all economic and racial groups. Examples of the latter goals included “tariffs to protect every branch of the economy; the distribution of land to promote farming; legislation to protect the equal rights of immigrants; the clearing of rivers and harbors for maritime trade; and the construction of a transcontinental railroad” (Smith 2016, 1).

The new Republican Party’s message immediately before the Civil War was “rich men should not dominate the government and take away economic opportunity for all.” The new party tried to make America “a land where every man, regardless of race or background could rise through hard work” (Richardson 2014, 1). Republicans in Maine supported these goals before and after the Civil War. Another example of this fact is the establishment of the University of Maine in 1865, the year in which the Civil War ended. The University of Maine is a public institution that was established under the provisions of the Morrill Act, which was approved by President Lincoln in 1862 to promote the creation of public colleges in each state. The university is located in Orono, along the banks of the Stillwater River. Although the exact date that the University of Maine became racially integrated is not certain, scholars suggest that the university was probably always open to all races; however, because of the very small number of blacks in Maine, there were few at the university. It is a fact that a black man by the name of Herbert Heughan attended the University of Maine in 1936, although he did not graduate. There are indications, if not facts, that there were black males at the university before Heughan’s enrollment (Price 2001, 34).

Maine’s congressional representative supported a second Morrill Act that was passed by Congress in 1890. It provided for the funding of colleges in ex-Confederate states. These states were required either to show that race was not designated as a criterion for admission or to establish a separate land-grant institution for persons of color. These states were given money for the creation of their colleges, although they were still referred to as land-grant colleges. In 1994, there were land-grant colleges for Indians, although the states were granted cash instead of land for the opening of Indian land-grant colleges. States throughout the United States, including Maine, could take advantage of the 1994 Land Grant Act.

During and after the Civil War, Maine’s Civil War heroes were recognized. The state produced several civil rights leaders during this time period. One of these famous leaders was Major General Oliver O. Howard, who had a leadership role in major Civil War battles. General Howard was born in Leeds, Maine, on November 8, 1830. He died on October 26, 1909. He was known as the “Christian General” because he tried to base his policies and decisions on strong religious values, which included human equality and freedom. In his fight to save the Union, free the slaves, and promote racial equality, he lost his right arm while leading his men against Confederate forces at the Battle of Fair Oaks/Seven Pines, in June 1862. His biological loss did not end his role in the fight for freedom, both on and off the battlefield. After the Civil War, Major General Howard became commissioner of the Freedmen’s Bureau, a U.S. agency to assist former slaves in getting an education, jobs, housing, and a bank account. While head of the Freedmen’s Bureau, 1865–1872, Commissioner Howard worked with the First Congregational Society of Washington, D.C., to establish Howard

University. The university was named for him in recognition of his support and devotion to equality and open opportunities for all people. While Howard was still commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau, he also served as president of Howard University, from 1869 to 1872.

Although Howard University today is often referred to as a historically black college, in fact, it has always been integrated. The first five students who entered the university in May of 1867 were white females. Thus, from the beginning, Howard University has been open to all, regardless of gender or color. Moreover, the history of the university provides evidence that the institution has always had an integrated faculty and administration. Today, Howard University is one of the top universities in the United States. It has produced highly trained and recognized leaders in every field—science, medicine, religion, law, music, acting, politics, writing, the civil rights movement, and many more fields. Oliver O. Howard, a white man who was born, raised, and educated in the state of Maine, played a major role in Howard University's history.

### **The Eugenics Movement and the Ku Klux Klan**

Throughout the history of Maine, the progressive social, educational, political, and philosophical climate produced citizens like Oliver O. Howard, who supported the principles of democracy and equality. However, there have been a few time periods and incidents throughout the history of Maine when the state's overall high human standards and democratic principles did not prevail. One event that demonstrates this statement occurred on Malaga Island during the early 1900s, shortly after the Reconstruction era, when racial minorities had gained many basic rights through the passage of congressional legislation and the adoption of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, with the support of Maine. One of the ugly developments at the start of the twentieth century was the so-called Eugenics Movement. This movement helped to promote the idea and belief that some groups of people, such as the poor, immoral, criminal, or mentally ill, were born that way because of their heredity. To a large degree, this statement implied that many people of color were of this heredity. The movement was accepted by many important leaders in many fields, including education, politics, science, religion, journalism, and business.

A Maine event that reflected the negative attitudes of the Eugenics Movement occurred on Malaga Island. The history of the island provides an understanding of the impact that the Eugenics Movement had on race relations in Maine. The island is located at the mouth of the New Meadows River. The 42-acre island was first occupied by American Indians about 1,000 years ago. Little is known about how they lived. More is known about the later residents, who lived in a mixed-race community that occupied the north end of the island, from the 1860s to 1912. The history of the island includes the role of a former slave by the name of Benjamin Darling. In 1794, he bought the nearby Horse Island. His son Isaac sold it and is said to have moved to the unoccupied Malaga Island in 1847. In the 1880s and 1890s, the Maine coast became more of a tourist site. As a

consequence, more summer homes were built, along with resorts, roads, and marinas. As the area attracted more tourists, the state saw opportunities for monetary gains. In response to this observation, the press emphasized the wide opinion that the best way to help the inhabitants of Malaga Island and simultaneously increase tourism and property values on the Maine coast was to dismantle the community. To achieve this objective, state and regional newspapers published negative concepts of the early inhabitants of Malaga Island. They were perceived as half-breed blacks and whites, queer, poor, shiftless, and degenerates who needed help. Governor Frederick Plaisted visited Malaga Island in 1911 and determined that the shacks should be burned down with all the filth. In the same year, the state of Maine ruled that Malaga Island was owned by the heirs of Eli Perry, and the Perry family signed papers to have the islanders evicted. In December 1911, Governor Plaisted supported the removal of eight Malaga residents from their homes to place them in the Maine School for the Feeble Minded.

In 1912, the state of Maine purchased Malaga Island from the Perry family heirs for \$400. Owners of homes on the island were forced to sell them to the state of Maine for \$50–300. Forty-five people were evicted from the island in 1912. All residents were told to vacate by July 1, 1912. By this date, all homes had been dismantled and removed with the help of the residents. The state even removed the cemetery remains on Malaga Island. For many present-day residents of Maine, Malaga Island represents “a century of shame.” The island is now uninhabited. Today it is owned and managed by the Maine Coast Heritage Trust. Public daytime access is permitted.

The aforementioned racist event on Malaga Island happened during the reign of Governor Plaisted, a Democrat. He was defeated by a Republican, William T. Haines, in the fall election of 1912. The Republicans maintained political control of Maine from the time that the United States entered World War I in 1917 until the mid-1950s.

After World War I, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) emerged again during the 1920s. According to the Maine Memory Network, a project of the Maine Historical Society, the Klan’s focus in Maine was against Catholics, Jews, immigrants, and black Americans. It is believed that the 1921 introduction of a local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in Bangor, Maine, was motivated by the presence of the KKK. The NAACP’s opposition to the KKK was supported by several ethnic and religious groups, even though the Klan’s activities in Maine were not considered “physically violent.” Instead, the Klan’s activities were focused on gaining the support of important social, economic, and political leaders in Maine. By this method, the Klan hoped to shape Maine’s political, cultural, and social ideas in order to achieve its objectives without the use of physical violence that was usually practiced by the organization, particularly in the South. The Klan’s racist and religious ideas never prevailed in Maine, although there were some Maine residents who embraced racial and religious prejudices. During the early 1900s, the Republican Party in Maine demonstrated its general support of human equality, regardless of race, religion, or ethnicity.

### **The Two-Party System and Diversity**

Although the Republican Party prevailed in Maine from the Civil War era to the mid-1950s, after 1955, Maine became a balanced two-party state. During the latter time period, Maine's population increased because of a wave of Irish immigrants and French Canadians. As a result, there was an increase in the number of Democrats as well as an increase in the number of Catholics. At the start of the twenty-first century, the Bantu, an ethnic minority from Somalia, entered Maine. Many of them moved to Maine from the South in search of a better life. Thus, minority groups in Maine grew slightly, but not much. According to the 2010 Federal Census Report, the white population of Maine was 95.05 percent of the state's total population. No other state has a higher percentage of whites in its total population than Maine's white percentage of the total state population. For this reason, many refer to Maine as the "whitest state in the United States."

According to the 2010 Federal Census Report, the black population of Maine was 1.12 percent, the Hispanic population was 1.40 percent, the Asian population was 1.10 percent, the Native American or Indian population was 0.58 percent, the population of two or more races (mixed) was 1.90 percent, and the population of one other race was 0.24 percent. The total population of Maine in 2010 was 1,328,535.

In spite of the small percentage of minorities in Maine, the quality of race relations in the state has continued to improve. Private organizations, as well as state agencies, have made changes to promote equality for all people. This goal is clearly stated in the aforementioned philosophy of the Lovejoy Health Center in Maine, as well as by more state laws, agencies, and elected minorities to serve in the state legislature. Progress that has been made in the latter category is illustrated by the 1972 election of Gerald Talbot and those who followed him.

### **Blacks in Maine Politics**

In 1972, Gerald Talbot became the first black American to win election to the Maine State House of Representatives. He served until 1978. After Talbot served three terms in the Maine House of Representatives, Governor Joseph Brennan appointed him to a seat on the Maine Board of Education in 1980. These are only a few examples of how Gerald Talbot has helped to improve race relations and equality for all people in Maine.

Talbot was born in Bangor, Maine, on October 28, 1931, and his family roots in Maine can be traced back to the 1700s. Thus, his ancestors lived in the region even before Maine became a state in 1820. Talbot continued to promote good racial relations in Maine through his leadership roles in many different organizations, including the NAACP.

Talbot's 1972 election to the Maine State House of Representatives paved the way for other black residents of the state to get elected to political positions. Examples of a few who followed his lead were William Burney, who was elected mayor of Augustus, Maine, in 1988, and John Jenkins, who became the first elected black mayor of Lewiston, Maine, in 1993, as well as the first black to get



elected to the Maine State Senate in 1996. Moreover, in 2008, Jenkins became the first elected black mayor of Auburn, Maine.

Following Jenkins's 2008 election as mayor of Auburn was the 2012 election of Craig Hickman to serve in the Maine House of Representatives. Hickman, a black writer, farmer, and Democratic politician, won the primary election of 2012 by an 80 percent approval of voters. He campaigned to end hunger, eliminate regulations for small farms and businesses, and to invest in energy-saving projects. He lives in Winthrop, Maine, and he still serves in the 2016–2017 Maine House of Representatives, along with Rachel Talbot Ross, the first black female to get elected to the Maine State House of Representatives.

Rachel Talbot Ross, a resident of Portland, Maine, was elected to the Maine State House of Representatives in 2016. She is the daughter of Gerald Talbot, the first black man to serve in the Maine House of Representatives. Rachel's family has lived in Maine for nine generations. Thus, Maine is truly her home state. Prior to her election, she served for 21 years as director of Portland's Equal Opportunity and Multicultural Affairs Department. She resigned in December 2015 to "focus on other endeavors." One of these endeavors was to help address the issue related to the disproportionate number of young residents of color who were detained as juvenile delinquents in Maine's juvenile justice system. More than 40 leaders attended the June 23, 2016, conference that drew public attention and served to inform citizens of the unequal legal treatment suffered by young citizens of color in Maine.

### ***The Maine 2016 Forum on Racism in the Juvenile Justice System***

Rachel Talbot Ross, the first black woman to be elected to the Maine House of Representatives in 2016, helped to plan a June 23, 2016, forum in Augusta, Maine, for the purpose of exploring ways to end systemic racism in Maine's legal and correctional system for youth. Approximately 40 or more people participated in the forum, held at the Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine in Augusta.

The discussion focused on a 2015 "University of Southern Maine study on the disproportionate number of people of color in the state's juvenile justice system." According to periodical data, Kennebec County detained more than twice as many blacks than whites, in spite of the extremely small black population in Maine. This same disproportionate data on the detainment of black and white youth existed in five of the six counties where it could be measured. The other 10 counties had too few cases to reach conclusions.

Improvements in race relations and the juvenile justice system depend on group and community support through funding, education, and mutual respect. The forum was supported by educators, politicians, religious groups, and community organizations such as the NAACP. The Reverend Chrissy Cataldo of the United Church of Christ in Winthrop, who also helped plan the event, stated that "We've been looking for ways that we can be advocates to stop racism in the state of Maine, and we consider it part of our faith commitment" (Pafundi 2016, 1–5).

Jerome Bennett, the disproportionate minority contact coordinator for the Maine Department of Corrections, stated that the forum on racial inequities in the criminal justice system was not easy to hold, but he believed that such forums educate people, which is necessary to end racial conflict.

Rachel Talbot Ross's second major 2016 endeavor was to run for a seat in the Maine State House of Representatives. Her two competitors for the position were white. Her victory demonstrates that a life-time dedication to improving the quality of life for all people is more important than a candidate's race and gender.

Black politicians in Maine could not have been elected without the majority vote of white citizens. As indicated earlier, according to the 2010 Federal Census Report, blacks constituted only 1.12 percent of the total population of Maine. John Jenkins demonstrated this fact when he was elected mayor of Lewiston, in 1993, by a 3-to-1 margin.

These elections were indications that race relations in Maine were improving during the last decades of the twentieth century and the start of the twenty-first century. Talent, experience, and character are now being recognized more than race, religion, or gender. For example, it is reported that at the time of the 1993 Lewiston mayoral election, the community was in dire economic conditions, burdened by a "sense of hopelessness" with dilapidated downtown buildings, empty storefronts, and a reputation as an "undesirable place to live" (Watson 2001, 117). After Jenkins was elected mayor, he was able to attract international business, work with other communities to cut expenses, and encourage young people to support the community with the use of their skills. As a result of these accomplishments and others, Jenkins was able to reduce unemployment in the city to one of the lowest in the state, and the community's economy rebounded. His great achievements as mayor enabled him to become the first black person to get elected to the Maine State Senate in 1996.

### *More Racial Progress Needed*

In spite of the progress that has been accomplished in the past 50 years, there is still evidence of racial unrest, inequities, and biases in Maine. One example of racial unrest is the state's recent dispute with Indian tribes. In 2015, the leaders of two Indian tribes in Maine expressed dissatisfaction with the state of Maine. There are four sovereign Indian tribes in Maine. They are Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, Aroostook Band of Micmacs, and Houlton Band of Maliseet. The Maliseets call themselves Wolastoqiyik, or "People of the Beautiful River" (Miller 2015, 1).

Although the sovereign Indian tribes are entitled to have nonvoting representatives in the Maine House of Representatives, they have no representatives in the state senate. Even though the tribes' representatives in the statehouse cannot vote, they can introduce new policies and speak during floor debates.

Due to many political, economic, and legal disagreements, two tribes withdrew their representatives from the statehouse in May of 2015. They were the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot tribes. The leaders of these two tribes said that the state did not respect their sovereignty. As reported in the *Portland Press Herald* of May 26, 2015, the many issues include the tribes' concerns about the right of the state to impose rules for fishing and hunting and restrict the right of tribes to open casinos and the use of state laws for the settlement of tribal land claims. The tribes insisted that the state "ignored tribal culture" and failed to recognize tribes as "sovereign partners," with whom to engage in a "relationship of mutual respect."

Indian tribes have had a long-term dissatisfaction with many state rules and regulations that have been interpreted as a violation of their sovereignty. However, the tribes' dissatisfaction with certain state rules, interpreted as disrespectful, came to a climax during the reign of Governor Paul LePage, a Republican who has been heavily criticized by several racial groups, including blacks, whites, and Indians. Some members of all racial groups have asked for his resignation. His current four-year term of office began after he won the 2014 election. The next gubernatorial election will be in 2018.

In addition to complaints made by leaders of Indian tribes in Maine, black citizens have criticized Governor LePage for his January 2016 remark that Maine's heroin problem was due to distributions by blacks and Hispanics. He actually stated that most drug distributors were black and Hispanic people. As reported in the May 3, 2017, edition of *US & Canada*, this implication was not supported by Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) statistics. According to the FBI records, of the 1,211 people who were arrested on charges of drug sales or manufacturing in Maine in 2014, "14.1% were black and almost all the rest were white."

Although Governor LePage apologized for his racist remarks, he did not revoke his conclusion about the role of blacks and Hispanics in the distribution of illegal drugs.

In terms of the two Indian tribes who withdrew their representatives from the state legislature, the representative for the Penobscot tribe returned in 2017. The Passamaquoddy tribe has not returned a representative. The representative of the Houlton Band of Maliseets retained his seat in the state legislature. The fourth Indian tribe in the state, the Micmacs, does not have a seat.

The struggle for Maine's tribes to have a voice in the state legislature as well as retain tribal sovereignty has existed from 1823 when the Penobscot tribe first sent their representatives. Tribal representation in the state legislature, along with full speaking and voting rights, has varied from the nineteenth century to the present. Thus, the struggle for tribes in Maine to have sovereignty, along with a voice in the state legislature in order to protect their sovereignty, continues.

In spite of Maine's racial issues, such as those that have been discussed in this chapter, the state is considered "progressive" by most of the state residents who responded to two online inquiries about race relations in Maine. The 2005 online questionnaire is entitled "The Race of Maine: Making Racism in Maine a Thing of the Past." The second questionnaire was posted online in 2016. It is entitled, "Is Maine a Racist Place?" Hundreds of Maine inhabitants responded to these two questionnaires. A majority of the participants in both inquiries expressed the opinion that Maine is not a racist state, although there are some Maine inhabitants who are racists. Many of the respondents admitted that racism exist in Maine, but racists do not dominate the state. Another common response to the two online questionnaires is related to the impact of numbers. Because of the very small percentage of minorities, many members of the white majority are more "reserved" in speaking out against racism than they would be if the percentage of minorities in the state's population were much higher. Many respondents to the questionnaires wrote that they had few encounters with minorities because of the latter's

very small population. Therefore, they had no opinions about members of the minority groups—blacks, Indians, Jews, immigrants, etc.

A few respondents announced that they believe that Maine is a racist state because of their personal experiences in Maine, but many other respondents expressed hope for good future race relations in the state. Many respondents to the two questionnaires also expressed the belief that white Americans in Maine must become aware of racism, stand against it, examine one's own deep beliefs, and vote for nonracist politicians to lead the state and the country.

Based on the above 2005 and 2016 comments about past, present, and future race relations in Maine, there is a positive attitude that racial progress in the state will continue in spite of negative racial incidents in Maine, from time to time. During the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century, the state has passed legislation to enhance racial equality and protect citizens from other forms of discrimination. One of many acts passed is the Maine Human Rights Act, which has been amended, from 1983 to 2005, to include more sections to protect citizens against discrimination based on race or national origin, gender, sexual orientation, and physical or mental disability. Emphasis has been placed on education because it is through proper education that human equality is achieved and racism becomes "a thing of the past."

The state of Maine has been a good example of how the United States can move in the right direction to end racism in America and to respect all people. Maine has passed legislation as well as produced national leaders to achieve the objective of the United States: "One Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." With dedication and determination, the residents of Maine and all other states can achieve our allegiance to the United States and truly become the greatest nation in the world.

## **NOTABLE FIGURE**

### **Healy, James Augustine (1830–1900)**

Thirty-one years before the start of the U.S. Civil War, which ended slavery in the United States, James Augustine Healy was born near Macon, Georgia, on April 6, 1830. His father, Michael Morris Healy, was an Irish immigrant who became a prosperous plantation and slave owner. His mother, Eliza Smith, was one of Michael Healy's slaves. Healy's parents could not marry because Georgia law prohibited interracial marriages. Although his father was a white man, James Healy was legally a slave because his mother was a slave. James Healy was the eldest of 10 children born to Michael Healy and Eliza Smith. Although Healy's racial identity was not always perceived as black by those who did not know him well, his race was known to be black in his community. For this reason, he and his nine siblings were not allowed to attend Georgia's schools. To get an education, he and his brothers had to leave Georgia. The cost of their education was probably paid by Healy's father, whose financial aid allowed Healy and his brothers to go North for an education.

James, along with his brothers Hugh and Patrick, went to Quaker schools in New York and New Jersey. Later, they attended the newly opened Holy Cross

College in Worcester, Massachusetts. James graduated as valedictorian of the college's first graduating class in 1849. After graduating, James Healy wished to enter the Catholic priesthood. He studied in Paris, as many U.S. citizens did at that time. On June 10, 1854, he was ordained a Roman Catholic priest and is often credited with being the first black Catholic priest. When he returned to the United States, he served in several positions in the Catholic Church. In 1866, he became the pastor of St. James Church in Boston, and on June 2, 1875, Healy was consecrated as bishop of Portland, Maine. Healy thus became the first black Roman Catholic bishop in the United States. He served in this capacity in Portland, Maine, for 25 years until his death on August 5, 1900, at age 70.

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# 21

## Maryland

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Leslie T. Grover

### CHRONOLOGY

#### **Tenth millennium BCE–1500 BCE**

Native Americans, predominantly Algonquian-speaking tribes, settle in Maryland

#### **1628**

The Beaver Wars, a series of wars fought among Native Americans to gain control over the fur trade along the East Coast, start; the wars end with the signing of the Great Peace of Montreal in 1701

#### **1634**

Matthias de Sousa, a black man, arrives in Maryland aboard the *Ark* as an indentured servant; he is freed after seven years of service

#### **1642**

Thirteenth African slaves are brought to St. Mary's City; they are used mostly to care for race horses or for domestic labor

#### **1642**

As a member of the Maryland General Assembly, Matthias de Sousa becomes the first black man to sit and vote in an American colonial legislature

#### **1663**

Maryland enacts a law enslaving all Africans brought into the colony

#### **1664–1665**

The following laws regarding Africans and slavery are proposed in the Maryland legislature: a ban on marriages between blacks and whites; a requirement for white spouses of slaves to become slaves; a requirement for all children of interracial unions to be enslaved

**1681**

Maryland declares all children born to white mothers and black fathers and all children born to free black mothers to be free

**1692**

Maryland sentences white men who marry or have children with black women to seven years of servitude and also prohibits all black men from having sexual relations with white women

**1731**

Benjamin Banneker is born to free parents in Ellicott, Maryland

**1760**

There are over 325,000 African American slaves in the American colonies, with most residing in the South

**1767**

Kunta Kinte, the ancestor of Alex Haley who was immortalized in Haley's book *Roots*, published in 1976, arrives in Annapolis as part of a cargo of slaves

**1775–1790**

Both the British and the Americans free African slaves who fight for their side in the Revolutionary War; this fact and changes in the colonial economy that diminish the need for slave labor cause Baltimore's black population to explode as free Africans migrate to the city

**1784**

Blacks in Baltimore withdraw from the Methodist Church and form Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church

**1788**

Maryland enters the Union as the seventh state on April 28

**1805**

Maryland forbids free blacks from selling corn, wheat, or tobacco without a license

**1810**

Maryland denies the vote to free blacks

**1816**

The Maryland chapter of the American Colonization Society is formed with the intention of returning former African slaves to Liberia

**1817**

Black abolitionist and author Frederick Douglass is born into slavery in Tuckahoe, Maryland

**1829**

The first boarding school for black girls, St. Francis Academy, opens in Baltimore

## **392 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1830s–1850s**

Baltimore becomes the third-largest American port of entry on the eastern seaboard for European immigrants fleeing religious persecution and famine

### **1830**

The federal Indian Removal Act forces the removal of Native Americans from the eastern states to the western territories

### **1832**

Maryland reacts to the Nat Turner slave revolt in Virginia by enacting new laws to restrict free blacks in the state

### **1838**

Frederick Douglass escapes from slavery in Baltimore

### **1845**

Frederick Douglass publishes his autobiography, *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave*

### **1847**

Frederick Douglass publishes the first issue of his newspaper, the *North Star*

### **1849**

Harriet Tubman escapes from slavery in Dorchester County, Maryland, to freedom in Pennsylvania

### **1852**

A convention of free blacks from across Maryland meets in Baltimore

### **1860**

A bill calling for the enslavement of free blacks in the state is defeated by the Maryland General Assembly

### **1861**

Baltimore Riot, also known as the “First Bloodshed of the Civil War,” occurs when large numbers of freed slaves and white supremacists clash in the city

### **1864**

Slavery is outlawed in Maryland under Article 24 of the state constitution

### **1865**

On February 3, Maryland ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

### **1867**

The Maryland State Constitution gives voting rights to nonwhite men

### **1870**

On February 26, Maryland rejects the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing voting rights to African Americans

### **1884**

Interracial marriages are made illegal in Maryland



**1889**

Frederick Douglass becomes American consul general to Haiti

**1890**

Harry S. Cummings is elected to the Baltimore City Council, becoming the first black to win a major elective office in the state

**1904**

Public transportation, steamboats, hotels, and other public facilities in Maryland are segregated

**1905**

The proposed Poe Amendment to the Maryland Constitution, which would have disenfranchised African Americans, is defeated

**1909**

The proposed Straus Amendment to the Maryland Constitution, which would have limited voting by African Americans, is defeated by voters

**1910**

Baltimore enacts the nation's first citywide housing ordinance, segregating neighborhoods by residential blocks

**1911**

The proposed Digges Amendment to the Maryland Constitution, which would have used property qualifications to effectively disenfranchise blacks, poor whites, and immigrants, is defeated

**1913**

The Baltimore chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is established

**1915**

Chapter 51 of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), a white supremacist hate group, is formed in Mount Rainier

**1922**

KKK rallies are held in Baltimore and Frederick

**1926**

Baltimore equalizes pay for the city's black and white teachers

**1931**

A white mob lynches a black man in Salisbury, Maryland

**1933**

A white mob lynches a black prisoner in Princess Anne, Maryland

**1935**

The Maryland Court of Appeals, in its decision in *Murray v. Pearson*, opens the University of Maryland Law School to African Americans, admitting Donald Gaines Murray as its first black student; Murray was represented before the court by Hamilton Houston and Thurgood Marshall, two NAACP attorneys

## **394 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

**1938**

A state court orders equal pay for teachers across the state regardless of race

**1942**

African Americans in Baltimore protest police brutality and demand black representation on the local school board

**1948**

On July 11, 24 black tennis players in Baltimore are arrested when they leave the Negro courts and play on the city's whites-only courts

**1953**

Maryland state parks are opened to African Americans

**1954**

Schools in Baltimore, the state's largest city, are desegregated on September 8; the University of Maryland is integrated, becoming the first major Southern university to do so

**1955**

Maryland National Guard units are integrated

**1956**

Baltimore enacts an equal employment ordinance

**1958**

Irma Dixon and Verda Freeman Welcome become the first African American women elected to the Maryland House of Delegates

**1959**

Maryland ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing full civil rights to African Americans; the amendment took effect in 1868

**1963**

Verda Freeman Welcome becomes the first African American woman elected to the Maryland State Senate

**1963**

Race riots occur in the summer in Cambridge, a small town on the eastern shore, when black students are confronted by pro-segregation police and white citizens

**1967**

KKK members attack a small black community in Laurel, which ignited three nights of violent confrontations

**1967**

Riots erupt when black residents clashed with police after a speech by activist H. Rap Brown on July 24

**1968**

In April, riots erupt in Baltimore after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.; the riots last for eight days

**1970**

Parren James Mitchell is elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, becoming the first African American elected to Congress from the state

**1971**

An assassination attempt is made on George Wallace, the former segregationist governor of Alabama, as he campaigns for president at a shopping center in Laurel

**1973**

On May 7, Maryland ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment granting the vote to African Americans, 103 years after the amendment took effect

**1980s–1990s**

Many Cubans, Guatemalans, and Salvadorans settle in Maryland after escaping civil wars in their home countries

**1986**

The NAACP moves its national headquarters to Baltimore

**1987**

Kurt Schmoke is elected as the first African American mayor of Baltimore

**1990–2000**

Prince George County police shoot and kill more residents per officer than any of their city-level counterparts, and more than any county-level law enforcement agency in the United States; nearly 85 percent of those killed are black

**1995**

Piscataway Indian Museum and Cultural Center opens in Waldorf

**2008**

Donna Edwards becomes the first African American woman elected to the U.S. Congress from Maryland

**2011–2014**

Baltimore pays out close to \$5.7 million to mostly black citizens who allege abuses and beatings by police officers, including pregnant women and elderly community members

**2012**

The Piscataway-Conoy and the Piscataway Indian Nation become the first tribes officially recognized by Maryland

**2014**

The number of undocumented immigrants living in Maryland declines 2 percent since 2010, to an estimated 233,000 or about 4 percent of the state's population

**2015**

Maryland governor Larry Hogan announces that the state will notify federal immigration officials when a prisoner who is an undocumented immigrant is to be released from the state-run Baltimore City Detention Center

**2015**

Freddie Gray, a 25-year-old black man, is arrested by Baltimore police; while being transported, Gray falls into a coma and dies, and charges are filed against the police officers, but later dropped

**2016**

A Department of Justice report finds Baltimore police engage in disproportionate rates of stops, searches, and arrests of blacks, and that doing so is unconstitutional

**2017**

The city council in College Park, home to the University of Maryland, allows green-card holders, illegal immigrants, and other noncitizens to vote in local elections

**2017**

In August, Baltimore removes four Confederate monuments quietly at night

**NARRATIVE**

**The First Inhabitants**

Race has played a role in shaping the economic, social, and geographic history of Maryland for almost as long as the state has existed. From trade with Native Americans to growing immigrant populations to more recent issues dealing with police brutality, Maryland is a state with a varied and relevant history to understanding race in the United States. The region was first inhabited by Native Americans, largely from Algonquin-speaking tribes. These Native Americans were hunter-gatherers and had lived in the region long before European settlement. However, when Europeans started settling in Maryland in 1634, it was not long until foreign diseases (not native to Maryland) and outbreaks of war over territory destroyed a large part of the population.

At that time, tribes and bands were present in most colonies. Bands generally consisted of small groups of immediate family or other kinship ties, and tribes were groups of bands. Subtribes included groups of bands that formed within the larger context of a tribe. In Maryland, the four largest Algonquin-speaking subtribes lived along the coast of the territory and included the Choptank, the Matapeake, the Nanticoke, and the Delaware. These subtribes subsisted from fishing and hunting around the Chesapeake Bay. The Choptank, who lived mostly along the lower eastern shore, encountered the European settlers first as they entered Maryland. This tribe assimilated, living among the Europeans in the 1700s, and they did not migrate to other states in the colonies. Pushed out by tribal conflict, the Matapeake migrated to other states outside Maryland, while the Nanticokes either migrated or purchased land and lived peacefully among the settlers.

However, the Delaware tribe was the hardest hit by wars and foreign diseases from the European settlers. Also known as the Lenape, the Delaware bands located in Maryland were part of a larger group, based mainly in what is now New York, New Jersey, and the Delaware River basin. When Europeans settled, they brought diseases, such as smallpox, influenza, and dysentery, which decimated

the population. Moreover, their wars with the settlers (and at times other tribes) were violent racial conflicts, which also led to population decline.

The Delaware were considered low ranking compared to other stronger tribes, and the Europeans would not trade or allow access to guns for this group. This ranking meant they were not politically powerful as their tribe or as autonomous within their own affairs as other tribes. They even had to seek permission from other tribes to make agreements to sell their land to settlers. During the course of the eighteenth century, they were pushed out of their remaining lands by both warring tribes and the Europeans. Further, the Revolutionary War and Indian Removal legislation moved them and other tribes even further away from their native lands.

Though the Indian Removal Act, which was federal legislation, was not signed into law until 1830, the removal of Native Americans was part of a larger cadre of concerns related to economic well-being and power. It took many decades to come to fruition, but relations between settlers and Native Americans served as a foundation for the legislation. Native Americans had conflicts before European settlers arrived; however, once they began to intervene in Native American affairs, the environment changed.

When Jacques Cartier, one of the first explorers credited with writing about Native Americans in the 1540, documented relationships among tribes, he noted trade happening among the tribes as well as the Basque fishermen. He described war between one group (later to be named the Iroquois) and another (later to be named the Toudaman), which ended in approximately 200 deaths. This conflict was one of many that helped tribes determine ownership of land and resources. By the time explorers, such as the French, landed in Quebec in 1608, and the English in Maryland in the 1630s, the Delaware had made alliances with the Dutch as well as other tribes in order to protect their land holdings. This gave them access to seasonal trading posts as well as leverage to deal with incoming European settlers. Trade with settlers helped in securing firearms to be used for hunting and other items that helped make life easier among the tribes.

During the settling of Maryland, the Delaware were in the midst of the politics and economic decisions made by tribes for their survival, particularly when it came to the trading of beaver fur. By this time, the Iroquois had become powerful and were well-armed with guns from the Dutch and the French. This powerful tribe greatly reduced the numbers of Delaware, who continued to war with other tribes in the Maryland region; the Europeans were an added component to the wars. When the English settlers came to Maryland, beaver fur had grown into a much scarcer item. Between controlling firearms and the conversion of Native Americans to Christianity, tribes like the Delaware were greatly affected.

### **The Beaver Wars**

The Beaver Wars were a series of wars that were fought on and off during the seventeenth century. The wars were primarily between the Iroquois, trying to take control of the beaver fur trade from the Hurons, the northern Algonquians, and their French allies. Fur trading was an industry before Maryland and other states

in the region were colonized. Basque fishermen, looking for cod off Newfoundland's Grand Banks, traded with local Indians for outerwear made from beaver fur to survive the cold winters. Because of where these tribes were located, there was tremendous influence in European–Indian relations from the early seventeenth century through the late eighteenth century. The Beaver Wars were about maintaining that power and economic well-being. The East Coast, including parts of Maryland, was desirable as trading posts, making access to traders from other countries easier. Due to its location, the eastern seaboard was also viewed as a military advantage.

The Beaver Wars were bloody and considered one of the most violent in the history of North America. Eventually, the Iroquois destroyed several tribes and their alliances, and, in effect, took over the fur trade and geographical dominance of the region. Native Americans in Maryland as in many other places were pushed out of the region. These changes disrupted patterns of trade and settlement among the Native Americans, affecting alliances with European settlers. The end result, aside from Native Americans being moved to reservations, as the Delaware were by the mid-1800s, was also that expansion pushed forward and beyond the colonies, including Maryland.

### **African Arrivals**

Native Americans, however, were not the only groups associated with Europeans. When European settlers arrived in Maryland, they brought Africans to work the land and aid in farming, manual labor, and other duties.

Unlike many of the colonies and settlements, slavery was not a permanent or vital part of Maryland's economy during its early development. The Maryland settlement was prosperous due primarily to the production of tobacco, and it afforded settlers

### **Negro Mountain**

Negro Mountain is a 30-mile-long ridge that stretches from Maryland's Deep Creek Lake to Casselman River in Pennsylvania. The peak got its name after a black man, known only as "Nemesis" or "Goliath" due to his large size, sacrificed his life to save soldiers during the French and Indian War in 1756. There are several stories surrounding exactly how the mountain got its name, but all seem to agree that it was the bravery of this black man who saved the lives of the white explorers with whom he was traveling when Native Americans attacked the group during an expedition. Some iterations of the story paint the man as a slave, while others as call him a freeman or a scout. As the story goes, his white companions named the mountain in honor of him, and they repeated their stories and published accounts of his heroism, thus giving fame to the name Negro Mountain. Nevertheless, the name of the mountain has caused controversy. Beginning in 2007, several lawmakers filed bills to change the name of the mountain, finding the use of the description "negro" offensive. However, the bills were never passed or signed into law. Opponents of the bills cited keeping the history and homage that was paid to a black man who served bravely as reasons not to change the name.

wealth and status. But by 1634, a plantation system that employed enslaved labor to grow crops for trade was in place.

The first slaves for purchase were brought to St. Mary's City, Maryland, in 1642. There were 13 of them, imported not from western Africa, but from the Caribbean islands and other American colonies. Many were born in America, they spoke English, practiced Christianity, and were familiar with English laws and trading systems. Although they were initially purchased as "laborers," they were slaves. They were worked hard by their owners, but still formed families, churches, and assimilated into Maryland society. They acquired property and made enough money to purchase their freedom.

Despite slavery's importance to the economies of other New World colonies, slavery was not popular in Maryland during most of the seventeenth century. Indentured servants from Ireland and England actually outnumbered enslaved Africans until the 1690s. Less than 10 percent of the colony's population was black.

The 1770s through the 1790s changed Maryland, most notably from its role in the Revolutionary War. Though the war did not officially start until 1775, a foreshadowing to war in Maryland came 10 years earlier when a tax collector was attacked in Annapolis at a shipping dock. Colonists, tired of paying taxes to the British, turned violent. In 1776, Maryland declared itself a sovereign state and was admitted into the Union in 1778. During the war, Baltimore served as the temporary capital of the colonies from December 1776 to February 1777. From November 1783 to June 1784, Annapolis briefly served as the capital of the newly minted United States of America. It was also the place where George Washington resigned from his commission as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army in December, 1783. Annapolis was also the place where the Revolutionary War ended, with the signing of the Treaty of Paris in January 1784.

For whites in Maryland, loyalties lay between those faithful to England and patriots who were tired of English rule and in search of independence from their oppressors. Blacks, on the other hand, served in the Revolutionary War for different reasons: slaves were motivated by the possibility of gaining freedom, free blacks sought equality and socioeconomic benefit, as they stood to gain greater social standing. Maryland was the only Southern state that enlisted slaves as substitutes for whites as soldiers. However, the benefits of serving, and the roles they played, came at a cost. In many regiments, black soldiers took on noncombat and servile roles. They also served much longer than their white counterparts: four and a half years. This was three years longer than the overall average. Following the Revolutionary War, black veterans were able to stake a new claim to citizenship, and their service helped create free black communities.

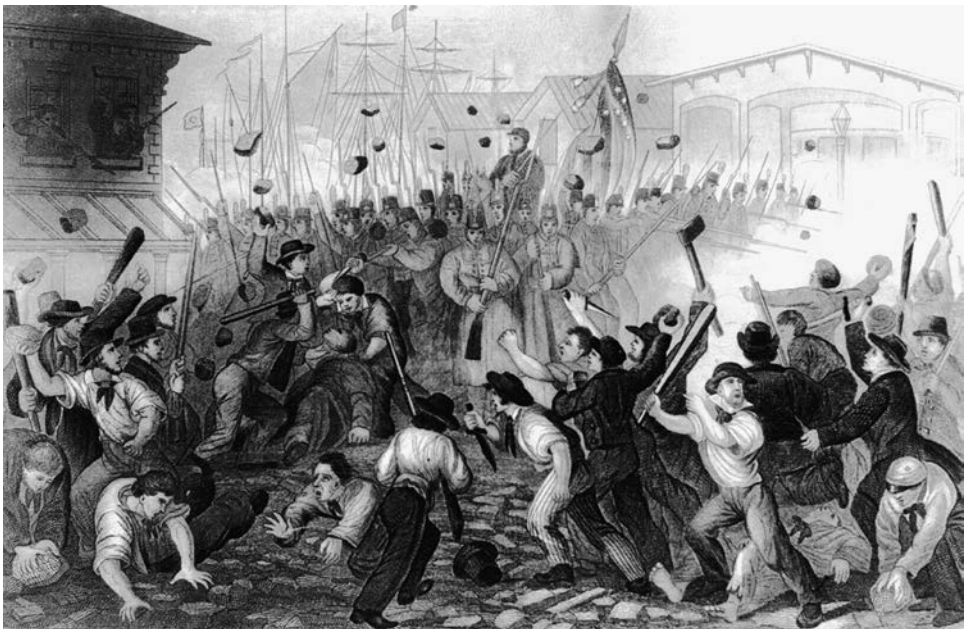
The 1800s in Maryland brought major changes to the population makeup. There were two major forces that played a role from the early 1800s right up until the time before the Civil War in 1861. In 1827, the Maryland Colonization Society was formed as a chapter of the American Colonization Society. This organization led the push to send free blacks back to the continent of Africa, and in many cases, to a colony in the small country of Liberia. The goal was to put an end to slavery and obtain greater freedom for blacks already living as free individuals in Maryland.

Further, the Maryland chapter was given the task of founding the Republic of Maryland in the small African country.

### The City of Baltimore

The second force that changed the population of the state was a combination of the abolition of anti-Catholicism laws and the creation of improved transportation. Between the 1830s and the 1850s, for example, Baltimore became the third-largest entry for immigrants from Italy, Ireland, and Poland on the eastern seaboard. On July 4, 1828, with \$4,000,000 of capital stock already raised, Charles Carroll laid the “first stone” of the B&O Railroad. Just under two years later, the railroad began running operations from Baltimore to Ellicott’s Mills, a distance of 13½ miles. By 1852, the railroad was serving a distance of 379 miles. The first year of operation coincided with a spike in immigration. The immigrant population doubled in 1830 and again in 1832, from 2,000 to 4,000 to 8,000 per year (City of Baltimore 2017, 30–31).

Indeed, Baltimore was the city of diversity and racial change. It was also the site for the Riots of 1861, called the “First Bloodshed of the Civil War.” Though the war had begun a week before the riots, this incident marked the first time there was violent confrontation. The riots ensued when white secessionists tried to stop armed troops from Massachusetts going through the city to Washington, D.C. Since the rail line stopped and began on the other side of town, travel on the train



Often viewed as the first bloodshed of the Civil War, the Baltimore Riots were a clash between pro-South civilians and Union troops in Maryland’s largest city. The nation was forced to address the issue of slavery in America. (Library of Congress)



required two different stops to continue on the same rail line. The troops had disembarked the train in order to take them across the city by carriage to board the train again. The mob was attempting to prevent the regiment from reaching the railroad station. They blocked the carriages; the troops continued on foot. The mob followed close behind and surrounded the regiment. The crowd swelled in size and started throwing rocks at the soldiers. The soldiers shot into the crowd and tried to continue their trek to the railroad terminal. By the time the police arrived to aid the infantrymen, the soldiers had already lost time and equipment. Four soldiers and 12 rioters were killed.

During the Civil War, Maryland, although considered a Southern state, remained in the Union. The state had a mix of Union and Confederate sympathies. In 1864, slavery was outlawed in Article 24 of the Maryland State Constitution. The Civil War ended a year later, and shortly thereafter, in 1867, the Maryland Constitution granted voting rights to nonwhite men.

Between the end of the 1860s and the early 1900s, attacks and influence from white supremacists grew in the state. Leftover feelings of resentment from those who sympathized with the South in the Civil War and who resented giving rights to nonwhites created a perfect storm for racial tension. A series of laws meant to divide black and white society were created. These Jim Crow laws stayed in place until the 1960s, when the civil rights movement began to change the laws. For example, in 1884, interracial marriage was outlawed, steamboats and hotels were segregated, and the state's first Ku Klux Klan chapter activated. It was also during this time anti-Catholic sentiment increased, and efforts to disenfranchise immigrants garnered more public support.

Such amendments were part of a larger national movement to keep blacks from integrating with white neighborhoods, owning property, and voting. In 1910, the same year the Digges Amendment was proposed; for example, Baltimore created a local ordinance that stated that no blacks could occupy a home on a block that was more than 50 percent white and that no whites could occupy homes on a block that was more than 50 percent black. Two other methods, known as race covenants and redlining were also used to influence where people of certain races lived and how they participated with the local community. Race covenants are legally enforceable contracts written into the deed of someone who purchase property. Owners who violate the terms of the covenant may end up losing their property, and the covenants can be enforced regardless of who purchases the land in the

### ***Race and Place***

In 1910, Maryland became one of the first states to actively seek to disenfranchise its black citizens by using property laws and zoning. In 1910–1911, an amendment to the state constitution was proposed that would require individuals to own at least \$500 worth of property and be able to show records of having paid taxes on the property two years prior to any election to be able to register to vote. These requirements would have been difficult for not just blacks, but also immigrants and some white residents to meet. The people of Maryland voted against the amendment.

future (Boston Fair Housing 2017). This first started in many places, including Maryland in 1915. Redlining first started in the 1930s, and it is the lending practice of mapping communities that were undesirable due to race and drawing red lines around them. Lenders would then refuse to give money to those looking to move there.

Under Jim Crow, segregation was legal. The doctrine of “separate but equal” was the law of the land. The landmark case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, in 1896, was still firmly in place, and it made it clear that separate public facilities for blacks and whites were mandatory. During this time, one in five Maryland voters was black, and nearly 15 percent of the population was made of immigrants. Blacks and immigrants doubled down and prepared to gain their political and socioeconomic power. They prepared to vote and to make their voices heard by voting in large numbers. As the 1930s gave way to the Civil Rights era, Maryland saw many important milestones in its social structure. For example, 1933 was the last year in which known lynchings of black people took place. Furthermore, the nation’s first case to overturn *Plessy* was decided in 1935, when the University of Baltimore Law School admitted its first black student.

However, Jim Crow was not the only social issue driving racial changes in the Maryland. There were two forces that contributed to population changes relevant to race: the Great Depression and World War II. Jim Crow continued in the state as the effects of the Great Depression set in and as World War II approached, and this set the stage for more civil unrest. This was particularly evident in Baltimore. By 1933, the governor closed all banks in the city to try and prevent mass bank withdrawals. Over 29,000 Baltimoreans were officially unemployed in 1934 (City of Baltimore 2017, 40).

Had it not been for an influx of federal resources during the latter half of the 1930s, Baltimore would have experienced financial and social collapse. Civil engineer Abel Wolman coordinated the Civilian Works Administration (CWA) in Baltimore, which provided jobs for thousands of residents of the city, mostly white. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) also provided work for many more Baltimoreans, especially whites.

However, it was World War II that sparked the greatest shift in the city. By 1939, Baltimore factories began preparing for war. They were revamped to make everything that the war effort required. For example, dining room table cover manufacturers began making the heavy cloth parts for gas masks; automobile makers began building tanks and jeeps; and the Martin Aircraft Corporation began making B-26 and B-29 Superfortress bombers (City of Baltimore 2017, 40). This shift in the products produced by factories increased the need for workers, and migrants from the rural southern United States and from other parts of the state overwhelmed Baltimore.

This influx remained in the city working, and after World War II, Baltimore found itself in the middle of tremendous physical and social changes. With the return of soldiers eager to raise families, housing needs contributed to rapid suburbanization. Again, the federal government subsidized much of the development of the suburbs. Federal subsidies, such as new housing-oriented Federal Housing Administration (FHA) loans, the 1956 Highway act, and tax incentives for industrial development, were instrumental in restructuring the city and the region.

However, the effects of redlining (mapping neighborhoods by race) and racial covenants (which legally allowed whites to sell their homes only to other whites) were in full effect and supported by federal housing policy. And many Baltimoreans, were forced to move as the city's infrastructure changed. The rate of demolition rose from 600 households a year throughout the 1950s to 800 in the early 1960s. The number reached 2,600 per year in the late 1960s, as sites were cleared for expressways, new schools, and public housing projects. Impoverished black populations were disproportionately affected. Black residents began to set the stage for the civil rights movement.

Parts of Maryland grew more violent against blacks as they demanded their rights. In 1963, for example, race riots in Cambridge erupted when a group of college students, organized under the auspices of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, clashed with pro-segregation police and residents as they began to throw rocks at white businesses who refused to serve black customers. Again in 1967, riots erupted when black residents clashed with police after a speech by H. Rap Brown, a prominent activist who called for the forceful taking of businesses that discriminated against black residents.

After the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Memphis, on April 4, 1968, Maryland reacted similarly to the rest of the country with riots, discord, and great sadness. Baltimore, for example, began violent outbreaks on April 6, that started with the destruction of businesses and fires being set. For several days and nights, the city was marred with unrest, as police, national guardsmen, and state troopers set up locations in various parts of the city to control the rioting. Finally, the rioting ended on April 8. Baltimore experienced "its greatest unnatural disaster of the second half of the twentieth century—looting and arson on a massive, unprecedented scale. The grim toll: six dead; more than 700 people injured; 5,500 arrested; 1,050 businesses looted, vandalized, or obliterated by fire; and an estimated \$13.5 million in property damages" (Yockel 2007). In 2017, that amount would be over \$96 million in property damages.

### **Police Brutality**

Maryland gained national attention surrounding the issue of police brutality. On April 12, 2015, Gray—a black man—died after being arrested and taken into custody by police. Gray was arrested with the charge of carrying a weapon. Police alleged that he was carrying a switchblade, illegal according to Baltimore law. While in custody, Gray fell into a coma, and eventually died a week later, with the official cause being injuries to his spinal cord. Gray's death was mysterious at first, as eyewitnesses recounted the use of too much force when he was arrested by police. Later investigation revealed that he had sustained spinal cord injuries after being restrained incorrectly by police and while in police custody. Medical examiners concluded Gray's death was a homicide by police because officers did not follow safety procedures.

There were six officers involved. Three were black, and three were white. All were suspended without pay, and charged with a myriad of crimes from depraved indifference to manslaughter to illegal arrest. Baltimore erupted, and after a major protest ended with 34 arrests and injuries to officers, Governor Larry Hogan

declared a state of emergency and a citywide curfew. He also deployed the National Guard to the city. Eventually, the curfew was lifted on May 3, and the National Guard withdrew from the city. Several months later in September 2015, the city of Baltimore settled with the family. None of the officers charged was found guilty of their charges. Three were acquitted, and charges were dropped against the remaining three.

The Gray case played out in the media and drew attention to issues surrounding police brutality against blacks. It joined a litany of cases where centuries of maltreatment, inequality, and social discontent culminated into protests outside Maryland in shows of solidarity, calls for peace, and racial anger that blacks were still fighting for and being denied civil rights due to them as first-class citizens.

### **The Future**

Maryland, like other parts of the United States, is a state with a checkered racial past. Its history of racial strife, and the struggle for racial equality, is most notable in the social relations between white, Native, and African Americans. In times when race relations have waxed or waned, Maryland has continued to contribute to an understanding of racial dynamics unlike any other state. For example, Maryland is home to many prominent activists and leaders important to understanding race, such as Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, and Thurgood Marshall. However, it is also at times a hotbed for tougher case studies in race. The city of Baltimore, from its inception, has been the policy laboratory for many attempts to bring about equality and understanding about race and also a public case study on the conditions that contribute to racial tension. If the fascinating history of this state is any indication of its future, the time will continue to show the state's role in advancing dialogues on race in the United States and beyond.

## **NOTABLE FIGURES**

### **Marshall, Thurgood (1908–1993)**

Thurgood Marshall is best known for his work in seeking equality under the law for black, poor, and other disenfranchised citizens. However, his life was a testament to his own personal struggles for those same ideals. Born on July 2, 1908, in Baltimore, Maryland, Marshall grew up under segregation laws. Baltimore in the early 1900s was a place where segregation determined where residents went to school, received medical services, and even traveled. His father worked as a service worker in a club, and his mother was a kindergarten teacher. Marshall, a good student who often got into trouble, loved the law. He would often discuss the cases from the local courts that his father talked about over dinner.

He finished high school in 1926, later attending Lincoln University. In 1930, he graduated with honors and applied to the University of Maryland's law school. Though he more than met all the entrance requirements, he was rejected. Instead, he applied to the law school at Howard University, an HBCU (historically black college or university). There he met his mentor and future colleague, Charles Houston, a notable civil rights figure. Marshall completed his law degree in 1933

with accolades. As a newly minted lawyer, Marshall eventually took a job with the Baltimore chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He worked alongside his mentor, Houston, on cases meant to dismantle the effects of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, a Supreme Court case that ruled the segregation of public facilities was constitutional.

Among Marshall's first cases was a direct challenge to *Plessy*—one similar to his own life. A well-qualified black man had been denied entrance to the law school at the University of Baltimore. In 1936, Marshall and his mentor won the case, and over the course of many decades, Marshall took on the fight to gain racial equality through the use of the court system. In the 1940s, regarding voter suppression of blacks by whites in the 1920s and 1930s, Marshall once wrote, "There is only one way to handle that bunch, and that is to take them into court. This we must do" (O'Donnell 2015, para 1).

And take them to court is what he did. Marshall's first victory before the Supreme Court came in *Chambers v. Florida* (1940), a case where he successfully defended four black men who had been convicted of murder based on statements the police had coerced from them using violence and intimidation. In *Smith v. Allwright*, the Supreme Court struck down the Democratic Party's use of whites-only primary elections in Southern states such as Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Still working as the NAACP's top attorney from 1938 to 1961, but this time in New York, he argued 32 civil rights cases before the Supreme Court and won 29. His landmark victories included *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1948), which outlawed racially restrictive real estate covenants; *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950), which integrated another law school, this time the one at University of Texas; and, most famously, *Brown v. Board of Education*, which overturned the separate-but-equal doctrine.

The 1960s brought about more success for Marshall, when he was appointed to the position of a circuit court judge by then president of the United States John F. Kennedy. After Kennedy's assassination, his successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, appointed him to the position of U.S. solicitor general. The solicitor general is the attorney designated to argue on behalf of the federal government before the Supreme Court. Marshall served two years and won 14 of 19 cases brought before the Supreme Court.

In 1967, President Johnson nominated Marshall to serve on the United States Supreme Court; and on October 2, 1967, Marshall was sworn in as a Supreme Court justice. He was the first black person ever serve as a justice on the Supreme Court's bench. Marshall spent the last 24 years of his career on the Supreme Court, but according to historians, the job was not a good match for him. According to one writer, "The Court's cloistered halls muffled his belly-laughs-and-backslaps personality. His leading biographer, Juan Williams, devotes only 54 pages of his 400-page book to Marshall's unhappy years in chambers, and those are not flattering. Studies of the Court in the 1970s and 1980s reveal an embittered man cut off from the outside world and dispirited by the ascendant conservatism of the Burger and Rehnquist Courts. Marshall was not effective in building coalitions with conservative justices—he wrote more dissents than majority opinions. He developed an unnerving habit of baiting his colleagues in a slave-boy dialect" (Haygood 2015, 347–48).

Marshall was not only about civil rights. He helped decide many cases about women's rights and reproductive rights, too, such as *Roe v Wade* in 1973, which made abortion legal, and a year earlier, *Furman v. Georgia*, which led to a moratorium on the death penalty. Marshall retired from the Supreme Court in 1991. He died on January 24, 1993, at the age of 84.

### **Tubman, Harriet (1822–1913)**

In 2016, it was announced the face of Harriet Tubman would be on the \$20 bill. Many applauded this, as she is renowned as a leader for women's rights and racial equality. Harriet Tubman is likely best known for her work with the Underground Railroad and with women's suffrage. Her nickname is "Moses," due to her leadership in freeing so many slaves from enslavement in the South to freedom in the North and Canada.

She was an activist, abolitionist, and spy, among others titles. The Underground Railroad was a network of people who helped slaves escape from states where slavery was legal to Northern states and Canada where slavery was outlawed. The network was in existence from approximately the late 1700s, but grew stronger as conflicts between abolitionists and slave-supporting groups increased in the 1830s. Though only an infinitesimal number of blacks actually used the Underground Railroad to escape to freedom, and though the most active of the network members were free blacks, Tubman helped over 300 slaves escape to freedom. She risked her own life 19 times, returning to the southern United States, even though there was a bounty on her own head for helping slaves to freedom.

Tubman was born a slave in Dorchester County, in approximately 1822, as Araminta Harriet Ross. Known as "Minty," she was one of nine children, and the exact year of her birth is unknown not only due to poor record keeping regarding slaves, but also due to slave families often being destroyed as family members were bought and sold. Three of Tubman's own sisters were sold into slavery, and when other attempts were made to sell Tubman, her father resisted.

The resistance of her father, as with many slaves, often led to violence. For Tubman, the effects of violence lasted for the rest of her life. Not only was she permanently scarred from whippings, but she also suffered seizures for the duration of her life, which resulted from when she was hit in the head with a weight during her childhood. Though she later received brain surgery to correct these episodes, she still had aftereffects. Further, she also suffered debilitating headaches and near catatonic states as a result of abuse by slave owners.

Maryland's precarious relationship with slavery in terms of many slaves already becoming free even before the legal end to slavery was apparent in Tubman's family. For example, the status of whether or not a person was officially a slave was determined by the status of the mother. If a person's mother was a slave, then that person was, too, regardless of whether other family members were free. Tubman's father was eventually freed when his owner died. However, her mother was not. Her father continued to work for his previous owners, but could not purchase his family's freedom or make the owners honor the agreements to free his family, even after the head of the household died. Tubman remained a slave. In 1844, she

married a freeman, John Tubman. Little is known about her children, except that in Maryland they would have been considered slaves because she as their mother was.

Five years after marrying John, Tubman ran away and escaped to Pennsylvania, along with two of her brothers. Though her brothers lost their nerve and returned to the Maryland, Tubman did not, and she vowed to free her family and others seeking freedom. She eventually achieved her goal and brought her parents and siblings to freedom. Her husband, however, decided not to move with Tubman. He remarried and remained free in Maryland. Tubman's work with the Underground Railroad continued, however, and in 1850, when the Fugitive Slave Act made it legal to capture free slaves in the northern United States, Tubman rerouted the network into Canada.

But Tubman did work beyond the network as well. During the Civil War, she worked as a nurse and a cook. She made history as she became the first woman to lead an armed expedition. In her role as a scout and spy, she helped free more than 700 slaves. In 1859, she moved near Auburn New York. Despite her prominence, she was never rich, and she sought to make a living outside her service of freeing others. She ran a boarding house and tried a series of other ways to pay off her debts.

After the war, she remarried, this time a man named Nelson Davis. He was 22 years her junior, and a veteran of the war. He met her when he boarded in her house and worked as a bricklayer there in Auburn. In 1874, they adopted a girl, whom they named Gertie. They remained happily married until his death from tuberculosis in 1888. She was eventually able to receive a pension from her second husband's death as well as donations and help from friends and admirers of her work.

In her later years, Tubman became involved in the women's suffrage movement. She often spoke of her work during the Civil War and used her contributions in order to build a case for women's equality. She inspired many famous suffragettes, including Susan B. Anthony and Emily Howland. In 1897, she was honored for her work in Boston.

As the nineteenth century drew to a close, Tubman donated part of her land to a church and to a home for the aged. In 1913, she died there of pneumonia. She was buried with full military honors at Fort Hill Cemetery in Auburn, New York.

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# 22

## Massachusetts

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Donnetrice C. Allison

### CHRONOLOGY

#### 1620

William Bradford and 101 other English separatists and merchants sail from Plymouth, England, to the area known today as Massachusetts; they call it Plymouth after the town from which they sailed

#### 1630

Governor John Winthrop and another group of English settlers seeking their fortunes and religious freedom land in the Massachusetts Bay area; Winthrop settles in an area now known as Medford, along the Mystic River, a few miles north of downtown Boston

#### 1636

William Pynchon settles in Western Massachusetts, naming the settlement Springfield after his hometown in England

#### 1636

The Massachusetts General Court establishes Harvard College in Cambridge, Massachusetts

#### 1637

The Pequot War ends with the Massacre at Mystic, where English forces attack members of the Pequot tribe in the middle of the night and burn down their fort; hundreds of Pequots are killed, and hundreds more are sold into slavery in the West Indies

#### 1638

The first “documented” enslaved African is brought to Massachusetts to serve students at Harvard; the slave is owned by Nathaniel Eaton, Harvard’s first instructor and school master

## **410 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

**1641**

The Massachusetts Body of Liberties formally endorses the ownership and sale of human property, making Massachusetts the first colony in North America to do so.

**1655**

Harvard erects a small brick building to be known as the “Indian College” in an effort to assimilate some of Native people to Christianity and English customs; it is hoped these men will help assimilate other Natives

**1656**

Fearing the possibility of a slave uprising, the Massachusetts General Court reverses an earlier decision and prohibits Africans from arming or training with the militia

**1665**

Caleb Cheeshahteumuck becomes the first and only Native American to graduate from Harvard College during the colonial period

**1673**

The General Court forbids whites from trading or engaging in commerce with Africans

**1693**

The Society of Negroes, a self-help organization, is founded in Boston

**1700**

Samuel Sewall, the Massachusetts chief justice, publishes *The Selling of Joseph*, a book that advances both moral and economic reasons for abolishing the African slave trade

**1754**

A colonial census counts almost 1,000 enslaved Africans in Boston

**1761**

Phillis Wheatley arrives in Boston on a slave ship and is purchased by John and Susanna Wheatley

**1764**

African Americans are granted the right to vote in Boston

**1770**

Crispus Attucks, a man believed to be of African and Native American ancestry, is one of those slain in the Boston Massacre on March 5

**1773**

Phillis Wheatley, a slave of the Wheatley Family in Boston, writes the first known book of poetry by an African American; the book is published in London

**1774**

On March 8, the Massachusetts General Assembly enacts a law forbidding the importation of black slaves; the law is suspended by the royal governor

**1775**

On April 19, free blacks fight alongside white Minutemen in the initial skirmishes of the Revolutionary War at Lexington and Concord

**1775**

On June 17, two African Americans—Peter Salem and Salem Poor—are commended for their service with the American forces at Bunker Hill

**1778**

Phillis Wheatley is legally freed on the death of her master

**1780–1783**

The Massachusetts State Constitution provides for equality for all men; the first test cases under the new constitution of African Americans Quock Walker and Mumbet (Elizabeth) Freedom lead to a declaration that slavery is unconstitutional

**1787**

Prince Hall, a free black man, petitions the Boston School Committee for a separate school for “colored” children

**1788**

Massachusetts enters the Union as the sixth state on February 6

**1796**

The African Society is established in Boston

**1815**

Abiel Smith, a wealthy white businessman, dies and leaves money in his will for the establishment of an African school in Boston

**1822**

The ship *Industry*, commanded by Absalom Boston, a man of black and Native American background, sets sail from Nantucket on a whaling voyage with an all-black crew

**1825**

The Massachusetts General Colored Association, led by David Walker, is founded to work for the abolition of slavery and the improvement of conditions for blacks

**1832**

On February 22, a group of “females of color” in Salem form the first women’s antislavery society in the United States

**1838**

Frederick Douglass and his wife Anna arrive in New Bedford, Massachusetts, after escaping enslavement in Maryland; Douglass becomes one of the most well-known and outspoken African American abolitionists of his time

**1845**

Macon B. Allen of Worcester becomes the first African American formally admitted to the bar in any state

## **412 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

**1853**

Sarah Raymond Parker, black woman, is ejected from a Boston theater for refusing to sit in the section reserved for blacks; the theater is later desegregated

**1855**

The state legislature enacts a law integrating all public schools in Massachusetts

**1859**

Lewis Hayden, a former slave, becomes the first black political appointee in the state when he is named messenger to the Massachusetts secretary of state

**1860**

According to the U.S. Census, 2,260 African Americans live in Boston

**1863**

The newly formed 54th Regiment of African American soldiers, which includes Charles and Lewis Douglass—sons of abolitionist Frederick Douglass—parades through the streets of Boston heading toward the ship that would carry them to Charleston, South Carolina

**1865**

On February 7, Massachusetts ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

**1866**

Charles Lewis Mitchell and Edward Garrison Walker become the first blacks elected to the Massachusetts legislature

**1867**

On March 20, Massachusetts ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing full citizenship rights to African Americans

**1869**

On March 12, Massachusetts ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing black men the right to vote

**1870**

Richard Theodore Greener becomes the first African American graduate of Harvard College

**1870**

According to the U.S. Census 3,445 African Americans live in Boston

**1890**

According to the U.S. Census, some 8,000 blacks live in Boston

**1895**

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois becomes the first African American to earn a PhD from Harvard

**1915**

When African Americans in Massachusetts object to the racist film *Birth of a Nation*, Governor Edward Walsh bans the film in Massachusetts outside Boston

**1917**

John Fitzgerald Kennedy, a descendant of Irish immigrants and a future U.S. president, is born in Brookline, Massachusetts, to Joseph Patrick Kennedy and Rose Elizabeth Fitzgerald Kennedy

**1955**

Martin Luther King Jr. earns a PhD in theology from Boston University

**1962**

Edward Brooke is elected attorney general of Massachusetts, becoming the first black man in any state to hold that office

**1963**

On June 18, 3,000 blacks boycott Boston's segregated public schools

**1966**

Edward Brooke is elected to the U.S. Senate from Massachusetts

**1974**

The federal court orders the integration of Boston public schools through a system of busing; massive protests and violence follow, including the firebombing of the Boston offices of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

**1985**

Black Bostonians vote in a referendum to secede from Boston and form a new city, with Roxbury and Dorchester, to be called Mandela; the referendum is voted down

**1988**

Michelle Obama, who later becomes the first African American First Lady, graduates from Harvard University Law School

**1991**

Barack Obama, who later becomes the first African American president of the United States, graduates magna cum laude from Harvard University Law School, where he served as the first African American president of the *Harvard Law Review*

**1992**

Ralph Martin is elected as the first African American district attorney of Suffolk County (Boston)

**2004**

Andrea J. Cabral, an African woman, is elected as the first female sheriff of Suffolk County (Boston)

**2006**

Deval Patrick of Milton is the first African American elected as the governor of Massachusetts

**2008**

Democrat Barack Obama, the first African American nominee of a major party, carries Massachusetts with about 62 percent of the vote

## **414 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **2009**

Henry Louis Gates, a prominent African American professor at Harvard, is arrested at his home in a confrontation with a white officer who responded to a call from a neighbor who thought Gates and his driver were trying to break into the house; President Obama would later invite both Gates and the officer involved in the incident to the White House

### **2012**

According to the Pew Research Center, about 150,000 undocumented immigrants live in Massachusetts

### **2014**

The “I, Too, Am Harvard” campaign is sparked by black students at Harvard to voice the challenges and discrimination they continue to face at the storied institution

### **2014**

Governor Deval Patrick initiates a policy prohibiting Massachusetts state police from holding illegal immigrants at the request of federal immigration officials

### **2016**

Governor Charlie Baker takes steps to reverse the policy of his predecessor which prohibited state police from holding immigrants at the request of U.S. immigration officers

### **2016**

A bill is introduced in the Massachusetts legislature that would allow a driver’s license to be issued to state residents who cannot provide proof of immigration status

### **2016**

Just over 9,500 people, about half of those Massachusetts residents who are eligible, have applied for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program

### **2017**

The only Confederate monument in Massachusetts, found at Fort Warren on George’s Island, is boarded up after the governor expresses a willingness to have it removed

## **NARRATIVE**

### **Colonial Massachusetts**

The story of the arrival of European settlers in the New World in 1620 Plymouth, Massachusetts, has been told to elementary school children for centuries as a feel-good story of friendship, compromise, collaboration, and brotherhood. Children are, even today, given the impression that the relationship between pilgrims and Indians was one of fair trade and equality. And for those children who grew up in Massachusetts, the second English colony established in what ultimately became the United States, a particularly rosy picture is painted to

encourage state pride about where the legendary first Thanksgiving took place. In fact, every November, children in classrooms across America are likely coloring pictures, painting pilgrim hats and dresses, and some are even taking walks around their school buildings to find feathers to create Native American head-dresses. Unfortunately, many of the facts behind the fairytale are often left untold.

According to documented historical accounts, in late 1620 the *Mayflower* landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts, after over two months of sailing rough waters, carrying 102 passengers in search of freedom from the religious persecution they faced in England. The passengers were known as Puritans, a group of Europeans who rejected the official religion of the British monarchy—the Church of England—and sought reforms that were spurned by King James I. The leader of this group of English settlers was William Bradford, who served as governor of Plymouth Colony for several decades. It was aboard the *Mayflower* that Bradford and the other men decided to create the Mayflower Compact, which stated, in part:

And by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices from time to time as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony, unto which we promise all due submission. (*Desperate Crossing* 2006)

The purpose of the compact was twofold: (1) to protect themselves from retaliation by those who had funded the voyage and expected the settlers to join the preestablished Virginia Colony in Jamestown; and, (2) to give them the right to govern themselves in a democratic fashion. What was not taken into consideration, however, was the Native people of the area, which included the Wampanoag, Narragansett, Nipmuc, Pocumtuc, Mahican, and Massachusetts tribes. The settlers' intention was to simply unload the ship, spread out, find plots of land that pleased them, and make it their home. But what about the people for whom the area was already home?

According to one Native historian in the PBS documentary, *The Pilgrims* (2015), when the settlers arrived in Massachusetts, they interpreted what they saw as free and open territory—an unsettled land.

What appeared to them to be as vast, uninhabited wilderness, was a very well-known network of places and home sites and burial sites and sacred sites and mountains with names and stories attached to them . . . they had places where they summered, wintered . . . places where they had hunting camps, where they went fishing, where they went burying, where they got this plant or that plant. The myth that we didn't use the land was just a misperception of the English and probably a purposeful one. We didn't just use it, we had a relationship with it. (*The Pilgrims* 2015)

The English believed that Native people just roamed the land like wild beasts; they did not own the land or guard it, so that meant any territory was free to be settled by newcomers. This is precisely what the English did, all across the state.

Another notable figure in the early establishment of Massachusetts was John Winthrop. Winthrop's first stop, in June 1630, was Salem, Massachusetts, which was governed by John Endecott. Endecott welcomed Winthrop's ships but warned that the winter had been brutal for the settlers. Many had died, and harvest time was still a ways off, so it would be difficult to feed all of the new arrivals.

Winthrop, and a small party of his most trusted companions, did not remain in Salem for long. Shortly after their ship arrived, the men set out to explore the lands southwest of Salem, further inland. They eventually chose to settle in an area called Medford, just a few miles from what is today considered downtown Boston.

Though most of the early settling of Massachusetts took place in the middle and southernmost areas of the eastern shore, in 1636, William Pynchon settled in Western Massachusetts and named the area Springfield, after his hometown in England. According to Green (1888), Pynchon was among those traveling with John Winthrop in 1630. As noted, Winthrop traveled on the lead ship, *Arbella*; on one of the other ships, the *Jewell*, was William Pynchon, his wife, and four children. Also, as noted, the ships first docked in Salem, but like Winthrop, Pynchon was unsatisfied with the crowded town. As such, he settled in the area that became known as Roxbury for several years, but Green contends that the poor soil caused Pynchon to venture further west after he refused to pay taxes for his land in Roxbury. Shortly thereafter, war ensued between the Pequot tribe and Boston area settlers. The fighting continued all the way up through the Connecticut Valley where Pynchon had settled, but he made every effort to stay out of the fray, and he even continued to trade with Indians in the Agawam area of Western Massachusetts. This made him popular with Indians, but unpopular with some settlers.

The practice among European settlers of New England of using slave labor to build up their homes and businesses extended to the founding of the first institution of higher learning in the New World. In 1636, the Massachusetts General Court chartered the first college (Harvard University) in the colonies. As previously noted, under John Winthrop's instructions, Indian captives from the Pequot War were sold into slavery and sent to the West Indies in exchange for black captives. According to Winthrop's own words, the returning ship "brought some cotton, and tobacco and negroes" (Manegold 2010, 29). Additionally, records indicate that Nathaniel Eaton, Harvard's first instructor and headmaster, owned the first documented enslaved African in the colony, documented by virtue of the fact that one of the students levied a complaint that the "Moor" had been found lying in the student's bed. While his presence there was to serve students, many complained that they were the ones being treated as slaves due to poor living conditions, bad food, and regular whippings from the headmaster. By 1639, Eaton was fired, and the institution was restructured, but even in the restructuring, slave labor was very much a part of the institutional plan. As noted by Sollors, Titcomb, and Underwood (1993), in their book, *Blacks at Harvard*, students, professors, and at least two college presidents owned slaves.

### **Pequot War (1634–1638)**

John Winthrop was a key figure in bringing African slaves to North America, but the key catalyst for the "coming together of three races" was the Pequot War (Manegold 2010, 154). According to the 2006 documentary, *Massacre at Mystic*, the Pequots were the most powerful, most feared, and most numerous group of Native people in southern New



England at the time the English settlers arrived in the early seventeenth century. They were also the wealthiest and most politically savvy Native American group in the region. As such, the Pequots initially engaged in trade with the settlers, given that each wanted something that the other possessed—cloth, fur, pottery, beads, etc. However, issues began to emerge because the English settlers perceived their way of life and their religious perspective as superior to that of the Natives. Because the Native people did not erect churches and monuments as visual symbols of their spirituality, Puritans came to believe that Natives did not have any spirituality at all. They began to see them as savages, which justified the initiation of war by the Puritans. The war resulted in the destruction of the Pequots, with many killed and hundreds sold into slavery in the West Indies and others sent as captives to the various tribes that had allied with the settlers during the war.

Unfortunately, some of the other Native tribes allied with the English settlers against the Pequots, and several bloody battles ensued. The bloodiest of all occurred on May 26, 1637, when settlers from Massachusetts and Connecticut, along with their Mohegan and Narragansett allies, attacked a Pequot fort in Mystic, Connecticut, just before dawn, killing hundreds of men, women, and children. Neighboring Pequot tribes, who arrived on the scene after the massacre, were overwhelmed by what they saw. The moment was beyond the comprehension of the Native people. “They never fought wars to wipe out another group” (History Channel, *Ten Days That Unexpectedly Changed America. Massacre at Mystic*. 2006). Even the Natives who were allied with the English never expected such a slaughter, particularly of women and children. As a result of the slaughter, Harvard College acquired “about two thousand acres of land” (History Channel 2006, 35).

Another aspect of the restructuring of the Massachusetts College, after the firing of Nathaniel Eaton, was the naming of the institution in 1639. Harvard College, as it came to be known, was named after Puritan minister, Reverend John Harvard, who left “a library of more than 200 books to further the training of the ministry” after his death from tuberculosis in 1638 (Wilder 2013, 23). Apparently, Reverend Harvard perceived the institution as a training ground for future ministers and a place of conversion for Indians. Wilder notes that the institution became “a symbol of Christianity’s success” (2013, 23). On the other hand, the institution was becoming more fully immersed in the slave trade.

In the aftermath of the Pequot War, Governor Winthrop documented the sale of hundreds of women and children, a dozen of whom were traded to [Patrick] Copeland. The minister recruited British students from the West Indian plantations for Winthrop, making Harvard the first in a long line of North American schools to target wealthy planters as a source of enrollments and income . . . New England and its college were producing scores of young men who coveted futures in the British Caribbean as planters and traders (Wilder 2013, 30–31).

Massachusetts was the first colony in North America to “formally endorse the ownership and sale of human property” when in 1641 the Massachusetts Body of Liberties defined slaves as “lawful captives taken in just wars, and such strangers as willingly sell themselves, or are sold to us” (Manegold 2010, 46). Such language made those very pious and God-fearing Puritans comfortable, in that it

justified their ownership of Indian and African slaves in terms of the collateral damage of “just” war and of financial necessity to help build up the colony. This was the rise of American capitalism.

The Puritans also satisfied themselves with the notion that they were Christianizing savages. They set up schools for Indian children “to learn the ways of the Christian God and to swear loyalty to the English and their government” (Manegold 2010, 26). And in 1655, the Indian College at Harvard was built. It was the “first brick structure on Harvard Yard.” Furthermore, in the name of full acculturation, Native students who attended the Indian College were required to dress in “English clothes,” speak the way English spoke, and believe as the English believed. This attempt at cultural annihilation, however, was not as successful as the English hoped. Ten years after opening, the Indian College graduated only one student, Caleb Cheeshahteumuck. In 1693, the college was unceremoniously closed, and the bricks were reused for other buildings.

Historians believe that during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, hundreds of enslaved Africans lived in Massachusetts. They do not all agree, however, on an exact figure. One problem was in the accuracy of the record keeping—the word “servant” was often substituted for “slave.” Nonetheless, there were many Natives and Africans slaves in New England working at any number of jobs, including as cooks, carpenters, blacksmiths, woodsmen, and weavers. Some worked in the home and some in the fields, and some were well treated, while others were not. Unruly slaves were often sold to plantations in the South or to the West Indies, where conditions for slaves were generally harsher than in New England. New Englanders were fully involved in the development of the Atlantic slave trade. Trade with the West Indies in human cargo was, in large part, how Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire were built.

### **Phillis Wheatley**

One of the first notable Africans sold into the Massachusetts system of enslavement was Phillis Wheatley in 1761, more than a century after the practice had become widely acceptable. She was just a child, less than 10 years old, bought to serve John and Susanna Wheatley in their later years. The couple named the child after the ship that carried her to them, and because Phillis was sickly, she was “spared from hard toil” (Sollors, Titcomb, and Underwood 1993, 9). In fact, the Wheatleys even allowed Phillis to learn to read and write, and Mrs. Wheatley assisted Phillis in publishing her writings. Phillis published her first poem in 1767 and a book of poems in 1773—the first by an African in America. Phillis was eventually freed after the death of Mrs. Wheatley, but she too died about 10 years later at only about 30 years old. She was buried in an unmarked grave in relative obscurity, and records indicate the Thomas Jefferson called her writings, “below the dignity of criticism” (Wilder 2013, 192). He asserted that religion was the only reason she was notable, but he refused to call her a poet. And by all accounts, it is likely that the reason her mistress allowed her to write and travel and publish is

because much of her work was in deference to English superiority and Christianity. In fact, in her poem about Harvard College, she wrote:

‘Twas not long since I left my native shore  
The land of errors, and Egyptian gloom:  
Father of Mercy, ‘twas thy gracious hand  
Brought me in safety from those dark abodes. (Wilder 2013, 10)

### **The Revolution to the Civil War**

Phillis Wheatley was also in Massachusetts during a time of great unrest and sociopolitical upheaval, leading up to the American Revolutionary War. The British Parliament had begun levying severe taxes on the colonies, and the Sons of Liberty emerged as a force to protest what were deemed as unjust laws. Manegold describes the Sons of Liberty as “an organized force intent on resisting British acts that worked against the colony’s best interests” (2010, 206). It was under the leadership of this group that protests broke out in Boston during March 1770. Protesters threw snowballs and rocks at British soldiers, who had begun occupying the area in order to enforce British laws. Crispus Attucks, a black man who had escaped slavery years earlier, was among the crowd. Historical accounts state that he “stirred the crowd with talk of liberty,” and as a result, he became the first to lose his life in the name of Revolution (Manegold 2010, 206). The obvious irony is that he was once enslaved by the very people whom he spoke up for that night. Ten other protesters were also shot that evening, and five lost their lives—including Attucks—in what became known as the Boston Massacre. The Sons of Liberty were also believed to be responsible for the Boston Tea Party three years later. The event, whereby protesters destroyed an entire shipment of tea sent by the East India Company, is coined by many as the impetus for war. But there were unintended consequences of the colonists’ rumblings about being under the heel of Great Britain. Many of them began using the term “slavery” to refer to what was happening to them. In fact, in 1771, a journalist for the *Boston Gazette* asserted that “No man of dignity would ever submit to the disgraceful state of slavery” (Manegold 2010, 208). And like Attucks, many blacks in Massachusetts, both enslaved and free, began calling for the abolishment of slavery in tandem with European colonists calling for freedom from the British crown.

The American Revolutionary War officially began in Massachusetts in April 1775. By October, George Washington and several other generals voted unanimously to “reject all slaves” from fighting in the war. However, the decree was short-lived, as “the raw need for men proved more compelling than shared prejudice” (Manegold 2010, 225). Additionally, the British were offering black men freedom in exchange for their loyalty as fighters. In response, Washington began allowing free blacks to enlist, but he remained resistant to freeing enslaved black men and giving them weapons with which to fight. The war finally came to an end in 1783, but slavery in Massachusetts did not, at least not officially. It simply

“petered out,” as “less and less could any owner claim he had a legal right to own another human” (Manegold 2010, 235). There was no official mandate or new laws enacted; gradually, over time some 5,000 slaves were freed in Massachusetts, though freedom, however welcome, brought with it no assurance of full acceptance within Massachusetts society.

On the other hand, many of the Europeans, who were deemed “loyal” to the crown and who had abandoned their homes and property in the colonies, received reparations. In fact, America’s new Congress stipulated that each state “provide for the restitution of all estates, rights, and properties, which have been confiscated. Similarly, on February 14, 1783, a former slave known as Belinda, petitioned the Massachusetts General Court asking for ‘a pension from her owner’s sizable estate’ ” (Manegold 2010, 236). Although the court ruled in her favor—a payment of 15 pounds and 12 pence per year—she only received one payment and no additional records of her exist after her final court appearance.

Growing up in Massachusetts, the story of the state’s slave past was so fully and thoroughly erased that students heard little to nothing of it in school. Education in state history during colonial times only included the American Revolution, minus the hypocrisies, and the abolitionists’ activities that followed; chief among them was Frederick Douglass.

Interestingly, while Massachusetts is noted as having been directly involved in the origins of African enslavement in America, it is also one of the states most actively involved in the abolitionist movement. Further, it is also the first state to establish an all-black military regiment during the Civil War, the 54th Massachusetts. Abolitionist governor John A. Andrew of Massachusetts issued the Civil War’s first call for black soldiers. Black men came in droves from various states to join the regiment, as did Frederick Douglass’s sons, Charles and Lewis. On May 28, 1863, the 1,007 black soldiers and 37 white officers of the 54th Massachusetts gathered in the Boston Common and prepared to travel South. On July 18, 1863, the 54th Massachusetts joined other Union regiments in launching a frontal attack against Fort Wagner. In this engagement, the unit lost 20 killed, 125 wounded, and 102 missing, most of who were likely killed—about 40 percent of the regiment’s strength. Colonel Robert G. Shaw, the regiment’s white commander, was killed on the parapet of Fort Wagner and buried with his men.

### **The Late Nineteenth Century to the Present**

Other firsts that occurred in Massachusetts after the Civil War included the first African American graduate of Harvard College, Richard T. Greener, who also attended the private preparatory school, Phillips Andover Academy, before matriculating to Harvard. Greener graduated in 1870, more than two centuries after the doors of the institution first opened, and only five years after the abolishment of slavery. Twenty-five years later, Harvard would graduate its first African American PhD, one of the most vocal scholars on discrimination and desegregation of the twentieth century, William Edward Burghardt Du Bois. Du Bois was born in Massachusetts in 1868. In 1896, his dissertation, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade*, was published in the Harvard Historical Series. Just a few

short years later, Du Bois would publish one of the most notable books on racism and the impact of racism ever written, *The Souls of Black Folk*, where he penned the infamous line, “The Problem of the 20th Century is the problem of the color line” (Du Bois 1903/2015, 12). On his time at Harvard, Du Bois asserted:

Following the attitudes which I had adopted in the South, I sought no friendships among my white fellow students, nor even acquaintanceships. Of course I wanted friends, but I could not seek them. . . . I did not seek them, and naturally they did not seek me. I made no attempt to contribute to the college periodicals since the editors were not interested in my major interests. . . . My friends and companions were drawn mainly from the colored students of Harvard and neighboring institutions, and the colored folk of Boston and surrounding towns. With them, I led a happy and inspiring life. . . . We met and ate, danced and argued, and planned a new world. (Sollors, Titcomb, and Underwood 1993, 74–75)

Massachusetts was also home to what some consider to be America’s royal family, the Kennedys, descendants of Irish Catholic immigrants to the United States. Joseph Patrick Kennedy Sr. was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1888 to an accomplished businessman. He also became a successful businessman and made much of his fortune in the stock market. Joseph Sr. later set his sights on politics and served as chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission during the Roosevelt administration. With Rose Elizabeth Fitzgerald, the eldest daughter of Boston Mayor John F. Fitzgerald, Joseph Sr. raised nine children. The second of their nine children was John Fitzgerald Kennedy (JFK). Born in Brookline, Massachusetts, in 1917, JFK went on to become the 35th president of the United States, from 1961 until his assassination in 1963. In short, the roots of the Kennedy family run deep in Massachusetts, including the fact that JFK, his father Joseph Sr., and his older brother Joseph Jr. were all graduates of Harvard College.

In addition to its historic involvement in both the initiation and the abolition of slavery, Massachusetts is also known for excellence in education, from private preparatory schools like Phillips Andover Academy to colleges and universities like Harvard College and Boston University. As such, Massachusetts has educated some the country’s most notable leaders, including leaders of the black community such as, W.E.B. Du Bois, Martin Luther King Jr., and Barack and Michelle Obama. In 1955, Martin Luther King Jr. earned a PhD in Theology from Boston University. In 1988, Michelle Obama graduated from Harvard University Law School. In 1991, Barack Obama, the 44th president of the United States, graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University Law School, where he served as the first African American president of the *Harvard Law Review*.

On the other hand, Massachusetts is also known for segregation, particularly in the capital city of Boston. Of course, this was not legal segregation like the Jim Crow South, but cultural and economic segregation. Boston leaders in the 1960s and 1970s called it “de facto segregation.” And in a 2016 article in the *Atlantic*, Matthew Delmont explains:

Understanding the history of school desegregation in Boston and other Northern cities makes it clear that so-called “de facto” residential and school segregation in the North were anything but innocent. While civil-rights advocates initially

promoted this distinction between “Southern-style” and “Northern-style” segregation to build a political consensus against Jim Crow laws in the South, the de jure/de facto dichotomy ultimately made it possible for public officials, judges, and citizens in the North and South to deny legal responsibility for the visible realities of racial segregation. (Delmont 2016)

Even in the twenty-first century, Massachusetts, and particularly Boston, is noted for racial segregation. In 2016, the Boston–Cambridge–Newton metropolitan area was the nation’s seventh most racially segregated area, slightly ahead of Nashville and Detroit, but worse than Birmingham, Alabama, and Kansas City, Missouri (Steele 2016, *MassLive.com*). Again, there are many ironies as regards racial relations in Massachusetts, but it is clear that while blacks in Massachusetts enjoyed social and political freedoms much sooner than blacks throughout the country, they were commonly relegated to the lowest economic rungs in society. Elizabeth Pleck called this the “hidden processes of exclusion and unsuccessful competition” (1979, 199). She notes that heading into the twentieth century, “8 out of 10 black Boston workers held menial jobs, the lowest paying jobs to be found. These dual racial barriers then slowly but inevitably helped create a class or working poor, or blacks with even lower incomes than Boston’s white immigrants” (Pleck 1979, 199).

Hence, years of economic exclusion and unwritten segregation led to massive protests and violent demonstrations over the 1970s busing system. As previously



Police restrain a crowd of people as a school bus carrying African American students arrives at South Boston High School on September 12, 1974. The massive attempt at integration was met with much hostility, with thousands of Boston schoolchildren refusing to enter the court-ordered desegregated schools on the first day of classes. (Bettmann/Getty Images)

noted, when William Pynchon first arrived in Massachusetts, he settled in Roxbury, named for the fact that there were so many rocks in the soil. Ultimately, Pynchon found the area to be unsatisfactory, and he moved to Western Massachusetts. In fact, according to Pynchon, the town of Roxbury was “not equally rated with others” (Green 1888, 6). Today, more than 60 percent of the population in Roxbury is black. Hence, the area was not good enough for Pynchon and his family, but it became commonplace for blacks to be relegated to that area. And many young residents of Roxbury were being bused to schools in more predominately white districts in the 1970s.

Efforts to better integrate schools were offset by the growth of largely-white, suburban areas as well as by discriminatory housing practices like redlining, which helped ensure that minority students were concentrated in particular school districts. Between 1968 and 1980, the number of black students in predominantly white schools actually went down in Massachusetts. . . . Massachusetts now has seven times as many highly segregated schools as it had two decades ago. (Horowitz 2014)

In short, several of the racial issues and challenges faced in the state of Massachusetts in its early establishment have lingering effects today. In fact, an online photo campaign emerged in 2014 among black students at Harvard College titled, “I, Too, Am Harvard,” patterned after Langston Hughes’s 1926 poem, “I, Too, Sing America.” The photos of black Harvard students holding various signs showing examples of ways they had been questioned and marginalized, was uploaded to the website, Tumblr, with the following description:

*I, Too, Am Harvard* is a photo campaign highlighting the faces and voices of black students at Harvard College. Our voices often go unheard on this campus, our experiences are devalued, our presence is questioned—this project is our way of speaking back, of claiming this campus, of standing up to say: We are here. This place is ours. We, TOO, are Harvard. The #itooamharvard photo campaign is inspired by *I, Too, Am Harvard*, a play based on interviews with members of the black community exploring and affirming our diverse experiences as black students at Harvard College. (Tumblr.com)

Again, the ironies are many, because while Massachusetts can boast its early abolition of the practice of black enslavement and some of the first wealthy and successful blacks in the country, it must also face its culpability in the murder and displacement of thousands of Native Americans, the initiation of the Atlantic slave trade, and continued racial and economic segregation today. Moreover, while the state can boast educating some of the most influential people in this country, black students at Harvard still feel marginalized. As Cromwell notes, there was a time during the height of freedom, abolition and reconstruction that “Boston was in many respects the capital of Negro America” (1991, 196). However, by 1950, Cromwell describes Boston as “having to play catch up with other northern and some southern communities in the progress of race relations and in opportunities for social mobility” (1991, 196). As such, the state’s history is tinged with both pride and disdain.

**NOTABLE FIGURES****Douglass, Frederick (1818–1895)**

Records indicate that Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey and his wife Anna arrived in New Bedford, Massachusetts, on September 17, 1838, after having escaped slavery in Maryland. While there, the couple stayed at the home of Nathan and Polly Johnson—free African Americans who were abolitionists—and changed their surname to Douglass. About a year later, Frederick and Anna moved into their own home in what was considered “an African American neighborhood in the West End of New Bedford” (New Bedford Historical Society, Inc.). Later, they found a larger home in an area near the wharf, where Douglass often worked. The family became active with the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and Douglass became a regular speaker there, “articulating his beliefs about slavery and freedom” (New Bedford Historical Society, Inc.). One of his speeches drew the attention of a local bookseller, who invited Douglass to speak in Nantucket. While in Nantucket in 1841, Douglass attended a convention of the Massachusetts Antislavery Society. The audience was riveted by his words and his experience as a formerly enslaved person. And most importantly, Douglass caught the attention of William Lloyd Garrison, one of the most vocal abolitionists of that era and the initiator of the abolitionist newspaper, the *Liberator*, which Douglass read regularly. Recalling the speech, Garrison said: “I shall never forget his first speech. The powerful impression it created upon a crowded auditorium. . . . I never hated slavery so intensely as at that moment” (Newman 2002, 7). Soon, Douglass was traveling throughout the colonies with Garrison, speaking out against slavery and oftentimes being met with violent protest from proslavery groups. Not only did he risk possible physical injury, but Douglass was also at risk given his new public profile. In essence, he risked his freedom by speaking out.

Frederick Douglass and his family lived in New Bedford, Massachusetts, for a total of six years, from 1838 to 1844, until he fled to England to escape recapture. According to the documentary, *Frederick Douglass*, which aired on the Biography network in 1996, friends of Douglass raised money to purchase him from his Maryland owner so that he could return to America and continue in the cause of abolitionism. When he returned in 1847, he and his family moved to Rochester, New York, where he began publishing the abolitionist newspaper, the *North Star*.

**Winthrop, John (1588–1649)**

John Winthrop was born into the landholding gentry class in Suffolk, England, in 1588. His father owned a 500-acre estate, and he sent John to the finest schools. Winthrop became an attorney and showed no initial interest in leaving his father’s estate in England. Plans changed, however, when the Massachusetts Bay Company obtained a royal charter to develop another colony in New England. Given Winthrop’s recent financial struggles and religious persecution as a Puritan, he decided to join the company.

Winthrop sailed to New England on the *Arbella* in the spring of 1630. His ship was the lead ship of four sailing to the New World, and Winthrop was chosen to



serve as the governor of the new colony upon their arrival, likely because he was born to a prominent family and served in government for two decades. Winthrop's accounts of the journey and his descriptions of the area where he chose to settle were chronicled in a series of journals that were to "frame and define our knowledge of this land for centuries to come" (Manegold 2010, 4).

When Winthrop and his traveling companions arrived, they initially docked in Salem, where they were greeted by John Endecott who governed that area. Salem was already a busy and chaotic place, and the arrival of 400 more colonists on the *Arbella* and the other ships only made matters worse. Winthrop and a small group of his most trusted companions set out to explore the area further inland. He eventually decided on an area along the Mystic River known as Medford, Massachusetts. There, he built a plantation known as Ten Hills Farm. In letters to his wife Margaret, still in England, he described the area as "paradise," declared that because smallpox had annihilated the Native Americans who had previously inhabited the area, "God hath hereby cleared our title to this place" (Manegold 2010, 24). Essentially, Winthrop and many of the other Puritan settlers perceived themselves to be God's chosen people with a divine right to displace the lowly Indian savages, who they believed were not making good use of the land. This is evidenced by Winthrop's description of the Pequot War, which ended in the slaughter of hundreds of Pequot men, women, and children, and the enslavement of survivors, as a "just war" (Manegold 2010, 41). Governor Winthrop was also responsible for supervising the "distribution" of the prisoners, with many scattered throughout New England and others sold and sent to the West Indies. And based on Winthrop's own accounts, those sent to the West Indies were sold in trade for African slaves. This exchange was "the first historical reference to the sale of Blacks upon New England soil" (Manegold 2010, 43). This part of Winthrop's legacy is not often revealed. He has been idolized and idealized in history books as a great settler and establisher of Massachusetts, a prolific writer, historian, and leader, whom President Ronald Reagan considered "a personal hero" (Manegold 2010, 84). Yet, according to historian C.S. Manegold, Winthrop's "city upon a hill" was never "shining," the doors were not all open, and that "early freedom man," though himself free, owned slaves, as did his sons, his grandsons, his friends, and many of his fellow founders, a detail later generations apparently found easier to erase than understand (2010, 84). John Winthrop Sr. died in 1649 at the age of 61.

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# 23

## Michigan

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Martin Kich

### CHRONOLOGY

#### 1765

Following the French defeat in the French and Indian War, a coalition of Native American tribes under the Ottawa Chief Pontiac lays siege to the British garrison at Fort Detroit; although “Pontiac’s Rebellion” is ultimately suppressed, the peace treaty temporarily blocks the American settlement of the trans-Allegheny territories that France has ceded to Great Britain

#### 1794

After the British defeat in the war, another coalition of tribes under the Shawnee chief Blue Jacket and the Miami chief Little Turtle is defeated at the Battle of Fallen Timbers by forces under General “Mad Anthony” Wayne, ending the Northwest Indian War

#### 1813

During the War of 1812, another Shawnee chief, Tecumseh, forms yet another Native American coalition, and, with British forces, captures Fort Detroit, but the tribes are defeated and Tecumseh is killed at the Battle of the Thames in Ontario

#### 1832

The Native American defeat in the Black Hawk War marks the end to organized resistance to white settlement of the Great Lakes region

#### 1834–1837

Successive epidemics of Asian cholera and smallpox devastate the remaining Native American population in Michigan and the Great Lakes region

#### 1863

A race-related draft riot occurs in Detroit, profoundly affecting the city’s psyche and leading to the establishment of a full-time police force in the city

**1865**

On February 3, Michigan ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

**1867**

Michigan ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution on January 16; the amendment secures citizenship for the newly freed slaves

**1869**

Michigan ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution on March 8; the amendment secures voting rights for black men

**1900**

About 4,000 African Americans are living in Detroit

**1910–1930**

The first wave of the Great Migration occurs, and Detroit's African American population increases dramatically to more than 120,000; African Americans still make up less than 7 percent of the city's total population

**1920s**

African Americans are segregated into neighborhoods on the near east side of downtown Detroit; known collectively as the Black Bottom neighborhoods, this area also becomes known as Paradise Valley during the 1920s when Prohibition leads to a flourishing network of illegal clubs that feature most of the major African American entertainers of the period

**1925**

After a mob surrounds the home Dr. Ossian Sweet purchased in a white neighborhood, shots are fired into the crowd, killing one person and wounding several others; in trials that receive national attention, Dr. Sweet, and then his brother, are tried for the shootings, but are defended by Clarence Darrow and found not guilty

**1930s**

The Brewster Housing Projects, later called the Brewster-Douglass Projects, are built in an area adjacent to the Black Bottom neighborhoods of Detroit; a combination of high-rise apartment buildings and two-story townhouses, the Brewster Projects provide affordable and relatively pleasant housing for African Americans eager for any alternative to the housing in the Black Bottom neighborhoods

**1930s**

In the far northwest of Detroit, on undeveloped land at 8 Mile and Wyoming, African Americans gradually develop a neighborhood well away from the Black Bottom neighborhoods

**1936**

The Black Legion, a white supremacist group, is suspected of having killed several dozen people in the Detroit area, but the killing of Charles Poole, a Roman Catholic organizer for the Works Progress Administration, attracts such negative national media attention that the Black Legion, like the Klan, is ultimately undone by its excesses

**1940**

When a developer seeks funding to build a subdivision for whites on land adjacent to the African American neighborhood at 8 Mile and Wyoming, the banks balk at providing financing—until he agrees to separate the proposed development from the African American neighborhood by constructing a wall that is a half mile long, six feet high, and a foot thick

**1942–1945**

During the war years, a “Second Great Migration” brings 400,000 new residents to Detroit, 50,000 of whom are African Americans

**1942**

The Sojourner Truth Public Housing Project is constructed at the periphery of a largely Polish neighborhood in northeastern Detroit; initially designated for African Americans, the housing project becomes a flash point for racial tensions in the city, and after several reversals of position, officials decide to designate the housing project for whites only

**1943**

In June, rigid segregation in housing and in employment in Detroit lead to three days of rioting that only ends after 6,000 federal troops are called in to restore order; 34 people are killed, another 600 are injured, and 1,800 arrests are made

**1950**

Detroit’s population peaks at 1,849,568, making it the fifth most populous city in the United States

**1967**

In late July, a police raid on an after-hours bar in an African American neighborhood of Detroit escalates into four days of rioting that leads the governor of Michigan to call in the National Guard and President Lyndon Johnson to send in elements of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions; 43 people are killed, 1,189 people are injured, more than 7,000 people are arrested; and the total property damage is estimated to be between \$40 and \$45 million

**1970s**

The out-migration from Detroit intensifies, with a population loss of 20.5 percent, more than double that of the previous decade

**2000s**

Detroit suffers another 25 percent decline in its population, to 713,777 people, the city’s lowest population since the mid-1910s

**2000**

According to the U.S. Census, Arab Americans comprised nearly 30 percent of the population of Dearborn

**2008**

Kwame Kilpatrick, the African American mayor of Detroit, resigns following his conviction on several state felony charges related to corruption

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### **2013**

Kwame Kilpatrick is convicted on 24 federal felony charges and sentenced to a 28-year term in prison

### **2013**

In March, Michigan governor Snyder declares a fiscal emergency and appoints an emergency manager for Detroit; four months later, the city becomes the largest in U.S. history to declare bankruptcy, and in December, the bankruptcy is approved in court

### **2014**

Governor Snyder signs an executive order creating the Michigan Office for New Americans to encourage immigration to the state

### **2014**

The governor's appointment of an emergency manager effectively sidelines the elected municipal government of Flint; when the new emergency manager decides that the city can economize by going back to using the Flint River as its primary source of water, the resulting lead contamination of the water causes unmeasurable long-term adverse health effects to the city's residents, especially its 13,000 children

### **2016**

Michigan's population is about 5 percent Hispanic

### **2016**

Once a Polish American enclave, Hamtramck has a population that is more than one-half Muslim and is the only city in the United States with a Muslim-majority city council

### **2016**

The illegal immigration issue is seen as a factor in Donald Trump's victory in the state in the 2016 presidential election; Trump won by just over 10,000 votes, with 47.5 percent of the total vote

### **2017**

Detroit, with a population that is 86 percent nonwhite, is named the worst city in the United States in which to live

### **2017**

Latinos comprise 16 percent of the population in Grand Rapids

## **NARRATIVE**

### **Native Americans**

As in almost every state within the United States, the first interracial contacts and conflicts were between Native Americans and Europeans. The estimates of the Native American population in Michigan at the time of the first contacts with French explorers in the early seventeenth century have varied considerably. The most widely accepted estimate is that approximately 15,000 Native Americans

lived in Michigan, accounting for 10–20 percent of the total Native American population of the Great Lakes region. Other researchers have, however, asserted that 10 percent of all of Native Americans living north of what is now Mexico may have lived in Michigan. Whatever the actual total population was, there seems to be general agreement that three-quarters of the Native Americans in Michigan lived in the southern half of the Lower Peninsula. Because most lived in small agricultural communities along the rivers, most of the state was not directly inhabited. But, because of the state's location in the middle of the Great Lakes region, there was a great deal of movement back and forth across the peninsula, even before the arrival of the Europeans. That movement facilitated the spread of European diseases to which the Native Americans had no immunity, and by 1800, it is estimated that the Native American population in the Great Lakes region had declined by at least two-thirds due to deaths by diseases.

Three major tribal groups dominated Michigan. Collectively referred to as the “Three Fires,” these tribal groups included the Potawatomie, who occupied the southern end of the Lower Peninsula, as well as parts of northern Indiana and Ohio; the Ottawa, who occupied much of the rest of the western half of the Lower Peninsula; and, the Ojibwe, or Chippewa, who occupied the rest of the eastern half of the Lower Peninsula and the Upper Peninsula. These tribal groups absorbed or drove out some smaller tribes, and they themselves were pressured by the movement westward of Native American peoples, such as the Iroquois, who were being pushed out of the English colonies along the Atlantic seaboard. Although the tribes were not organized nations in the European sense, the Europeans signed treaties with them as if they were.

The Native American resistance to the loss of their territory and autonomy was manifested in four main conflicts. During the French and Indian War, the tribes in the Great Lakes region generally sided with the French. When the French were defeated, the tribes gathered in a coalition under the Ottawa chief Pontiac. His forces seized a number of small forts and settlements in Michigan, and one of the major turning points in the conflict was the lengthy siege of the British garrison at Fort Detroit. Although “Pontiac's Rebellion” was ultimately suppressed, the peace treaty temporarily blocked the “American” settlement of the trans-Allegheny territories that France had ceded to Great Britain. During the Revolutionary War, the Clark expedition against the British forts in the Midwest never extended into Michigan, but after the British defeat in the war, another coalition of tribes formed under the Shawnee chief Blue Jacket and the Miami chief Little Turtle. In the Northwest Indian War, the forces under General “Mad Anthony Wayne” defeated the Native Americans at the Battle of Fallen Timbers, near present-day Toledo, Ohio. Although most of the battles in this conflict occurred in western Ohio, the conflict spilled over into southern Michigan. During the War of 1812, another Shawnee chief, Tecumseh, formed yet another Native American coalition. With British forces, Tecumseh did manage to capture Fort Detroit, but the Native American coalition that he had inspired disintegrated following his death at the Battle of the Thames in Ontario. By the late 1820s, Native Americans had already ceded their rights to more than half of Michigan's Lower Peninsula, but in response to the Indian Relocation Act, some of the remaining Native Americans in Michigan

did join in the Black Hawk War, a brief but viciously fought, last-ditch effort to stop the advance of European settlement. The Black Hawk War occurred in 1832, and the losses that the remaining tribes suffered in that conflict paled in comparison to the deaths caused by successive epidemics—first of Asian cholera and then of smallpox—that occurred in the 1830s. The devastating effects of these epidemics made relocation to territories west of the Mississippi something of a moot point.

The Native Americans who remained in Michigan were eventually awarded homesteads, if they could prove their Native American ancestry, and, ironically, if they submitted to assimilationist policies that discouraged the maintenance of a sense of Native American culture and identity, while doing nothing to diminish the social and economic stigmas of being Native American. It was not until the 1930s that the federal government officially abandoned these policies. The remnants of the Native American tribal groups in Michigan have reasserted their identity and rights in three ways that have attracted media attention: by applying for licenses to open tribal casinos; by reasserting their rights to tribal lands ostensibly still guaranteed by treaties and filing suit to prevent their sale to mining companies and other corporate interests; and by filing suit to claim the right to free higher education at major universities built on ceded tribal lands.

### **African Americans in the Colonial and Antebellum Periods**

Before the Civil War, there were relatively few African Americans living in Michigan, and a little-acknowledged part of Michigan's history is that a sizable percentage of the African Americans in the state were slaves. Some of the slaves came to the state with Southerners who migrated north, but as the mercantile class in Detroit began to prosper and grow, it became a status symbol to have household slaves. In the decades leading up to the Civil War, the *Detroit Free Press*, then and now the city's major newspaper, took a strong editorial stand against the Abolitionist Movement and presented strongly worded arguments in favor of preserving the status quo on the slavery issue.

Nonetheless, because of Michigan's proximity to Canada and the many points at which the border could be crossed quite easily, Michigan, and in particular Detroit, became an active terminus in the Underground Railroad. In western Michigan, important stations along the Underground Railway were operated by Dr. Nathan Thomas of Kalamazoo, who eventually founded the Republican Party in Michigan, and Elizabeth Chandler of Tecumseh, who had already become one of the notable poets of the Abolitionist Movement by the time she relocated to Michigan with her family. In Detroit, George de Baptiste and the Second Baptist Church, Detroit's first African American religious congregation, played central roles in the Underground Railroad. De Baptiste, an African American born free in Virginia, was a successful entrepreneur who eventually purchased a steamship that greatly facilitated the transportation of fugitive slaves across the Detroit River into Canada.

Although it has not received the attention of the race-related draft riots that occurred in New York and other eastern cities, Detroit was convulsed by such a



riot in early March of 1863. During the riot, two African Americans were killed and dozens of people were injured. Although the violence lacked the scale of what occurred in New York, Detroit was a much smaller city at the time, and the violence had a profound impact on the community's psyche. Most notably, it led to the establishment of a full-time police force in the city.

### **African Americans from the Civil War to World War I**

In the period spanning the era of Reconstruction, the Gilded Age, and the Progressive Era, Detroit experienced steady growth. In addition to its importance as a shipping and commercial center, due to its advantageous geographical location, the city gradually became an industrial center to which raw materials could readily be provided and from which finished products could be shipped efficiently and inexpensively. The city eventually supported a broad range of industries, from cigar making to stove manufacturing. Because of its eventual standing as the automobile manufacturing capital of the world, much attention has been given to the number of wagon makers that flourished in Detroit in the last half of the nineteenth century. But the diversity of the city's industrial base ultimately served the growth of its auto industry as much as, if not more than, the existence and success of its wagon-making shops.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Detroit was the 13th most populous city in the United States. The city had expanded by absorbing adjacent towns until it had one of the largest land areas of any American city. Like most large American cities of the period, its population included a large number of immigrants, but those immigrants may have been more ethnically diverse than in many other large cities. The census of 1900 showed that there were at least 40 ethnicities significantly represented among Detroit's residents. Many of those ethnic groups formed distinct neighborhoods in various parts of the city. But, very notably, there were still only about 4,000 African Americans living in Detroit at that time, and they lived throughout the city, rather than in any easily defined section of the city.

### **The Great Migration**

In the previous two sections of this chapter, I have focused primarily on Detroit. This emphasis will become more pronounced in this section and subsequent sections of the chapter. There have been significant numbers of African Americans in other cities in Michigan—with Flint, Grand Rapids, Pontiac, Saginaw, and Lansing each having African American populations of 20,000 or more. Nonetheless, the great majority of Michigan's African American population has always been concentrated in the city of Detroit, the Detroit Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), and Wayne County. For instance, according to the 2000 census, MSAs account for 82 percent of Michigan's total population, but 98 percent of the state's African American population. The Detroit MSA accounts for 72 percent of Michigan's African American population, and, within the Detroit MSA, Wayne County accounts for 85 percent of the MSA total, with an African American population of 864,627, which amounts to 42 percent of its total population.

By 1930, Detroit's African American population had increased dramatically to more than 120,000 from 1900. African Americans were, however, still a very small percentage of the city's total population. Between 1900 and 1930, the population of Detroit increased from 285,704 to 1,568,662, rising from the 13th most populous city in the United States to the fourth most populous. So, African Americans still represented less than 7 percent of the city's total population, and state-wide, African Americans were about 3.5 percent of the population (Gibson and Jung 2005).

### **Segregation in Housing**

By the end of the 1920s, African Americans were largely confined to just a few Detroit neighborhoods on the near east side of the city. Known collectively as the Black Bottom neighborhoods, this area also became known as Paradise Valley during the 1920s, when Prohibition led to a flourishing network of illegal clubs that featured most of the major African American entertainers of the period.

These neighborhoods were very crowded, and since African Americans were prohibited from living in most other parts of the city, the resurgence of migration from the Deep South during the war years compounded the deplorable conditions in which African Americans of all economic means were increasingly forced to live. Most of the housing in these neighborhoods was older and more dilapidated than that in other parts of the city, but the rents were nonetheless higher than those almost everywhere else in the city. The owners of the properties recognized that there was such great demand for living quarters that there would be considerable competition to rent even the most substandard properties. Those renting the properties were not just paying higher than average rents, but they were also earning lower than average wages and therefore had no extra resources of their own to direct toward even the most basic upkeep of the properties. In fact, because both the property owners and the renters had every incentive to pack as many people as possible into every available unit—and to subdivide units until the square footage per resident reached absurd levels—it was inevitable that the properties would deteriorate more rapidly than normal, in proportion to the overcrowding.

The combination of higher rents and lower wages also meant that most African Americans found it more difficult to save money to buy properties of their own. Indeed, the restrictions that the federal government had imposed on lenders during the Great Depression in order to reduce the number of defaults on mortgages and to safeguard homeowners' investments in their properties had the effect of creating obstacles to home ownership by African Americans. Since there was an undeniable corollary between substandard housing and African American occupancy, the introduction of African American families into a neighborhood was immediately deemed a reason to downgrade the value of other properties in the neighborhood. As a result, homes could not be sold for their previous value because the lenders would not provide mortgages reflecting that value. Moreover, homeowners would find it more difficult to secure home-improvement loans, further degrading the property values in the neighborhood. So, in those instances in which African Americans did manage to accumulate a sufficient down payment

and to meet the income requirements for securing a mortgage, the courts generally cited the lending guidelines established by the federal government and upheld the policies of homeowners' associations that prevented African Americans from purchasing homes in neighborhoods self-defined as white.

In the years preceding World War II, several situations illustrated the pernicious effects of these housing issues. In the 1930s, the Brewster Housing Projects, later called the Brewster-Douglass Projects, were built in an area adjacent to the Black Bottom neighborhoods. A combination of high-rise apartment buildings and two-story townhouses, the Brewster Projects provided affordable and relatively pleasant housing for African Americans eager for any alternative to the housing in the Black Bottom neighborhoods. Unfortunately, in the decade following the war, when the city government committed itself to building new expressways and other urban-renewal projects, the Black Bottom neighborhoods were considered dispensable, even though the plans to provide alternative housing to African Americans crowded into those neighborhoods would repeatedly prove insufficient. The piecemeal fragmentation of the neighborhoods intensified their degradation, and the Brewster-Douglass Projects eventually suffered as much from that degradation as the white homeowners associations feared their neighborhoods would be degraded—though, of course, in this instance, the city government was undermining its own limited solution to an immense and escalating problem.

In the far northwest of Detroit, at 8 Mile and Wyoming, African Americans found undeveloped land that no one objected very strenuously to their purchasing. Unfortunately, because they still had difficulty securing loans to purchase the land and to build homes on it, the homes were built in stages, at best, and in improvised fashion, at worst. The residents often struggled to maintain the properties. On the one hand, the neighborhood demonstrated the ferocity with which African Americans wished to secure the most tangible manifestations of the American

### ***Dr. Ossian Sweet Tried for Murder***

In 1925, Dr. Ossian Sweet managed to purchase a home in a white neighborhood. Sweet had previously lived in Florida and was painfully aware of white mobs lynching African Americans with impunity. Because he expected that there might be a violent reaction to his family's occupancy of the home, he notified the police when they were moving into it, and he stockpiled some weapons in a closet. The day of the move went without incident, but the next day an angry mob surrounded the house. As the shouted threats against the family intensified, pieces of brick were thrown through several windows, and someone inside the house fired shots into the crowd, killing one person and wounding several others. The police, who had not interfered with the mob in any way, quickly arrested most of the adult males in the Sweets' house. Dr. Sweet and his brother were tried for the shootings. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) recognized the significance of the case and retained Clarence Darrow to provide their defense. Sweet's trial ended in a hung jury, while his brother was found not guilty. The case received national attention, and the verdicts were generally seen as just, but, ironically, the notoriety reinforced the sense that segregated housing needed to be preserved.

Dream. On the other hand, the resulting neighborhood served to confirm the worst stereotypes about African American home ownership. In fact, in 1940, when a developer sought funding to build a subdivision for whites on adjacent land, the banks balked about providing the financing—until he agreed to separate the proposed development from the African American neighborhood by constructing a wall that was a half mile long, six feet high, and a foot thick. Most of the wall still stands today, though parts of it have been covered with murals both highlighting and countering its purpose. Although “Black Flight” from Detroit has now extended well into the suburbs north of the wall, it stands as a symbol of the racial segregation that remains the most significant issue for the city and many of its surrounding suburbs.

### **Segregation in Employment**

The segregation in employment not only paralleled the segregation in housing but actually resulted, at least in part, from the segregation in housing. The growth of the auto industry attracted both African Americans and whites to migrate to Detroit from the Deep South and Appalachia. But when they arrived in Detroit, they did not find equal opportunities for employment. Very consistently, African Americans were either excluded from entire industries and entire position classifications within industries. Indeed, even in industries in which they found employment, their opportunities often varied widely from plant to plant. One might argue that since many of the African American migrants had formerly been employed in agriculture, they lacked the training to do more skilled and better-paid jobs. But they were competing against whites from the same regions of the United States, most of whom had also been employed in agriculture, and with European immigrants, relatively few of whom had technical skills or, for that matter, even basic fluency in English when they had arrived in the city. Indeed, even when African Americans had technical training and could demonstrate skills, they were typically given unskilled jobs.

Many of the African Americans who arrived in Detroit in the 1910s and 1920s found employment with the Ford Motor Company. Ford had developed a reputation for offering good wages under good working conditions. But in his plants, as elsewhere, African Americans were given the most menial, the most physically grueling, the dirtiest, and the most dangerous jobs, putting them not only at the bottom of the salary scale but also at most risk to losing their employment due to injury. Ford had cultivated relationships with African American pastors who would recommend job candidates to him. This arrangement gave the pastors extra influence with their congregations, and it made it more likely that the African Americans hired by Ford would be conscientious and compliant employees. Moreover, in the first half of the twentieth century, labor activism was associated with socialism and communism, which were associated with atheism. Therefore, most Protestant churches were opposed to labor unions, and as a result, few African Americans were involved in the formation of the unions for auto workers and other industrial workers.

Aside from Ford, the employment of African Americans in the auto plants was extraordinarily uneven. Some plants, for the most part foundries, had very high percentages of African Americans in their workforces. Others employed a few token African Americans or none at all. In addition to the major automakers, Detroit had several other major industries, including several major chemical plants. These enterprises typically employed no African Americans. Moreover, throughout the city, there were hundreds of small plants and shops that either performed contracted work for the automakers or met other needs in the large metropolis. Very few of these small plants and shops employed African Americans. They were typically privately owned enterprises with fewer than 50 employees, and the owners and managers typically relied on their current employees to recommend those who might fill job openings. This meant that blood relations or acquaintances of current employees were most likely to fill the open positions. And since there were very few interracial families in the city and African Americans could not live in the same neighborhoods, attend the same churches, or belong to the same social clubs and civic organizations as whites, it was extremely unlikely that they would be hired into such plants or shops. Furthermore, because racial tension was so close to the surface of daily life in the city, the owners and managers of small operations did not want to invite disruptions in the workplaces that could so easily be avoided.

By the 1940s and 1950s, the United Auto Workers (UAW) would begin advocating vocally for equal employment opportunities regardless of race—at the national level. But the UAW locals would continue to operate with a great deal of autonomy, and because the more skilled jobs at the plants required apprenticeships and the locals controlled who was admitted into those apprenticeships, the larger plants were not much different than the small plants and shops in how they filled open positions. Most of the employees at the large plants lived in neighborhoods adjacent to or within a relatively short distance of the plants, and family, social, and workplace relationships were more important than any objective appraisal of applicants. In most cases, there was no open application process to fill openings, and if there was such a process and African Americans applied, their applications were ignored, and if they were persistent in inquiring about the openings, they were simply told that they had already been filled.

### **Great Depression**

Not surprisingly, Detroit suffered the consequences of the Great Depression as severely as any other major city in the United States. The severe contraction in industrial employment resulted in untold human misery, and because African Americans were often among the last-hired and lowest-paid employees, they were typically among the first to be laid off. As payrolls shrank and many full-time positions became part-time, upward mobility occurred in reverse, with even highly skilled workers accepting whatever work was available. The inability to find work exacerbated the housing and other economic issues that African Americans had faced even during the economic boom of the Roaring Twenties.

During a period of such upheaval, it is predictable that hate groups would arise to channel people's uncertainty, frustration, and anger toward groups to whom the blame for the calamity might be attributed. In the 1920s, in response to the Great Migration, the Ku Klux Klan had extended its reach from the Deep South into the states of the Midwest. Legitimized in many quarters as just another civic organization, the Klan briefly became a political force until scandals involving several prominent leaders suddenly made it a social and business liability to be associated with the Klan. By the time that the stock market crashed, the Klan's organizational structure across the Midwest was largely in tatters. In eastern Ohio, however, in response to threats made against a local Klan leader, some diehard extremists formed the Black Legion, which was originally characterized as a security force. Within several years, the Black Legion had expanded to a number of other locations across the Midwest. In Michigan, the Black Legion attracted between 20,000 and 30,000 members, with perhaps a third of those members in the Detroit MSA. One of its strongest chapters was in the suburbs of Detroit, where the leaders of the local government and police force of Highland Park had quite openly become active members.

Especially in the Detroit area, the Black Legion became an aggressive vigilante group that targeted just about anyone who was not a white Anglo-Saxon Protestant. Several dozen killings in the Detroit area would ultimately be attributed to the Black Legion, but the killing of Charles Poole, a Roman Catholic organizer for the Works Progress Administration attracted such negative national media attention that the Black Legion, like the Klan, was ultimately undone by its excesses. Over the latter half of the 1930s, almost 50 members of the Black Legion were convicted of violent felonies and sentenced to lengthy prison terms. But the vigorousness with which these prosecutions were pursued did not alleviate the level of fear that the Black Legion had created among the groups that were its most frequent targets, especially African Americans. Most African Americans recognized that although the Black Legion was in the end very broadly denounced for its excesses, its messaging had been just as widely condoned across the white neighborhoods and in many of the white institutions of Detroit.

## **World War II**

The transformation of Depression-era Detroit into the "Arsenal of Democracy" did not occur overnight. The gradual recovery in consumer production and the gradual introduction of military contracts over the latter half of the 1930s created the momentum for the unprecedented industrial output of the war years. By the late 1930s, Ford's massive River Rouge Complex employed 90,000–100,000 workers. Even before the plants across the city shifted completely to war production, the city began once again to attract migrants from the Deep South and Appalachia. During the war years, this "Second Great Migration" would bring 400,000 new residents to the city, 50,000 of whom were African Americans. In 1940, 9.8 percent of the U.S. population was African American. Although African Americans represented a somewhat higher percentage of the new wave of migrants

into Detroit, the difference was not so great that the city should have had difficulty in absorbing them—except for the city’s very restrictive housing policies.

In 1942, the Sojourner Truth Public Housing Project was constructed at the periphery of a largely Polish neighborhood. Initially, the project was designated for African Americans. But, despite a considerable police presence at the site, when the first African American families attempted to move in, a white mob prevented them for doing so. The authorities then decided to designate the housing project for whites only. However, after the Nazis seized upon the incident and exploited it in their propaganda, the decision was reversed, and black families, again, were designated to move into the units. This time, the protests of the white mob escalated into violence. More than 200 people were arrested, with about half of them being held for trial. Ironically, all but three of those held for trial were African Americans. With the Nazi propaganda being eclipsed by the escalating racial violence in the city, officials decided to designate the housing project once again for whites only.

At about the same time that the African American community established 8 Mile and Wyoming, another community was being created outside the Black Bottom neighborhood, but with very different results. Conant Gardens was a development in northeast Detroit that provided nice homes for middle-class African Americans in the general vicinity of the Sojourner Truth Housing Projects. Conant Gardens demonstrated that African Americans with considerable education and the opportunity to earn good incomes were no less capable of home ownership and no less interested in maintaining their properties than whites of similar means. The residents of Conant Gardens also demonstrated that they were just as susceptible as white homeowners to the biases and fears about subsidized housing, especially for African Americans. Although the residents of Conant Gardens stopped short of joining the white mob that prevented African Americans from occupying units in the Sojourner Truth Projects, they had joined with the white residents of the adjacent neighborhoods in very vocally opposing the projects being built and then being designated for African Americans. In part, the residents of Conant Gardens may have simply feared that violence against the residents of the projects might lead to violence against them but that is clearly not their only concern.

In June 1943, the issues created by the rigid segregation in housing and in employment came to a head. In response to a directive from the Roosevelt Administration, the management at the Packard Plant promoted three African American workers to production jobs previously open only to whites. In response, 25,000 white workers walked out of the plant. This incident created an atmosphere across the city in which even the most incendiary rumors, involving race-motivated rapes and murders, were given great credence.

For three days, rioting convulsed the city. Similar “race” riots occurred in a number of other U.S. cities that summer. But the events in Detroit and the media attention that they generated eclipsed all others, except perhaps the riots in Los Angeles. The violence ended only after 6,000 federal troops were called in to restore order. In the end, 34 people were killed, another 600 or so were injured, and 1,800 arrests were made. African Americans accounted for a disproportionate amount of all of those statistics: 25 of the dead (17 of whom had been shot by the



The Detroit riots occurred during a period of massive increase in population of white and black migrants to the city. Competition for jobs, housing, and other valuable social resources resulted in violent attacks between both black and white citizens. Federal troops were sent to the city to end the rebellion. (Bettmann/Getty Images)

police), about three-quarters of the injured, and about 85 percent of those arrested. These statistics seemed to substantiate the official version of events provided by the city government and police department, which was that gangs of unemployed young African Americans had begun attacking whites and damaging and looting properties throughout the city and that white Detroiters had then retaliated.

Not surprisingly, both Nazi and Japanese propaganda seized on the racially related violence in Detroit and the other cities to assert that the U.S. claim that it was fighting racist regimes was hypocritical at best.

Even less surprisingly, researchers have subsequently undercut most of the elements of the official version of events. Most of the rioters who roamed far from their home neighborhoods were, in fact, young and unemployed, but they were white and not African American. Most of the African Americans who were arrested for violence were on or near their own properties, or likely protecting their homes. Most of the property damage occurred in the Black Bottom neighborhoods, further exacerbating the issues with African American housing. And the racial bias in the police force, which was not integrated, clearly accounts for the disproportionate number of African Americans killed, injured, or arrested by police. Indeed, because of the overwhelming bias in the official version of events, the African American community was further stigmatized among white Detroiters, and none of the



underlying issues related to housing and employment was significantly addressed. Ironically, none of the violence spread to the auto plants, not even the Packard plant where the walk out over any integration of the assembly line had occurred. In fact, one positive outcome of the violence was that the UAW became more committed to integrating, or more meaningfully integrating, the workforces at the plants where it now represented the workers.

### **Postwar Prosperity: The Heyday of White Detroit**

In the 1950s, Detroit became the center of American economic prosperity and the symbol of American industrial might. It was acknowledged internationally as the automobile capital of the world. The automobile industry accounted for one out of every six jobs in the postwar economic boom. That boom spurred the growth of the suburbs, of intra-urban expressways (the first of which had been built in Detroit in the 1940s), and in automobile ownership, as the automobile became not only a marker of social status but a necessity in daily life. The construction of the interstate highway system, initiated in the second half of the decade, further spurred the demand not only for automobiles but also for trucks to deliver the ever-increasing volume of consumer goods being produced domestically and imported. And although Detroit was still the industrial as well as the corporate center of the auto industry, industrial plants in cities throughout the Midwest supplied glass, rubber, and plastics to the plants in Detroit.

Since the 1970s, it has been commonplace for the decline of Detroit as a city to be linked to the decline of the American auto industry, the decline of American manufacturing, and the decline of American economic and political power. But this argument ignores the evidence that Detroit's decline actually began in the 1950s, rather than several decades later. In 1950, the city's population peaked at 1,849,568, making it the fifth most populous city in the United States. By 1960, the population had declined 9.7 percent to 1,670,144. Much of the population loss can be attributed to out-migration into the suburbs. Certainly, as the city had fewer open spaces, the suburbs were the natural alternative for the construction of new housing developments, and the expansion of the expressways into the city initially facilitated the commute to work in the city. But the out-migration was also accelerated by the movement of auto plants, their suppliers, and then other industries to the suburbs. The auto industry itself provided a number of explanations for this decentralization. It was more cost-effective to build on open land than to renovate existing plants. Increasing numbers of plant workers were commuting by automobile to the plants, and there was not enough room around the old plants to accommodate parking lots. The development of expressways and their incorporation into the interstate highway system made it much more efficient to take deliveries and to make shipments from suburban plants because the streets around inner-city plants were becoming ever more congested. The movement of auto plants to Detroit's suburbs was, however, accompanied by the location of new plants in small and medium-sized cities throughout the Midwest. So, this decentralization was clearly part of a strategy to undermine the strength of the labor unions by making the labor force less geographically concentrated and less homogenous.

This strategy also reduced the opposition to automation because the location of a plant in another city would be seen as employment growth, rather than as a reduction in positions.

While all of this was occurring, the prosperity of African Americans was still largely constrained by very slow progress in the desegregation of housing and employment. For most African Americans, a life in the suburbs was simply not economically or socially feasible. The out-migration to the suburbs did gradually open up some additional neighborhoods in the city to African Americans. But typically the housing stock in those neighborhoods had already degraded, and so African Americans may have had more places to live, but the quality of their housing options did not significantly improve. In employment, the one area in which African Americans did achieve gains in both employment opportunities and wages and benefits was with federal, state, and municipal government offices located within Detroit. Initially, these jobs were largely confined to agencies and departments that involved a good deal of contact with other African Americans, but for many African American families, public sector employment would become one of the major pathways to the middle class.

### **Civil Rights Movement, Motown, and Calamity**

Both because of the increasing size of its African American population and because of the long-standing issues with segregation in housing and employment, Detroit was a focal point in the Midwest for the civil rights movement. Several months before he gave the landmark “I Have a Dream” speech to a massive crowd on the Washington mall, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke to a large crowd in Detroit. Significant changes were clearly on the horizon, but there was growing concern and even impatience with how long such changes might take first to be formalized at the national level and then to have a meaningful impact on the lives and opportunities of ordinary African Americans.

In Detroit, the sense of the growing economic and cultural empowerment of African Americans was given expression in the music produced by Motown. Before Motown was founded and began to churn out a seemingly endless succession of hit songs by an ever-expanding stable of individual performers and groups, most African American music had been distributed primarily to African American audiences and found a broader white audience only if it was covered by a white performer. In a very short period of time, Motown not only became an exception to that long-standing practice but wrecked it. White teenagers across America found the Motown sound as irresistible as African Americans teenagers found it, and Motown recordings became fixtures both on the Billboard charts and in the programming on AM radio. It is a significant cultural indicator that by the 1970s “Motown” had replaced “the Motor City” as the most commonly used nickname for Detroit.

But beneath the upbeat Motown sound, there was a deepening sense of frustration and resentment among African Americans in Detroit, as in many other American cities. But, it would explode most violently and destructively in Detroit. In

late July 1967, a police raid on an after-hours bar in an African American neighborhood escalated into four days of rioting. In the numbers of deaths and injuries and in the estimated damage to property, this riot was exceeded only by the 1863 Draft Riots in New York City and, a decade and a half later, by the 1992 riots in Los Angeles after the Rodney King verdict. The Detroit riot dominated the national and international news, and it became symbolic of the growing unrest over the preservation of the status quo in American society. In this case, the issue was, of course, racial privilege, but in the broader scheme of things, there was much overlap with the unrest about the escalation of the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War and issues of inequality related to gender and, somewhat later, sexual orientation. Indeed, it does not seem completely coincidental that the police raid that triggered the 1967 riot interrupted a celebration for a soldier returning from a tour in Vietnam. And it needs to be noted that in many sources, the events are referred to not as a “the Detroit Riot of 1967” but as the “Detroit Rebellion” or the “Detroit Uprising.”

Whatever term is used to identify the events, it was unarguably a calamity. To restore order, the governor called in the National Guard, which was not up to the task and may have incited as much violence as it suppressed. President Johnson ordered elements of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions into the city. Unlike the National Guard, these units included many Vietnam veterans who were less rattled by gunfire and were very racially integrated. In the end, 43 people were killed, 33 of whom were African Americans; 1,189 people were injured, almost 500 of whom were simply onlookers; more than 7,000 people were arrested; more than 2,500 stores and businesses were looted; more than 400 buildings had to be condemned because of fire damage; almost 400 families were left homeless; and the total property damage was estimated to be between \$40 and \$45 million.

As was the case with the 1943 riot, African Americans suffered disproportionately and were widely blamed for the calamity. Moreover, it was again widely overlooked that a significant number of white Detroiters actively participated in the rioting, not just in defense of their home and businesses, but as looters and roving bands of thugs. Nonetheless, in marked contrast with the aftermath of the 1943 riot, the city responded by making radical changes in policy to reduce segregation not only in housing and employment, but also in education. Most conspicuously, aggressive efforts were made to integrate the city’s police force. Following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968, there would be further rioting in Detroit, but it was not comparable in scope or duration to the 1967 riot and it did not stand out from the rioting that occurred in many other U.S. cities in response to that tragedy.

### **White Flight, Black Flight, and Urban Decay**

In most media commentaries on Detroit, the 1967 riots are characterized as a turning point in the history of the city—as if the riots were so traumatic that in themselves, they convinced whites to flee the city for the suburbs. But, as I have already detailed in previous sections of this chapter, the out-migration from the

city began early in the 1950s and had very little to do with race because segregation in housing remained in place well into the 1960s. Furthermore, despite the social, economic, and political convulsions caused by the riots, the decline in Detroit's population due to out-migration to the suburbs actually slowed somewhat from a 9.7 percent decline from 1950 to 1960 to a 9.3 percent decline from 1960 to 1970. During these two decades almost all of the out-migration involved whites, and that out-migration was slightly offset by a much smaller migration into the city of African Americans relocating from outside the Detroit MSA. As a result of these two factors, the racial divide between the city of Detroit and its suburbs became even more pronounced than it had already been.

Between 1970 and 1980, the out-migration intensified, with a population loss in the city of Detroit of 20.5 percent, more than double that of the previous decade. For the first time in over half a century, the city's population fell below 1,500,000. Although this decline was again attributed to white flight, it also included a considerable out-migration to the suburbs of middle-class and more affluent African Americans. Between 1970 and 2000, one-third of the increase in the population in Detroit's suburbs was due to African American out-migration from the city. In fact, from 1990 to 2000, half of the population increase in Detroit's suburbs was due to African Americans moving out of the city. Moreover, whereas four out of five African Americans living in Detroit's suburbs were concentrated in six of those suburbs, only one out of three lived in those six suburbs by 2000; all of Detroit's suburbs were becoming more racially integrated. In any case, between 1990 and 2000, Detroit experienced its lowest level of population loss since the population had peaked in 1950, a 7.5 percent decrease for the decade.

As Detroit's tax base was dramatically declining, a higher percentage of Detroit residents depended on the public sector for employment or on public pensions for the bulk of their income. Several much-publicized corruption scandals allowed critics to blame the decline on rampant political cronyism and gross mismanagement. But, although those charges carried considerable truth, such arguments were almost always reflective of an antagonistic political perspective, and they often had a not very subtle racial subtext. The more fundamental truth is that no one has really found solutions when "Rust Belt" cities have experienced such spiraling decline. That the economics of Detroit government would become unsustainable and as irreparable as the homes in its abandoned neighborhoods was basically inevitable.

### **Great Recession, Government by Outside Managers, and the Flint Water Crisis**

From 2000 to 2010, Detroit suffered another 25 percent decline in its population, to 713,777 people. It was the city's lowest population since the mid-1910s. The Great Recession was especially devastating to the city. A large percentage of those who had bought homes in the early 2000s had qualified only for sub-prime mortgages. As home foreclosures rose dramatically and the revenues from taxes dropped, the city was forced to lay off workers, putting those workers' mortgages in jeopardy and exacerbating both the foreclosure and revenue crises. As the abandonment and vandalism of homes escalated, even the homeowners who stayed

current with their mortgage payments discovered that their homes were not just worth less (that their mortgages were “underwater”) but that they were almost worthless. There are at least a dozen websites that offer series of photos of various Detroit neighborhoods from 2007 to 2015, chronicling their astonishingly rapid transformation from well-maintained properties to shattered shells of homes overgrown with weeds. In most cases, many of the homes have collapsed onto their foundations or have completely disappeared under the overgrowth. In fact, the photo series emphasize the way that the abandonment and dilapidation of one property quickly transfers to adjacent properties like some sort of contagion with ghastly symptoms.

After serving as Detroit’s mayor from 2003 to 2008, Kwame Kilpatrick resigned following his conviction on several state felony charges related to corruption. Five years later, he was convicted on 24 federal felony charges and sentenced to a 28-year term in prison. At the same time as Kilpatrick’s trials and those of several other high-ranking city government and school officials were dominating the news, Detroit was hitting bottom fiscally. In March 2013, Governor Snyder declared a fiscal emergency and appointed an emergency manager. Four months later, the city became the largest in U.S. history to declare bankruptcy, and in December of that year, the bankruptcy was approved in court. Then, almost a year later, in November 2014, a plan for the city to emerge from bankruptcy was approved.

The plan involved a major consolidation of city services, with sparsely populated swathes of the city no longer being provided services. It also involved reductions in the paid hours of city employees and in city pension benefits, which, given the importance of public sector employment, further exacerbated the problems that led to the bankruptcy. In 2010, one-third of the households in the city had incomes below the poverty line, and half of the city’s residents who were under 18 or over 65 were living in poverty. In 2014, half a decade after the Great Recession, the unemployment rate was still over 14 percent. In the years immediately following the economic downturn, the owners of more than half of the city’s more than 300,000 properties failed to pay taxes, and in the years following the bankruptcy, the utilities at more than 80,000 properties were turned off due to delinquency in payments.

When Detroit was put under emergency management, 49 percent of African Americans living in Michigan were residing in communities in which their elected governments were no longer able to function independently but, instead, became advisory bodies at best as appointed emergency managers had the power to make all decisions for the community, large and small, with no constraints beyond their having to answer to the governor. Since the state’s governor was a Republican and its legislature had solid Republican majorities in both houses, and since most of the affected communities were heavily Democratic, the very conspicuous issues of racial bias were overlaid with and inseparable from very conspicuous issues of political interest.

Of the communities under emergency managers, the second largest was Flint, which has a population of just over 100,000 that is about 57 percent African American. Like Detroit, Flint has been heavily dependent on the auto industry,

has lost much of its economic base and its population (in Flint's case about half of its peak population), and has struggled with the core paradox that a more impoverished population provides a smaller tax base but demands more social services, without which it will be difficult to provide a stable, decently educated workforce to potential new employers. Although Flint is considerably smaller than Detroit, the issues with its water supply put the problems with government by appointed managers in the national spotlight.

Because the Flint River provided water not only to the city's residents but also to several large auto plants and other industries, Flint had long planned to build a pipeline so that it could get its water from Lake Huron. This planning took on extra urgency as increased environmental awareness was given extra impetus by problems with rivers in other industrial cities—most notably the fact that the Cuyahoga River that runs through Cleveland began to catch fire with some regularity. But as Flint's economy began to decline in the 1970s, the city not only did not have the resources to undertake such a project, but it also seemed less and less likely to have those resources in the near future. So Flint entered into a long-term deal to purchase water from Detroit, which because of its own population decline had excess capacity and a need for any additional sources of revenue that it could find. But the new city manager appointed by Governor Snyder decided that the city could economize by going back to using the Flint River as its primary source of water. The manager seems to have made almost no inquiries into the health-related, scientific considerations in making such a change, and it turned out that because many of the city's water pipes are still made of lead, an additive needed to be added to water from the river in order to ensure that it would not contain increased quantities of lead by the time that it came out of the tap. The additive would have cost very little. But, after the changeover to the river water was made, despite many immediate complaints about the quality of the water and then despite preliminary water sampling that suggested the problem with the increased lead content, the emergency manager, backed by the Snyder's administration, continued to insist that there was nothing wrong with the water. By the time that they bowed to public outrage, not just locally and statewide, but nationally, irreparable damage had already been done to the 13,000 children in the city who had drunk the lead-contaminated water. And although steps have been taken to treat the water with the necessary additives, to replace the lead pipes, and to provide for children who have suffered permanent cognitive impairment because of the exposure to lead, no one believes that ideological insistence on austerity will be leavened with enough sense of conscience to ensure that all that needs to be done to address this issue in the longer term will actually be done.

### **Continued Racial Inequality**

The history of race and racial inequality in the state of Michigan has, for the most part, been viewed through an examination of the many racially charged incidents in the state's largest city, Detroit. After nearly two centuries of systemic discrimination, the state has been honored with a dubious title: in 2017, Detroit, Michigan, was named as the worst city to live in America.

## NOTABLE FIGURE

### Gordy, Berry, III (1929– )

Berry Gordy III (also known as Berry Gordy Jr.) was born on November 28, 1929, in Detroit, Michigan. The mogul of “Motown” would eventually become one of the most successful African American businessmen in America and help to cross the racial divide by bringing the soulful sounds of Motown to all racial groups in America.

Like many black Detroiters, Gordy expected to begin his career in the auto industry, which was the dominant economic force in the mid-1950s. However, his love for music and his desire to be a songwriter led him to pursue his dream job in the music industry. With an investment of \$800 from family members, Gordy founded Motown Records. Motown would produce the leading voices in rhythm and blues during the civil rights era and is often credited with helping to integrate music venues throughout the nation. Motown’s most successful recording groups were not simply successful in gaining the following of a loyal black community, but they became the darling performers in America and the global community as well. The Motown label included Diana Ross and the Supremes, the Temptations, the Jackson Five, the Four Tops, Martha and the Vandellas, Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, Jackie Wilson, Marvin Gaye, and Stevie Wonder. They were among the most popular recording groups in the 1960s in the midst of the civil rights and Black Power movements.

In the 1960s, Motown became a major economic force in the city of Detroit. And with the social and cultural revolution that was occurring in America during the civil rights era, Motown became a powerful force to chronicle the both the passions and the pleas of black America. Berry Gordy was at the forefront of this racially inspired musical revolution as he found a way to successfully release the culturally unique, creative and artistic expressions of black music to the entire world.

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# 24

## Minnesota

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Ajay Panicker

### CHRONOLOGY

**9000 BCE**

The earliest human presence in Minnesota

**6000–5000 BCE**

Native tribal groups establish themselves in the prairies and woodlands of present-day Minnesota

**3000 BCE**

Native tribes are settled as far north in Minnesota as the modern border with Ontario, Canada

**500 BCE**

Evidence of burial mounds, suggesting establishment of woodland culture

**900 CE**

Beginning of Mississippian culture in Minnesota

**1650**

First European contact of Minnesota Native people with the arrival of French colonial explorers and missionaries

**1700–1800**

French fur traders establish close contact with the Ojibwe

**1787**

The U.S. Congress created the Northwest Territory by enacting the Northwest Ordinance, which prohibits slavery in the region; the territory includes the northeastern portion of present-day Minnesota

**1787**

Pierre Bonga, the first recorded African slave living in what is now Minnesota, is freed

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### **1803**

The Louisiana Purchase from France includes the southern and central portion of present-day Minnesota.

### **1805**

The Pike expedition, led by Lieutenant Zebulon Pike, convinces the Dakotas living at the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers to allow the United States to establish military posts in the area; Pike's agreement opens 100,000 acres, including much of the modern Twin Cities area, to white settlement

### **1818**

The northern boundary of Minnesota is established at the 49th parallel

### **1820–1825**

The U.S. Army builds Fort Snelling at the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers in Hennepin County, Minnesota

### **1836**

Congress creates the Wisconsin Territory, which includes Minnesota

### **1836**

The slave Dred Scott is brought to Fort Snelling, in the free Wisconsin Territory, by his owner

### **1837**

With the collapse of the fur trade, white trading interests push for the conclusion of the first major Ojibwe land cession treaty, whereby the tribe would give up lands in Minnesota and Wisconsin for \$16,000 in cash and goods down and promises of up to \$40,000 per year in the future

### **1849**

Congress organizes the Minnesota Territory; a territorial bill restricting voting rights to white men over 21 passes

### **1851**

Under the Dakota land cession treaties, the Dakota people sell most of their land to the United States in exchange for \$3,750,000; little of this money was ever paid

### **1853**

The territorial legislature bars African Americans from participating in town hall meetings

### **1855**

The United States concludes a major land cession with the Ojibwe, who cede millions of acres of land in northern Minnesota for increased annuity payments for the government

### **1857**

In *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, the U.S. Supreme Court rules against Scott, a slave from Missouri who claimed his freedom based on his one-time residence at Fort Snelling in the Minnesota Territory

**1858**

Minnesota is admitted to the Union as the 32nd state on May 11

**1862**

The Dakota War, an armed conflict between the U.S. forces and several bands of Dakota in Minnesota and the Dakota Territory, results in the execution of 37 Dakota men

**1865**

On February 23, Minnesota ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

**1867**

On January 22, Minnesota ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution extending full citizenship rights to African Americans

**1868**

The Minnesota legislature grants the vote to black men and some Native Americans

**1869**

The Sons of Freedom, a mutual support designed to help African Americans find jobs, manage property, and obtain education for their children, is established in Saint Paul

**1870**

On January 13, the Minnesota legislature ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution extending the right to vote to black men

**1873**

When Frederick Douglass speaks at the Saint Paul Library Association meeting, he is denied hotel room

**1885**

The *Western Appeal*, a black newspaper, starts publication in Saint Paul; the state legislature enacts an antidiscrimination public accommodation law

**1885**

Frederick McGhee becomes the first black attorney admitted to the Minnesota bar

**1887**

The Protective and Industrial League, an organization to resist racial discrimination in public accommodations, is founded in Saint Paul

**1889**

The Afro-American League of Saint Paul is founded

**1895**

An all-black company is organized at the Saint Paul Fire Department

**1898**

Frank Wheaton becomes the first African American to be elected to Minnesota legislature; the National Afro-American Council (NAAC) is founded

## **452 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1902**

The NAAC convention is held in Saint Paul

### **1905**

At Frederick McGhee's house in Saint Paul, W.E.B. Du Bois drafts the principles leading to Niagara Movement, a precursor to the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

### **1920**

Three black men are lunched in Duluth after being accused for raping a white teenage girl

### **1921**

The Minnesota legislature passes an anti-lynching law passes, which requires the police to protect victims from mobs and makes it possible for the families of lynching victims to receive damages; the Ku Klux Klan becomes active in Minnesota

### **1921**

Lena O. Smith becomes the first woman African American attorney admitted to the Minnesota bar

### **1934**

The Indian Reorganization Act is passed by the U.S. Congress

### **1934**

The *Minneapolis Spokesman-Recorder* is founded by Cecil E. Newman

### **1948**

Minneapolis mayor Hubert H. Humphrey calls for an end to racial discrimination in a speech at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia

### **1955**

Saint Paul civil rights leader Roy Wilkins is elected executive director of the NAACP

### **1956**

The decision is made to demolish Saint Paul's historically black Rondo neighborhood to build Interstate-94

### **1963**

On February 27, Minnesota ratifies the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing the poll tax

### **1965**

The passage of national immigration reform legislation to emphasize skills and family reunification encourages the arrival of Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino immigrants in Minnesota

### **1971**

Mixed schools are established in Minneapolis after earlier efforts to desegregate schools are met with protests

**1977**

Conrado Vega becomes the first Latino elected to the Minnesota State Senate

**1980s**

The Hmong of Southeast Asia arrive in the Twin Cities, becoming the first major nonwhite refugee population in Minnesota

**1991**

Newspapers report the presence of white supremacist groups in the Dayton Bluffs neighborhood of Saint Paul

**1993**

Alan Page becomes the first African American elected to the Minnesota State Supreme Court

**1994**

The Confederation of Somali Community in Minnesota is established to coordinate services for new immigrants

**2003**

A memorial is built in Duluth to commemorate victims of 1920 Duluth lynchings

**2006**

Keith Ellison becomes the first African American elected to Congress from Minnesota and the first Muslim elected to Congress

**2008**

On November 4, Democrat Barack Obama, the first African American nominee for the president of a major party, carries Minnesota with about 54 percent of the vote

**2013**

Five Minneapolis officers become the subject of internal affairs investigations stemming from two altercations at bars between the white off-duty officers and black men in Apple Valley, Minnesota, and Green Bay, Wisconsin

**2014**

According to the Migration Policy Institute, about 81,000 undocumented immigrants live in Minnesota, with about 61 percent coming from Mexico and Latin America and about 19 percent from Asia

**2015**

Foreign-born residents make up 8.3 percent of the state's population

**2015**

Jamar Clark, a 24-year-old black man, is shot and killed by two Minneapolis police officers; Black Lives Matter organizes an 18-day protest outside the Fourth Precinct police station, but after an extensive investigation, no charges are filed against the officers

**2016**

Ilhan Omar is elected to Minnesota legislature, becoming the first Somali American woman to be elected to any U.S. state legislature

**2016**

Philando Castile, a 32-year-old black man, is killed by police in Falcon Heights, a small, mostly white Minnesota city, during a traffic stop

**2017**

A local jury acquits the police officer who shot Philando Castile in 2016, accepting the officer's claim of self-defense

**2017**

Hundreds of students at St. Olaf College, a private, Lutheran liberal arts college in southern Minnesota, boycott classes and demonstrate at an administration building to protest a rash of racist and threatening messages left around campus

## **NARRATIVE**

### **The Native Experience**

Despite a high degree of demographic homogeneity in Minnesota until very recently, complex histories of race and racism are written into its very foundations. Known as the land of 10,000 lakes, the state owes its name to the Sioux, a Native American tribe that inhabited the land prior to European colonization. In the Sioux language “minne” means water. There are contrasting interpretations of the latter part of the word, “sotah,” which has been interpreted, variously, to mean clear blue or cloudy—thereby making Minnesota the land of cloudy water or clear blue water for the Sioux that inhabited much of Minnesota for hundreds of years prior to colonial contact.

Archaeological evidence points to human presence in parts of southern Minnesota as early as 11,000 years ago. By 5000–6000 BCE, Native tribal groups had established in the prairie and woodlands of Minnesota, and by 3000 BCE, they had reached as far north as the border with Ontario, Canada. Prior to European contact, Minnesota had two dominant cultures—woodland culture and Mississippi culture. The woodland culture, which harvested wild rice and hunted animals for food and was capable of making pottery, is thought to have started around 2,500 years ago. The presence of burial mounds in the Lake Superior region and along the border with Wisconsin suggests that these may have been the western border of the great mound-building cultures of the time. Petroglyphs point to the possibilities of these latter societies being shamanistic. The shift to agricultural societies is thought to have happened during the Mississippi period (around 900 CE), with the introduction of maize cultivation.

French colonial explorers and missionaries, around 1650, were the first Europeans to arrive in Minnesota. Following the initial contact, the French established fur trade in Minnesota with the support of the Ojibwe. When the first European contact took place, the Ojibwe and Dakotas were the two large tribes that called Minnesota home. The Ojibwe, formerly known as the Chippewa, who inhabited the northern third of Minnesota were speakers of the language Algonquin, in which the Ojibwe refer to themselves as Anishinabe or first people. The Ojibwe may have migrated to the superior region from the Atlantic coast. They lived in

settled villages around “wigwams”—the main dwelling. In addition to hunting and gathering, they also grew gardens of corn and other crops. Occasional internecine wars took place among tribal groups, and the Ojibwe were among the successful warriors.

The southern two-thirds of Minnesota were inhabited by the Dakotas, a tribal and linguistic part of the larger Sioux nation, and the oldest inhabitants of Minnesota. The Sioux nation itself comprised eight major tribes that speak three languages that are mutually intelligible—Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota. Four tribes of Sioux nation—Mdewakanton, Wahpeton, Wahpekute, and Sisseton—are speakers of Dakota. Of these, the Mdewakanton lived in the southeastern part, and the Santee band of Sisseton were present in the southwestern part of Minnesota. As part of relocations enforced by the U.S. government, some of the Ho-Chunk people, formerly called Winnebago, who had lived in Wisconsin, were moved to central Minnesota.

The French established flourishing fur trade in Minnesota by entering into agreements with the Ojibwe. Commercial relations brought the French closer to the Native Americans, especially through gift-giving practices. In the Native American tradition, the powerful were expected to engage in gift giving, which, in turn, maintained power. As Native Americans started to use the European gifts they received, a paternalistic form of relation started to develop between “European ‘fathers’ and native ‘children’ ” (Radzilowski 2006, 40).

With increased fur trade and French presence in Minnesota, marital unions between French, and to a lesser extent, English, Scottish, and American traders and Native American women became common. Their progeny, the Metis or mixed-race people, became a bridge between the Europeans and the Native Americans and served as middlemen in fur trade.

A number of treaties signed among European imperial powers and America had important consequences for changing race relations in Minnesota. In 1787, the U.S. Congress passed the Northwest Ordinance, which led to the creation of the Northwest Territory, from which a number of states were to be established in time. Even as it was the home of the Ojibwe and the Dakotas, what is now Minnesota came under the U.S. government rule with the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. Even though life in Native communities continued for a few years unaffected by the ordinance and the purchase, the subsequent decades would record their lasting impacts on these communities.

Unlike the French and British who were primarily interested in trade and discouraged European settlement on native lands, Americans focused on expansion through settlement and homesteading, which in turn had to be secured through removal and marginalization of Native Americans from their communal lands. In this process, treaties and military force became important instruments of the government. In 1805, an expedition led by First Lieutenant Pike convinced a band of about 150 Dakota warriors at the confluence of Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers to allow the United States to establish military posts in exchange of a paltry sum of \$2,000. “From a legal standpoint, Pike’s treaty was nonsense. Neither Pike nor the Native Americans who signed were authorized to make such treaties. Native chiefs . . . did [not] have the authority to give away land that, as the Native

Americans saw it, was not something to be sold” (Radzilowski 2006, 52). At Little Falls in Minnesota, Pike announced to the Ojibwe that they were now under the rule of the “Great Father” in Washington.

In 1820, an expedition led by Colonel Snelling started building a military outpost. Fort Snelling, completed in 1825, signaled the American domination over Native American lands. American settlers started to move into Minnesota Territory to homestead, resulting in a series of “Indian wars” when the Native Americans resisted and the forced removal of Native Americans from their lands.

The population of the time consisted of a variety of people, including Native Americans of various nations/tribes, Europeans, Americans, and some African Americans. When Minnesota was officially made a territory in 1849, Native Americans were about five times the size of the white population. There were about 31,000 Native Americans, mostly from Dakota, Ojibwe, and Ho-Chunk tribes, as well as mixed-race people, whereas the official population that did not count Native Americans was a little over 6,000. By 1860, however, an influx of new arrivals from New England, German, Ireland, and Scandinavian countries saw the official population increase 28-fold, to over 170,000 individuals.

It is an irony of history that actions that promoted emancipation of slavery in the South led to expulsion and annihilation of Native Americans. Many industrialists and financiers from the Northeast and Chicago, keen on emancipation, saw opportunities to advance their cause if Minnesota, now a territory, was made a free state of the Union. This, along with business interests especially in timber, led to the need to expand the settlements away from around Fort Snelling where it had initially concentrated.

The Treaty of 1837 forced the Ojibwe to give up all their land between the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers for seven cents an acre. Another treaty, in 1851, forced the Dakotas to retreat to a reservation in Minnesota River valley and give up control over vast swathes of their territory west of the Mississippi. Similar treaties were signed again with the Ojibwe, in 1854 and 1855, when they lost most of northeastern and north central Minnesota lands. The government agreed to provide yearly annuities to the Native American population in exchange for their lands. These agreements enforced a relationship of paternalistic dependency upon a people that were once as independent as any other.

The year 1862 saw one of the worst incidents in race relations involving Native Americans in Minnesota. The Dakotas, having ceded most of their land to the government, had retreated to a small reservation in return for a small annuity payment that barely covered their food requirements. For most of the year, the Dakotas would buy food supplies from traders on credit and make payments when their annuities arrived. The traders charged unreasonable rates and pushed alcohol sales among the Dakotas. Some of the Dakota folk had started to change their habits already—they cut their hair and settled down on small farms. Many others, dependent on the U.S. government payments, experienced severe poverty.

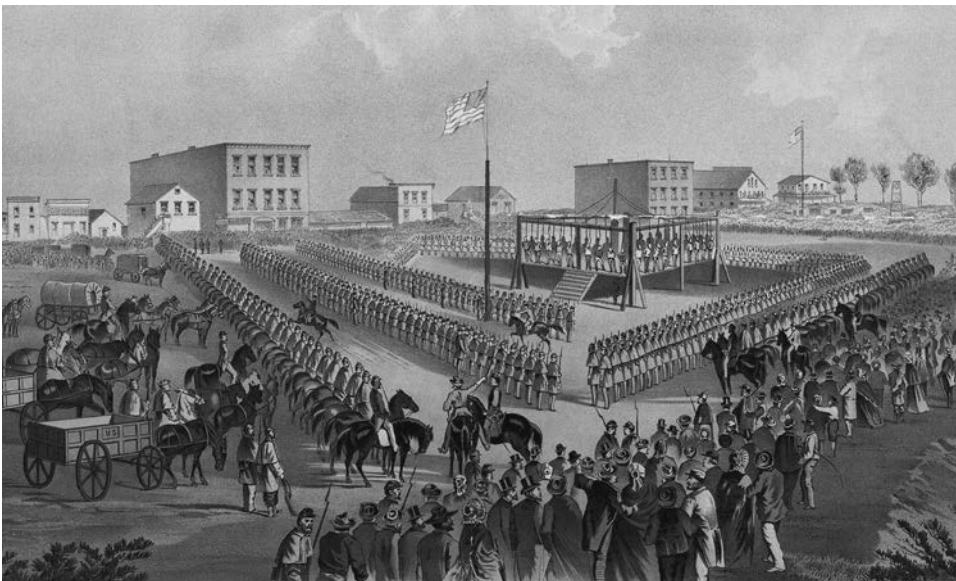
In the summer of 1862, payments were late to arrive, and traders refused to continue the credit availability. Efforts to hunt game animals proved futile. The Dakotas approached government agents who were not sufficiently responsive to their requests to release food. As poverty and hunger grew intense, a group of



young Dakotas approached a trader who had food in a warehouse who, in turn, insulted them. The restiveness of the situation led to violence. A small group of youngsters shot dead a white store owner at a friendly round of target shooting. The youth reported the matter to their leader Little Crow, or Taoyateduta, and pressed for his permission to go to war with white communities. Knowing that soldiers would come to get the killers, Little Crow had no option but to agree to their demand.

The Dakota attacks on white communities started in mid-August in areas around New Ulm, Morton, Forest City, and others, and the military retaliated. Initially, there were casualties among white settlers, even as Dakotas who had settled down on farms rescued some of their white neighbors from the violence. While the Dakotas were able fighters, they were eventually overwhelmed by the power of the military. Several hundred people were killed, and about 40,000 settlers had fled. After the defeat of the Dakotas, 307 of them were sentenced to death and 1,700 others, including older men, women, and children, were rounded up and taken to Fort Snelling. Later, 37 of them were hung to death at the gallows, and the remaining were expelled to Nebraska. Since the end of the war in 1862, until about 1866, the military conducted regular expeditions into Dakota Territory to “search and destroy” any Native Americans. Chief Little Crow was killed in one such expeditions when he was caught picking berries. With the war, the removal of the Dakotas from Minnesota became complete.

Later, the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 recognized the right of Native Americans to live as a separate group and organize their own government. In more recent years, Minneapolis continues to remain a center of Native American



Clashes between the Native inhabitants and government forces produced deadly consequences. Following the Great Sioux Uprising, 38 Sioux Indians were executed at Mankato, Minnesota, December 26, 1862. (Library of Congress)

anti-racism activism. The American Indian Movement (AIM) has championed the cause of removing racist imagery and stereotypes from sports and media. AIM, along with Native American civil rights movement, has historically organized several protests in Minneapolis to bring attention to the denial of civil rights, stereotyping, and marginalization.

### **African Americans in Minnesota**

Jim Thompson was among the earliest African Americans in Minnesota during whose lifetime the state witnessed immense changes in race relations. Thompson was born a slave in Virginia and brought to Fort Snelling still a slave in 1828. Thompson married Dakota chief Cloud Man's daughter Mary, or Marpiyawecasta. He learned to speak French and, after becoming a freedman, started living in a small French-speaking community called Pig's Eye that was to become Saint Paul. The French referred to Thompson as a mulatto.

Thompson was described as a respectable member of the community whose testimony as a witness led to conviction of a white man for attempted rape in the 1840s, at a time when many Midwestern states were enacting laws that barred black testimonies against whites. Thompson was counted among the 5,000 free individuals required to form a territory of Minnesota. This reflects a time period when Americanization of Minnesota and racialization of society had begun, but yet to fully take shape.

With Minnesota becoming a territory, and the arrival of boats of settlers, notions of race and racism started to enter its foundations. In 1849, a bill was passed in Minnesota that restricted voting rights only to white men over 21 years of age, effectively barring people of color not only from participating in elections, but also from serving on county juries. Another law barred blacks from attending town hall meetings. Reflecting the racial animosity among Minnesota's new white settlers, schools were segregated in the late 1850s, a time when Minnesota was on the cusp of statehood and led by progressive leaders that espoused abolition of slavery.

Given the constraints imposed by the prevalent racism in Saint Paul, many newly arrived blacks in Minnesota became barbers in pursuit of social mobility. Barbers skilled in grooming were sought after by many rich white Americans aspiring to take after European aristocracy and hoping to be acknowledged as "genteel." The black barbers in Saint Paul were following a practice that had begun in the colonial era. Part of this arrangement required that these barbers maintain the exclusive status of their white clientele; as a result, many of them often refused to serve African Americans. Barbering provided opportunities for steady income at a time when few opportunities were available to African Americans, some amount of social mobility and acceptance, and access to networks of power and influence in Saint Paul.

Debates around the late nineteenth century reveal the complexity of the situation. At a time when republican ideals of independence couched in norms of masculinity were dominant in the white society, barbering was seen as a subservient occupation characterized by servility. Pointing to the stigma attached to barbering,

leaders like Frederick Douglas argued that black barbers, even when they achieved some level of material prosperity, would not be treated as equals by white men. In hindsight, however, some of the prosperous barbers of early Minnesota played an important role as “race men” engaged in advancing racial equality.

Recognized as a free territory, Minnesota became a destination for fugitive slaves. Secretive networks along the Mississippi and some African American individuals in Saint Paul aided them. However, the white working class in Saint Paul viewed the arrival of fugitives with animosity. A rapidly developing Minnesota became a summer vacation destination for many Southern elites who brought slaves with them. With a view to securing their business, a legislation was unsuccessfully introduced in the Minnesota assembly that sought to secure, for the visiting Southerners, the right to own slaves while vacationing in Minnesota.

Reverberations of the 1857 Supreme Court ruling against Dred Scott, a former resident of Fort Snelling, were felt in Minnesota, thereby striking a blow to the hopes of many fugitives who sought freedom in the new states in the North. Progressives, in order to advance the abolitionist agenda, formed themselves into Hennepin County Anti-Slavery Society. Its members tried to free slaves forcibly from visiting Southern elites. Henry Sparks, a slave accompanying a Mississippi woman, escaped only to be later caught by white men from his hotel room and sent back to Mississippi. Abolitionists sued Sparks’s kidnappers. A black man who had stayed with Sparks in a hotel while he was a fugitive reported that the police had taken Sparks from the hotel room. The trial, however, exonerated the police and found the black man guilty of perjury.

Abolitionists, led by Emily Grey, a black woman from St. Anthony Falls, then freed Eliza Winston, a slave visiting Minnesota with her owner. Violence broke out in response to this incident. White mobs destroyed properties of African Americans, including Emily Grey’s house and her husband Ralph’s barbershop. As seen in these cases, while the currents of antislavery remained strong in Minnesota at the time of its statehood, its society also simultaneously witnessed racist backlash. During the Civil War, the threat of fugitive slave catchers in Minnesota diminished, even though the white working class continued to harbor worries about competition for work from African Americans. With the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, many African Americans in Minnesota registered for the draft and fought for their freedom.

In 1865, Reverend Charles Griswold, a clergyman and Republican legislator from Winona, petitioned the House in favor of black suffrage. Leading to a referendum that failed, Democratic newspapers campaigned against black suffrage, claiming that increased rights would lead to miscegenation. With the active support of Republican politicians, Minnesota adopted black (male) suffrage in 1868, and in 1870, the legislature passed the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that prohibited state and federal governments from denying a citizen the right to vote based on race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

After the Civil War, some efforts were made by well-meaning officials to allocate land, acquired after removal of Winnebago, to African Americans that had taken part in the war as part of the 67th Regiment, U.S. Colored Infantry. However, these efforts did not yield results, as most of the Winnebago lands went to

speculators. Meanwhile, efforts to advance black homesteading failed in Minnesota's legislature based on fears that it "could foment racial tensions in Minnesota's farmland" (Green 2015, 57). Much of these lands came to be populated by waves of European immigrants. African American exclusion from homesteading, when even newly arrived European immigrants had such privileges, is a glaring example of how racialized institutions prevented African Americans from realizing freedom.

Even as the war was coming to an end, and the possibility of black suffrage loomed in the horizon, there existed a de facto school segregation in areas with significant African American population, including Saint Paul—the only incorporated town in Minnesota at that time. The schools that were allocated for black children were housed in dilapidated buildings bereft of minimum facilities for learning. Debates went on in the press between those that supported desegregation of schools and its opponents. In 1868, the Minnesota legislature passed a law banning school segregation, despite opposition from a number of Democratic representatives from Saint Paul. The pro-Democrat newspaper *Pioneer* wrote articles in opposition to the law, arguing that the law would privilege African American children over white children in already crowded schools, and that black children did not want to learn with white children.

With a number of legislative victories that affirmed legal rights to African Americans, the next challenge was faced from the people that refused to uphold these rights. These continuing discriminatory practices reflected the divided nature of society, wherein the Lincoln Republicans, especially from areas without significant black population, passed egalitarian legislations only to be compromised in practice in Saint Paul and its surroundings. Instances such as denial of admission into rail coaches even with valid tickets and white landlords refusing to rent their properties to black tenants continued to occur. When a black person filed suit against such discrimination, which itself happened rarely, jurors—mostly all-white—would side with the white defendant.

This division was most visible in 1873, when Frederick Douglass, thinker and national leader of the abolitionist movement, was invited to Minnesota to speak to a select audience by Saint Paul Library Association. The audience was enthralled, while a thronging crowd outside the hall shouted abuses, denigrating the black leader. To add to the insult, Douglass was denied admission to stay the night at two of Saint Paul's prestigious hotels based on the policy of no service to African Americans. The irony was that Douglass initially was invited to stay at The Metropolitan by its owner, Gilbert Dutcher, who had to intervene to secure admission for Douglass after learning of the slight.

Faced with ongoing racial animosity, a number of African Americans in Saint Paul formed a mutual support group, called Sons of Freedom, in 1869 to help African Americans find jobs, manage property, and get education for their children. However, as with most organizations of marginalized people, Sons of Freedom, too, struggled to muster the resources it required to effectively advance its agenda. This organization held a celebration of the seventh anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1870. A number of white Lincoln Republicans spoke, and attendees felt camaraderie, yet it failed to raise sufficient funds for the organization.

The black population of Minnesota reached 1,500 out of a total population of about 750,000 in 1880. They formed churches, literary, music societies, and various types of clubs to support their community. Churches became key to community life, and literary societies provided avenues for personal intellectual development, reflecting the development of a middle class that was to become the black leadership in the state. They organized events to preserve their history, by commemorating events such as freeing of slaves in the West Indies, the first of which was organized in Minnesota on August 15, 1868. They convinced the police and fire departments in Saint Paul and Minneapolis to start employing African Americans. In 1895, the 9th Company of Saint Paul Fire department was organized as an all-black company.

The first African American weekly newspaper of Minnesota, *Western Appeal*, started its publication in 1885, reflecting a high degree of literacy and urbanization among Minnesota's African Americans relative to their Southern brethren. *Western Appeal*, especially under the leadership of John Adams, went on to strongly espouse the cause of African Americans and consistently decried discrimination and disenfranchisement that blacks experienced. Later, the newspaper expanded its open editions to several other cities.

Earliest representation of African Americans in Minnesota's public culture was in the form of a caricature of a black man, Rastus, in the 1890s. Rastus was presented as a cheerful African American chef in an advertisement for "Cream of Wheat," a packaged breakfast cereal. This depiction pandered to stereotypes of African Americans being servile at a time when the black community in Minnesota was extremely small—suggesting that the company was targeting sales to a nonblack clientele.

Racial domination included both ideological power on the one hand and the force of brutal violence on the other hand. Drawing on the prevalent racist ideas in the nineteenth century, many arguments that justified African American exclusion from white institutions were constructed around the notion that nonwhites, specifically African Americans, were not "civilizable," where these institutions represented civilization. These ideological assertions of power were increasingly challenged by African American individuals who succeeded in the white world to live middle-class lives, even against tremendous barriers.

With the soft power of ideological domination showing signs of wilting with the legislative changes, assertions of white supremacy occasionally took the form of direct violence, lynching being its worst form. Even though the infamous Duluth lynchings were the most widely known of such instances, there were several prior, unsuccessful, attempts at lynching African Americans by white mobs. The first such incident happened in 1869 in Stillwater, when a Swedish mob of 200 people unsuccessfully attempted to lynch Taylor Combs, who was accused, and later convicted, of committing rape of a Swedish immigrant woman.

The formal equality that African Americans, as citizens, enjoyed before law was in sharp contrast to their everyday reality of exclusion and discrimination. In law enforcement, black convicts were handed out much harsher punishments than whites who committed similar crimes—a pattern that has continued throughout history. In the 1870s, civil rights activists highlighted many cases of blacks refused

***Duluth Lynchings***

A rare historical case of murder by lynching in the Northern states occurred in Duluth on June 15, 1920. By the early twentieth century, Duluth had become a rapidly growing industrial city of about 100,000 people. Many European immigrants lived in the working-class sections of West Duluth. A number of Southern blacks had also moved to Duluth in search of employment. Competition for jobs resulted in tense race relations.

On June 14, a traveling circus company visited Duluth for a day. Two teenagers—James Sullivan and Irene Tusken—went to participate in the revelries and ended up behind the circus tent where black workers were packing up to move. What transpired is not clear; the two teens went back to their respective homes that night. The next morning, Tusken reported that she had been raped at gunpoint by black workers the night before. Even though a physician did not find evidence to corroborate her claim, the media widely reported the incident as true. The police arrested and jailed six black workers, hoping to extract confessions; however, none of the jailed men confessed.

As rumors spread, a crowd numbering in the thousands assembled in front of the jail demanding the prisoners be released to them. The police force guarding the jail did not have orders to shoot and were eventually pushed aside when the mob seized three of the prisoners. Elias Clayton, Elmer Jackson, and Isaac McGhie were beaten and lynched.

Later, three white men were convicted of rioting, but not of murdering the three black men. In 1921, the state legislature passed an anti-lynching law. In 2003, a memorial was built in Duluth to commemorate the victims.

service in saloons or tenancy by white landlords. The Congress passed the Civil Rights Act in 1875, only to be later struck down as unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice Morrison Waite in 1883.

Following this, Minnesota passed a public accommodations law in 1885 that barred discrimination in places of public accommodation. However, in reality, rarely were civil rights cases brought in instances when blacks were refused to be served by white businesses. In a few such cases, when cases were filed, all-white juries, mostly relying on interpretations and loopholes in the law, ensured that defendants were not found guilty.

In one such instance, two black men who were refused service in a saloon brought charges against the establishment, only for the charges to be dismissed on the basis that “saloons” were not included in the public accommodations law. Eventually, in 1897, two black attorneys—William Morris and Frank Wheaton—managed to pass an amendment to the 1885 law to cover all eating establishments. Following the success of this legislative effort, in 1898, Wheaton, who himself had been refused service in a restaurant earlier, became the first African American elected to the Minnesota legislature.

William Hazel, a black architect from Massachusetts, visiting Saint Paul in the spring of 1887, was denied entry into two prominent hotels. When he protested, he was arrested and charged with causing drunken disorderliness, even though he was sober. Hazel filed an antidiscrimination suit seeking \$2,000 in damages. When he came back for the trial, he had similar experiences, this time from a bakery. Eventually, an all-white jury ruled in favor of the plaintiff, however, only

awarding “a token twenty-five dollars in damages plus nineteen dollars in costs” (Green 2015, 156), an amount that did not even cover the legal costs.

The Hazel case was widely reported in *Western Appeal*. In 1887, editor John Adams, along with the black leadership in Saint Paul, organized a convention that led to the establishment of Protective and Industrial League “to resist racial discrimination in public accommodations.” In the same year, *Western Appeal* published a call by the African American leader Timothy Fortune (whose efforts laid the groundwork for civil rights struggles) to blacks nationwide to form themselves into similar local and state leagues. As the league’s efforts proved unsuccessful, the Afro-American League of Saint Paul was founded in 1889. At a time when the Republican Party’s commitment to racial egalitarianism seemed uncertain, the league toyed with the idea of alternative political formations to advance the cause of African Americans. Many among the black elite in Saint Paul were frustrated with the patronizing Republican attitude of taking the black vote for granted.

The Saint Paul League was represented by two of its prominent members at the Chicago convention that launched the National Afro-American League in 1890. At this time, the black leadership was divided over which approach would achieve racial progress—a conciliatory tone espoused by the supporters of Booker T. Washington to appeal to the benevolent whites, or a more strident tone that identified discrimination as the core problem. This dilemma was experienced regularly by middle-class and professional African Americans in Minnesota, who had to assert their rights and demand respect without being seen as “uppity” (a racially coded term). Mainstream politicians and the media were reluctant to support the militant message of the league’s leader, Fortune, making it difficult to raise the direly needed resources for its activities.

Minnesota blacks traveling to the Jim Crow South had to endure various acts of legally sanctioned discrimination that they had fought hard to end in Minnesota. Such experiences further added to a sense of urgency about addressing racial inequality. The Minnesota Civil Rights Committee was established in 1891. As conditions worsened in the South, Thomas Fortune, whose earlier effort at a national organization failed, made another attempt at mobilizing black activists nationally. He organized a meeting of activists in Rochester, New York, that led to the founding of the National Afro-American Council (NAAC) in 1898. McGhee and John Adams, who represented Minnesota in that meeting, returned to Minnesota and launched the Law Enforcement League in Saint Paul to organize locally.

The emergence of these organizations was an indication of how far race relations in Minnesota had changed in less than 50 years—from the early experiences of Jim Thompson as a “mulatto,” to the rise of a black middle class who were acutely aware of their racial identity because of the pervasive discrimination that existed. These organizations, despite varying degrees of success, reflected the urgency that blacks felt to change the conditions of their existence.

McGhee, then, organized a national convention of NAAC in Saint Paul in 1902, to which he invited Booker T. Washington, then the most important national leader of African Americans. Washington, however, had taken a tack of racial submissiveness and thought that self-help was the way forward for his race, a perspective that was staunchly opposed by attendees, such as W.E.B. Du Bois

and Ida B. Wells-Barnett, who were keen on addressing discrimination and oppression directly and critically.

The latter perspective was to become more popular in the years to come, especially after the publication of Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk* in 1903. In 1905, Du Bois visited Saint Paul and stayed with McGhee, the then president of Saint Paul chapter of NAAC. Following the visit, Du Bois drafted a set of principles as key to racial progress and decided to convene a meeting of like-minded race leaders in Buffalo, New York. In July 1905, the meeting was convened in Fort Erie Hotel in the Canadian side of Niagara Falls. McGhee of Minnesota was a notable attendee. Even though this movement did not last long, it became the direct precursor to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which was founded in 1909.

Despite NAACP's staunch opposition to segregation, the reality was that racial segregation had gained currency among whites in general, even in Minnesota. As increasing numbers of Southern African Americans migrated to Minnesota, white neighborhoods started to actively engage in residential segregation. In 1909, Madison Jackson's was the only black family living in the white middle-class neighborhood of Prospect Park in Minneapolis. When William Simpson, Jackson's friend and fellow porter at Pullman Rail Company, decided to move there as well, white residents tried to stop construction and attempted to get the city to buy out his land. However, the Simpsons managed to remain in Prospect Park. A similar incident happened in Linden Park—another white middle-class neighborhood—the same year, when a black minister, William Malone, sought to buy a house from a white woman. The white residents protested. However, unlike Simpson, Malone was unsuccessful in his efforts, as the city intervened and bought the property from the woman.

Reflecting the increasing racial animosity, racial covenants in property deals started to appear in Minnesota in the first decade of the twentieth century. Henry Scott, president of a real estate company, insisted on a stipulation in deeds that the property could not be sold to non-Caucasians including “Chinese, Japanese, Moorish, Turkish, Negro, Mongolian or African blood or descent.” Despite a 50 percent growth in black population in Minneapolis between 1910 and 1920, access to downtown areas continued to be denied to them, in a de facto manner.

Historical records also point to vast difference in wages between whites and blacks engaged in the same type of work. As real estate companies started to be agents of racial segregation, banks engaged in redlining practices that denied loans to purchase properties in racially mixed neighborhoods. Even though a 1919 Minnesota law against such covenants reduced anti-Semitism, African Americans continued to experience segregation.

Persistent discrimination brought out class divisions within the African American community, with the professional and middle-class African Americans sometimes siding with whites in a bid to differentiate themselves from their poorer brethren. All of these factors may have contributed to segregated neighborhoods, with poorer African Americans concentrating mostly in Northside and Seven Corners areas, which to this day remains an area mired in poverty and high crime rates.



Much like the widely reported recent events of police violence on African Americans, segregated areas in the 1920s witnessed police highhandedness and violence on a regular basis, suggesting a history of troubled relationship between the community and police. In the summer of 1922, a drunk policeman patrolling in a mixed neighborhood decided that men hanging around a club had to go home because they “invited white girls to dance.” Many of them were arrested upon refusal to leave. Another night, a black man was “speaking to white girls” when a policeman intervened and fired a few rounds at him, only to miss the target, upon which the black man seized the gun and fled. These incidents led to increased police patrols on the streets but also invited community protests against the police.

While ideas influenced by, and support for, the white supremacist group Ku Klux Klan existed in Minnesota prior to the 1920s, the Klan activity itself is thought to have begun in Minnesota in 1921. Prior to this, ideas espoused by Masonic organizations and newspaper were very close to those of the Klan’s, including racial bigotry and a rabid hatred for Catholicism. The Klan established several chapters in Minnesota, the most prominent among them in Owatonna, which went on to raise considerable funds and own property. In 1921, they organized a chapter in Minneapolis. After the 1920s, the Klan activity was considerably reduced in Minnesota. Even though Klan membership never went mainstream in Minnesota, its strong presence on the fringes may have encouraged practices of discrimination and bigotry.

Continuing the activism against racism, a few black professionals, led by Herbert Howell, who worked for the African American newspaper *Spokesman*, started the Minnesota Club in the 1930s. Among its prominent members was Lena Olive Smith, the first African American woman law graduate in 1921. Lawyers in this group, including Smith, helped advance mixed neighborhoods by defending black residents that faced protests in white neighborhoods.

In the 1940s, many property advertisements included the words “Gentiles Only,” barring not only blacks, but other racial minority groups as well. A survey found that in 1948, 40 percent of the new developments were covered by the racial covenant. In 1944, Daisuke Kitagawa, a Japanese minister, was denied rental accommodation for his family after the landlord was forced to change his mind following neighborhood protests. Minneapolis’s residential segregation came in for sharp rebuke from veterans’ groups when fellow veterans, returning at the end of World War II, were denied housing due to race. Jon Matsuo, who had joined a cooperative housing venture initiated by veterans, was denied housing by the real estate agent who informed him that the denial was because of his ancestry. Matsuo and fellow veterans protested. He went on to become a community activist and, eventually, president of United Citizen’s League to advance interests of Japanese American community in Minnesota.

An important point to note here is that while these cases found support from fellow white veterans, the many African Americans who endured similar experiences for much of Minnesota’s history did not. This was so at a time when residents of African American neighborhoods did not qualify for federal funds, based on the notion that they would prove to be risky investments. In the late 1940s, with the civil rights movement looming on the horizon, the city of Minneapolis, led by

Mayor Hubert Humphrey, a known supporter of civil rights, made strides toward tackling discrimination by organizing human relations training in interracial friendship for children and by organizing a survey on racial attitudes in the city.

Despite civil rights movement taking shape and finding support in Minnesota, various forms of racial discrimination continued. A prominent black family that experienced effects of residential segregation was that of Woodfin Lewis in 1952, a nuclear physicist employed at Honeywell, who had recently moved to St. Louis Park. The year 1956 saw the end of Rondo, a historically black neighborhood in Saint Paul that went back to 1865, after the federal government decided to fund construction of interstate highways. About 400 homes were destroyed to build I-94, and Rondo, once an iconic center of African American cultural activities, ceased to exist.

With public opinion against segregation and the rise of civil rights discourse, the 1950s and 1960s were largely a time period of struggles against racism in Minnesota. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. addressed the Minneapolis Urban League in 1961. Dr. King visited Minnesota again in 1963 and 1967. At the heights of civil rights activism, in the early 1960s, six Minnesotans (including four students) were part of 400 Freedom Riders who nonviolently protested Jim Crow laws in the South. Local groups associated with the University of Minnesota organized support for the Freedom Riders.

Roy Wilkins, executive secretary (the title changed to executive director later) of NAACP during the civil rights era, was perhaps Minnesota's biggest contribution to the movement. Wilkins, born in Missouri and raised by his aunt and uncle in Minnesota, was a sophomore at the University of Minnesota and had become the first black reporter of the newspaper *Minnesota Daily* at the time of Duluth lynchings. Wilkins had witnessed several everyday incidences of racism on campus. He later went on to guide the civil rights movement by organizing the March on Washington in 1963.

As part of efforts to desegregate schools in 1970, the Minneapolis public school system decided to bus students from the all-white Hale School to Field School, whose students were mostly African American. While majority of the white parents protested, a small group of desegregationists got together to build a new community school that successfully established mixed schools in 1971.

Even though civil rights legislations made illegal practices of discrimination in housing and property exchanges, records show that occasionally such cases continued into the 1970s and beyond. Problems also existed in employment and equal pay practices. Around the 1970s, African Americans, who had been traditionally paid lower than their white colleagues in the workplace, started addressing this problem by bringing lawsuits against discrimination. In 1975, Charles Lewis of Minnetonka won a case against Honeywell for being paid less than other employees and denied promotions.

Minnesota is home to many white supremacist groups including: White Christians Patriot League, Minnesota White Man's Association, White Aryan Resistance (WAR), Northern Hammer Skins, and United Patriot Front. The Anti-Racist Action (ARA) group successfully drove many skinhead groups out of Minneapolis in the late 1980s; however, hate crimes started to resurface in the 1990s.

A 17-year-old boy was charged with a hate crime in Saint Paul after he threw a burning cross onto a black family's yard. Another cross burning took place in St. Louis Park in 1993. In 1991, newspapers reported presence of skinheads and the Klan at an event protesting against anti-racism rally in Dayton's Bluff neighborhood in Saint Paul.

In the more recent decades, the arrival of immigrant and refugee populations have made the demographic picture more complex and increased the share of minorities as a percentage of the overall population. Minnesota's demographic makeup is still considerably different than at the national level. African Americans constitute 5.2 percent of Minnesota's population, per 2010 census, compared to 12 percent nationally. While overt forms of discrimination are less frequent, two factors are key to contemporary race relations—the overall social economic conditions of impoverishment and its effects and the harsh treatment that African Americans often experience from law enforcement agencies. Despite the rise of a black professional and middle class with substantial achievements, the overall quality of life indicators, such as educational attainment, home ownership, income and wealth, health indicators, are much lower for African Americans, on average, relative to whites. These disparities, reflecting the persistent poverty in de facto segregated urban communities, such as Northern Minneapolis, are correlated with higher neighborhood crime rates.

The tense relationship between such communities and the law enforcement has come into sharp focus with the killing of a number of black men by law enforcement agencies and the ensuing protests that congealed into the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. Two such deaths, of Jamar Clark in 2015, in Minneapolis, and Philando Castile in 2016, in Saint Paul, both shot dead by police officers, drew protests nationally. BLM-led sit-in and direct action took place at the Minneapolis city square and Mall of America. Nekima Levy-Pounds, former president of Minneapolis chapter of NAACP, led the protests. In June 2017, a local jury acquitted the police officer who shot Castile accepting the defense argument that the officer shot Castile in self-defense.

### Refugees and New Immigrants

Immigration and refugee-related legislations since the 1960s paved the way for changing demographic landscape in Minnesota in the decades to come. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 set out a new immigration policy that emphasized family reunification and skills as important criteria. Since 1990, immigration has been a key driver of population growth in all the major metro centers in Minnesota. As of 2013, the state had 403,514 immigrants that arrived mostly from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, which constitutes 7.4 percent of the population.

**Latino/a Americans:** People of Mexican descent have been traveling to Minnesota since the early twentieth century for farm work. Luis Garzon, a visiting artist that stayed back after he married a Minnesotan, was the first Mexican that settled down in Minnesota. Residents of the first Mexican American settlement, built on Saint Paul's Westside in 1916, formed an organization called Sociedad

Anahuac to promote religious, cultural, and social activities. A Neighborhood House in Saint Paul Westside provided a safe space for new arrivals. Since the early days, Latinos—members of various Spanish-speaking ethnic groups that are mistakenly viewed and treated as a racial group—have faced discrimination, especially barriers to full citizenship, despite the fact that parts of the United States were Mexico territories prior to 1848. Despite contributing immensely to farm economies in Minnesota historically, Latinos have been targeted for forced deportation back to their home countries from the time of the Great Depression.

Upon establishing stable communities, Latinos built various institutions to facilitate their social and cultural life. In the 1950s, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the GI Forum focused on community building. In addition to focusing their efforts locally, they also built important connections with national-level organizations. These were precursors to the Chicano Movement in Minnesota that focused on protecting and rebuilding their Saint Paul Westside community that was facing threat of destruction due to urban renewal.

Art became an expression of their fights against exclusion and discrimination. Murals depicting Mexican folklore are still visible in these neighborhoods. Organizations such as Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio (CLUES), an initiative of student activism, and the Latino Economic Development Center (LEDC) have worked on providing vitality for communities and opportunities for its members. Latinos have been active in trade unions, for example, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), UNITE-HERE (formed in 2004 by the merger of UNITE—the Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees—and HERE [Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union]), and Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en la Lucha (CTUL). The “Dreamers” have been at the forefront of demands for immigration reform as they advanced their long-standing demands for full citizenship. In 1977, Conrado Vega became the first Latino in Minnesota Senate, and Edwina Garcia became the first Latina elected to the legislature in 1991.

Latinos in Minnesota, like other immigrant groups, have experienced rapid population growth since the 1990s. At about 275,000, currently Latinos constitute about 5 percent of Minnesota’s population, and 8 percent of its youth, engaged in farm work and meatpacking in “outstate” (mostly rural) counties such as Nobles and Watonwan, Mahnommen, and Lake counties, in areas experiencing population declines. Even though Latinos as a group have reported lower graduation rates, there is an increasing presence of advance degree holders that work in business, government, and nonprofit sectors. Racial identity remains a complex issue in the Latino community. While many Afro-Latinos are visibly present, lighter-skinned members of the community prefer to indicate their racial identification as white.

**Asian Americans:** Restrictive immigration laws ensured that there were fewer Asians in early Minnesota. At least six Chinese families are said to have established residency in Minnesota by 1910. Following the 1965 immigration reform, Minnesota’s population started to become more diverse with the arrival of Chinese, Japanese, and Filipinos. Indian Americans (or Asian Indians, as they are referred to in census) started arriving in the 1990s to work in the technology sector. Asian Americans are a diverse group, with substantial differences among

subgroups based on ethnic or national origins in terms of socioeconomic status, education levels, and quality of life indicators. Even though Asian Americans as a percentage of Minnesota's population are lower than that of the nation, they are currently the fastest growing racial/ethnic group in Minnesota.

**Hmong:** The Hmong people came from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Lao, whose communities had supported American war efforts in Southeast Asia. Faced with persecution in their countries, they arrived in America following the passage of legislation to admit refugees. By the end of 1980, about 6,000 Hmong were living in Twin Cities. Today, Frogtown in Saint Paul is a Hmong ethnic enclave. The emergence of Saint Paul as the U.S. city with the largest Hmong population and unsuccessful efforts to build communities in other states drew them to Minnesota. The general progressive culture in the Twin Cities, low cost of living, better facilities such as education and health, and opportunities for work were the main "pull" factors.

Largely from agrarian communities, the first-generation Hmong found themselves in the low-skilled workforce in Minnesota. Increasing segments of the second-generation Hmong hold college degrees and are represented in skilled sectors of the economy. The Hmong, however, experience higher poverty rates than other Asian groups.

Minnesota is also home to a number of smaller refugee groups from Southeast Asia, such as Karen, Karenni, Mon, and Chin, ethnic groups that fled conflicts in Burma. Minnesota is also home to a small number of Tibetan refugees fleeing Chinese persecution in Tibet and refugees from Bhutan.

**Somali Americans:** Feeling civil strife in Somalia (located on the southern side of East Africa), many Somalis have made Minnesota their home since 1990. Currently, Minnesota is home to about 25,000 Somalis, many of them living in the Twin Cities area and in St. Cloud. Movement out of the Twin Cities in search of work has increased the outstate population of Somalis. Much like earlier refugees, Somalis were also drawn to Minnesota for better living conditions, public facilities, a socially progressive ethos, and the presence of philanthropic support systems. They founded community organizations, such as Confederation of Somali Communities in Minnesota and Somali Community Access Network (SomaliCAN).

At \$19,000 per year (2015), Somali Americans have among the lowest median family income of any group in the United States. However, there is considerable internal differentiation in terms of education and skill levels, as well as class status, as many Minnesotan Somalis came from professional classes in Somalia. Muslims by faith, Somali Americans have been facing racism as well as Islamophobia. Post 9/11, Somali Americans have experienced the effects of Islamophobia, ranging from mosques being targets of arson and vandalism to children being bullied in schools in central Minnesota. Despite persistent everyday forms of racism and discrimination that Somali immigrants face, especially in outstate Minnesota, studies have shown that Somalis in Minnesota are much more integrated and influential than their counterparts in other parts of the country. In 2016, Ilhan Omar, a woman community activist, was elected to the Minnesota House and became the first Somali American elected to a state legislature anywhere in the United States.

Aside from Somalis, other groups from East Africa include considerable populations of Sudanese and Oromo. Oromo are a persecuted ethnic group from Ethiopia. Settled mostly in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood in Twin Cities, Oromos have often been mistaken for Somalis and have felt that they are a largely invisible minority in Minnesota, especially due to language barriers.

## **CONCLUSION**

In a century and half, Minnesota is changing from being the land of the Sioux to one inhabited by immigrants, first from New England, the American South, and Europe and later by those migrating from mostly the Global South. The post-indigenous Minnesota, once established as a state, retained near racial homogeneity for most of its history. Until 1990, 95 percent of its population was white. Immigration, due to globalization of economies, has contributed to its increasing diversity. The 2010 census showed that nonwhites are currently about 15 percent of the population—progress, despite these numbers being much lower than the national average. Through these historical changes, the general principles that have guided Minnesota’s approach to race relations have been based on its progressive ethos. However, in practice, the substance of race relations—especially forms discrimination and racism—has not been dissimilar in kind to elsewhere, albeit perhaps less harsh in degree.

## **NOTABLE FIGURE**

### **McGhee, Fredrick (1861–1912)**

Born into slavery in Aberdeen, Mississippi, Fredrick L. McGhee had an extraordinary life and career. He was among the first African American attorneys in the nation, a foremost civil rights activist of his era, and, most importantly, a leading figure in the Niagara Movement and a founding member of NAACP.

After the Civil War, the McGhee family moved to Tennessee, where Fredrick and his siblings became orphans after the passing of their parents in 1873. McGhee went on to graduate from college in Tennessee. Having earned his law degree in Chicago while working as a waiter to pay for his education, McGhee moved to Saint Paul in 1889 and became the first black lawyer admitted to the Minnesota bar. He gained a reputation as a remarkable lawyer and a powerful orator. With an outgoing personality, he frequently used his theatrical skills in the courtroom to serve the interest of his clients.

Despite his success as a lawyer, McGhee’s primary concern focused on race and racism, making him one of the most important “race men” in Minnesota’s history. McGhee was a trailblazer. When most blacks were Baptists, he converted to Catholicism and founded St. Peter Claver Church in Saint Paul. Concerns about race led him to politics and the Republican Party, where his oratorical skills were noted. He was appointed a presidential elector by the Republican Party in 1892, but the appointment was rescinded after whites in the party protested. Upon experiencing further marginalization, McGhee left the Republican Party, then supported by the vast majority of blacks, and became a Democrat.

McGhee represented Minnesota at the founding of NAAC in 1898. He organized its national convention in Saint Paul in 1902, which was attended by leading black activists, including Booker Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Ida Wells-Barnett. He went on to become a close friend and associate of Du Bois. It was at McGhee's house in Saint Paul, at his suggestion, that Du Bois drafted a set of principles for the Niagara Movement. McGhee was one of the key attendees of the meeting in Fort Erie, Ontario, to initiate the movement. After the founding of NAACP in 1909, McGhee established Minnesota's first chapter in Saint Paul. He died three years later in his adopted home of Saint Paul.

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# 25

## Mississippi

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Patricia Hureston Lee

### CHRONOLOGY

#### 700–1200 CE

Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek, Cahokia, and Natchez Native Americans inhabit the geographic area located along the Mississippi River; indigenous Native Americans develop the Mississippian traditional economy, based on fishing, hunting, agriculture, mound building, and other complex institutions

#### 1619

Dutch traders introduce slavery into the English colonies

#### 1724

Jean Baptist Bienville, the French governor of the Mississippi region, develops the Bienville Code, or the Black Code, to govern slaves

#### 1763

The British begin to establish settlements in the Mississippi Territory, bringing slaves with them

#### 1790s

The use of a new invention called the “cotton gin” begins to reinvigorate the institution of slavery in Mississippi and across the American South

#### 1802

Concluded in April, the Compact of 1802, formally the *Articles of Agreement and Cession*, provides an agreement between the United States and the state of Georgia for the purchase of the central and western lands (the Yazoo lands, now Alabama and Mississippi, respectively), with the promise to extinguish American Indian land titles there



**1816**

In October, President James Madison negotiates, and the Choctaw nation signs, the Tombigbee Cession Treaty of 1816, which cedes 10,000 acres of Choctaw nation land to the United States

**1817**

Mississippi joins the Union as the 20th state on December 10

**1820**

In October, Andrew Jackson negotiates the Treaty of Doak's Stand with the Choctaws; the agreement exchanges over 5 million acres of fertile land in Mississippi for 13 million acres of land in Oklahoma and a part of Arkansas (which part was never given)

**1823**

The Mississippi legislature severely restricts the grounds upon which a slave owner can free slaves

**1829**

Andrew Jackson takes office in March as the seventh president of the United States; he proceeds immediately to implement a policy of Native American removal from the South

**1830**

In January, the Mississippi legislature places all Native Americans within state boundaries under Mississippi law and government; in May, the national Indian Removal Act becomes law; in September, the Choctaw nation signs the Dancing Rabbit Creek Treaty

**1832**

The Chickasaw nation signs the Pontotoc Treaty, ceding 6 million acres of land

**1833**

Little Leader leads one band of Choctaws that refuses to be removed from Mississippi to the Oklahoma Indian Territory

**1857**

The Mississippi legislature outlaws the emancipation of slaves

**1861**

On January 9, Mississippi becomes the second state to secede from the Union

**1862**

In May, Corinth, in northern Mississippi, falls to Union forces; with the arrival of federal troops, an estimated 17,000 black slaves eventually join their ranks

**1863**

On January 1, President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation frees enslaved persons living in areas under Confederate control, as in much of Mississippi, but does not free enslaved persons residing in slaveholding border states that remain part of the Union

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### **1863**

On July 4, Vicksburg on the Mississippi River falls to Union forces under General Ulysses S. Grant

### **1865**

The Mississippi legislature enacts the Mississippi Black Codes to thwart the freedoms of newly emancipated African Americans

### **1865**

On December 5, Mississippi rejects the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

### **1867**

The U.S. Congress rejects the reconstructed government of Mississippi and replaces it with a military government

### **1868**

The “Black and Tan Convention,” a biracial constitutional convention, drafts a new state constitution that protects the rights of African Americans; voters reject the proposed constitution

### **1870**

On January 17, Mississippi ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, granting citizenship to “all persons born or naturalized in the United States,” including former slaves

### **1870**

On January 17, as a requirement for sending representatives to Congress, Mississippi ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, granting voting rights to African American men

### **1870**

Hiram R. Revels of Natchez enters the U.S. Senate, becoming the first African American to sit in either house of the U.S. Congress

### **1871**

On May 13, the Mississippi legislature creates Alcorn State University, the first land-grant school for African Americans in the United States

### **1875**

Blanche K. Bruce of Mississippi becomes the first African American elected to the U.S. Senate

### **1875**

The “Mississippi Plan” is instituted by the state government to deter African American political participation

### **1877**

The Natchez Seminary for Black Ministers is founded in Natchez by the American Baptist Home Mission Society of New York

**1880**

The Lightfoot Lodges No. 1, 2, 3 and a Grand Lodge is organized, creating an African American fraternal order called the Knights of Pythias, North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia (NASAEAAA), in Vicksburg

**1887**

Mound Bayou, the first Mississippi city founded by African Americans, is established

**1899**

William T. Jones becomes the grand chancellor of the Knights of Pythias, NASAEAAA, for the state of Mississippi

**1903**

The State Federation of Colored Women's Club is founded

**1908**

African American author Richard Nathan Wright Jr. is born in Roxie, Mississippi

**1917**

Fannie Lou Hamer, American voting rights activist, is born in Montgomery County, Mississippi

**1924**

The Afro-American Sons and Daughters, a fraternal organization, is started by T.J. Huddleston Sr. in Yazoo City

**1928**

T.J. Huddleston Sr. builds and operates the first hospital in the state owned and managed by African Americans

**1954**

*Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* overturns *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which rules segregated public schools unconstitutional; Mississippi forms the Sovereignty Commission to resist school desegregation

**1954**

On November 24, Medgar Evers is appointed the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) field secretary for Mississippi

**1955**

On August 28, black teenager Emmett Till is murdered, supposedly for whistling at a white woman, while visiting family in Mississippi; his bludgeoned body is found in the Tallahatchie River

**1960**

The African American protest of the civil rights era occurs in Biloxi Beach, where there was an attempt to use a segregated beach

**1962–1963**

Civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer and others are jailed in Mississippi for seeking voter registration rights

**1962**

*Meredith v. Fair* is decided in favor of James Meredith, which allows Meredith to become the first African American student to enter the segregated University of Mississippi

**1962**

On December 20, Mississippi rejects the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which abolishes the poll tax; Mississippi has never ratified this amendment, which took effect in January 1964

**1963**

On June 12, civil rights activist Medgar Evers is assassinated in Jackson, Mississippi, in the driveway of his home

**1964**

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) organize a Mississippi voter registration drive, known as Freedom Summer or the Mississippi Summer Project

**1964**

Three Freedom Summer volunteers, James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael “Mickey” Schwerner, are murdered in Mississippi; their story becomes the basis of the movie, *Mississippi Burning*

**1964**

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party is founded to challenge the control of the whites-only regular Democratic Party in Mississippi

**1966–1967**

James Meredith develops the March against Fear and Violence; in 1967, Meredith is shot, but survives

**1967**

State Representative Robert G. Clark becomes the first African American to serve in the Mississippi legislature in the twentieth century

**1970**

Rainey Pool, a black sharecropper from Midnight, Mississippi, is murdered

**1972**

*Furman v. Georgia* declares Mississippi’s Black Codes unconstitutional

**1977**

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Mississippi, Delta Ministry, Owen Brooks, and Ken Lawrence sue the Sovereignty Commission to gain access to civil rights era files; the Mississippi Senate votes 35–9 to seal the Sovereignty Commission files until July 1, 2027, causing the ACLU to refile their lawsuit

**1981**

On April 8, the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reinstates the ACLU lawsuit to open Sovereignty Commission records; the files reveal jury irregularities in the trial of Byron de la Beckwith for the murder of Medgar Evers

**1984**

Ruben Anderson from Jackson is elected as the first African American justice of the Mississippi Supreme Court

**1986**

Michael Espy is elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, becoming Mississippi's first African American congressman since Reconstruction

**1989**

On July 27, U.S. District judge William Barbour Jr. rules that the Sovereignty Commission files remain open

**1993**

Michael Espy is appointed U.S. secretary of agriculture by President Bill Clinton

**1994**

Byron de la Beckwith is convicted, after 31 years, of the 1963 murder of civil rights leader Medgar Evers in Jackson

**1995**

On March 16, Mississippi ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, 130 years after the amendment took effect

**1998**

On July 31, Judge Barbour delays opening of the Sovereignty Commission files while privacy plaintiffs appeal

**1998**

Sam Bowers, former head of the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in Mississippi, is convicted of the 1966 murder of civil rights activist Vernon Dahmer

**1999**

On November 13, a Mississippi grand jury indicts five men in connection with the 1970 murder of black sharecropper Rainey Pool, but the men are released

**2005**

Eighty-year-old Edgar Ray Killen is convicted of manslaughter in connection with the 1964 deaths of civil rights workers Michael Schwerner, James Chaney, and Andrew Goodman in Neshoba County

**2010**

A Humphreys County jury convicts three of the five indicted men for manslaughter in connection with the murder of Rainey Pool

**2011**

James Anderson, a black resident of Jackson, Mississippi, and employee of Nissan Corporation, is beaten and run over by a truck in a motel parking lot; the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) gets involved and the Southern Poverty Law Center files suit

**2012**

House Bill 488, a tough anti-immigration measure, is defeated in the Mississippi legislature

**2013**

The Mississippi legislature passes a law declaring that no statue, monument, memorial, or landmark from any war can be removed from a public property unless it is moved to another approved location or if it is a safety hazard that blocks drivers from seeing

**2014**

The governor of Mississippi tells President Barack Obama that the state will not accept undocumented immigrant children after it was learned that Mississippi was under consideration as a site for housing some of the 60,000 children who have entered the country in the past year

**2015**

The Southern Poverty Law Center wins justice for James Anderson; the FBI case against the white supremacists ends with guilty pleas against all 10 defendants

**2016**

Mississippi's incarceration rate of 843 per 100,000 is the 11th highest rate of incarceration in the world; the incarceration rates of Hispanics/Latinos, African Americans, and Native Americans total 92.8 percent of the Mississippi prison population

**2017**

The U.S. Supreme Court rejects a lawsuit filed by an African American attorney that sought to have the Confederate battle emblem on the Mississippi flag declared an unconstitutional relic of slavery; Mississippi's state flag, in use since 1894, is the last state banner to carry the Confederate symbol

**NARRATIVE**

Mississippi native son and daughter, Richard Nathan Wright and Fannie Lou Hamer, captured the despair of Mississippi living, while at the same time genuinely voicing hope for a better future for all humanity. The reflections, stories, and ideas of both Wright and Hamer were shared widely through poetry, novels, and short stories. On the one hand, author Richard Wright vividly characterized early-twentieth-century racial conflict and disparity in economics, culture, employment, housing, civil liberties, and civil rights. On the other hand, Fannie Lou Hamer, a civil rights activist, expressed the horrors of race and racism but held hope in the idea that tomorrow could be better. Their voices helped to identify racial conflicts and how their day-to-day lives were harmed by centuries-old systems of socioeconomic, political, physical, and emotional oppression that impacted their psychological well-being and quality of life. As we confront these issues of race and racism, we are called to reexamine the past, the present, and what is possible for the future.

It is well known and documented that Mississippi has struggled with a long and sordid history of heightened racial conflict, racism, and racial disparity dating back to the invasion of the Europeans and the introduction and expansion of the slave trade into the state. The removal of indigenous populations and the

introduction of enslaved Africans caused a disruption among the races. The Civil War, the deadliest war fought on U.S. soil, divided the nation. Following a brief period of Reconstruction, the incarceration exception of the Thirteenth Amendment effectively imprisoned thousands of African Americans (and later Native Americans and Latinos) during their adult years.

Another hundred years of Jim Crow and segregation further alienated the races. The notorious “Black Codes” left oppressive legacies that linger into present day. By the mid-twentieth century, the invention of the television and photographic images (e.g., the 1955 photographic images published in *Jet* magazine of Emmett Till’s bludgeoned body) exposed a wider population to the terror of racial conflict in Mississippi. Today, through a host of digital technology, firsthand narratives from residents, and voices of civil rights activists, journalists, and scholars, many have had the opportunity to weigh in their views about racial issues in the United States and, in particular, the state of Mississippi.

### **Defining Race and Racism**

The terms “race” and “racism” are inextricably connected, and Mississippi has an undeniable history of the social implications of both. In order to understand racism, we must first define race, which is generally understood as a social construct that is biologically meaningless when applied to humans. However, the concept of race has tremendous significance in structuring social reality; it is “a symbolic category, based on phenotype or ancestry and constructed according to specific social and historical contexts” (Desmond and Emirbayer 2009, 335). On the other hand, racism is a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent inferiority or superiority of particular racial groups. When implemented, racism creates social and political systems based on prejudice and discrimination. At the founding of the United States, classification by race was fundamental to the way in which property, civil rights, benefits, and penalties were administered. And race and racism have played a significant role in the history and development of the state of Mississippi.

### **Indigenous Nations, Europeans, and the African Slave Trade**

Many cities and states trace their original history to the cultures of indigenous people who lived along the Mississippi River in the southeastern part of the United States. The Mississippian tradition took shape between 700 and 1200 CE. Mississippi’s history begins with Native Americans from many nations, including the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek, Natchez, and Cahokia. These cultures were generally characterized as Native cultures that reached their greatest socioeconomic complexity during Mississippi’s earlier stages of development. “This complexity is reflected in a hierarchy of site types ranging from single family habitations or ‘farmsteads’ to multi-mound ceremonial centers, a stratified social/political organization that has been broadly compared to chiefdom level societies, specialization in the production of various traded

commodities (shell, copper, salt, etc.), and a heavy reliance on maize (corn) horticulture for subsistence” (Prentice 2003, 1).

The beginning of enslavement in the United States is generally traced to that arrival of 20 Africans brought to the British colony of Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619. As European cultures, including the Portuguese, Spanish, English, and the French, introduced slavery into Mississippi, it forever changed the course of history for the indigenous people, the enslaved Africans, and the white Europeans who exploited the slavery system. The oppressive power and ability to force a lifetime of human bondage on African people, coupled with the near-complete disruption of the Native American culture, created wounds in America society that still need to be addressed.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the system of enslavement spread, like a disease or a virus, from state to state. By 1720, European slave traders brought thousands of enslaved Africans from Georgia and South Carolina into the borderlands frontier of Mississippi for the production of tobacco, lumber, and indigo. Speculators bought and sold land and people for profit. Georgia land speculator, Robert Morris, a signer of the U.S. Constitution, created the North American Land Company, which purchased millions of acres of land that was later sold to the federal government. The Compact of 1802, formally *Articles of Agreement and Cession*, was an agreement between the United States and the state of Georgia for the purchase of the central and western Yazoo lands, which later would be designated as the states of Alabama and Mississippi. The compact also contained one additional promise: that the United States government would extinguish all American Indian land titles. Soon thereafter, a series of executive treaties with the indigenous populations were implemented. In one of the earliest treaties between the federal government and Native Americans, President James Madison (through his Generals) forced the Choctaw to sign the Tombigbee Cession Treaty of 1816, ultimately ceding the first 10,000 acres of land belonging to the Choctaw nation. Following these forceful acts of aggression, Mississippi would become a state in the Union.

The racial exclusion of Native nations from the developing political and social systems of the new American nation would continue throughout the early 1800s. In 1820, Andrew Jackson, lead negotiator of the Treaty of Doak’s Stand, exchanged over 5 million acres of fertile land in Mississippi for 13 million acres of land in Oklahoma and a part of Arkansas (which was never given). Jackson’s 1829 United States presidential inauguration paved the way for the 1830 Mississippi legislature to place all Native Americans within the state boundaries under the jurisdiction of Mississippi law and government. The laws, customs, and traditions that Native Americans followed would no longer have legal effect in Mississippi, causing questions about their property rights and status. In May 1830, the Indian Removal Act became law and allowed for the forced removal of Native Americans to the state of Oklahoma. As a last resort, the Choctaw nation signed the Dancing Rabbit Creek Treaty on September 27, 1830, which provided for peace and friendship with the United States, and ceded to European immigrants the remainder of the Mississippi delta and eastern Mississippi. Other Native nations, such as the Chickasaw, would later fall to the aggression of the United States and would be forced



into signing the October 20, 1832, treaty at Pontotoc Creek, which “gave the whites more than six million acres and this, combined with the previous and relatively small Tombigbee Cession of 1816, accounted for all the remaining land in present-day Mississippi” (Walton 1997, 105).

From the 1830s until slavery was abolished, Mississippi became a land of opportunity for white European immigrants. Early settlers purchased millions of acres of Mississippi land for the purpose of furthering a system of enslavement that oppressed and exploited one racial group and reaped benefits for another. The system of enslavement in Mississippi was brutal and included branding, whippings, mutilations, rape, and premature death. The block of acquired land from Native American nations would be used as a major U.S. acquisition for cotton production and further expansion of the slavery system. Once Andrew Jackson officially became president, he proceeded to sell or give away federal government land to Europeans and early settlers for the purposes of farming and to build slave plantations.

In 1833, Choctaw’s Little Leader led a band of Choctaws that refused to be removed to Oklahoma Indian Territory. They remained within Mississippi’s borders. (This band of Choctaws would become the ancestors of the present day Mississippi Choctaws, identifying with the Choctaw nation and as citizens of the United States.) Their isolation in Mississippi disconnected them from the majority of the Choctaw nation, but they chose to maneuver the terrain. Not being a part of the binary world of black and white, and fearing new confrontations, the Mississippi Choctaws avoided alliances with either race during the 1800s and into the early 1900s. As powerful forces rose up to challenge America’s slave system and western movement (e.g., John Brown’s raids) Mississippi and all races would be a part of the deadliest war ever to be fought on U.S. soil.

### **The Civil War and Emancipation Proclamation**

Prior to the start of the Civil War, in 1861, the state of Mississippi reaped the benefits of free African American labor and the economic gains from the international sale of cotton. King Cotton, as the era was called, aided in the addiction to the slave system. However, a growing number of people in America became uncomfortable with slavery for a variety of reasons, and some led resistance movements to end the progression of slavery in U.S. territories. What followed was conflict between the South and the North, brother and brother, sister and sister, and the enslaved and the free. America was a house divided. Decades long of simmering dissension ultimately played itself out with the start of the Civil War at Fort Sumter, South Carolina, on April 12, 1861. In the midst of the war, on January 1, 1863, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring freedom for the enslaved in the Confederate states, but not for enslaved in slaveholding border states. Mississippi, which had ceded from the Union, was a Confederate state; however, word of the emancipation spread throughout the Confederacy and inspired enslaved persons to actively rebel and join the Union Army in the war effort. With the establishment of U.S. Colored Troops, General Lorenzo Thomas was dispatched to the lower Mississippi valley to recruit African Americans.

Between 1861 and 1865, the Civil War consumed the lives of as many as 850,000 soldiers from combat, accidents, starvation, injury, and disease. Finally, after a series of deadly battles in 23 states, including the District of Columbia and Mississippi, the war ended. Yet, ideas about the meaning of race and racism in Mississippi did not. The continuation of racist ideas led to the adoption of the Mississippi Black Codes.

### **Mississippi Black Codes**

One of the most ominous and foretelling events occurred in December 1865, when the Mississippi legislature created the Mississippi Black Codes. Historian David Oshinsky describes how Governor Benjamin G. Humphreys, a former pardoned Confederate and planter, used derogatory language and fear to address what he called the “negro problem” before a special session of the Mississippi legislature in the fall of 1865:

The people of Mississippi have abolished the institution of slavery. . . . That decision was final; there could be no turning back. . . . The Negro is free, whether we like it or not; we must realize that fact now and forever. . . . But freedom had its limits. . . . It protected the Negro’s person and property but did not guarantee him political or social equality with whites. Indeed the “purity and progress” of both races required a strict caste system, with blacks accepting their place in the lower order of things. And that place—literally—was the cotton field of the south. Since economic recovery depended on a ready supply of Negro labor, the new system, like the old one, must reward the faithful field hand and punish the loafer. Such was the rule of the plantation and the “law of God.” (Oshinsky 1996, 23)

The derogatory and inflammatory speeches lasted for days, concluding with the legislature’s passage of a series of Mississippi Black Codes, planting the seeds for a Jim Crow social system that would shape the social intercourse of blacks and whites for more than 100 years.

### **Mississippi Black Codes**

The Mississippi legislature enacted a series of far-reaching Black Codes, enforcing draconian laws over all freedmen, free Negroes, and mulattoes. For example, Sections III and IV of the four-part 1865 code spells out civil rights and criminal penalties under the new law for blacks in Mississippi.

#### **III. Civil Rights of Freedmen**

Section 1. Limits civil procedures of freedmen, free Negroes, and mulattoes.

Section 2. Freedmen, free Negroes, and mulattoes permitted to intermarry with each other.

Section 3. Unlawful for freedman, free Negro, or mulatto to intermarry with any white person; nor for any white person to intermarry with any freedman, free Negro, or mulatto;

and any person who shall so intermarry shall be deemed guilty of felony and, on conviction thereof, shall be confined in the state penitentiary for life.

Sections 4–11. Questions competence of witnesses; requires evidence of housing and employment; requires contracts for labor; provides authority to arrest; grants employer affidavits and warrants; prosecution for persons found guilty in efforts to persuade, entice, or cause freedman or free Negro to desert employment. Unlawful for freedman, free Negro, or mulatto to charge any white person, with any criminal offense against his or her person or property.

#### **IV. Penal Code**

Sections 1–5. Describes a variety of crimes and punishments against freedman, free Negro, or mulatto found with arms or ammunition, rioting, and/or trespassing.

### **Reconstruction and Racial Advancement**

For a brief period of time, there were significant racial advancements during Reconstruction and the post-Reconstruction era. Although public places and religious and educational institutions remained segregated, newly freed men and women had a thirst for organizing, building their community, and getting educated. This new beginning included organizing religious institutions, insurance companies, fraternal, philanthropic, charitable, and mutual aid societies. Aiding the movement for social uplift of the formerly enslaved was the bond between black Mississippians and former Civil War veterans, religious men, and all who sought to organize for the common good. These individuals came together to build themselves up from slavery in a form of self-reliance, perhaps, a predecessor to what may have been a first attempt at a practical implementation of Afrocentricity or self-help empowering measures.

As a first step during these early days after the end of the Civil War, black Mississippi natives found comfort in religious institutions—which remained racially segregated. One such example is the church home of Bethel African Methodist Episcopalian, the first African Methodist Episcopal Church in Mississippi. The Reverend Page Tyler organized Bethel in January 1864, and named it after the denomination’s mother church in Philadelphia. The building first occupied by the congregation was an 1828 structure purchased in the late 1860s from the First Presbyterian Church. The church was reconstructed in 1912, under the direction of Dr. John J. Marrant. According to church lore, Marrant visited Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and returned with ideas for a new church. Marrant demolished the old structure and on its site erected the new Bethel Church, which still remains standing today.

Within the Bethel Church, Civil War veteran Dr. Thomas W. Stringer founded the first fraternal lodge of the Prince Hall Masons in 1875. Stringer moved to Vicksburg, Mississippi, and became a vital part of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) community. Stringer served as the first supreme chancellor and was elected grand master of the Prince Hall Masons for Mississippi, a title he held until his death in 1893. An exceptional force for good, Dr. Stringer continued to

organize fraternal lodges throughout the state and the country. In 1890, Stringer assisted with the development and organization of the educational institution named Campbell College, which later moved to Jackson, Mississippi, and evolved into Jackson State University—an HBCU (historically black college and university). The church, the lodge, educational institutions, and newly freed African Americans combined as a great force for social change during this early period in the very racially divided and racially segregated Mississippi.

Bethel AME Church was known as the Mother Congregation of African Methodism in the state of Mississippi. In addition to Stringer, Bethel would also become the church home of the first black U.S. senator during Reconstruction, Republican senator Hiram Revels (one of the early pastors of Bethel), and another Civil War veteran, William Tillmon Jones, who would become a future leader of the Knights of Pythias, North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia (NASAEAAA), in Mississippi.

The Knights of Pythias was a fraternal organization originally “founded in Washington, DC, on February 19, 1864, by Justus Henry Rathbone, a federal employee along with several other federal clerks” (Peebles 2012, 1). The new fraternal organization sought to create an association that “shall not be a copy, an imitation, of any existing order, but that it shall be instituted independently, and be intensely American” (Beach and Rines 1904). Ironically, the idea of what these men created would ultimately not include the African American lodges that would soon be created in 1870.

The African American Supreme Lodge, Knights of Pythias had similar goals: to extend friendship, charity, and benevolence. However, when African Americans sought official membership in 1870, they were denied. Founder Justus Rathbone resigned from the organization in disappointment. Despite this rejection, the lodge moved forward with its mission, recognizing that the members of the order described an ideal that may have been impossible to implement along racial lines in Mississippi. The order engaged in numerous projects, including providing mutual aid to members, assisting sister organizations in the community, and supporting entrepreneurial initiatives.

As a national body, the Knights of Pythias took a further step in their decision to exclude African Americans from the order. The national organization instituted a legal strategy to sue lodges of African American Knights of Pythias and prohibit them from using the name, regalia, and rituals. Due to the fortitude of the Knights of Pythias, NASAEAAA, rather than face exclusion, they fought back. The African American lodges took a stand that they were Knights of Pythias, although they were of a darker hue. The Supreme Order’s litigation failed to slow the development of African American lodges but served to further racially separate the orders—white from black. It is unknown what possibilities may have existed for the Knights of Pythias to build friendship, benevolence, and charity in Mississippi (rather than the ongoing focus on racial conflict) if a united organization had been permitted to evolve.

Racial progress was also met with racial strife. In 1874, one of the bloodiest, post-Civil War incidents occurred in Vicksburg, Mississippi, as white residents began to react to social and political gains made by their black counterparts. After

the successful rise in fraternal, political, and educational institutions, an angry white mob forced the newly elected black sheriff Peter Crosby to flee from his job. African American townspeople responded and came forth to defend their sheriff. The resulting clash was a bloodbath. According to a number of sources, over 300 people were lynched in Vicksburg, Warren County, Mississippi in 1874 (Lee 2015, 77). This pattern of violence in the county and state would continue for decades.

### **Jim Crow and Segregation**

Reconstruction gains were significantly eroded by the Dirty Deal of 1877. The Dirty Deal was a compromise between Republican Representative Rutherford B. Hayes and Southern Republican state governors. In exchange for their support to back Hayes in his bid for the White House over Democrat Samuel J. Tilden, if elected, Hayes agreed to remove the federal troops from the South. African Americans were betrayed by this compromise, which ultimately fostered a reign of terror in Mississippi and other Southern states. Jim Crow was the new rule of law, severely limiting the civil rights and freedom of African Americans. In a review of Steven A. Berrey's work on *The Jim Crow Routine: Everyday Performances of Race, Civil Rights, and Segregation in Mississippi*, Leigh Anne Duck notes that "Jim Crow . . . was a kind of theatrical production in which white and black Mississippians had assigned lines, props, and stage directions with accompanying (albeit differently inflected) vigilance for moments when others 'did not follow the script' " (Duck 2016, 169). Jim Crow laws effectively took away voting rights of African American men who had voted prior to the Dirty Deal; restricted civil rights and social privileges, segregated housing, education, and public accommodations; and created a climate in Mississippi that was intolerable for both black and white American sympathizers.

From *Plessy v. Ferguson* until World War I, the reign of terror in Mississippi forced African Americans and whites to walk with their feet north, west, and east, far away from Mississippi. The restrictive system of Jim Crow laws, designed to maintain white power and privilege by limiting the rights and liberties of African Americans, ultimately drove out a large percentage of Mississippi's population. This movement was part of the Great Migration. Journalist and author Isabel Wilkerson noted the effect of what happened in response to Jim Crow, segregation, and World War I:

Historians would come to call it the Great Migration. It would become perhaps the biggest underreported story of the twentieth century. It was vast. It was leaderless. It crept along so many thousands of currents over so long a stretch of time as to be difficult for the press truly to capture while it was under way. (Wilkerson 2010, 9)

Before the Great Migration, Mississippi was a majority African American state and had a substantial population. However, after 1930, Mississippi became a majority white state, with a declining population. (The significantly large Native American population that existed prior to 1820 had previously been diminished.) The reasons for this outflow may vary, but one reason included the overt acts of racial and social oppression that existed in the state during Jim Crow and through

the modern civil rights era. However, despite the outflow during the Great Migration, according to the most recent census, Mississippi continues to have the highest percentage of African Americans in any state in the United States.

### **Civil Rights Movement and Voting Rights**

Mass mobilization of the civil rights movement began in the South in the 1950s, and one Mississippi tragedy would serve as a rallying cry. In 1955, the murder of a teenager, Emmett Till, sent shockwaves throughout the nation. Till was not the first young black man to be savagely murdered in Mississippi or the Deep South. The brutality that blacks experienced—intimidation, whippings, branding, and mutilations—under the system of enslavement continued during the post-Reconstruction and Jim Crow eras, but now included murders and lynchings. However, Emmett Till's death created a level of national consciousness around race and racism that had not been witnessed before.

Emmett Till's mother, Mamie Till, sent her 14-year-old son to Mississippi during the summer of 1955 to visit family. The young man, unfamiliar with the strict racial norms of the South, reportedly stared and then whistled at a young white woman. It proved to be a fatal error. He was beaten and bludgeoned to death by a group of angry white males. His body was later found in the Tallahatchie River. Mrs. Till brought his body back home to Chicago, displaying his remains in an open casket to show the horror of Emmett's disfigured face and body. It proved to



In what many consider to be the emotional spark that triggered the start of modern-day civil rights movement, 14-year-old Emmett Till (seen here with his mother) was murdered by vigilantes in Mississippi in 1955. (Library of Congress)

be a deeply emotional, overwhelming site for many. *JET* magazine's illustrated story stirred the consciousness of the nation and moved people from various geographical regions to get involved in a movement for social change in Mississippi.

Bus boycotts, protests, sit-ins, pray-ins, and a variety of other measures intensified in the state as mass mobilization efforts continued to resist segregation and inequality, yet most forms of Jim Crow segregation continued to be enforced. Movement lawyers and civil rights activists waged a battle for freedom and equality in the nation's courts, having recently claimed a victory in the groundbreaking 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education (Brown)*. However, the white power structure in Mississippi resisted all efforts toward social change.

The Mississippi legislature formed the Sovereignty Commission to flagrantly resist the implementation of *Brown*. The legislature established the Legal Education Advisory Committee (LEAC) "to devise ways to preserve segregation" (Rowe-Simms and Pilcher 1999, 16). By September 1955, LEAC outlined its six-point plan and its blueprint, to establish "permanent authority for the maintenance of racial segregation" and in 1956, the Mississippi legislature voted the State Sovereignty Commission into existence (Rowe-Simms and Pilcher 1999, 16–18). With the mission of resisting enforcement of federal civil rights laws, including the integration of public schools in Mississippi, the commission performed three general functions: investigative, advisory, and public relations. For 17 years, from 1956 to 1973, the commission spied on civil rights workers, acted as a clearinghouse for information on civil rights activities and legislation from around the nation, funneled money to pro-segregation causes, and distributed right-wing propaganda.

### **Freedom Summer (1964)**

The State of Mississippi would again be thrust into the national limelight with the events that occurred during Freedom Summer. Two major civil rights organizations, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE), targeted the state for a massive voter registration drive, noting that fewer than 5 percent of African Americans were registered to vote at the time. The drive, called the Mississippi Summer Project or Freedom Summer, included black Mississippians and over 1,000, primarily white volunteers who traveled from across the country to participate. These organizing efforts and peaceful protests would be marked by violence and murder. Mississippi, a state known for its history of racial violence, was still reeling from the 1963 murder of NAACP leader and civil rights activist Medgar Evers by known white supremacists and Klansmen.

During Freedom Summer, white opponents, including average citizens, members of the Ku Klux Klan, and local law enforcement officers, abused, falsely arrested, beat, threatened, and harassed the volunteers. Some were attacked as they departed buses carrying them into the targeted communities. Native Mississippian and civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer, a vocal spokeswoman who would later rise to national prominence after her fiery speak at the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey, was beaten, jailed, and tortured as she

and other state residents attempted to register to vote. The violent attacks also included the murder of at least three civil rights activists. Volunteers James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael “Mickey” Schwerner had traveled to Neshoba County, Mississippi, to investigate a recent church bombing. Chaney was African American; Goodman and Schwerner were Jewish. After they went missing, concerned organizers and their families began to search for them. Their abandoned car was found in two days, but it took another 44 days before their battered bodies were found in an earthen dam, shot and beaten. In 1967, 18 men were tried for violation of federal civil rights of the civil rights workers; seven were convicted, eight were acquitted. For three others, including Edgar Ray Killen, the jury was deadlocked. However, 50 years later, in 2005, Killen, the former Klan leader and viewed by many as the main instigator who planned the murders, was convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to 60 years in prison.

Terror and violence did not end with the murder of the three civil rights activists. This terror campaign continued into the 1970s and beyond with cross-burnings, murder, church bombings, and other acts of violence and suppression. Another case that received national attention was the murder of Rainey Pool, a 54-year-old, one-armed sharecropper from the town of Midnight in Humphries County. On April 12, 1970, Rainey Pool was killed by a group of white men, who assaulted him, loaded him up in a pickup truck and then drowned him in the Sunflower River. Police found Pool’s body two days later. Local police detained four suspects, who all confessed. Although the four men confessed and were indicted, the prosecutor asked the court to release them. It would take another 28 years (1998) before Rainey Pool’s family would be able to revive the case against the men. Ultimately, a Humphreys County jury convicted three men—James “Doc” Caston, 66; his brother Charles Ernie Caston, 64; and a half brother Hal Spivey Crimm, 50—of manslaughter and sentenced them to a 20-year maximum sentence allowed by law. The fourth man, Joe Oliver Watson, pleaded guilty to manslaughter and testified against the other three.

In February 1977, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) brought a class action lawsuit against the Sovereignty Commission to unseal files that the commission had in its possession. In March 1977, the Mississippi House voted 110–7, and Governor Finch signed the bill to have the records sent to the Department of Archives and History. The commission stood firm in its resistance, and the back and forth battle to gain access to the records continued for two decades. During one brief period of unsealing, enough details were provided to reopen the prosecution case against Byron de la Beckwith Sr. suspected in the killing of Medgar Evers. Two previous trials had resulted in hung juries; however, with new information, Beckwith was convicted of the assassination of Evers in 1997 and died in prison in 2001.

## **MISSISSIPPI PRESENT DAY**

The depressed socioeconomic and political conditions that exist in the state of Mississippi today have been shaped by its tragic and alienating racial history. Despite the best efforts toward progress, it is challenging for a state and its people



to divorce themselves from its past. The overall demise in the quality of life in the state, coupled with the exodus of talented individuals seeking access to opportunities in other locations, can, in part, be attributed to Mississippi's historical environment of racial intolerance. As Mississippi entered the twenty-first century, racial disparities were evident, and prejudice, discrimination, and violence against African Americans continued to occur.

In 2011, James Anderson, a resident of Jackson, Mississippi, and an assembly line employee of the Nissan plant, was viciously beaten by a group of young, white supremacists who deliberately used their truck to run him down in a motel parking lot. Motel camera footage captured the murder by seven teenagers. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) was called in to investigate. The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), along with a private law firm, filed a wrongful death suit. Morris Dees, founder of the SPLC, stated that "This case was a sickening reminder of the consequences of racism and hate." Dees went on to say:

James Anderson was brutally murdered for no other reason than the color of his skin. And the lives of these young people have been ruined. As a nation, we must work even harder to confront the legacy of white supremacy that continues to haunt us. (Southern Poverty Law Center 2015)

After four years, the Southern Poverty Law Center and FBI won justice for James Anderson. The case against the white supremacists ended with guilty pleas against all defendants.

In addition to direct violence against blacks, rates of incarceration, health status, educational achievement, and economic well-being capture the impact of race and racism on African Americans and other minorities in the state. The belief that "Mississippi racism is alive and thriving" is illustrated by the following: blacks, Latinos/Hispanics, Native Americans have a higher rate of incarceration—92.8 percent of the state's imprisoned population; African Americans and other minorities are less likely to get the preventive care needed to stay healthy, less likely to receive quality care, and more likely to face poorer health outcomes; Mississippi, with a long history of inadequately funded, segregated schools, continues to have one of the least educated populations in the United States, ranking 49th, with low levels of achievement for minority populations; finally, there is a widening economic gap between whites and others, with blacks suffering from poverty rates and low incomes that far exceed the national average.

## Conclusion

Mississippi's racial history is beyond tragic, maybe one of the most violent, turbulent, and oppressive histories of any state in the United States. Institutionalized racism was enforced in all aspects of culture and society, and at every level of government, by people who espoused white supremacy. Beginning with the exclusion of Native Americans from the land they toiled to the enslavement and oppression of African Americans to the mass incarceration of Hispanics/Latinos, blacks, and Native peoples, this history is tragic and a difficult one to confront. Yet, Fannie Lou Hamer held out hope that change would eventually come, and there has been

some progress along racial lines. The people of Mississippi actively participate in organizations working toward the improvement of race relations. Examples include the William Winter Institute of Racial Reconciliation, the Mississippi Center for Justice, and the Neshoba Youth Coalition. There have been some political and social gains for African Americans. For example, African Americans have been elected to public office. In 1987, Mike Espy was elected to Congress, the first to serve since the Reconstruction era. In 1997, Harvey Johnson Jr. became Jackson City's (the state capital) first black mayor. In 2013, Chokwe Lumumba was elected mayor of Jackson City. His brief tenure in office ended in 2014 following his untimely death. His son, Democrat Chokwe Antar Lumumba, was elected mayor in 2017.

One must also be reminded that many of the cultural traditions of Mississippi natives have enriched American culture through music, literature, sports, entertainment, and politics. Blues, rock 'n' roll, jazz, and folk music were born in the Mississippi delta. For example, Mississippi was the birthplace of legendary blues singers Howlin Wolf, Muddy Waters, Robert Johnson, and B. B. King, as well as rock 'n' roll greats Bo Diddley and Ike Turner. Opera singer Leontyne Price and country singer Charley Pride hail from the state of Mississippi; and the nation's most recognizable black female entertainer, producer, and entrepreneur, Oprah Winfrey, was born in Kosciusko, Mississippi.

Finally, despite its history of despair, the native daughters and sons of Mississippi would encourage us to move forward. Phyliss J. Anderson, Mississippi Choctaw tribal chief, reminds us that "we are all travelers on this journey called life. Keep in mind where you've come from and keep looking ahead to see where you are going. Always have appreciation for those who have supported you and always give God the glory" (<http://blog.nmai.si.edu/main/2015/07/meet-native-america-phyliss-anderson.html>). Richard Wright, when facing the worst of times, would "hurl words into this darkness and wait for an echo . . . and send other words to tell, to march, to fight, to create a sense of the hunger for life that gnaws in us all, to keep alive in our hearts a sense of the inexpressibly human" (1944, 453). And Fannie Lou Hamer, who famously quoted that she was "sick and tired of being sick and tired," also reiterated at the 1964 Democratic Convention, "I didn't come this far for only two votes!" Residents of Mississippi must continue to move forward.

## **NOTABLE FIGURE**

### **Hamer, Fannie Lou (1917–1977)**

Fannie Lou Hamer was born Fannie Lou Townsend on October 6, 1917, in Montgomery County, Mississippi, on a plantation in the Mississippi delta. Her parents were sharecroppers, and she, along with her 19 brothers and sisters, worked the land. She was the youngest in the Townsend family. She married Perry "Pap" Hamer in 1944 and worked with him on a cotton plantation near Ruleville, Mississippi.

Fannie Lou Hamer became actively involved with the civil rights movement after several meetings with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

(SNCC) in the early 1960s. While she was much older than the average SNCC volunteer, her enthusiasm and commitment to work toward voting rights would serve the organization and the movement well. Her powerful voice would also serve as a rallying cry, providing a soothing form of emotional support as she helped to pull protesters together with the singing of freedom songs.

A fiercely determined woman and staunch civil rights activist, she personally defied Mississippi laws and social customs when she insisted on her right to register to vote. She encouraged many others to follow her lead. In addition to enduring daily threats from white supremacists, Hamer was jailed and brutally assaulted by law enforcement officers when she attempted to exercise her civil rights.

Hamer became a leading figure in the civil rights movement after attending the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey. As a member of the newly created Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party—which formed in opposition of the all-white Mississippi Democratic Party—Hamer and party members sought representation as delegates to the national assembly. In a speech before the Credentials Committee, Hamer told her harrowing story about her decision and many attempts to register to vote in Mississippi and the consequences of those actions. While their request for recognition was denied, Hamer's powerful speech in which she questioned the ideals of freedom and social justice in America reverberated throughout the nation. Hamer continued to fight for civil rights for African Americans and other oppressed groups until her death in 1977 from breast cancer, partially attributed to her limited access to quality health care.

In honor of Fannie Lou Hamer, a national grassroots fund-raising effort resulted in the erection and dedication of a full-length bronze statue of the civil rights icon—one of only four known monuments commissioned for an African American woman. Dedicated on October 5, 2012, the statue is located at the Fannie Lou Hamer Memorial Garden in Ruleville, Mississippi.

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# 26

## Missouri

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Lori L. Hall

### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **1500s**

The Otoe-Missouria Tribes settle in the Great Lakes region

#### **1720**

The first slaves are brought by the French, assisted by the Missouri Indian tribe

#### **1800**

In the Third Treaty of San Ildefonso, Spain returns the Louisiana Territory to France in exchange for Tuscany

#### **1803**

Missouri comes into American possession as part of the Louisiana Purchase from France

#### **1821**

Missouri enters the Union as the 24th state on August 10; it is admitted as a slave state through the signing of the Missouri Compromise

#### **1822**

The Santa Fe Trail, a transportation route connecting Independence, Missouri, to Santa Fe, New Mexico, opens

#### **1847**

Missouri bans education for blacks

#### **1854**

Congress passes the Nebraska-Kansas Act, which repeals the Missouri Compromise and thus the ban on slavery in territories north of the southern border of Missouri; the repeal aggravates the growing controversy over the extension of slavery into the western territories

**1855**

The Missouri Indian tribe is relocated to the Big Blue Reservation in Nebraska

**1857**

In one of the most important cases of the nineteenth century, the U.S. Supreme Court renders its decision in the case of *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (popularly known as the Dred Scott Decision) in which Dred and Harriet Scott, former Missouri slaves, sued for their freedom; the Court rules against the Scotts, ultimately denying citizenship to all blacks

**1865**

Taking effect in January, the new Missouri State Constitution officially bans slavery and requires all school boards to support education for blacks on a “separate but equal” basis

**1865**

On February 6, Missouri ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

**1867**

On January 25, Missouri ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution extending full citizenship rights to African Americans

**1870**

On January 7, Missouri ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment guaranteeing African American men the right to vote

**1881**

The Missouri Indian tribe is relocated to Red Rock, Oklahoma

**1887**

With the passage of the Dawes Severalty Act, the U.S. government parcels out tribal land to individual owners in an effort to disassemble Indian tribes

**1890–1910**

Many Missouri towns pass sundown laws restricting blacks from being out after sundown

**1903**

In Joplin, a mob of 2,000 white men, including many police officers and politicians, threatens to break down the jail if Thomas Gilyard, a black inmate, is not released to them; Gilyard is subsequently lynched by the mob, which burns the homes of blacks and runs them out of town—many never return

**1904**

St. Louis is home to the World’s Fair, which includes exhibitions of African slaves, Native Americans, and Asians for public viewing

**1906**

In the so-called Easter Offering, a St. Louis mob of 3,000 white men breaks into the county jail and abducts three black prisoners, lynching them under the Gottfried Tower; this incident causes a majority of black residents to flee St. Louis

**1907**

The Immigration Act of 1907 initiates a restrictive national immigration policy and establishes the Dillingham Commission

**1917**

The East St. Louis Race Riots, which last from May 28 to July 2 are considered one of the bloodiest race riots of the twentieth century—white workers who fear that black migrants threaten their jobs rampage through the streets, beating all blacks and turning over streetcars and trolleys; by July 2, white mobs are beating, shooting, and lynching as many black children, women, and men as they can find

**1923**

An angry mob in Columbia threatens to break down the jail if James T. Scott, a University of Missouri janitor, is not released to them; Scott was lynched, as some of Columbia's most prominent citizens and University of Missouri students cheer

**1938**

Housing covenants are used by the Federal Housing Administration, to prevent blacks from obtaining mortgages or renting property in white neighborhoods; white neighborhoods were required to exclude blacks or they will not be able to secure financing

**1943–1965**

The Bracero Program, a joint United States–Mexico initiative, allows Mexicans to come and work in the United States

**1950**

The University of Missouri admits its first black students; the nine students include Gus T. Ridgel, the first black to earn a graduate degree from the University of Missouri

**1954**

Operation Wetback, a U.S. government and law enforcement initiative to combat rising immigration from Mexico, begins

**1955–1956**

In an attempt to desegregate housing in St. Louis, the Pruitt-Igoe Towers are constructed for low-income whites and blacks; however, because whites are fleeing to the suburbs the structure becomes a troubled, low-income, high-crime housing structure for blacks until its destruction in 1972

**1963**

African Americans protest in front of the Jefferson Bank to pressure St. Louis companies to hire black employees for white-collar jobs

**1969**

Arvarh Strickland is hired as the first black professor at the University of Missouri; he is responsible for the founding of a Black Studies minor in 1970



**1980**

Although integration in schools was mandated in 1954 with the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, it was not practiced across Missouri; St. Louis courts, therefore, order the desegregation of all St. Louis public schools

**1990–2010**

During this period, the racial demographics of many cities in Missouri begin to change, reflecting the racial and socioeconomic segregation of many black communities

**2014**

Michael Brown Jr. is shot by a police officer in Ferguson, prompting protests and demonstrations from others in the community; the Justice Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation open investigations of racism in the Ferguson Police Department

**2015**

On October 10, the group Concerned Student 1950 is founded by a group of 11 University of Missouri students in recognition of the first nine black students admitted to the university in 1950; the group seeks to bring the University of Missouri's problems with race relations to the forefront, and a protest action ultimately leads to the resignation of the president and chancellor of the university on November 9

**2017**

The Justice Department reaches a deal with the city of Ferguson over the racial bias investigation of the city's police department by imposing local taxes and local voting

**2017**

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) issues a warning to blacks and other racial minorities traveling in and through Missouri: "Do so with extreme caution. Your civil rights could be violated."

**NARRATIVE**

Long before its admittance to the Union in 1821, Missouri was home to many Native American tribal groups. "Indians roamed Missouri long before Europeans arrived in the new world. There were no hogs or sheep or cattle or horses, and no guns . . . all of those things were brought by the invading Europeans" (McCullough 2018,1). By 1821, Missouri was a prominent settler's community. It was home to many immigrants from France, Germany, Ireland, and England who traveled to America looking for the many promises it offered. It was also home to the Missouria tribe and a large African American population brought to America via the Transatlantic Slave Trade in order to provide forced labor sources for the growing nation. Throughout its troubled history, Missouri's struggles with being a "border state" were similar to that of others. And being a border state has always proved

problematic for Missouri, as each side required it to pledge its allegiance to the causes each esteemed. At the time of its birth, Missouri was placed in the middle of the battleground between proslavery and pro-abolition forces. Present-day life in Missouri fares no different, as ongoing battles on the political right and left threaten the state's identity.

### **Missouria Indians**

The state takes its name from the Missouria Indian tribe who first settled Missouri. The Missouria, or Nutachi, was part of the Otoe-Missouria tribe that settled in the Great Lakes region prior to the sixteenth century. The two tribes, Otoe and Missouria, were similar in language and customs and facilitated trade along the Missouri River valley. By the early 1700s, French settlers began to arrive; the Missouria Indians assisted them. The Missouri Indians traded with the Spanish, American, and English settlers, as this trade business became a major source of industry in Missouri. The Missouri River valley was a lush and thriving farm community that had been fertile Missouria land for many years. Its vast waterways, bountiful forests, and rolling prairies attracted many immigrants from across the world. The Missouria often found themselves fighting other Indian tribes, such as the Iowa, Fox, and Saux, to defend their land.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Europeans began to settle in the Missouri River valley, which resulted in much conflict between the Missouria tribe and settlers. In 1800, the Spanish returned what is known as the Louisiana Territory to the French via the Third Treaty of San Ildefonso. It was later purchased by the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, doubling the size of the United States overnight. It was not until 1821 that Missouri was granted admittance into the Union under the Missouri Compromise. Controversy over Missouri's application into the United States began almost immediately and stalled many times. The problem arose out of a need for Congress and the House to maintain a balance between slaveholding and free states. Issues related to race were at the center of the conflict.

### ***The Missouri Compromise***

With the purchase of the Louisiana Territory in 1803, slavery was prohibited in those portions of the territory lying north of the 36°30' latitude line. On December 29, 1819, Missouri applied for admission as a slave state, even though its territory was north of the 36°30' line. What followed was a battle between free states of the North and the slave states of the South over the issue of maintaining a balance in the number of free and slave states so as to avoid giving one section a voting advantage in the Senate. By admitting Missouri as a slave state, the balance in the Senate would swing in favor of the slave states. When Maine applied for admission to the Union shortly thereafter, Congress linked the two statehood applications, balancing admission of Missouri as a slave state with admission of Maine as a free state. In May 1820, Congress passed and President James Monroe signed the Missouri

Compromise legislation, which admitted both Maine and Missouri and made slavery illegal in the Louisiana Purchase territories north of the 36°30' parallel, which marked Missouri's southern border. Missouri itself was thus the only territory north that line to be open to slavery. The Missouri Compromise was repealed in 1854 by the controversial Kansas-Nebraska Act, which sought to organize the territories won from Mexico in 1848 on the basis of local regulation of slavery. The Missouri Compromise restriction of slavery was ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court's Dred Scott decision in 1857.

While the state was in the midst of a waging battle over the rights of those free and those enslaved, there was continued conflict among the Missouriia, settlers, and other Indian tribes. In addition, the Missouriia struggled to overcome diseases brought by the Europeans. By 1834, the combined Otoe-Missouria tribe had fewer than 500 people, as smallpox decimated the population. As the settlers continued to arrive, the Missouriia Indians fought, unsuccessfully, to save their homeland.

Railroad construction began in 1821, and, by 1822, the Santa Fe Trail connected Independence, Missouri, to Santa Fe, New Mexico. Soon, more and more immigrants poured into Missouriia tribal land. In the 1830s, trade between the United States and the Republic of Mexico opened along the Santa Fe Trail, which resulted in many Mexican immigrants settling in Missouri as well. By the early 1900s, more than one million Mexican immigrants migrated to the United States, a response to railroad construction, westward expansion and the Mexican Revolution.

In 1855, the U.S. government began to forge treaties with the Native people. In an effort to protect the settlers and colonize the indigenous populations, the U.S. government moved the Missouriia to the Big Blue Reservation in Nebraska. Their new home proved very difficult; Missouriia were prohibited from hunting buffalo, forced to live an agrarian lifestyle, and suffered from the spread of diseases and food and medicine shortages. Piece by piece, the land promised to the Missouriia via treaties with the U.S. government were sold to non-Indians. In 1881, the Missouriia Indians moved to Red Rock, Oklahoma, where they continue to reside in present day. Once at Red Rock, the U.S. government took away their children and sent them to boarding schools where they would be "civilized" and taught "white ways." Whites and the U.S. government discouraged their traditional language, Chiwere. Many tribal leaders refrained from teaching their children Chiwere and from speaking in their native tongue at home in fear of punishment.

Following the passage of the Dawes Act in 1887, the remaining Missouriia tribal lands were confiscated. The Dawes Act, or the Dawes Severalty Act of 1887, parceled out the tribal land into individually owned tracts. The act sought to dismantle the indigenous tribes in America by severing their ties to tribal land and establish Natives as individuals rather than as members of tribal communities. Slowly, the number of Missouriia Indians began to dwindle as they experienced extreme poverty and social hardships.

### The African American Presence

During this same period, slavery, which resulted from the transfer of millions of Africans from the African continent to the Americas, had a strong hold on Missouri, restricting the lives of many blacks across the country as well. These descendants of Africa were now native-born African Americans but enjoyed very few American freedoms. In 1847, Missouri enacted a ban on black education, thus prohibiting blacks from being educated anywhere within the state. The ban imposed legal punishments and strict penalties for those who violated the law. This prohibition on education resulted from white fear; whites believed that educating blacks would lead to rebellion and a breakdown in the slave system.

In the same year, Dred and Harriet Scott sued their former owner's widow for their freedom. The Scotts both resided with their owner in a free state before moving (with the owner) to the slaveholding state of Missouri. According to Dred and Harriet Scott, their freedom should have been granted because they had previously lived in a free state and been granted freedom by their previous owner. Known as one of the most controversial cases to reach the Supreme Court of the United States, the *Dred Scott* case lasted from 1847 to 1858. The Supreme Court ultimately decided against the Scotts, denying them freedom on grounds that no

black, slave or free, was allowed to petition the court for their freedom. However, just three months after the court's decision, the owner granted Dred and Harriet Scott their freedom. Slavery would continue to remain legal in the state.

In January 1865, delegates to the state convention in Missouri proposed a document that would immediately end slavery. The Missouri Constitution passed on January 11, 1865, 11 months before the United States ended slavery, and emancipated all slaves in Missouri. Despite the support for the emancipation of slaves in Missouri, whites still feared equality. In addition to the abolition of slavery, it created the "separate but equal" doctrine across the state. The state was required to provide institutions that were equal to the quality and offerings of white institutions. Education was granted to all blacks, but



"A black man has no rights which the white man is bound to respect" was Chief Justice Roger Taney's decision in the *Dred Scott* case. Dred Scott was the plaintiff in one of the most important cases of constitutional law in American history (*Dred Scott v. Sandford*, 1857). The Supreme Court ruled that blacks, whether slaves or free, could not become U.S. citizens. (Library of Congress)

only on the grounds that it be separate from white schools. This fear of equality has persisted to present day and has resulted in many discriminatory practices. For example, “sundown times” were enacted in 1890 (and lasted until 1910), where blacks were required to remain indoors after sundown and were prevented from being in some communities all together.

Violence across Missouri became commonplace as many whites feared blacks. In 1903, an angry mob of over 2,000 whites in Joplin, many of them police officers and politicians, threatened to break down the walls of the jail if the guards did not release Thomas Gilyard—accused of murdering a police officer. The guards complied. Gilyard was released and lynched. Later, the mob burned the homes of many blacks in the area and ran most out of town. This resulted in the stark, racially segregated housing patterns still seen today across most of the South.

In 1904, St. Louis was home to the World’s Fair. Indigenous people, African Americans and Asians were put on display in what was termed as their “savage” or “primitive” living conditions. People traveled from all over the world to see the exhibitions and to learn about what the “New World” had to offer. However, this did not alter the racial climate in Missouri. Following the World’s Fair, mob lynching persisted. In 1906, the Easter Offering occurred in St. Louis. An angry mob of 3,000 white men broke into the county jail and abducted three black prisoners. The mob lynched the three men under the Gottfried Tower. As a result, many blacks fled St. Louis for Ferguson, Missouri. This practice of lynching and mob violence drove many blacks from cities across Missouri, seeking safe haven in, primarily, all-black communities.

White fear continued to fuel riots and lynching across Missouri, leading to the deaths of many blacks. The black presence in the state resulted in competition in the labor market. Whites, particularly Irish factory workers, feared that blacks were stealing their jobs, which led to the East St. Louis Race Riots of 1917, considered one of the bloodiest race riots of the twentieth century. White and Irish workers rampaged the streets, beating every black they came across and turning over streetcars and trolleys. The riot lasted over a month and resulted in the beating, shooting, and lynching of many black women, children, and men. In nearby Columbia, Missouri, James T. Scott, a janitor at the University of Missouri, was lynched in 1923. Some of the most prominent members of the community, as well as students from the University of Missouri, applauded as he was hanged.

### **Mexicans and Immigration**

By 1907, Mexican immigration was growing, adding diversity to the state population. As a result, the U.S. government passed the Immigration Act of 1907, which was a restrictive immigration policy set out to reduce the number of immigrants coming into the United States. By 1914, “mounted inspectors” were stationed along the United States–Mexico border. Seeking employment opportunities, many Mexican migrants found their way to Missouri. However, the Mexican population has always been viewed and treated as “other” than white. They were frequent targets of prejudice and discrimination.

Mexican immigration followed a shifting pattern; during the Great Depression, the migration pattern reversed. Due to increased discrimination and poverty, many Mexican immigrants in Missouri headed back to Mexico. This resulted in shrinking the immigrant population by half. Following the Great Depression and World War II, a labor shortage reemerged. To fill this shortage, the United States enacted the Bracero Program (1943–1965), which granted Mexican immigrants the right to work in the United States. As a result, an influx of new immigrants soon began funneling back into Missouri, settling in the St. Louis and Kansas City areas in search of work in factories and on railroads.

By the mid-1950s, Mexican immigrants established growing communities across Missouri; unfortunately, many were devastated by raging floodwaters, wiping out these stable ethnic communities. No plans were ever put in place to rebuild. Over the next several decades, additional Mexican immigrants arrived in Missouri, many settling in major metropolitan areas, where large populations of Mexican immigrants remain residentially concentrated. In response to the rising number of Mexicans, the U.S. government sought new ways to restrict immigration. In 1954, the U.S. government established a deportation plan titled Operation Wetback, which targeted undocumented immigrants. While blacks were fighting for civil rights and equality in housing, education, and employment, Mexican immigrants were arriving daily, also in search of employment opportunities and a piece of the American Dream. However, unlike the African Americans, Mexicans carried an additional burden: the fear of deportation.

Mexican immigrants were not the only minority populations dealing with white hostility throughout Missouri's growing history. White fear not only produced the illusion that blacks were taking white jobs, it also contributed to hostility toward working and living among blacks. As a result, whites fought to maintain segregated living conditions. While small pockets of black communities existed in every one of the 114 counties in Missouri, "white-only" communities emerged throughout the state, and the nation. In 1938, the Federal Housing Administration mandated that housing covenants be put into place across the country. This resulted in the denial of mortgages and loans to blacks and required white neighborhoods to enforce rules barring them from living in white communities. This policy of racial discrimination victimized blacks and other communities of color, which granted preferential treatment and financial support to white families and communities.

### **Separate and Unequal**

The "separate but equal" doctrine, put into effect when slavery ended in Missouri, was in full force by the early 1900s. The implementation of this racially restrictive policy barred blacks from participating in every white institution across the state. However, many blacks found themselves entrenched in the loopholes of a law that was set up to marginalize them. More specifically, the "separate but equal" doctrine had a stipulation that required the state of Missouri to pay the tuition and grant admittance to a white institution if a black institution of learning did not offer the same program. This was met with ambivalence by many white

institutions. The University of Missouri, in particular, has a very troubling past concerning the “separate but equal” doctrine. In 1930, Lloyd Gaines applied to the law school at the University of Missouri. At the time, Missouri did not have a black institution that offered law as a discipline, which prompted Gaines to apply to a white institution. The University of Missouri denied his admittance; Gaines sued the school. The landmark case, *Gaines v. Canada*, made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court ruled in favor of Gaines, ordering the University of Missouri to grant his admittance, or create a black institution offering the same program. Missouri chose to convert a cosmetology school into the Lincoln University School of Law. (It is important to note that Lincoln University is among the first institutions of higher learning established for African Americans. Founded in 1866 in Jefferson City, the Lincoln Institute had an all-black student body, but an integrated faculty. With a white abolitionist as its president, it received both religious and state support. The institute focused on developing careers in teaching, agriculture, and mechanics. In 1890, Lincoln Institute was designated as a land-grant university. In 1921, the college was officially designated a university and in 1954 changed its name to Lincoln University of Missouri and opened its doors to all.) Shortly after his victory, Gaines disappeared and was never seen again. Many people believe that his disappearance was the result of foul play because he challenged the “separate but equal” doctrine that kept many whites comfortable with the abolishment of slavery and the granting of rights to blacks.

The *Gaines* case paved the way for many other blacks to challenge the inequality that persisted across Missouri in the educational system. In 1939, Lucile Bluford submitted an application for admission, by mail, to the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri. Lincoln University did not offer a degree in journalism at the time, and Bluford was granted admission. However, when she went to enroll in classes, she was denied admittance. She continued to apply for admission and, with the assistance from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), filed 11 lawsuits against the University of Missouri. In 1941, she won her appeal and was granted admission into the school. However, the school closed, stating that students and faculty were serving in the war. Her landmark case, *Bluford v. Canada*, led to the founding of a school of journalism at Lincoln University. While Bluford’s career was not contingent on her obtaining a graduate degree in journalism, she was focused on dismantling the lingering discrimination in education for blacks. It was not until 1950 that the University of Missouri admitted its first black students, nine in all. One of those nine, Gus T. Ridgel would go on to become the first black to obtain a graduate degree from the University of Missouri. As the inequality in education began to shift, so did attempts at desegregating and reducing discrimination in housing.

### **Efforts toward Integration**

In 1955, construction on one of the largest public housing structures began in what was an attempt to integrate blacks and whites. The Pruitt-Igoe Towers were opened in 1956 with the idea that poor whites and blacks would live in an integrated community and begin making changes in segregation. However, very few

whites applied to live in the Pruitt-Igoe Towers, and it became known as one of the biggest public housing disasters in history. In essence, the attempt failed. Erected in St. Louis, the Pruitt-Igoe Towers was home to some of the highest crime rates in Missouri. It was demolished by the federal government in 1972.

In response to growing discrimination in the employment sector, blacks protested outside the Jefferson Bank Building in downtown St. Louis in 1963. The Jefferson Bank demonstration was an attempt to pressure companies in the area to hire blacks. The discrimination in education, housing, and employment were at the forefront of the issues addressed in the civil rights era; Missouri was no different from the rest of the nation in terms of race relations. Change was slow, but some progress was being made. For example, in 1969, the University of Missouri began to make changes in its hiring practices; Arvarh Strickland was hired as the first black professor. Strickland was responsible for the founding of the Black Studies minor in 1970.

Despite the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling in 1954, for decades, the St. Louis Public School District remained segregated. It was not until 1980 that the St. Louis courts sought to end segregation across the city and ordered the desegregation of all schools.

A history of racism and discrimination has taken its toll on the state, the past few decades offering little hope for optimism. Between 1990 and 2010, the demographic shifts across Missouri have resulted in large areas of segregation in housing, education, and communities, further solidifying old historical patterns of bias and discrimination. This has resulted in the distribution of blacks and whites in different communities living in parallel worlds across the state.

### **Twenty-First-Century Realities**

This parallel reality gained media attention, in 2014, with the fatal shooting of Michael Brown Jr. by a Ferguson police officer. While this reality was no different from the history of race relations in Missouri, it sparked outrage by the community, as the reality of living in Ferguson, Missouri, for blacks was in stark contrast to the experiences of whites living in Missouri.

#### **A Border State: Black Lives Matter and White Nationalism**

Being a border state has always proved problematic for Missouri, with each side requiring it to pledge allegiance to the causes they esteem. Antebellum Missouri was always caught between proslavery and abolitionist forces, and present-day Missouri fares no better. A battleground of sorts between pro-white and pro-equality groups, contemporary Missouri has experienced its share of controversial race relations. Nothing attests to this more than the coexisting of two groups, the Black Lives Matter racial equality movement that has recently emerged in Missouri, and the pro-white nationalist group, the Council of Conservative Citizens, which arose out of the segregationist White Citizens' Councils of the 1950s and 1960s, and which moved its headquarters to St. Louis in the late 1980s.



On August 9, 2014, Michael Brown Jr., an 18-year-old African American man, was shot and killed by a white police officer in Ferguson, Missouri, a suburb of St. Louis. Shortly after Brown's death, Black Lives Matter demonstrators took to the streets calling for justice and the resignation of various members of the Ferguson city government. The Black Lives Matter movement had begun in 2013 in response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting death of Trayvon Martin, a black teen in Florida. The Brown demonstrations quickly spread to the University of Missouri campus, with its troubled racist past, where protestors called for the resignation of the president and chancellor. The Council of Conservative Citizens, a white supremacist and white nationalist group, declares in its statement of principles its opposition to "all efforts to mix the races of mankind." These two groups illustrate the strange parallel that characterizes Missouri history, with the state always on the precipice of racial change but never quite able to shake its racist roots.

In 2015, the city of Ferguson and the Justice Department reached a settlement, stemming from an investigation of racial bias in the police department. Seeking to change the city's image, the consent decree called for ending unlawful arrests, which disproportionately targeted the city's black community. In addition, the city, accused of operating the police department as a moneymaking venture, would work toward "refocusing police and municipal court practices on public safety, rather than revenue generation" (Apuzzo and Eligon 2016, 1). Finally, the agreement also empowered city residents, preserving citizen's right to record police officers.

In response to a series of race-related events taking place on the University of Missouri campus, a group of 11 students formed a student organization called Concerned Student 1950. The group, which credits its namesake to the first 11 students admitted to the university, organized to bring to light the reality of race on the University of Missouri campus and throughout the state of Missouri. The group organized protests and demonstrations, gaining substantial support of a portion of the student body, as well as the university's football team. The group called for the resignation of both the chancellor and president of the university. In addition, the group requested that the University of Missouri create a program of diversity and inclusion.

The story of race and racism in Missouri has led to some change, but at a slow pace. It is a high price to pay for the lack of equality and social justice for all.

## Conclusion

As a border state, Missouri has a rich history that exhibits a kaleidoscope of identities. From Native Americans to Europeans, Africans, Mexicans, and now Asians, Missouri offers an eclectic cultural experience. St. Louis and Kansas City are host to many diverse immigrant populations that have been growing and changing since statehood. The International Institute lists one hundred different cultures and ethnic groups that call St. Louis, Missouri, home.

Immigration into the United States began undergoing stark changes since the new administration took office in early 2017. Many of the immigration policies implemented have influenced immigration and migration to and from Missouri. Particularly, Mexican immigration to Missouri has reversed yet again as about one million Mexican immigrants left the United States for Mexico between 2009 and 2014. Many Mexican immigrants are now facing deportation, increasing discrimination, and job loss due to heightened scrutiny. Furthermore, many of the new immigrants arriving to Missouri are coming from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. From 2000 to 2010, Missouri's Asian immigrant population experienced a 60 percent growth; the Latin population growth was over 80 percent. Moreover, African immigrant growth in Missouri has risen by 92 percent since 2000. With growing minority populations, Missouri, again, is facing additional challenges: the racial landscape in many communities is changing.

In 2017, the Missouri Senate passed Senate Bill 43, which according to many political leaders is equivocal to Jim Crow laws that eliminate equal rights for all. Many race-based hate crimes have been reported across the state. In particular, India Native Srinivas Kuchibhotla was shot outside a restaurant in 2017 as the alleged shooter screamed, "Get out of my country." That same year, the NAACP issued a warning—the first in its more than 100-year history—to all minorities traveling in and through Missouri to do so with extreme caution as their civil rights could be violated.

The shooting deaths of Srinivas Kuchibhotla and Michael Brown Jr. are not isolated events in Missouri. There are countless instances where minorities have been lost at the hands of racial tension across the state. The case of Michael Brown Jr., in particular, brought to the forefront many of the racial tensions that exist within Missouri. Following his death, the Ferguson unrest, or the Battle of Ferguson, set in motion weeks of political protests throughout the city. Protestors took to the streets for weeks of relentless protesting, resulting in fires, violence, and targeting of city police.

The historical accounts of racial inequality throughout Missouri have held strong for Native Americans, Africans, African Americans, Mexicans, and Asians and continue to the present. The history of race and racism in Missouri runs deep and wide.

## **NOTABLE FIGURES**

### **Bluford, Lucile Harris (1911–2003)**

On July 1, 1911, Lucile H. Bluford was born in Salisbury, North Carolina, to John Henry Bluford Sr. and Viola Harris Bluford. Her mother died in 1915, when she was only four years old. Her father was a professor at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical University where he taught classes in science. After her mother's death, John Henry Bluford married Addie Alston. He later accepted a position at Lincoln High School in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1918.

Lucile's father, stepmother, and brothers moved to Kansas City in 1918. Lucile went to live with her grandmother, Mariah Harris, until 1921 when she moved with

her family to Kansas City, Missouri. She attended Wendell Phillips Elementary School and later went on to spend her high school years at Lincoln High School, writing for the school newspaper before graduating, first in her class, in 1923.

Lucile went on to study journalism at the University of Kansas; she was only the second black student to major in journalism. Once enrolled in college, she spent most of her free time at the *Kansas City Call*, a black newspaper founded by Chester A. Franklin. Most of her summers were spent volunteering, later becoming a cub reporter for the *Call*. In 1932, she took a position at the *Daily World* in Atlanta. She spent several years working at various newspapers as a journalist. She later moved back to Kansas City because she was tired of the strict Jim Crow laws in Atlanta. She accepted a position at the *Kansas City American*.

Following the Supreme Court ruling in favor of Lloyd Gaines, an African American man seeking admittance to the University of Missouri School of Law, Lucile and the NAACP set out to challenge the “separate but equal” doctrine. They sought to dismantle inequality in education and champion the fight for desegregation in all aspects of social life. In doing this, she applied to the School of Journalism’s graduate program at the University of Missouri in 1939. Submitting all her material by mail, she was accepted into the program. However, when she went to enroll at the Columbia, Missouri campus, she was denied admittance on grounds that it was a “white-only” university.

Over the next several years, she worked closely with the NAACP legal team to gain admittance, filing 11 lawsuits until the court finally ruled in her favor in 1941. Shortly after winning her Supreme Court appeal, the School of Journalism closed, citing that much of faculty and students were serving in the war. Her case against the University of Missouri led to the establishment of a journalism school at Lincoln University, an all-black college.

Education and civil rights became a passion for Lucile; she was a champion in the fight against racism. Although she never married, nor had children, she remained devoted to strengthening the African American community and remaining a strong voice for civil rights. She worked closely with the *Call*, establishing it as the largest and most important black newspaper in the state. Throughout her time working at the *Call*, she held many positions from reporter to city editor. She became editor in 1955 after the death of Chester Franklin, founder and then editor.

Lucile became the voice of the African American community in Kansas City for more than 65 years. She fought for civil rights era causes that most white newspapers failed to report on. She went on to hold the position of editor and publisher of the *Call* for the rest of her life. Most of her controversial work was published under her pseudonym, Louise Blue. She was a tenacious, outspoken, and commanding person who even reprimanded Reverend Jesse Jackson, after he gave a campaign speech, because he had not contacted the *Call* about the event. She was a strong advocate for strengthening community and sought to foster relationships with others in the African American community. She was an advocate; her life was a testament to civil rights causes.

Both nationally and in the state of Missouri, Lucile Bluford is recognized as a prominent figure in the history of race relations. Despite the strained relationship with the University of Missouri, Bluford was given an honorary doctorate degree

and the Missouri Honor Medal for Distinguished Service in Journalism. It is the university's highest award for distinguished service in journalism. She worked for the *Call* for over 70 years until her death in Kansas City on June 13, 2003, at the age of 91. She is a major historical figure in the fight against racism, an advocate for equal rights, and a champion of education for the black community. Her legacy lives on with many monuments, dedications, awards, honors, library collections, endowments, scholarships, and buildings named in her honor. July 1 is designated as a state holiday in Missouri as Lucile Bluford Day. The University of Missouri is in the process of renaming a dormitory in her honor. The Forest Hill Cemetery in Kansas City serves as her final resting place.

### **Freeman, (Marie) Frankie Muse (1916–2018)**

Marie Frankie Muse was born on November 24, 1916, in Danville, Virginia, to Maude Beatrice Smith Muse and William Brown Muse. Both of her parents were college-educated and had a strong commitment to community and education. She started college at the age of 16 at the Hampton Institute, her mother's alma mater. Marie transferred to St. John's University to obtain a degree in law; however, her credits would not transfer, so she returned to Hampton University.

While in New York City, she met Shelby T. Freeman; the two later married. She returned to Hampton University to complete her degree and then enrolled at Howard University Law School. During college, she joined the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and engaged in a prominent lifetime commitment to the sorority, later serving as the 14th national president. She had two children while she attended Law School. Her husband, Shelby, remained in New York.

Marie graduated second in her class in 1947. That same year, her sister died from pneumonia after attending her first year of college. After graduation, she moved to St. Louis, Missouri, which was the hometown of her husband. Marie applied at major law firms across the country but never obtained a position. Instead, she established her own law practice in 1949 in the Jefferson Bank building in St. Louis. She became a champion in the civil rights movement, fighting against racial segregation and Jim Crow laws.

Marie Frankie Muse Freeman was part of the legal team in the 1949 Missouri State Supreme Court case *Brewton v. The Board of Education of St. Louis* which was victorious in challenging the "separate but equal" doctrine. She was the lead attorney for the landmark case, *Davis et al. v. The St. Louis Housing Authority* that ended racial discrimination in public housing in St. Louis. Sadly, that same year her son died.

She continued to work avidly with the NAACP and on civil rights cases and played a key role in ending racial discrimination in housing and education in Missouri. Freeman helped with the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)—organized and infamous Jefferson Bank demonstration in St. Louis. In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed her as the first female commissioner of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. Muse served on the commission for 16 years, spanning four presidencies. Her contributions as the commissioner of the U.S. Commission

on Civil Rights led to the passing of Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and Fair Housing Act of 1968.

Freeman was a prominent figure in the civil rights movement, working as a member of the NAACP legal team and fighting causes such as discrimination in housing and education and working toward erasing racism. She played a key role in the creation of the Citizen's Commission on Civil Rights in 1982, along with 15 other former high federal officials. Freeman was appointed as the U.S. representative at the United Nations housing conference. She was also appointed as the Inspector General of the Community Service Administration. Drawing from her parents' belief in community, Freeman volunteered in numerous positions throughout her life span. She served on the boards of the World Affairs Council of America and the United Way of St. Louis. She was chair of the board of directors for both the National Council on Aging, Inc., and the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, and served as trustee emeritus on the Howard University Board of Trustees.

Freeman practiced law for nearly 60 years and was still practicing at Montgomery Hollie and Associates, L.L.C., in St. Louis at the age of 90. She retired in 2008. Freeman published her memoir in 2003, *A Song of Faith and Hope: The Life of Frankie Muse Freeman*. The NAACP awarded her with their highest honor, the Spingarn Medal, in 2011, for her outstanding contributions. She has been inducted into the National Bar Associations Hall of Fame, the International Civil Rights Walk of Fame, and was appointed as a member of the Commission on Presidential Scholars. She was honored by the St. Louis NAACP in celebration of her 100th birthday on October 22, 2016. In addition, the St. Louis NAACP erected a bronze statue to memorialize Frankie Muse Freeman and gifted it to the city of St. Louis, where it is displayed at the Kiener Plaza. In 2016, Maryville University recognized her work in civil rights as the inaugural recipient of the Sister Mary Byles Peace and Justice Prize. She was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters by Southern Illinois University for her work in civil rights in 2017. In addition, she has received honorary degrees from the University of Missouri, St. Louis University, Howard University, Washington University in St. Louis, and Hampton University.

(Marie) Frankie Muse Freeman passed away on December 12, 2018, at the age of 101.

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# A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States

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# A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States

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VOLUME 2: Montana–Wyoming  
Patricia Reid-Merritt, Editor



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*To those who have suffered the most.*

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# Preface

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“Mr. President, are you a racist?”

This seemingly unimaginable question was posed, quite often, to the president of the United States in the very first year of his administration. In 2017, issues surrounding race and racism appeared to boil to the surface. Among one of the most shocking events to occur was the torch-carrying, white, neo-Nazi nationalist rally that took place on the campus of the University of Virginia in Charlottesville during the month of August. Chanting, “You will not replace us,” the far-right group was met by counter-protestors who objected to the racist message and language used to draw their supporters. The protest turned deadly, when a car driven by a white nationalist supporter rammed into the peaceful counter protestors, killing 32-year-old Heather Heyer, a white counter-protestor, and critically injuring many more. Condemned by politicians and civil rights and religious leaders as a march “inspired by hatred,” the president of the United States drew condemnation from leaders across the nation when he proclaimed that there was “hatred, bigotry and violence on many sides.” These are just a few of the race-related issues confronting twenty-first-century America.

*A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States* examines the history of race and racism in every state in the United States and the District of Columbia. Its contents are disturbing. Since the founding of our nation, race has played an essential role in the way citizens are granted opportunities for freedom, equality, social justice, and the pursuit of the American Dream. A history of European expansion and capitalist exploitation, wrapped around the ideology of white supremacy, resulted in racial prejudice and acts of racial discrimination that hindered the moral and social development of the nation for many centuries. People of color have disproportionately shouldered the social burdens caused by racism and discrimination.

The collection of essays in this two-volume set provide an overview, as well as in-depth discussion, on how the concept of race evolved in America and the implementation of racist policies and practices in each state. Each state chapter provides a chronology of important events, a historical narrative, and sidebars highlighting a significant event that occurred in the state, as well as a brief biographical account of one or more individuals intimately involved in the race/racism question during their historical era. The encyclopedia is written to provide high school students, college undergraduates, and interested nonspecial readers

with accurate descriptions of the history of race and racism in each of the states and the District of Columbia.

Many different perspectives are reflected in this work. The disciplines are as diverse as the writers who are the contributors. The contributors are racially and ethnically diverse—African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Caucasian Americans, Native Americans, and Asian Americans—men and women residing in different regions throughout the country. They utilize different perspectives and focus areas to describe the activities in each state, but generally emphasize the history of segregation and racial discrimination in major organized structures and institutions, including education, religion, housing, employment, government, the judiciary, public service, marriage, and the family.

There are many troubling issues facing the American populace; none seems as intractable as those involving questions about race and racism and the ways these concepts and practices have affected the United States of America's social system. America is in dire need of an open and honest discourse on questions surrounding race and racism. There are many thought-provoking issues raised in this work. It is our hope that this fact-filled, historical account offers some understanding of the pervasiveness of these racial issues throughout the nation by showing that every state must confront its past and address the contemporary manifestations of these concerns.

# Acknowledgments

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Patricia Reid-Merritt

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# Introduction

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In *Race in America: How a Pseudoscientific Concept Shaped Human Interaction*, race is described as “a pseudo-scientific concept developed in the middle of the 18th century to justify the dehumanization of various globally unique categories of the human population” (Reid-Merritt 2017, 3). Furthermore, race, defined as a socially constructed concept, is “a system of human classifications based on skin color, hair type, body proportions and other observable physical characteristics. These characteristics are genetically transmitted and occur with great frequency among various people in the same geographic, or even continental, locations” (ibid., 3). Racism, an extension of the concept, is the belief in the inherent superiority or inferiority of various racial groups. Membership in the group is by birth-right, and the perceived innate characteristics of superiority or inferiority are unalterable. Racism produces social structures that privilege one group over another; society’s most valuable resources—wealth, income, education, power, and so on—are unequally distributed to members of the group who claim racial superiority. America was built on the concept of race, its history replete with examples of how racial divisions were created among the people as each group struggled to find their place in the developing nation.

This introduction provides an overview of race, racism, and related concepts. It examines the variety of ways in which race and racism manifest in every aspect of American society. It is important to note that historical or contemporary acts of racism cannot be localized to specific regions of the country, or to specific ethnic populations. Rather, racism is an unescapable aspect of American history and culture, premised on one unifying tenet: the belief of the white majority that they were superior to all people of color. In reviewing the history of race and racism of every state in the United States, one will discover many commonalities; however, one will also discover the variety of ways each state uniquely individualized racist social practices to restrict full and equal participation of populations of color. One can only hope that in the very near future, the ongoing investigation and understanding of issues surrounding race and racism will lead to a more progressively enlightened American public.

## **CONCEPTUALIZING RACE**

Since its early introduction, race has proven to be both an evolving and elusive concept. The notion of race, most likely, emerged as a result of physical variations

in the human species observable to the naked eye. There were differences in skin color, from light to dark hues, and other physical characteristics that separated one group from another. But what, if any, were the significance of these differences?

The limited contact between continentally unique populations, prior to the period of European exploration, offered little reason to question the possibility of separate human species. However, with rapid European expansion, white explorers encountered populations with unique physical features and social characteristics. These variations led some to question monogenetic or polygenetic theories of human development. Did the human species emerge from one (monogenetic) or multiple (polygenetic) sources? While biblical references cited a single source (Adam and Eve), scientists set on different investigatory paths to prove otherwise. More importantly, the exploration of the New World coincided with the rise of capitalism and the need to exploit human beings and all of their natural and social resources for profit. As Europeans began to conquer, destroy, and colonize the indigenous cultures and populations in the New World, a scientific, if not moral, justification was needed to defend their acts of greed and brutality.

Swedish-born zoologist and physician Carolus Linnaeus's 1758 publication of *Systema Naturae* (10th edition) was as an important starting point in the scientific study of race. "While the focus on Linnaeus' work was on understanding the difference and hierarchical placement of the animal, plant and mineral kingdoms, it wasn't long before the politically powerful, slave-holding leaders in America began to marry the idea of race to a biological and human hierarchy" (2017, 5).

European scientists may have led the way in the scientific exploration of the origins of the species, but the idea of separate human species was already popular in America. Columbus's "discovery" of America in 1492 opened the doors to European exploration, and over the next several hundred years, Europeans would travel to the New World in search of trade, wealth, and new adventures. The first were explorers, not colonists; many would return to their native lands. However, American colonization rapidly unfolded during the seventeenth century as the British established permanent colonies on the eastern shore. These Europeans were here to stay, and many sought to re-create the new world in their own image.

During the very early, formative years of our nation's development, three major groups populated America: the European, the African, and the Native American. European immigrants came to America from many different nations, including Spain, France, Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Germany, and Great Britain (the dominant force during the colonial era). They were in search of new social and economic opportunities and freedom from social, political, and religious oppression. However, the European colonization of the Americas was also coupled with the destruction of native populations, as the desire for land and natural resources superseded all human rights. Native Americans first faced a systematic form of discrimination and social oppression and later became the first group forced into a "minority" status in their own land. Steady encroachment of the burgeoning colonies not only resulted in the loss of native lands, but threatened the very survival of Native American communities. Moreover, with the overwhelming need for labor in the developing New World, colonists focused on the native as a potential workforce. However, after many failed efforts to force the Native people into slave

labor, the international slave trade emerged, targeting those on the continent of Africa as the newest victims of capitalist exploitation. This immoral act of human bondage removed millions of Africans from their homeland, all transported to the New World for the sole purpose of exploitation of their labor. What separated the Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans was the color of their skin, and by the end of the century, the descendants of Europe would emerge as the new powerful group of “white Americans.” Was this the natural order and rule of God or the beginning of manifest destiny? Proclaiming that Africans and Native Americans were a subcategory of human beings provided a convenient rationale for cultural domination and all resulting forms of social oppression and human humiliation that followed. The ideology of race, and the superiority of the white majority, began to take hold, serving as a founding principle for the new American culture.

## **SEPARATING THE RACES**

Once the idea of race and white supremacy was planted, America faced a new challenge: How best to separate the races? A pattern of social separation emerged from the very beginning. New generations of Americans were socialized to believe that racial differences, resulting in the separation of the races in living arrangements, employment, politics, power, and all forms of social interaction, were the new social norm. In a very brief period, these patterns of social living were embedded in the American psyche. However, it was not long before Americans turned to the newly established system of jurisprudence to legislate the interactions between the races and to implement laws that reinforced their beliefs in white supremacy.

## **SLAVE LAWS**

The arrival of 21 Africans in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619, is often referenced as the starting point of African enslavement in America. Historians later argued the point, noting that the newly arrived immigrants were most likely indentured servants, given that no slave laws existed in the colonies during that period. Indentured servitude was different from enslavement. During the colonial period, tens of thousands of Europeans flooded the American shores seeking opportunity in the New World. Impoverished and lacking resources, many sold their labor to plantation owners, offering to work for a period of four to seven years, in exchange for room and board and as partial payment for their European voyage. The Africans may have experienced the life of an indentured servant, but only for a brief period. In a little over two decades after their arrival, Massachusetts, in 1641, became the first colony to pass slave laws, permanently altering the status of Africans from servants to a lifetime of servitude.

Slave laws or slave codes would later flourish throughout the colonies in both the North and the South and would be used to determine the status of Africans, African Americans, Native Americans, and children born of mixed parentage. While slave laws proclaimed that all Africans and their descendants were slaves,

others born of mixed heritage were also included. More specifically, the Virginia Act of 1662 stated:

Whereas some doubts have arisen whether children got by any Englishmen upon a Negro shall be slave or Free, Be it therefore enacted and declared by this present Grand assembly, that all children born in this country shall be held bond or free only according to the condition of the mother.

In English law, “birthrights” passed on to the child through the father. The passage of the Virginia law removed all options of freedom for children of white male Europeans and enslaved African and Native American women. In 1705, the codes were further clarified adding, “All servants imported and brought into the Country . . . shall be accounted as slaves. . . . All Negro, mulatto and Indian slaves within this dominion . . . shall be held to be real estate.” This law made it clear that the African, African American, mulatto (mixed race), and Indian slaves would be viewed as property. Chattel slavery marked the system of enslavement in America.

In 1712, a South Carolina law declared that “all negros, mulattoes, mestizos or Indians, which at any time heretofore have been sold, or now are held or taken to be, or hereafter shall be bought and sold for slaves, are hereby declared slaves; and they, and their children, are hereby made and declared slaves. . . .” Slave laws focused on the need to classify the African, Native American, and the children of mixed racial heritage as “other,” separate from the superior white population. Yet, Maryland, in 1664, passed a law that made it possible to enslave white women as well. As a warning to those who engaged in social and sexual intercourse with an African male, the colony declared: “That whatsoever free-born [English] woman shall intermarry with any slave . . . shall serve the master of such slave during the life of her husband; and that all the issue of such free-born women, so married shall be slaves as their fathers were.”

Slave laws placed numerous restrictions on the enslaved populations. As indicated earlier, the form of chattel slavery that emerged in America required human beings to be viewed and treated as property. Slaves were stripped of all basic human rights, including the right of self-determination; specifically, they lacked freedom of choice and decision-making ability. For example, slaves were not permitted to move about freely, pursue intimate relationships, mate, marry, and produce offspring that they could claim as their own. Children of slaves were property of the “master,” sold away from their parents at the master’s discretion. In most colonies, slaves were not permitted to carry firearms, travel without a pass, enter into a contract or testify in court against a white person. Punishment for those who broke the law was harsh and included whippings, mutilations, imprisonment, and death. The way in which “justice” would be meted out by the courts would be based on the color of one’s skin—a foundation of our jurisprudence system.

As the indigenous people of America, one could easily argue that the Native Americans were the very first victims of enslavement and American racism. This is true. The “red” man was considered a savage, incapable of the same level of social progress and intellectual achievement as the white. Many of the tribal groups were hunters and gathers, freely roaming the land without establishing



permanent residences; however, others cultivated the land and developed advanced systems of social organization. Furthermore, some Native American tribes had practiced a form of slavery prior to the arrival of the Europeans and had a rudimentary understanding of a system of human bondage. As was the case in the earlier history of some Western and African nations, enslavement among Natives resulted from tribal warfare. Captured “prisoners of war” were forced into service for the victors. However, it was not a system of chattel slavery, which eliminated all human rights. The prisoners could regain their freedom and even, through marriage, become a member of the new tribal group. In addition, some tribal groups sold their prisoners into captivity to the colonists, while others enslaved Africans, supporting the system of chattel slavery.

The perceived weaknesses of the Native Americans led some to believe that they, too, could be forced into labor through a system of enslavement. Fortunately, the enslavement of Native Americans proved to be an impractical venture. In addition to the devastation caused to Native populations with the spread of “white man’s diseases,” the Native’s familiarity with the land resulted in frequent opportunities to escape. For more than 200 years, the descendants of Africa would carry the burden of enslavement, their labor used to build the economy of the new nation. The Native Americans, many of whom had been engaged in tribal warfare before and after the arrival of the Europeans, would need to focus their attention on the increasing conflict with the colonists. These conflicts resulted in the many Indian wars that occurred throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries.

## **MORAL JUSTIFICATIONS**

The establishment of slave laws was only one aspect of America’s justification for racist and discriminatory practices. With “the law” firmly on the side of the emerging white majority, Americans turned to another major social institution to provide moral justification for its actions: the Church.

The new settlers would proclaim that America was a Christian nation, where all could practice freedom of religion. The Protestant-dominated followers would use their faith to justify their superior position in the new land. The Creationists, who believed in God as the absolute creator of heaven and earth, were much more likely to embrace the monogenic approach to human development. God created Adam and Eve, the first human beings, who sinned in the Garden of Eden and, as a result, were forced out of paradise. Adam and Eve (and later Jesus and all of his disciples) were, undoubtedly, white people destined to assume a leadership role in the world. Furthermore, the Bible, Christianity’s sacred text, offered at least one explanation for the enslavement of blacks.

The very first book of the Bible, Genesis, Chapter 9, tells the story of the Curse of Ham, a reference to a curse placed on one of Ham’s four sons, Canaan. Genesis 9:25–27 specifically states:

And Noah said “Cursed be Canaan! A slave of slaves, a slave to his brothers! Blessed be God, the God of Shem, but Canaan shall be his slave. God prosper Japheth. . . . But Canaan shall be his slave.”

The curse carried the mark of blackness, a biblical reference frequently cited by the slaveholding Christians in America to justify the perpetual enslavement of Africans, presumed to be the descendants of Canaan and Ham. According to this biblical interpretation, the African was predestined to a life of forced servitude in the New World. The Protestant nation, which would declare its independence and freedom from the British Crown in 1776, utilized the scriptures in the Bible to explain their dehumanizing actions toward its African-descendant citizens.

Others, who deviated from the white norm with different colors and physical features, could also be explained utilizing biblical text. In Genesis 11:1–9, the story of the Tower of Babel explains the reasons why humans were scattered across the earth. This, we surmise, was an intentional action by God to disrupt any unified efforts to build a stairway to Heaven that would bypass the power and authority of the almighty. The people were divided: each given a different tongue and forced onto a new land. The European descendants were able to develop to their fullest potential; the Natives were not.

## THE MISCEGENOUS NATION

Miller and Mills's (2017) analysis of American history concludes that America is a miscegenous nation. Racial mixing has been an integral part of the American heritage since its early inception. However, numerous states made many attempts to prohibit racial intermingling with the passage of anti-miscegenation laws.

In the early 1600s, the record of Hugh Davis may provide the earliest indication of efforts to restrict interracial intercourse. Mixing Church (Christian values) and political beliefs, Davis was sentenced to be "soundly whipt before an assembly of negroes for abusing himself to the dishonor of God and the shame of Christianity by defiling his body in lying with a negro" (Jordan 1968, 78). In 1640, Robert Sweet of Virginia was ordered to do penance in church for getting a Negro woman with child; the woman was to be whipped. This, it was argued, was sanctioned according to the laws of England. In 1643, the Virginia Colonial Assembly codified into law the punishment for any white found guilty of fornication with a non-European and, by extension, a non-Christian. Finally, in 1691, a Virginia statute "banished and removed forever" any English manor woman who married a Negro, Indian, or mulatto, slave or free.

During the early colonial period, white indentured servants, enslaved Africans, and free blacks were placed in subordinate positions; their work for powerful masters resulted in frequent contact. Attempting to prohibit social and sexual intercourse among those who experienced oppression by the wealthy and powerful majority proved challenging. Sexual liaisons may have been a natural by-product of these close personal contacts, for both males and females. While the laws restricted interracial marriages for all, punishment for violations may have been particularly harsh for white women, expected to uphold the racial purity of the new society, and for black men who were their sexual partners. It was a difficult challenge. Moreover, it was evident that white women, and men, pursued sexual relations with members of different racial groups. In the state of Louisiana, for example, where the black population nearly doubled that of whites, the mixing of

the racial groups became part of the social norm. However, the French-controlled colony also enacted the “Code Noir,” banning interracial marriage in 1724. Unable to control the interracial liaisons, the French introduced the system of placage, sanctioning intimate, extramarital relationships between privileged white men and the more vulnerable free women of color.

Throughout the period of enslavement, sexual intercourse between masters, overseers, and slaves was common, producing a sizable mixed-race or mulatto population. In this social setting, the black female was the most victimized, lacking the power or ability to control her own body and reproductive process. While some would argue that relationships between master and slave evolved to the level of consensual sexual encounters (as with the long-term affair between Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemmings), this was unlikely the case for enslaved black women; rather, the raping of black women was a frequent occurrence during the period of enslavement.

Efforts to prohibit interracial unions occurred in all regions of the country. As the country expanded, new territories and states were concerned about the unions between blacks and whites, Native Americans and whites, Mexicans (Indian) and whites, and, finally, Asians and whites. In states where anti-miscegenation laws did not exist, the courts were forced to recognize the legitimacy of interracial marriages, which were viewed as a threat to white supremacy. However, in time, the anti-miscegenation laws, which first emerged in the South—Alabama, Florida, Virginia, and Maryland—and the North—Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island—emerged in new territories as well, including California, Idaho, Illinois, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Washington State. While some states did repeal these laws, it was the Supreme Court decision in *Loving v. Virginia* in 1967 that finally declared such laws unconstitutional.

## **RACIAL SEGREGATION**

Each state developed methods to enforce racial segregation, by law (*de jure*) or social customs (*de facto*). Residential segregation was a common practice in housing, education, employment, military service, transportation, public accommodations, and religious services.

European settlement in America focused on the takeover of prime land, specifically that which could be used for development. Farming communities and large plantations emerged in all of the 13 colonies, forcing Native populations to move further westward. The loss of Native American lands began during the colonial era, with the many resulting wars and conflicts ending in favor of the new colonists. Government endorsed and signed treaties, failing to protect the Native Americans in their new habitats. The addition of more white immigrants with the desire to claim a piece of America further worsened their position. From the post-American Revolutionary period to the beginning of the twentieth century, Native Americans resisted the ongoing land theft; however, the descendants of Europe emerged victorious. Native Americans were forced onto reservations. The Indian Removal Act of 1830, followed by the Trail of Tears, forced Native tribes out of the South, relocating them hundreds of miles away to the state of Oklahoma. The

pattern of Indian relocation to reservations was repeated: in the North, in Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania; in the Midwest, in Ohio, Indiana, Nebraska, Montana, South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, and Wisconsin; in the Southwest, in Arizona, New Mexico, Kentucky, and Texas; and in the West and Northwest, in California, Oregon, and Washington state. At the dawn of the twentieth century, the segregation of the Native Americans from the American mainstream was complete.

After more than 300 years of forced segregation, Native American communities have paid a heavy price. As Reid-Merritt notes:

A cursory view of the status of today's Native American communities offers a chilling story of the social and economic conditions as well. Native Americans continue to shoulder a heavier social burden than their white American counterparts. They live, disproportionately, below the poverty line and have higher rates of infant mortality and morbidity. They have a higher rate of heart disease, diabetes, tuberculosis, suicide, cancer and shorter life spans than do white Americans. There is a gap in educational achievement, with Native Americans underachieving in all areas: high school graduation, college and graduate degrees. These conditions are even worse for those who remain on the reservations, where they are plagued by substandard housing, limited employment opportunities and a "toxic" social environment. (2017, 16)

## **AFRICAN AMERICANS AND JIM CROW**

The historical narrative is somewhat different for African Americans, but a very rigid system of racial segregation resulted. During the colonial and post-American Revolutionary War period, separate slave quarters were created for the African populations; freedmen lived in racially segregated residential communities. Following the period of emancipation, blacks traveled near and far in search of housing and employment opportunities. In the South, in particular, efforts by black Americans to establish themselves as productive American citizens were hampered by the passage of Jim Crow laws, or Black Codes, restricting black freedoms and civil rights. Publically enacted state and local laws in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Texas, and Louisiana forced segregation in the use of public accommodations, including education, transportation, hotels, restaurants, restrooms, swimming pools, beaches, and drinking fountains. Private businesses and employers also engaged in racial segregation practices, forcing employees to use separate dining halls, restrooms, and stairwells.

In small and large communities, once the black population reached a "critical mass," a black section of town emerged, or was forcibly created. Real estate developers and homeowners abided by "covenants" prohibiting the sale of homes to nonwhite families. "Sundown" towns not only prohibited blacks from purchasing homes, but threatened bodily harm if African Americans were caught in town after the sunset.

The Great Migration of the twentieth century resulted in the movement of hundreds of thousands of black families out of the South and into urban enclaves

further north and west. While all who fled the harsh social conditions of the South were seeking improved living conditions, the heavy influx of these Southern migrants led to the creation of “ghetto” communities in the North and west. Black ghetto communities flourished in places like Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Newark, New Jersey; Brooklyn, New York; Chicago, Illinois; Detroit, Michigan; St. Louis, Missouri; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Oakland, California. Many of these communities existed in close proximity to de facto white, ethnic enclaves, where second- and third-generations of Europeans immigrants, building on the concept of “ethnic succession,” struggled to be accepted as “white” Americans. After decades of overcrowding, underfunding, and physical deterioration, the racially segregated and increasingly isolated black ghettos served as breeding grounds for social problems related to poverty, discrimination, and social oppression.

While there are more than a few incidents of African Americans creating their own successful communities, which provided positive and supportive environments, the overall effect of racial segregation proved to be devastating. Racial segregation in housing resulted in the lack of availability of affordable and high-quality homes; banking and financial institutions failed to support black neighborhoods; “redlining” emerged as a common practice; and public services were curtailed or not readily available in all-black communities. Residential segregation also served to exasperate the existing de jure and de facto systems of racial segregation in the public schools. Black schools, often victims of underfunding with limited resources, were known for the poor quality of education offered to its students, trapping many in an ongoing cycle of poverty and despair.

Racial discrimination in employment and job opportunities meant that, for most of the twentieth century, black men and women were overrepresented in domestic, service, and low-skill occupations and underrepresented in skilled, managerial, and professional occupations. This “dual labor market” resulted in a preponderance of low-paying, undesirable jobs for members of the black communities, while reserving high-paying, desirable positions for members of the white community. The impact of centuries-old patterns of racial discrimination in the employment sector continues to be felt today. For example, data from the 2010 Census Report indicate that for households with \$100,000 incomes, whites represent 21.6 percent, while blacks represent only 9.7 percent. (It is important to note that Asian Americans had the highest percentage of 31.7%.) Employment conditions for black men and women have certainly improved, but after several centuries of discrimination, they continue to lag behind the norm and are not on equal standing with their counterparts. Moreover, the Census Report also indicates that on all key measures of social achievement—education, income, wealth, home ownership, longevity—blacks continue to lag behind their white counterparts.

## **MIXED-RACE AND OTHER**

The indigenous “brown” people, especially those from Mexico, faced similar hurdles. Hispanic, or the more popular term of Latino, refers to ethnic, not racial populations. Hispanics are Mexicans, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Costa Ricans,

Dominicans, Colombians, Salvadorians, Argentinians, Peruvians, and others. As aptly noted by Garcia:

Latinos are not a “racial” group. Not all Latinos have jet-black hair or olive skin, just as not all Mexicans are short, dark-skinned, and “Indian-looking.” Latinos include persons with fair skin, blonde hair, and blue or green eyes, as well as persons who are typically misperceived as African American in New York or Philadelphia due to their phenotype. Other Latinos display more pronounced indigenous/Amerindian physical features. . . . The vast physical diversity found among Latinos derives from the colonial history of Latin America, in which male European conquistadors engaged in sexual and martial unions with indigenous and African females on a scale that far exceeded that which occurred in British colonial North America. Over the centuries, this amalgamation produced physically blended and phenotypic diverse populations throughout the Spanish-speaking empire. . . . Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and other Latinos whose ancestry consists of significant admixture between Europeans, Amerindians, and Africans—to varying degrees, depending on which nation or region of Latin America one’s heritage derives from—pose a major conceptual challenge to an American society that thinks of race in terms of concrete, clearly discernible categories. (2017, 160)

It is this amalgam of “European, Amerindian, and African” ancestry that we now identify as “miscegan”—the multiracially blended, brown people of the world. As indicated earlier, this population has emerged after generations of racial intermingling and, when asked to identify themselves on census forms, they are far more likely to select the category of “other,” given their discomfort in proclaiming their racial group to be white, black, or Native.

The experience of the Mexican, the largest (69%) Spanish-speaking population in America, is clearly one that has been racialized throughout U.S. history. During the period of early frontier expansion, many Mexicans who never traveled beyond the confines of their homesteads awakened to the reality of their new status as a citizen of the United States. Neither immigrants nor migrants, the Mexican Americans were victims of repeated waves of European and U.S. aggression. Invaded by the Europeans (Spaniards) in the sixteenth century, the area that we now call Texas was part of Mexico. Like all of the Americas, indigenous peoples occupied the land. In 1836, the white majority-controlled Republic of Texas declared its independence from the Republic of Mexico (which was also dominated by the Spanish-speaking European). The 1845 “Texas Annexation” incorporated the Republic of Texas into the United States of America. Texas was later admitted to the Union as the 28th state. Three years later, in the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the Mexican-American War, Mexico ceded a large section of the southwestern region to the United States, which included parts of California, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Wyoming, and Colorado. Once citizens of Mexico, those who decided to stay were now citizens of the United States, with the guarantee that they would be granted the rights and privileges of U.S. (white) citizenship. Unfortunately, American racism produced a different result.

Mexican Americans, different from the Africans and Native Americans, were legally classified as white by state and federal courts. But as noted by Fox and Guglielmo (2012, 328) “it was clearly a subordinate form of whiteness.” Mexican Americans, many recognizable because of their darker hue, but distinctively marked by the Spanish language, were placed in the category of other and faced

discrimination. And once joined by waves of immigrants from Mexico, they too faced segregation in education, employment, housing (barrios), and public facilities, created by de facto rules and customs rather than codified in law. Many of the southwestern states, including California, Arizona, and Texas, once home to the Mexican, now created separate schools for Mexican and Mexican American children. Like blacks, Mexican Americans were refused or granted limited access to restaurants, movie theaters, swimming pools, and other public facilities. The experience of the Mendez family provides a case in point. In 1945, the Mendez children were prohibited from enrolling in the local school in Orange County, California, due to their Mexican heritage. The father, Gonzalo Mendez, took the issue to court. In 1947, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Mendez family, ordering the Orange County school district to desegregate. *Mendez v. Westminster* became the first case in U.S. Supreme Court history to rule on school desegregation, occurring seven years prior to the landmark 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education, Topeka, Kansas*.

Since its founding, the United States has experienced four major immigration waves. The British, Germans, and the Scotch Irish dominated the first wave in the colonial era. The second wave during the post-American Revolutionary War and pre-Civil War era sent millions of Germans, Irish, and Scandinavians to our shores. At the turn of the twentieth century, the third wave resulted in 10 million new immigrants dominated by those coming from Italy, Poland, and Greece. However, it is the fourth, contemporary wave of immigration, the largest in our nation's history, which has resulted in millions of future U.S. citizens coming not from Europe like the first three waves, but from the Caribbean, Central America, and South America. These Spanish-speaking populations from south of our border often describe themselves as "people of color," but depending on the place of origin, they may also classify themselves as white or Afro-Latinos.

As with the Mexican American experience, it is the language, as well as the immigrant status, that has become racialized. The repeated experiences of the Spanish-speaking population with segregation and discrimination have resulted in many concluding that they are victims of American racism. The Hispanics, not a single ethnic nor racial group, are consistently identified as the fastest-growing minority group in America—a misnomer that adds to confusion about their racial and ethnic identity. In addition, issues around racism and colorism within the Hispanic community are too often overlooked. However, while the socioeconomic status varies within the group (Cuban Americans, for example, have achieved higher socioeconomic status than Mexicans and Puerto Ricans), overall, and by most measures, life experiences for the Hispanic community are comparable to that of African Americans. They, too, have higher rates of poverty, lower rates of educational achievement, lower income, less wealth, and the likelihood of being marginalized in low-skill, low-status occupations.

## THE DIVERSITY OF ASIAN AMERICANS

The Asian American population is a racial group consisting of many ethnic subgroups. They are as ethnically diverse as the Latino population and include the Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Filipino, Korean, Asian Indian, Native Hawaiian,

and other Pacific Islanders. Often described as the “model minority group,” their experiences are varied, marked by different periods of entry in America’s immigration history. They were not white, and in every state they landed, fell victim to American racism.

While Chinese immigration to America began as early as the seventeenth century, large numbers of immigrants descended on the West Coast during the mid-to late nineteenth century, who were viewed as the “yellow peril”—a racist epithet directed at Asia. In California, which served as the port of entry for Asian countries, social restrictions in employment, housing, education, marriage, and citizenship were placed on Chinese and Chinese American citizens. The Chinese were victimized by racial discrimination at the local, state, and federal levels; the impact proved devastating. First encouraged to come to the United States to fulfill the need for cheap labor when the demand for manual labor was high in the railroad and gold mining industries, the Chinese were viewed as hard-working, productive laborers. This cheap “coolie labor” was exploited until there was no further need for their services; resistance to Chinese immigration grew.

The Chinese community was socially isolated; they lived in segregated communities (Chinatowns), and their opportunities to participate in the American mainstream were limited. An unwelcome, alien culture with strange customs, a language that was difficult to understand, and a foreign religion, they were distained. More specifically, “the Chinese were victims of mob violence and murder; they served as scapegoats in labor conflicts; their businesses attacked and boycotted; and their children racially segregated in the public schools” (Reid-Merritt 2017, 13). Under the Naturalization Act of 1790, hundreds of thousands of Chinese who made America their home were denied U.S. citizenship. Rather, citizenship through the process of naturalization was reserved for white people. In the late nineteenth century, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 barred Chinese immigration to America for 10 years. And in 1892, it was extended for another 10 years, marking the first time in U.S. history that Congress acted to bar an entire group from entering the country.

Similar forms of racial discrimination and social humiliation were also directed at the Japanese. They, too, began a process of immigration to America in large numbers in the late nineteenth century. The Japanese worked as “laborers at low wages and under poor working conditions. Their industriousness in such circumstances made them popular with employers but unpopular with unions and other employees” (Schaefer 2011, 315). Labeled as dishonest, untrustworthy, “shifty-eyed” invaders, efforts were made to restrict Japanese immigration, bar them from landownership, limit their business opportunities, and segregate their children in the public school system. Immigration restrictions were not placed, specifically, on Japan; however, the Immigration Act of 1924 excluded nearly all Asians from the United States.

Discrimination against Japanese Americans intensified during World War II. Following the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, anti-Japanese sentiment flourished. It was not long before President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued an Executive Order forcing the evacuation of Japanese Americans to internment camps. The forced relocation resulted in the loss of their homes, material possessions, employment,



and community. Government detention centers and internment camps were located in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming, creating segregated communities, limited to Japanese detainees. These were wrongful acts of racism and discrimination, cloaked under the false pretense of “national security.” The U.S. government attempted to rectify this dark period in history with restitution payments to Japanese American families. However, government “reparations” to families of internment camp survivors can never fully compensate for the loss of social resources experienced by the Japanese American community.

Large numbers of Filipinos began migrating to the United States at the start of the twentieth century. The first wave followed the U.S. annexation of the Philippines in 1899, the second following World War II, and the third following the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act. Their immigration status differed from other Asian groups due to their status as U.S. nationals. Filipinos came as students, war brides, and skilled and unskilled laborers. In the west, Filipino migrants were needed to fill the agricultural labor shortage left by Chinese and Japanese laborers. While the women, who arrived in very small numbers, were stereotyped as “brides for hire,” the presence of a disproportionately larger male population was far more menacing. Labeled as “zoot-suiters,” a characteristic attached to young Mexican, African American, and Filipino men who wore flamboyant clothes, they were publically perceived as thugs and hoodlums, in hot pursuit of young white women. Conflict was inevitable. Such was the case with the infamous Zoot Suit Riots, in Los Angeles in 1943, a clash between white servicemen and police officers against men of color, including the Filipinos. A community dominated by men, the Filipinos faced many social pressures. They worked for low wages, in undesirable jobs, and occupied substandard housing. They were the target of anti-miscegenation laws. And at the beginning of World War II, they were prohibited from joining the army, a restriction later lifted by President Roosevelt.

It was the third wave of immigration that substantially increased the numbers of Filipinos in the United States. Nurses, health care workers, and higher-educated professionals would dominate this group, a pattern first established in the second wave. As their numbers increased, they gained greater acceptance into the American culture. The Filipino American population is disproportionately concentrated in the west, with smaller communities in the East Coast like New York, New Jersey, and Washington, D.C. And while the myth of the “model minority” continues to impact America’s perception of the assimilability of Asian Americans, Filipinos have achieved higher levels of education and higher incomes and experience lower levels of poverty than their white counterparts and members of other racial minority groups. Much the same could be said for the latest arrival of Asian immigrants, part of America’s fourth wave.

The immigration of large numbers of Koreans to America is a mid- to late twentieth-century phenomenon. Initially populated by low-skilled workers, the immigrant population was later dominated by skilled, managerial, and professional workers and are generally considered among the most successful of the Asian immigrant groups. They have higher incomes and levels of educational

achievement than native or foreign-born Americans. The same would be true for several other groups, more specifically those coming from India. For the most part, they too are likely to be highly skilled workers, concentrated in the professions and health science areas. However, the Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Laotians are also part of the mid-twentieth-century Asian immigration. Less-skilled and fleeing turmoil in their homeland, many were not well received in the United States and treated as undesirables.

There is much diversity within the Asian American community; not all are living the American Dream. As part of the nonwhite minority, Asian Americans continue to be victims of prejudice and discrimination. Successful Asian businesses in predominantly racial minority enclaves have faced criticism and hostility from the members of the local community. Moreover, conflicts have risen about the perception that Asians are competing with white Americans for jobs. Such was the case in the 1982 murder of Vincent Chin, beaten to death by two white men in Detroit. Chinese American Chin was thought to be a “jap,” tied to the Japanese automaking industry, making headway in the United States. Feeling threatened by the possible loss of their local jobs, the two white men bludgeoned him to death with a baseball bat.

## CONCLUSIONS

The history of race, racism, and race relations vary state by state. The Jim Crow South has a bloodied and torrid history of prejudice, discrimination, and violence against African Americans; but they are not alone. From the North to the South, and from the East to the West, the ideology of race and racial supremacy has negatively impacted the lives of all Americans—Caucasian, African, miscegen, Native, and Asian. The nation’s social indicators reveal the continuous presence of racial disparities in educational achievement, longevity, mortality, morbidity, housing, health care, occupational status, income, and wealth for many of America’s racial minorities. Throughout the country’s 250-year history, some progress has been achieved, but there remains a long path toward social equality that has yet to be traveled.

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## Montana

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Jon Allan Reyhner

### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **1862**

Discovery of gold in Montana leads to a rapid influx of non-Indians to the area that will become the State of Montana

#### **1864**

Montana is established as a territory

#### **1868**

Beginning with the cattle drive of William G. Butler in the summer of 1868, African American cowboys take part in cattle drives through the Montana Territory for the next two decades

#### **1869**

James Pratt, a black man and former Union soldier, stakes a successful mining claim in Marysville, which he works until 1886, when he sells the mine and moves to Helena to operate a saloon

#### **1870**

The Baker Massacre of Blackfeet Indians occurs on January 23; attempting to punish a band of Blackfeet for killing a white rancher, Major Eugene Baker's troops attack the wrong band, killing some 200 Blackfeet, mostly the elderly, women, and children

#### **1870**

The U.S. Census shows that Chinese make up 10 percent of Montana's population; the census also documents 183 African Americans in the territory, 71 of them residing in Helena

#### **1871**

Montana Territory denies voting rights to any person under "guardianship" and outlaws voting precincts on Indian reservation

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**1872**

An Alien law that blocks the Chinese from buying placer mining claims is enacted; the law is struck down by the Montana Territorial Supreme Court in 1874

**1872**

A territorial law is passed placing a special tax on Chinese laundries

**1872**

The Montana territorial legislature passes a law segregating African American children in public schools

**1876**

Fought on June 25–26 in southeastern Montana, the Battle of Little Big Horn sees part of the command of General George Armstrong Custer wiped out when it attacks a large encampment of Sioux, Cheyenne, and other tribes who did not have permission to leave their reservations

**1879**

An African American fraternal order, the Lodge of the Good Templars, is organized in Helena by 20 African Americans

**1882–1883**

The Northern Pacific Railway is built through Montana using an estimated 6,000 Chinese laborers in western Montana and Irish and other European laborers in eastern Montana; Chinese workers receive no credit for their contributions at the completion ceremony for the railroad

**1882**

Protests, dwindling enrollment, and the increasing cost of maintaining segregated schools result in a successful referendum vote to prohibit racial segregation in Montana schools

**1883**

A Code of Indian Offenses promulgated by the U.S. secretary of the interior prohibits many American Indian religious practices; the law is enforceable for more than 50 years and not repealed until 1934

**1884**

The St. Labre Catholic Mission and School is founded on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation and remains open in 2018

**1885**

Mary Fields arrives in Cascade to become a successful business owner, running a restaurant and laundry; she is also the second African American U.S. postal worker in Montana, driving a mail coach from Cascade to Fort Shaw and Simms until she is almost 70

**1888**

Reverend James Hubbard establishes the St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church in Helena

**1888**

The 25th Infantry—one of four African American regiments created after the Civil War—arrives at Fort Missoula

**1889**

Montana enters the Union as the 41st state on November 8

**1892**

The Fort Shaw Indian Boarding School opens west of Great Falls, Montana

**1894**

Montana's first black newspaper, the *Colored Citizen*, is published in Helena

**1896**

Montana's "landless Indians" are deported to Canada

**1897–1899**

A boycott of Chinese businesses and laborers is conducted in Butte, Montana, with leadership by local white labor unions

**1901**

Three black churches are established in the state: AME (Wayman Chapel) in Billings; AME (Shaffer's Chapel) in Butte; and Bethel Baptist in Butte

**1905**

Students from the Ft. Shaw Indian Boarding School in Montana and from other U.S. government Indian schools display their musical, basketball, and other talents at a model Indian boarding school over the summer at the St. Louis World's Fair

**1908**

*Winters v. United States*, 207 U.S. 564, clarifies tribal water rights on American Indian reservations, declaring that the Indian residents of the Fort Belknap Reservation in Montana have rights to water from the neighboring Milk River to irrigate their lands

**1909**

Montana's first anti-miscegenation law is passed, prohibiting interracial marriage; the law is not repealed until 1953

**1916**

The Rocky Boy Indian Reservation is established by executive order for some landless Montana Indians

**1934**

Indian Reorganization (Wheeler-Howard Act) is sponsored by powerful Montana senator Burton K. Wheeler; this act provides for limited tribal self-government, ends further allotment of tribal lands, and provides for Indian religious freedom

**1946**

The Indian Claims Commission is established to provide a process for tribes in Montana and other states to get financial compensation for some of their lost land

**1949**

Arcella Hayes of Missoula initiates a successful campaign to repeal discriminatory statutes and enact the Fair Employment Practices Law

**1965**

Black and white residents of Missoula and Billings hold marches and prayer services in reaction to the beating of black civil rights marchers in Selma, Alabama

**1968**

The Indian Civil Rights Act is passed, extending civil rights to American Indians

**1968**

Professor Ulysses Doss establishes a black studies program at the University of Montana; it is only the third such program in the country

**1969**

Ophelia Fenter, who teaches home economics, becomes the first African American teacher at Butte High School

**1972**

Montana adopts a revised constitution that “recognizes the distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians and is committed in its educational goals to the preservation of their cultural integrity”

**1974**

Great Falls librarian Geraldine Travis becomes the first African American elected to the Montana state legislature

**1975**

The Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act is passed and Dull Knife Memorial College is founded, becoming the first of seven tribal colleges in Montana

**1978**

Congress passes the Indian Religious Freedom Act, which further establishes the rights of American Indians to practice their traditional religions as well the right of the Native American Church to use peyote in religious ceremonies

**1986**

*Windy Boy v. Big Horn County et al.* finds Montana’s Big Horn County in violation of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by systematically blocking American Indians from elective office

**1990**

The U.S. Census counts 2,381 African Americans resident in Montana

**1991**

Montana declares the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. a holiday, becoming the 48th state to do so

**1991**

The name of the Custer Battlefield is changed to Little Big Horn Battlefield



**1999**

Montana Indian Education for All Act is passed calling for all Montana public students to be educated about Montana's indigenous population

**2000**

The U.S. Census documents 2,692 African Americans residing in the state, constituting just over 0.3 percent of the state's population

**2009**

Denise Juneau (Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara nation) is elected Montana state superintendent of Public Instruction, the first American Indian woman to be elected to a statewide executive office in Montana

**2009**

On November 1, a Diversity March is held in Bozeman to protest attempts by a white supremacist group to establish a base of operations in the community

**2010**

Illegal immigrants comprise less than 0.5 percent of the state's population

**2014**

A Montana judge strikes down as unenforceable a 2012 voter-approved state law banning undocumented immigrants from accessing state services

**2017**

Attorneys representing the Tribal Executive Board of the Fort Peck Indian Reservation file a Title VI Civil Rights Act complaint with the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Justice alleging discrimination against children of the Assiniboine and Sioux nations in the Wolf Point, Montana, School District

**NARRATIVE**

Montana is the fourth-largest state in the United States, but it is very sparsely populated. According to the 2016 U.S. Census, just over 1 million people reside in the state. On the east side of Montana is the Great Plains; to the west are the Rocky Mountains. It is not a very diverse state. Whites make up 89.2 percent of the population, American Indians and Alaska Natives 6.6 percent, Asians 0.8 percent, blacks 0.6 percent, and Hispanics 3.6 percent. The boundaries that now delineate the state of Montana meant nothing to the American Indian tribes who lived in the area prior to its founding by Europeans. They were nomadic hunter-gatherers who moved periodically throughout the year. For the plains Indians, including the Assiniboine, Blackfeet, Crow, Gros Ventre, Nakota Sioux, and Northern Cheyenne, who lived part of the time in eastern Montana, bison were an important source of food, and they shifted their encampments to follow the herds. For tribes living in the Rocky Mountains in what is now western Montana and Idaho, including the Nez Pearce, Kootnai, and Salish, bison were less important, but they did venture out onto the plains to hunt bison as well, which often brought them into

conflict with the Blackfeet and other plains tribes. The Crow also fought with the Northern Cheyenne and Sioux. However, unlike other tribal groups, they allied themselves with the U.S. government and engaged in such activities as scouting for General Armstrong Custer and other U.S. Army officers.

Classic histories of the United States written by Francis Parkman, President Theodore Roosevelt, and others tell a story of Anglo-Saxon Protestant civilization overcoming Indian “savages” and French and Mexican Catholics. Theodore Roosevelt expressed this thinking in his 1889 book, *The Winning of the West*, writing, “The settler and pioneer have at bottom had justice on their side; this great continent could not have been kept as nothing but a game preserve for squalid savages” (119). Central to racism and genocide is the dehumanization of targeted groups who are portrayed as inferior and obstacles to progress. Relatively powerless minorities across the globe, more specifically populations of color, are often the targets of various forms of racism and genocide. The story of racism in Montana, as elsewhere in the United States and abroad, is very complex.

On their way to the Pacific Ocean, the Lewis and Clark expedition (1804–1806) explored and mapped the Montana region with the help of York (1770–?), a slave William Clark inherited who was taken along for the trip. York carried a rifle during the expedition and performed duties similar to the other members of the expedition. He was freed in 1811 and then operated a wagon freight business in Tennessee and Kentucky. As the Lewis and Clark expedition explored the new territory, they were also guided by Sacajawea, a Shoshone Indian. Following Lewis and Clark were European fur trappers and traders. For example, Angus MacDonald, a Scottish immigrant who married a Nez Perce woman in what is now Idaho in 1842, established a Hudson Bay Company trading post in Montana in 1847. Thus, multiple racial groups played a role in the founding of the state. In the mid-nineteenth century, the discovery of gold would lead to an influx of Asians and Mexicans, who would be treated with low regard by the European settlers who overwhelmed the indigenous populations and assumed a position of power and control over the emerging state.

### **Montana’s Indians**

Montana’s indigenous population suffered the same low regard as all other nonwhite populations. In the beginning of their chapter on Indian removal (1851–1890), the authors of *Montana: A History of Two Centuries*, one of the most authoritative Montana histories, write “Except perhaps for black slavery, the whites’ purposeful destruction of Native American societies is the most sordid chapter of American history” (Malone, Roeder, and Lang 1991, 114). Central to racism is the dehumanization of people who look and behave differently from the dominant group. This dehumanization rationalizes the subjection or even annihilation of those who are different. In North America, massacres of Indian men, women, and children date back to the 1637 massacre of the Pequots in Connecticut to the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee in South Dakota. Montana Indians did not escape this dehumanization, including the 1870 massacre of Piegan Blackfeet Indians by U.S. Army troops under the command of Major Eugene



The Native American community engaged in ongoing battles against the encroachment on tribal lands. Artist Charles M. Russell's 1903 painting depicts the defeat of the U.S. Army under General George Armstrong Custer by the Sioux chiefs Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse at the Battle of Little Bighorn in Montana in 1876. Custer and his army did not survive. (Library of Congress)

Baker, who may have been drunk at the time, and attacked the wrong encampment. Told by his commanding officer, General Phillip Sheridan, to “strike them hard” for killing a white rancher, Baker struck the wrong encampment and killed an estimated 173 Indians, including 53 women and children (Malone, Roeder, and Lang 1991).

In addition to the confrontations with the U. S. military, Montana Indians dealt with Catholic missionaries who established missions and schools across the state to “civilize” them. Father Lawrence Palladino (1837–1927) came to St. Ignatius Mission on the Flathead Reservation in Montana in 1867 and went on to become president of Gonzaga College in Spokane from 1894 to 1897. Missionaries, as was true of most Westerners, often had low estimations of Indian capabilities. In 1894, Palladino wrote, “the Indian has a great, deep, natural aversion to work and manual exercise of any kind” (93). He argued further, “A plain, common, English education, spelling, reading and writing, with the rudiments of arithmetic, will be for the Indian at large, book-learning enough for all the purposes of his civilized life and social intercourse” (113). According to Palladino, one could not educate Indians without Christianity, and after Christianity, work and manual labor were most important for civilizing the Indians. He opposed day schools but felt it an advantage that some Catholic schoolteachers spoke their students’ Native language.

St. Labre Indian School was started by Catholic missionaries on the edge of the North Cheyenne Reservation in 1884, the same year as the founding of the reservation. From 1885 to 1947, the students at St. Labre only saw their parents on Sunday, after Mass, and went home only for Christmas vacation. Punishment for

violations of the rules were harsh. For example, a runaway student was whipped and put in a dark room for nine days. The scribe of house diaries at St. Xavier for Crow children wrote in 1893 that if the students “had no Crows for parents—how much better would they be” (Watembach 1983, 72). To convert the Crow, Catholics had to first teach about sin, since there was no need for grace without sin; however, the concept of sin did not exist in Crow traditional culture. The Crow preferred day schools over boarding schools, and many voted with their feet when the Baptists opened day schools. To compete for students, the Catholics opened their own day schools, despite thinking that they were a “farce.” The missionaries translated catechisms, sermons, Bible stories, and hymns, but not the Bible itself, into the Crow language.

The removal of Northern Cheyenne children from their homes was, of course, not without regret. Wooden Leg, a Northern Cheyenne leader, described in his autobiography how he built his house on a hill overlooking the mission so that he could see his children during the week, as he was only permitted to visit them on Sunday. The St. Labre Indian School continues to educate Northern Cheyenne children until present day.

In addition to efforts to Christianize Indian children in boarding schools, efforts were made to suppress Indian religions, including the banning of Sun Dances held by plains Indians in 1881, and the use of peyote, a powerful natural substance, by the Native American Church. Some Montana Indians traveled to Nevada to visit the Paiute prophet Wovoka who promoted the Ghost Dance religion, precursor to today’s Native American Church. The use of peyote by the Indians in their religious ceremonies was viewed as illegal drug use by the federal government. Suppression efforts continued well into the twentieth century. During the Prohibition era, in particular, minority groups were targeted for drug and alcohol use: Chinese for the use of opium, even though it had been commonly dispensed in drug stores as a medicine, Hispanics for marijuana, and American Indians for alcohol and peyote use. It was not until 1978 that Congress passed the Indian Religious Freedom Act establishing the right of American Indians to practice their traditional religions, as well the right of the Native American Church to use peyote in their religious ceremonies.

After more than 100 years of various forms of social oppression, Montana Indians are inspired by the social activism of the American Indian or “Red Power” Movement that occurred in the late 1960s and early 1970s, reflecting similar demands made by the civil rights and Black Power movements. Montana’s tribes took action to take over the governance of schools serving their children. For example, in 1970, residents of Rocky Boy successfully petitioned to have their own school district. Tribal members cited a 12 percent Indian student graduation rate from the border town Havre High School, as well as other incidents of discrimination. In 1979, Rocky Boy Alternative High School opened to meet the needs of 32 students who had dropped out of the public school system. In 1984, a tribal ordinance was passed, creating the charter for Stone Child College to serve the higher education needs of Native American children.

Tribal groups also began to fight for their voting rights. In 1932, Montana disenfranchised Indians by requiring voters to be a “citizen” and a taxpayer. In 1937,

a constitutional amendment required all deputy voter registrars to be taxpaying qualified resident. These laws were not repealed until 1975, when *Windy Boy v. Big Horn County et al.* found Montana's Big Horn County in violation of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by systematically blocking American Indians from elective office. The Native Americans demonstrated their eagerness to use the power of the vote.

In recent times, Montana has become a leader in statewide efforts to promote understanding between its non-Indian and Indian population, showing improvements in the areas of education and politics. In 1999, the state legislature passed the Indian Education for All Act, which states:

Every educational agency and all educational personnel will work cooperatively with Montana tribes or those tribes that are in close proximity, when providing instruction or when implementing an educational goal or adopting a rule related to the education of each Montana citizen, to include information specific to the cultural heritage and contemporary contributions of American Indians, with particular emphasis on Montana Indian tribal groups and governments. (Montana Legislative Service, 2015)

To help implement this act, the Montana Office of Public Instruction has developed essential understandings that all students in Montana should learn. In 2009, Denise Juneau (Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara nation) elected Montana state superintendent of Public Instruction, the first American Indian woman to be elected to a statewide executive office in Montana. She served two terms as superintendent and then, because of term limits, could not run again.

### **Montana's Asian Population**

Despite its small Asian population (0.8%) in 2016, the 1870 U.S. Census reported that there were 1,949 Chinese in Montana, about 10 percent of its then total population. They came from other parts of the West after the discovery of gold in Montana in 1862 and often bought and worked placer claims that non-Chinese no longer considered profitable. A second wave of some 6,000 Chinese came in the early 1880s to build the western part of the Northern Pacific Railway through Montana. About 15,000 Chinese working on western portion of Northern Pacific Railway were paid about \$1 a day, half of what white workers received. However, the Chinese contribution to this important piece of U.S. infrastructure received no credit at the railroad's completion ceremony. Later, the Great Northern Railway was built through Montana, and it used cheaper Japanese labor. The 1890 census listed only six Japanese in Montana, but by 1900, there were 2,441. A 1923 law banned them from owning land. In 1940, only 508 Japanese residents were counted in the census. As with German Americans in both World War I and II, there was some prejudice against Japanese Americans in Montana after the attack on Pearl Harbor; however, unlike the Japanese on the West Coast, they were not interned for the duration of the war.

Montana's Chinese population remained largely male, partly because of immigration restrictions and the desire of many Chinese to eventually return to China. After the completion of the railroad and the playing out of surface mining, the Chinese population declined precipitously with only a few remaining, mostly with

### ***Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians***

The Montana Office of Public Instruction issued the following list of “Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians” in 2012.

1. There is great diversity among the 12 tribal nations of Montana in their languages, cultures, histories, and governments. Each nation has a distinct and unique cultural heritage that contributes to modern Montana.
2. There is great diversity among individual American Indians as identity is developed, defined, and redefined by entities, organizations and people. A continuum of Indian identity, unique to each individual, ranges from assimilated to traditional. There is no generic American Indian.
3. The ideologies of Native traditional beliefs and spirituality persist into modern day life as tribal cultures, traditions, and languages are still practiced by many American Indian people and are incorporated into how tribes govern and manage their affairs. . . .
4. Reservations are lands that have been reserved by the tribes for their own use through treaties, statutes, and executive orders and were not “given” to them. . . .
5. There were many federal policies put into place throughout American history that have affected Indian people and still shape who they are today. Many of these policies conflicted with one another. . . .
6. History is a story most often related through the subjective experience of the teller. With the inclusion of more and varied voices, histories are being rediscovered and revised. History told from an Indian perspective frequently conflicts with the stories mainstream historians tell.
7. Under the American legal system, Indian tribes have sovereign powers, separate and independent from the federal and state governments. . . .

laundry businesses or restaurants, because of exclusionary laws. The 1868 Burlingame Treaty prevented Chinese from becoming naturalized U.S. citizens, and in 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act prohibited their immigration. Much of the railway infrastructure of the West was built with Asian labor, with Irish labor predominating east of the Rockies. While big businesses, like the railways, liked cheap labor, labor unions resented the competition for jobs that Asian workers presented them, and they fueled anti-Chinese prejudice. Immigration restrictions for Chinese were not ended until 1943, as the United States sought help from China in fighting the Japanese during World War II.

Recurring economic depressions in the United States, such as the one in 1893, heightened anti-immigrant sentiment. That year an editorial in the *Butte Bystander*, a Populist weekly, declared:

The Chinaman is no more a citizen than a coyote is a citizen and never can be . . . The Chinaman’s life is not our life, his religion is not our religion. His habits, superstitions, and modes of life are disgusting. He is a parasite, floating across the Pacific and thence penetrating into the interior towns and cities, there to settle down for a brief space and absorb the substance of those with whom he comes into competition. His one object in life is to make all the money he can and return again to his

native land, dead or alive. His very existence in our midst is an insult to our intelligence. Pestilence and disease follow in his wake, no matter what sentimentalists say to the contrary. Let him go hence. He belongs not in Butte. (Swartout 2002, 58)

In 1897–1899, there was a citywide boycott of Asian workers and businesses in Butte. Local anti-Asian laws were sometimes struck down by the courts, but national laws marginalizing and excluding Chinese and other Asians were held in place. Because Montana's Asian population was overwhelmingly male, by the 1940s, through death and out-migration, it dropped to almost nothing.

### **Mexican Immigrants to Montana**

The sugar beet industry, seeking cheap labor in the Yellowstone valley surrounding Billings, Montana, drew more than 1,000 Mexican heritage workers in the early twentieth century. Today they represent Montana's second-largest ethnic minority, after American Indians. While the U.S. Census today classifies many Hispanics as white, the popular perception of the time did not view them that way. The Great Western Company in 1924 brought 3,604 Mexicans and 1,231 German Russians to harvest sugar beets. The German Russians were loaned money, but not the Mexicans. Only 25 percent of the Mexicans stayed. Many came as families, and sugar companies provided a place where they could build adobe housing that included a clinic and school. However, they were faced with discrimination in Billings, Montana's largest city after Butte, whose population precipitously declined with the closing of the mines.

As with other ethnic minorities, Mexican immigrants were discriminated against. They were banned from the public swimming pools and restaurants and had separate seating in theaters. Some store even had signs reading, "No Mexicans or dogs allowed." Some were deported during the Great Depression, and out of concern for overburdening the social welfare system, less emphasis was put on recruiting families to work in the sugar beet fields. Labor shortage during World War II changed the situation; Mexicans were able to find better job opportunities elsewhere during the war. Sugar companies were forced to recruit Indians from their reservations, the Heart Mountain Japanese Internment Camp in Wyoming, and even German prisoners of war.

The Bracero program, which started in 1943 and lasted to 1963, provided temporary jobs for Mexicans. A few of the migrant workers were able to purchase farms. Job opportunities outside the beet fields were scarce, partly because of discrimination, but some Mexican immigrants did get better-paying jobs with the railroad and other businesses. Mexican American and other racial minority soldiers returning after serving in World War II wanted more benefits of the "American Dream" for themselves and their children and began demanding an end to discrimination. While there still was some discrimination in schools, the second- and third-generation Mexican Americans were able to leverage their public school education into better jobs. During the 1960s, the impact of the Chicano civil rights movement lessened overt acts of discrimination. In addition to its permanent residents, approximately 6,000 migrant workers, mostly of Mexican origin, continue to come to Montana to perform seasonal labor (Mercier 2002).

### African Americans in Montana

Other than York, who traveled with Lewis and Clark, African Americans were late comers to Montana. After the Civil War, Congress authorized the first peacetime segregated black units of the U.S. Army, popularly known now as the “buffalo soldiers.” It is believed that the name buffalo soldier was coined by the Native Americans when they first encountered the extraordinary fighting ability of the new dark-faced soldier. The buffalo soldier units were stationed throughout the western United States, including at forts in Montana, not only to assist the all-white army troops, but also to pacify the various Indian tribes. Noted for their courage and bravery, the buffalo soldiers served with distinction, but their legacy became controversial as historians began to question whether their role in Native American conflict with the government was one of oppressor or liberator.

The 1870 U.S. Census listed 183 African Americans in Montana; 346 in 1880; and, at the turn of the century, approximately 1,500. Small black populations in some of Montana’s major cities formed their own churches, clubs, social organizations, and support services, partly due to the discrimination they faced in organizations run by whites. For example, Montana’s first black newspaper, the *Colored Citizen*, was published in Helena in 1894. In 1896, Butte’s black residents established the Afro-American Club as a social outlet to pursue interests in music, literature, and science. In 1898, Anacondans founded the A.J. Campbell Afro-American Club.

An African Methodist Episcopal Church congregation was organized in Billings in 1901. In the same year, congregants laid the cornerstone for Shaffer’s Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Bethel Baptist Church was organized in Butte in July 1901.

While there were fewer than 1,700 African Americans in the state, the Ku Klux Klan organized a chapter in 1921, during the same year that 10 existing organizations joined together to found the Montana Federation of Colored Women’s Clubs, supporting the national organization’s motto, “Lifting as We Climb.”

In the 1940s and 1950s, Montana’s overall drop in population impacted African Americans as well, with the U. S. Census Bureau listing fewer than 1,300 listed in each decade. The numbers rebounded in 1960 and 1970, with 1,467 and 1,995, respectively. As with the Mexican Americans, Montana’s black community was energized by the nation’s civil rights and Black Power movements. Barriers to full participation and access to social organizations began to diminish. In 2000, 2,692 residents identified themselves as solely African American; by 2010, the numbers had risen to 4,027.

### Ongoing Struggles

In its most recent publication (2015), the National Center for Children in Poverty ([http://www.nccp.org/profiles/MT\\_profile\\_7.html](http://www.nccp.org/profiles/MT_profile_7.html)) reported that 15 percent of white children, 32 percent of Hispanic children, and 48 percent of American Indian children lived in poor families (incomes \$24,0036 for a family of four with two children) in Montana. Because of their small population in Montana, statistics



### ***White Rights: The Constitutional Party***

The so-called white rights groups have proliferated in Montana, including Montanans Opposed to Discrimination (MOD), Citizens Rights Organization (CRO), Interstate Congress for Equal Rights and Responsibilities (ICERR), and Citizens Equal Rights Alliance (CERA). In general, these organizations advocate that states should have exclusive jurisdiction over all non-Indians and non-Indian lands wherever located. The organizations are also interested in eliminating or terminating the Indian reservations and have clashed with the tribes over such specific issues as taxation, tribal sovereignty, hunting and fishing rights, water rights, and appropriation and development of tribal resources. Joe Medicine Crow, a Crow tribal historian and anthropologist, says the mentality of MOD is to deny Indians enjoyment of rights that have traditionally belongs to white men. One political party gaining a foothold in Montana is the Constitution Party, which has a controversial, distinctly anti-Indian platform. Its 2000, National Platform included: repeal of the Voting Rights Act; opposition to bilingual ballots; an end to all federal aid, except to military veterans; repeal of welfare; and abolishing the U.S. Department of Education. In the 2000 general election for the Montana legislature, 11 Constitution Party candidates appeared on the ballot. They did poorly where they faced candidates from both major parties. But where they faced only one major-party candidate, they did better, with one candidate getting 25 percent of the vote. And in House District 73 in Lake County, home of the Flathead Reservation where the only major-party candidate was an Indian, the Constitution Party candidate got 49 percent of the total vote, 62 percent of the white vote, and came within 54 votes of being elected.

were not available for black and Asian families. Montana citizens have made some efforts to end racism, but it remains a conservative state with a small but vocal right-wing population. In 2016, the Southern Poverty Law Center listed 8 hate groups active in Montana including United Patriots, American Patriots, Eagle Forum, John Birch Society, Oath Keepers, Stand Up America U.S., SteveQuayle.com, and the Three Percenters. However, these groups tend to be small. During and after World War I, the Ku Klux Klan was active in Montana; its voters tend to be rural and conservative. Donald Trump won Montana with 55.6 percent of the vote, compared to 35.4 percent for Hillary Clinton, though Clinton won in Big Horn County with its large Crow population and in Glacier County with its large Blackfeet population.

On June 28, 2017, attorneys representing the Tribal Executive Board of the Fort Peck Indian Reservation filed a Title VI Civil Rights Act, with the U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice alleging discrimination against children of the Assiniboine and Sioux nations in the Wolf Point School District. “There is substantial evidence that the Wolf Point School District violates federal standards for equal education,” according to Attorney Melina Healey, an Equal Justice Works Fellow who is representing the Tribal Executive Board. “Native students have been systematically disadvantaged in comparison to their non-Native peers through racially biased enforcement of school discipline policies, inequitable access to school activities, and verbal abuse by teachers and staff. We hope that the Departments of Justice and Education will help grant Native students the education and opportunities they deserve” (Cordova 2017).

As a result of the passage of the 1887 Allotment Act and the sale of “surplus lands” to non-Indians, most Montana Indian reservations are checkerboards of Indian and non-Indian lands. Despite the large size on the map of Crow Reservation, in 1974, only 22 percent of the land within its boundaries was tribally owned, 45 percent of the land within the boundaries of the Flathead Reservation were tribally owned (U.S. Department of Commerce 1974). This “checkerboarding” of alternating sections of tribal and non-tribal land can exasperate non-Indians who see themselves not being treated equally in regard to taxation and other issues.

Today, although the majority of the Fort Peck Reservation’s 10,000 residents are Native, a small population of white residents control the Wolf Point city government, local economy, and school board. Tribal community member and parent, Louella Douglas-Contreras declared that “The discrimination our children face builds off a legacy of hostility towards our community and culture. Our children have the right to feel safe in their schools and supported in their community but instead, they have been ridiculed and taunted by their teachers, administrators, and coaches. We hope that this complaint will start a process of healing. Our children have a right to hope and happiness through education afforded us in the Constitution. We hope the federal government will intervene by investigating these issues. Our children are our future” (Cordova 2017). The American Civil Liberties Union of Montana is supporting the tribe’s complaint.

## **NOTABLE FIGURE**

### **Pease, Janine (1949– )**

Dr. Janine Pease, a member of the Crow nation in Montana, was born in 1949. Her father was a Crow teacher, and her mother a non-Indian teacher. Her Hidatsa great grandmother was a dorm matron at the Unitarian Montana Industrial School for Indians, which lasted from 1886 to 1897, where she met her Crow Indian husband who worked at the school.

Her major accomplishments include being the founding president of Little Big Horn College, from 1982 to 2000, and the lead plaintiff from 1983 to 1986 in a successful Big Horn County voting rights case, *Windy Boy v. Big Horn County et al.*, leading to the first Crow Indian being elected to the Big Horn County Commission. VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America created in 1964 as part of President Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty) volunteers, with Crow Indian activists, registered 1,000 new American Indian voters in Big Horn County prior to the 1982 primary elections, with the assistance of Little Big Horn College. In June 1986, Judge Edward Rafeedie ruled that “official acts of discrimination . . . have interfered with the rights of Indian citizens [of Big Horn County, Montana] to register and vote” (Svingen 2002, 267). The case involved countywide at-large voting that kept Indians from holding elective office in violation of the on the 1965 Voting Rights Act. This was the first case involving Indians brought under the Voting Rights Act.

At the time of Pease’s lawsuit, the mayor of Hardin, Montana, the county seat of Big Horn County on the edge of the Crow reservation, described her as

“a militant . . . a real troublemaker, one of them half-breeds that’s never happy less’n she’s stirring things up” (Colton 2000, 254). She and two other plaintiffs had 200 witnesses who testified about “segregated rest rooms in the County Courthouse, a teacher at the high school who’d never given an Indian student higher than a C in thirty years; ambulance drivers picking up a white accident victim but leaving an Indian bleed on the side of the road” (Colton 2000, 254–55). The mayor called these “isolated cases,” and Pease received death threats and was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Big Horn County had 205 employees, and only five were American Indian. The county had 100 persons appointed to committees, in which only one was Indian—Joe Medicine Crow, who was on the Big Horn County Historical Society Board. The county plowed out white ranchers’ lanes and driveways, but plowed in Indian lanes, keeping Indian people from getting to work and health services. Hardin was 19 percent white in residents, but the arrest record showed 89 percent Indian arrests.

Tribal colleges, beginning with the founding of Navajo Community College in Arizona, were started because of the high college dropout rate in non-Indian colleges and a desire to provide more culturally appropriate education. Little Big Horn College was started on a shoestring budget by Pease and her coworkers by converting an abandoned gymnasium donated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs into a learning center in 1983. Bordewich (1996, 286) describes it as a “ruin”: “weeds and trees grow through gaps in the cinderblocks. Windows are broken, and the heating fixtures have been stolen.” With volunteer help, the building was transformed.

Recognition of her success at Little Big Horn College led to Pease’s election as president of American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), serving from 1983 to 1985. AIHEC, on its website in 2017 noted how it “is the collective spirit and unifying voice of our nation’s 37 Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs)—a unique community of tribally and federally chartered institutions working to strengthen tribal nations and make a lasting difference in the lives of American Indians and Alaska Natives.”

Pease also served as a member of U.S. Secretary of Education Lauro Cavazos’s Indian Nations at Risk Task Force in 1990–1991. The task force found that “schools have failed to educate large numbers of Indian students and adults [as indicated by] high dropout rates and negative attitudes toward school” as well as discouraging the use of Native languages with the result that the language and culture base of the American Native are rapidly eroding. In 1992, she served as a delegate to the White House Conference on Indian Education that echoed the findings of the task force.

Her service to the Crow nation besides her work at the tribal college includes serving in 1977 as the director of her tribe’s educational programs and, from 2010 to 2012, as the Crow nation’s cabinet head for education.

In 1990, she was named a trustee of the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian that opened on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., in 2004, and in 1991 received the National Indian Education Association’s Indian Educator of the Year award. In 1992, she received the Montana American Civil Liberty Union’s Jeanette Rankin Peace Award, and in 1994, she received a MacArthur Fellowship. Her 1994 doctorate in education from Montana State University was

the first doctorate for a female member of the Crow nation, and her dissertation was titled “The Tribally Controlled Colleges Act of 1978: An Expansion of Indian Self-Determination.” Her publications include “Native American Language Immersion: Innovative Education for Families and Children,” commissioned by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the American Indian College Fund; “Helps the People: The Dance of the Seasons” in *American Indian Stories of Success: New Visions of Leadership in Indian Country*; and with Laughlin McDonald and Richard Guest, “American Indian Voting Rights in South Dakota-1982–2006” commissioned by the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, 2006. From 2008 to 2010, she served as vice president for Academic Affairs at Fort Peck Community College in Poplar, Montana.

Montana has recognized Dr. Pease’s work. She was unanimously appointed by the Montana Supreme Court to the Montana Commission on Districting and Apportionment as the presiding officer from 1999 to 2003; from 2004 to 2007, she served as a member of the Montana Human Rights Commission; and from 2006 to 2011, she was a member of the Montana University System Board of Regents. She currently works with planning and accreditation at Little Big Horn as well as teaching classes.

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## Nebraska

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Bruce E. Johansen

### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **1682**

Rene Robert Cavelier (known as Sieur de La Salle), a French explorer, visits the area of present-day Nebraska

#### **1724**

Etienne Veniard de Bourgmont claims the Nebraska region for France

#### **1803**

The United States acquires Nebraska as part of the Louisiana Purchase from France

#### **1804**

York, a black man accompanying the Lewis and Clark expedition, is the first documented African American to visit the region that will become the state of Nebraska

#### **1854**

The Om'a'ha tribe sells most of its land, about 4 million acres, by treaty for less than 22 cents an acre to make way for a railroad and European American immigration into a new city bearing an anglicized version of its name

#### **1854**

Congress creates the Nebraska Territory, declaring that it remain "free," that is, without slavery, though slaves continue to be held and the earliest territorial legislature debates the practice; the Omaha City Council also debates slavery until at least 1859

#### **1855**

There are 13 black slaves in the Nebraska Territory

**1859**

An ultimately unsuccessful proposal to abolish slavery in the Nebraska Territory is introduced into the Omaha City Council

**1860**

A slave named Eliza escapes an Omaha business and runs to Chicago

**1860**

The U.S. Census lists 81 Negroes in Nebraska Territory, of whom 10 are said to be slaves

**1860**

An early draft of a Nebraska State Constitution restricts voting rights to “free white males”

**1861**

The territorial legislature overrides the governor’s veto and enacts a bill prohibiting slavery in Nebraska

**1867**

On March 1, Nebraska becomes the 37th state to join the Union

**1867**

On June 15, Nebraska ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing equal protection to blacks

**1870**

On February 17, Nebraska ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution extending voting rights to black men; the state’s ratification comes two weeks after the amendment had taken effect

**1870**

According the U.S. Census, the total population of the state is 122,993; the black population of Nebraska is 789

**1873**

The Nebraska Supreme Court rules that blacks cannot be excluded from serving on juries in the state

**1879**

The Standing Bear trial (*Standing Bear v. Crook*) in U.S. District Court in Omaha establishes for the first time that American Indians are defined as persons under U.S. federal law

**1884**

Matthew Ricketts of Omaha becomes the first African American to graduate from a Nebraska college or university, when he earns a degree from the University of Nebraska College of Medicine

**1887–1906**

The 9th and 10th U.S. Cavalry, comprising African American troopers called “buffalo soldiers” by the Native Americans, are stationed in Nebraska at Fort Robinson

## **530 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1890**

According to the U.S. Census, the total population of the state is 1,062,656, with 8,913 African Americans resident in the state

### **1891**

Joe Coe, a black worker, is lynched by a white mob in Omaha on suspicion that he raped a white woman; no one is charged with the murder of Coe

### **1892**

Dr. Matthew Ricketts, a North Omaha medical doctor, becomes the first black to be elected to the Nebraska Unicameral (Legislature)

### **1895**

Silas Robbins becomes the first African American admitted to the Nebraska state bar

### **1913**

A tornado on Easter Sunday devastates North Omaha, leveling several blocks, killing at least 100 people in the heart of Omaha's black community

### **1919**

Willy Brown, a black man, is lynched by a mob of several thousand white men in South Omaha after being accused of raping a young white woman; this riot is one of several across the United States at this time sparked by competition for jobs

### **1921**

Malcolm X's father, Earl Little, founds the Omaha chapter of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), headed by Marcus Garvey; when this comes to the attention of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), it opens its first Nebraska klavern in Omaha at about the same time

### **1925**

Malcolm Little (later Malcolm X) is born in Omaha; shortly thereafter, his family leaves the city under threat by the KKK

### **1928**

The KKK stages a demonstration in Neligh

### **1938**

Mildred Brown and her husband found the *Omaha Star*, the longest-lived of Omaha's many black newspapers; she is the first black woman to start a newspaper in the United States

### **1947**

The DePorres Club is founded at Creighton University to resist racial discrimination in Omaha; a year later, 30 members of the club organize a sit-in at a downtown Omaha restaurant

### **1952–1954**

The DePorres Club, assisted by Mildred Brown, organizes bus boycotts in Omaha to compel hiring of black drivers; the boycott spreads to Council Bluffs as well, until blacks are hired



**1955**

Protests are organized at Peony Park after the amusement venue bars blacks from a swimming meet; the case reaches the Nebraska Supreme Court, which rules the park's bar a violation of state desegregation laws and fines park management \$50

**1958**

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. speaks in Omaha at Salem Baptist Church

**1963**

Black ministers in North Omaha form the Citizens Committee for Civil Liberties (also known as 4CL); several protest marches are held, one of which draws more than 10,000 people, and youth activists protest the color barrier at Peony Park; the barrier falls following protests at admissions gates for more than a month

**1964**

Malcolm X returns to Omaha for a speech

**1966**

Two days of riots in North Omaha stop only after occupation by the National Guard

**1966**

A locally produced film, *A Time for Burning*, a documentary on the racial problems of North Omaha, is nominated for an Oscar

**1968**

In April, riots flare again in North Omaha, sparked by the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King

**1968**

In June, riots erupt again in Omaha after a white police officer kills Vivian Strong, a black teen from the North Omaha housing projects

**1969**

A sit-in at the University of Nebraska at Omaha leads to initiation of a Black Studies Department in 1971

**1970**

Ernie Chambers, one of the state's most prominent African American leaders, is elected to the Unicameral (state legislature) for the first time

**1971**

David Rice and Ed Poindexter, both Black Panthers, are arrested and convicted under questionable circumstances in connection with a bombing that kills a police officer; the case remains controversial for decades as parole is repeatedly denied

**1976**

Omaha public schools begin two decades of court-ordered integration via busing

**1977**

JoAnn Strickland Maxey becomes the first African American woman elected to the Nebraska legislature

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**1981**

Arsonists destroy an East Omaha duplex after an African American family signs a rental agreement to live there

**1988**

The Mad Dads, a biracial group, holds a march to protest gang violence in Omaha

**1990**

According to the U.S. Census, blacks resident in Nebraska number 57,404 out of a total population of more than 311,000

**1996**

Omaha public schools end court-ordered busing

**1997**

Brenda Warren-Council, of North Omaha, loses (by 700 votes) a bid to become Omaha's first black mayor; six years later, Thomas Warren, her brother, becomes the city's first black police chief

**1997**

Marvin Ammons, an African American veteran, is shot and killed by police officers in Omaha; his controversial death underscores the difficult relations between the city's black community and the police

**2000**

George Bibbins, an African American man, leads Omaha police on a high-speed chase that ends with Bibbins being shot and killed by police officers

**2006**

The Nebraska legislature passes the Nebraska DREAM Act, which permits undocumented students to pay in-state tuition at public colleges and universities

**2007**

A grocery store in East Omaha owned by an Ethiopian immigrant is robbed, fire-bombed, and spray-painted with racial epithets

**2009**

State Senator Ernie Chambers is forced out of office due to a term limits law created to stop him from serving beyond his 38 years in the Nebraska Unicameral; after a one-term hiatus under the law, he is reelected, becoming the longest-serving state senator in the history of Nebraska

**2009**

The Nebraska legislature passes a bill that requires that applicants of public social benefits possess legitimate verification of their immigration documents

**2010**

According to the U.S. Census, the total population of Nebraska is 1,806,000, and the state's black population is 88,000

**2012**

According to the Pew Research Center, there are about 55,000 undocumented immigrants resident in Nebraska

**2014**

In response to threatened lawsuits by the American Civil Liberties Union and others, two Nebraska counties—Hall and Sarpy—no longer jail suspected undocumented immigrants without a judge’s approval

**2014**

The U.S. Supreme Court refuses to review a 2010 city ordinance of Fremont, Nebraska, which bans renting property to undocumented immigrants, many of whom came to Fremont in the last decade to work in local meatpacking plants

**2015**

Various state officials, including the governor, call for the resignation of a Nebraska State Board of Education member who referred to President Barack Obama as a “half-breed” in a post on the board member’s conservative blog

**2016**

Due to the draw of jobs in the local meatpacking industry, the population of Lexington, Nebraska, is about 60 percent Latino; the town also has a growing population of Muslim immigrants from Somalia

**2017**

A study by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy concluded that undocumented immigrants pay more than \$39 million in Nebraska state and local taxes each year

**NARRATIVE****Statistical Overview**

Before they were removed by the U.S. government (as Omaha and surrounding areas were filled by immigrants on the railroads), the area now occupied by the city of Omaha was occupied by several Native American peoples, including the Ioway, Ponca, Pawnee, bands of Lakota (Sioux), and O’ma’ha, after whom the city was named (“Omaha” is anglicized).

Minority populations in Nebraska have generally been less than U.S. historical averages, but have grown rapidly in recent years, according to the U.S. Census. Hispanic population grew from 94,425 (5.5%) in 2000 to 133,832 (7.5%) in 2007, a 41.7 percent increase in seven years. The population of African Americans grew from 70,043 in 2000 (4.1%) to 78,581 (4.4%) during the same period, a 12.2 percent increase. American Indians rose from 15,634 (0.9%) to 17,576 (1.0%), up 12.4 percent, and Asians, at 22,528 in 2000 (1.3%) rose to 30,317 in 2007, (34.7%) . The first Chinese arrived in Omaha during the last half of the nineteenth century to work on the railroads; many of the earliest Japanese were recruited to work in the stockyards and in meatpacking.

By 2010, the proportion of Latinos (called “Hispanics” in census reports) had risen to 9.2 percent of the Nebraska’s population. By 2010, Latinos had become half of the state’s minority population. In one decade (2000 to 2010), Nebraska’s racial/ethnic minority population (defined as blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and

American Indians) grew from 216,769 to 326,588. During the same period, the census category comprising “non-Hispanic whites” grew by 0.4 percent.

The Hispanic/Latino population in Nebraska increased from 36,969 in 1990 to 94,425 in 2000, and 167,405 in 2010, a 353 percent rise in 20 years, including a 155.4 percent increase from 1990 to 2000 and a rise of 77.3 percent between 2000 and 2010. In 1990, Latinos made up 2.3 percent of Nebraska’s population of 1,578,385. In 2010, the state’s population was 1,826,341, 9.2 percent of whom were Hispanic/Latino. These were official counts, which do not record a substantial number of people without immigration documents. During the last quarter century, much of southern Omaha has become majority Latino, as have several rural towns out-state (west of Omaha) with large farming and meatpacking activities.

The foreign-born population of Nebraska also indicates the rapid influx from Latin America. According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, the largest share (51.5%) was from Central America, 24.6 percent from Asia, 9.9 percent from Europe, 8.7 percent were from Africa. A state report indicated that

The top five countries of birth of the foreign born in Nebraska were Mexico, India, El Salvador, Vietnam, and China. In 2010, Mexico accounted for 41 per cent of all foreign-born Nebraska residents. India was the birthplace of the next largest with 5.1 per cent, followed by El Salvador with 5 percent, Vietnam with 3.8 per cent and China with 2.8 per cent. (Profile of the Minority Population in Nebraska 2015)

The overwhelming number of Latinos have come to the state for employment, which is generally abundant. Nebraska’s unemployment rate of 3–5 percent during the last 25 years is consistently among the lowest in the United States. Although Latino workers are generally welcomed in the state, the rapid increase in Latinos has met some resistance. The small city of Fremont, northwest of Omaha, enacted an ordinance requiring proof of citizenship to rent or buy housing. The city’s business activity suffered when many Latinos moved to surrounding communities. In Omaha, a young Salvadoran immigrant killed a white woman, spurring much local commentary and a role, for a time, in the anti-immigrant screeds of Donald J. Trump’s presidential campaign.

Many of Omaha’s earliest Mexican residents were recruited to work in the stockyards, which were in the midst of South Omaha, now a predominantly Latino community. The stockyards have since been closed, as their operations were moved to smaller towns west of Omaha. Omaha’s stockyards, second in size only to those of Chicago, attracted workers not only from Southern states, but several other countries as well. By 1907, three-quarters of the stockyards’ workers were immigrants, or had immigrant fathers, according to the Dillingham Commission of the U.S. Senate. Communities such as Lexington, west of Lincoln, today host large immigrant populations of several ethnicities. Lexington, with a population of about 15,000, has public schools that in 2016 taught immigrants speaking 32 languages.

Today, Omaha has become an immigrant destination for Africans from several countries, including Sudan, Nigeria, Kenya, Togo, Ghana, and Cameroon. The Sudanese, with 8,500 living in Omaha as of 2015, are one of the largest such settlements in the United States, many of whom have fled factional conflict in their

country. By 2015, Metropolitan Omaha's population of about 800,000 was about 14 percent African or African American, 15 percent Latino, and 5 percent Asian, with rapid rates of increase that reflect the state as a whole.

### **North Omaha's Enduring Black Community**

Omaha's Near North Side comprises Nebraska's only substantial black community. It has a rich history, including some of the United States' earliest restaurant sit-ins, as early as 1948, a decade before better-known, similar events in Southern states. Omaha also experienced bus boycotts during the 1950s, as well as a substantial number of race riots. It is the birthplace of Malcolm Little, who became known as Malcolm X, as well as jazz great Preston Love. Omaha is also known for some of the starkest income inequities in the United States and a high rate of deaths due to gun violence. It is, as some local people have remarked, a small city with big-city problems.

The first known black man to spend a night on the site that would become Omaha was named York, who arrived as a slave with the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1804. By September 1814, Major Stephen H. Long, writing from what is today North Omaha, recorded the presence of several blacks, probably slaves, on farmsteads. The first free black person, Sally Bayne, was recorded on Omaha's site when the city was founded in 1854. A proposed constitution for the state of Nebraska, drafted in 1854, limited voting to "free white males." It never was enacted (Nebraska did not become a state until 1867). The 1860 U.S. Census recorded 81 Negroes in Nebraska Territory, 10 of whom were identified as slaves.

Some of Omaha's earliest black residents arrived via the Underground Railroad, fleeing slavery in the South. Many of them passed through a cabin built in Nebraska City by Allen Mayhew during 1855, which has been preserved as a small museum. By 1867, escaped slaves and other blacks had organized the first church in North Omaha, St. John's African Methodist Episcopal Church. By the early 1880s, about 500 blacks lived in North Omaha, supporting several businesses and churches. In 1894, blacks in Omaha organized the first African American fair in the United States.

#### ***Omaha as Malcolm X's Birthplace***

The father of Malcolm Little (later Malcolm X), the Reverend Earl Little, "a big six-foot-four, very black man" (Malcolm and Haley 1964, 1), had drawn the attention of whites as a public advocate of Marcus Garvey's ideas, most notably that blacks should return to Africa (some did, founding Liberia). Reverend Little was out of town, preaching in Milwaukee, when hooded members of the Ku Klux Klan surrounded his family's North Omaha home, at 3448 Evans Street, on horseback, shouting threats and breaking windows with their rifle butts. His wife was pregnant with Malcolm at the time, their seventh child. They resolved to move away as soon as possible after Malcolm was born on May 19, 1925. Today, the site is observed with a state historical marker and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The house was demolished before its significance was widely recalled.

Before the *Omaha Star* (which continues to publish today) was founded in 1938, by Mildred D. Brown and her husband S. E. Gilbert, North Omaha had hosted several other black newspapers, including the *Progress* (begun in 1889), the *Afro-American Sentinel* (started in 1892), the *Omaha Monitor* (1915–1929), and the *Guide* (begun in 1927), which reached a circulation of more than 25,000, for a time the largest African American newspaper west of the Missouri River.

In 1910, the census reported that Omaha's black community's size was surpassed in western states only by Los Angeles and Denver. The first black-owned early motion picture company (Lincoln Pictures) was founded in Omaha during 1920, part of a vibrant music and entertainment culture in North Omaha. (After only a year in Omaha, however, Lincoln Pictures moved to Los Angeles.) Later, North Omaha clubs hosted Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, the original Nat King Cole Trio, and other jazz greats, often in the Ritz Theater, with seating for 548 people, which was closed during the 1950s and later demolished. Ironically, the vibrancy of North Omaha's entertainment scene was reinforced by strict, Southern-style segregation in other neighborhoods.

By 1910, this community had grown to 4,426 people, many of whom were recruited from Southern states to work in the meatpacking industry. The community supported more than a hundred locally owned businesses, including attorneys, dentists, and physicians, as well as preachers in several churches, mainly Baptist and Methodist.

Omaha's history has been marked by occasional eruptions of racial violence. In 1890, several hundred European Americans formed a mob that seized Joe Coe, a black worker, from a jail cell after he had been accused of kidnapping a five-year-old white child. He was killed and lynched. Mobs attacked Greeks as well as blacks. During February of 1919, a mob of 3,000 whites gathered outside a city jail where a Greek immigrant who had been accused of having sex with a white woman was being held. When police refused to surrender the man, the mob attacked Greektown, an ethnic enclave, chasing residents away from their homes and demolishing 30 homes and businesses.

Between 1910 and 1920, the African American population of Omaha more than doubled, from 4,426 to 10,315, to about 5 percent of the city's population. Some of the immigrants were recruited as strikebreakers, contributing to racial tensions. The railroads (notably Union Pacific, with a head office in Omaha) had imported black strikebreakers as early as 1877.

Seven months later, a larger white mob, perhaps 3,000 or more, lynched Will Brown, age 41, a black worker, whose body was mutilated and burned. This riot also resulted in the deaths of two white men and the attempted lynching of Omaha mayor Edward Parsons Smith. The white mob set fire to the Douglas County Courthouse; it was one of more than 20 riots in major U.S. industrial cities during the "Red Summer" of 1919. Judging from the size of the U.S. Army's response to quell the riot of September 28–29 (70 officers and 1,222 enlisted men), the Omaha riot was probably the largest in the United States that year. A federal report had observed three weeks before the riot that racial tensions were primed to explode

largely from racial animosity between workers in the Omaha stockyards, as competition for jobs became intense. During periodic strikes, blacks had been recruited to replace white workers, aggravating the situation.

Adding to the mix, Omaha police from its “morals squad” killed a black bellhop on September 11, feeding sensational newspaper coverage of his alleged rape of 19-year-old Agnes Loebeck on September 25, 1919. This coverage lit the fuse. (Loeck had identified Brown as the rapist, but later investigation cast doubt on the veracity of the claim.) The Omaha *Bee*, which routinely stoked racial fears against blacks as well as American Indians (advising whites to “hunt them down!”), had carried accounts purportedly describing several attacks by black men against young white women.

Segregation in Omaha became more severe after the 1919 riot. Covenants were placed on properties for sale or rent to restrict black movement outside North Omaha. In 1940, however, the federal government ruled them illegal. By the 1930s, the United Meatpacking Workers of America strove to integrate that industry, which had a major impact in Omaha. The same union supported integration of public facilities during the 1950s, as well as the civil rights movement of the 1960s. At the same time, meatpacking jobs were moving out of Omaha, with employment there declining. By the 1990s, Omaha’s black community was afflicted with acute poverty at the fifth-highest rate among the United States’ 100 largest urban areas. More than one-third of Omaha’s blacks (and 60% of its black children) were living in poverty.

During the mid-1960s, as several large cities across the United States experienced large riots during what became known as long, hot summers, on July 4, 1966, with the temperature in Omaha at 103°F, a large crowd of blacks assembled at 24th and Lake Streets in the center of North Omaha. Police ordered the group to disband, and its members refused, instead inflicting several million dollars in damage as buildings along North 24th Street were burned and looted.

### ***Sit-Ins and Bus Boycotts***

Civil rights issues sparked tensions after World War II, as Omaha also lost several thousand meatpacking and railroad jobs, crimping the economy. Omaha experienced some of the United States’ earliest restaurant sit-ins as early as 1948, several years before similar protests over refusal of service began in the Southern states. Omaha also experienced a bus boycott during the late 1950s.

In 1947, the DePorres Club was founded at Creighton University to resist racial discrimination in Omaha. A year later, 30 members of the club organized a sit-in at a downtown Omaha restaurant. The restaurant, in the Douglas County Courthouse, agreed to desegregate, but the DePorres Club was expelled from Creighton. Its members were invited to meet at the offices of the *Omaha Star* by Mildred Brown. Several other Omaha restaurants continued to bar blacks through the 1950s, posting signs that read: “We Don’t Serve Any Colored Race.” The DePorres Club, again assisted by Mildred Brown, organized bus boycotts in Omaha to compel hiring of black drivers. The boycott spread to Council Bluffs as well, and blacks were hired.

Four weeks later, on August 1, 1966, violence erupted again after a 19-year-old black man was fatally shot by a member of the police (who was off-duty at the time). Several buildings were burned before almost 200 riot police enforced order.

On March 4, 1968, protesters at a presidential campaign rally for segregationist Alabama governor George Wallace—at Omaha’s Civic Auditorium—were beaten by police. One African American man was fatally shot. A riot ensued. A day later, Ernie Chambers, known to locals as a loquacious barber, helped prevent a riot at Horace Mann Junior High School. Chambers’s reputation as a community leader spread, and two years later, after he completed a law degree, Chambers was elected to represent North Omaha in Nebraska’s Unicameral, the state legislature. Chambers was not the first black member of the Unicameral, however. In 1892, Dr. Matthew Ricketts had been elected.

Riots occurred again on April 5, 1968, following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. On June 24, 1969, riots reignited following the killing of Vivian Strong, a black teenager, by police officers at the Logan Fontenelle low-income housing project. Several businesses along North 24th Street were firebombed and looted over the next several days.

### **Standing Bear’s Trial and the Ponca Trail of Tears**

By every Anglo-American measure, the Poncas led by Standing Bear were “good Indians,” before they were sent packing on their own trail of tears. They did what the Great White Father thought was good for them. Before their forced removal in 1877 by the U.S. Army from the Niobrara River country in northernmost Nebraska, the Poncas had begun the transition to farming in the Jefferson yeoman image that “reformers” insisted was, along with education and Christianity, the Indian’s key to the future. The Poncas also had endeavored to maintain friendly relationships with the United States. In 1858, they ceded part of their homeland, trading it for nearby land that was then said, by treaty, to be theirs forever.

The Poncas’ adaptation to “civilization” was rudely interrupted by a bureaucratic mistake in Washington, D.C., when the United States signed the Treaty of Fort Laramie. In 1868, a bureaucratic error by sloppy cartographers ceded the Poncas’ homeland to their enemies, the Great Sioux Nation. The U.S. Army was thus compelled to enforce the treaty against the Poncas at the behest of the Sioux. In late January 1877, Indian inspector Edward C. Kemble told the Poncas they had to leave home for Indian Territory (now Oklahoma).

Standing Bear and nine other Ponca chiefs were forced to visit Indian Territory to inspect the new lands that the government proposed as their new home. Dissatisfied with the new land, the chiefs who were young enough to walk home decided to do so; the rest stayed in Oklahoma, under protest. Having walked almost 500 miles, Standing Bear and the other chiefs were provided shelter among the Om’a’has, north of the city that had been named for them. After a few days of rest, Standing Bear and the other chiefs traveled to Sioux City to



telegraph President Rutherford B. Hayes about their opposition to removal. On his return to Ponca Agency (in northern Nebraska), Standing Bear was arrested for leaving the reservation without permission and sent to Yankton for a military trial. A sympathetic commander freed Standing Bear, but Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz demanded that the Poncas, as a group, be compelled to move to Indian Territory.

A few months later, paying no heed to the Poncas' objections, federal troops removed 723 of them at bayonet-point from three villages along the Niobrara River to Indian Territory, "just as one would drive a herd of ponies," said the Poncas' paramount chief White Eagle (Dando-Collins 2004, 34). After the Poncas were forced out of the Niobrara valley, troops tore down all of their 236 log houses, plus barns, a gristmill, sawmill, and blacksmith shop, church, and schoolhouse. The only building left standing was the government's Indian Agency.

Standing Bear protested that his people were being removed from their homeland illegally: "This land is ours," he said. "We have never sold it. We have our houses . . . here. Our fathers and some of our children are buried here. Here we wish to live and die. We have harmed no man. We have kept our treaty. We have learned to work. We can make a good living here. We do not wish to sell our land, and we think no man has a right to take it from us. Here we will live, and here we will die" (Tibbles 1880, 6).

Standing Bear later described the scene as federal troops arrived to escort the Poncas southward:

They took our reapers, mowers, hand-rakes, spades, ploughs, bedsteads, stoves, cupboards, everything we had on our farms, and put them in one large building. Then they put into the wagons such thing as they could carry. We told them that we would rather die than leave our lands; but we could not help ourselves. They took us down. Many died on the road. Two of my children died. After we reached the new land, all my horses died. The water was very bad. All our cattle died. Not one was left. I stayed until one hundred fifty eight of my people had died. Then I ran away with 30 of my people, men, women, and children. Some of the children were orphans. We were three months on the road. We were weak and sick and starved. . . . Half of us were sick. (Jackson 1888, 203–4).

During a cold April 1877, a first group of Poncas endured a 51-day march southward, under the direction of Indian agent James Lawrence. A second group departed in May under agent E.A. Howard. The second march, 65 days in length, was plagued by heavy rain, a tornado, and several deaths. Once both groups reached Indian Territory, malaria weakened and killed many of the Poncas who had survived the forced marches.

A year after their removal, at least a third of the Poncas had died, including two of Standing Bear's children, a daughter, Prairie Flower (who died of pneumonia on the march), and a son, Bear Shield. Following Bear Shield's death, Standing Bear, who was determined to bury the bones of his son in the lands of his ancestors, escaped north, with about 30 other Poncas.

Standing Bear's group walked for 50 days during the worst of winter, eating raw corn until it gave out, sleeping in haystacks under thin, tattered blankets. "When their moccasins ran out, they walked barefoot in the snow. Barely able to

stand on their bloodied feet, they struggled into the Otoe Agency in southern Nebraska,” wrote one observer (Mathes 1989, 45). Their accounts, later given to the press in Omaha and distributed nationally by telegraph, indicated that friendly whites often helped them during their winter trek northward. The Poncas arrived at the Omaha Agency, where they were offered food, lodging, and seed, for use if they wished to stay.

In March 1879, troops under General Crook arrested Standing Bear and his party and conveyed them to Fort Omaha. Enriched by its status as a new railroad terminus, Omaha had already grown to 150,000 residents, many of them liberal emigrants from the East Coast and Europe. When General Crook arrived at the fort, which was serving as his headquarters, he called Omaha newspaperman Thomas Henry Tibbles of the *Omaha Herald*.

Tibbles was filling in for the editor of the *Herald*. He walked to Fort Omaha the next morning and interviewed members of Standing Bear’s group. As Tibbles returned to town, running part of the way, he stopped at every church he could find, asking pastors if he could address their congregations about the travails of the Poncas. At a Congregational Church, the pastor, Rev. Mr. Sherill, allowed him to speak “between the opening hymns” (Tibbles 1880, 27). After hearing Tibbles’s account, two churches passed resolutions to the Interior Department and Secretary Carl Schurz on the Poncas’ behalf. By the next day, Tibbles was preparing wire dispatches for newspapers in Chicago, New York, and other cities, as he searched for attorneys who would represent Standing Bear and his people in Omaha federal district court.

Tibbles was 39 years of age at the time, an outspoken abolitionist, who had been a Scout in the Civil War and a circuit-riding preacher before he was hired as an assistant editor at the liberal *Omaha Daily Herald* (today part of Omaha’s only daily newspaper, the *Omaha World-Herald*). Using the then-new technology of the telegraph, Tibbles spread the story to the East Coast. In Omaha, Tibbles provided pages of coverage and provocative front-page headlines, such as “Criminal Cruelty—The History of the Ponca Prisoners Now at the Barracks,” and “A Tale of Cruelty That Has Never Surpassed.” Tibbles’s dispatches were wired to major East Coast newspapers, and a flurry of protest letters to Congress on the Poncas’ behalf ensued.

Crook already had announced his disgust at how Standing Bear’s party was being treated and became a major conduit of a legal case (*Standing Bear et al. v. Crook*) that he had every intention of losing. Following a trial during the spring of 1879, which included a speech by Standing Bear that provoked tears from the bench, Federal District Court judge Elmer Dundy ruled during 1879 that Indians were people within the meaning of the law, and no law gave the army authority to forcibly remove them from their lands.

By the time the case went to court in May 1879, Standing Bear and the rest of the Poncas drew a large audience to Judge Dundy’s courtroom, many of whom ignored Judge Dundy’s instructions not to applaud the chief’s remarks.

[Standing Bear] claimed that, although his skin was of a different hue, yet he was a man, and that God made him. He said he was not a savage, and related how he had

saved the life of a soldier whom he had found on the Plains, starved, and almost frozen to death, and of a man who had lost his way on the trackless prairie, whom he had fed and guided to his destination. In spite of the orders of the court and the efforts of the bailiffs, he was greeted with continual rounds of applause. (Tibbles 1880, 93)

Following Dundy's legal ruling and popular pressure provoked by national press coverage, in 1890, Standing Bear and his people finally were allowed to return home to the Niobrara River after Congress investigated the conditions under which they had been evicted. Standing Bear's efforts produced a victory, but nearly his entire family had died.

### **Whiteclay, Nebraska, and Beer Sales to American Indians**

Forty years after the American Indian Movement (AIM) protested beer sales to drunken Oglala Sioux at Whiteclay, Nebraska, in 2012, the Oglala Lakota tribal council at Pine Ridge filed suit against the major beer companies that distribute their wares in that tiny border town, seeking \$500 million in damages for ruined Native lives. The companies have sought to have the suit dismissed on grounds of discrimination, arguing that they have a right to profit, and Indians have a right to get drunk.

AIM has maintained a long-standing campaign to limit alcoholic beverage sales to American Indians in the tiny border town of Whiteclay, Nebraska, south of the Pine Ridge Oglala Lakota Reservation, with a population of 12, where the only major business in town is catering to Native American drunkenness. From four metal shacks along Whiteclay's main road, 13,000 cans of beer and malt liquor sell on an average day (an annual sale of more than 5 million cans for more than roughly \$4 million), nearly all of it to Oglala Sioux from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, which banned alcohol sales during the 1970s (Johansen 1998, 56).

The tribe hired Tom White, an Omaha attorney, and authorized him to sue the town's alcohol merchants as well as their suppliers. The lawsuit named Whiteclay's four beer stores, four distributors in Western Nebraska, and several large, name-brand brewers. The Oglala Sioux tribe also filed an amended complaint in Lincoln, Nebraska, U.S. District Court seeking an injunction that would limit beer sales in Whiteclay "to an amount that can reasonably be consumed" in a village of fewer than 12 people with no public drinking establishments (Duggan 2012a, 6-B).

White, announcing the lawsuit on February 9, 2012, at a press conference on the steps of the state capitol in Lincoln, asserted that the beer sales are illegal because nearly all of it is consumed on the Pine Ridge Reservation, where alcoholic beverages are banned. "They are helping people violate the law," White said. "This lawsuit is about holding them responsible and stopping the devastation of an entire people and culture" (Duggan 2012b, 1-A).

The lawsuit demanded \$500 million in monetary damages. Pine Ridge tribal president John Yellow Bird Steele, said that 90 percent of criminal cases in the

reservation court system and an equal proportion of illnesses there were caused or aggravated by alcohol. “We believe we can’t get ahead, or function, without Whiteclay being addressed,” he said (Williams, 2012b, A-15). Pine Ridge tribal police made 20,000 alcohol-related arrests during 2011. Twenty-five percent of babies at Pine Ridge are born with fetal alcohol syndrome or fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. White said that 85 percent of families at Pine Ridge are affected by alcoholism. According to an account by Timothy Williams in the *New York Times*,

After the lawsuit was filed, Whiteclay’s two-lane road, Highway 87, bustled with traffic driving to and from the beer stores. Dozens of people in various states of inebriation wandered along the road. Other men and women were passed out in front of abandoned buildings. A [recording of] Hank Williams Jr’s [song], “I’d Rather Be Gone,” was among the detritus along the road, as well as empty liquor bottles, a copy of “Tabernacle Hymns No. 3,” soiled clothing and a dead puppy. (Williams 2012a)

Victor Clarke, who had lived in Whiteclay 19 years in 2012 and owns Arrowhead Foods (which does not sell alcohol) said that residents of nearby towns want Whiteclay’s problems contained there. “People don’t want Whiteclay to go away,” he said. “The state of Nebraska doesn’t want Whiteclay to go away because it allows problems to be isolated in this one little place. You hear people in the towns around here, saying, ‘We don’t want these guys in our town’ ” (Williams 2012a).

The beer companies agreed with Larson. On April 27, 2012, they filed a motion to dismiss the Oglalas’ case, arguing that a ruling restricting beer sales at Whiteclay would force them to discriminate against residents of Pine Ridge. As the beer distributors defended the right of the Lakota to buy their products at Whiteclay on freedom-of-speech grounds, AIM activist Frank LaMere, a member of the Winnebago tribe of Nebraska, said the state of Nebraska had “blood on their hands.” Any action short of shutting down Whiteclay “and crippling the enterprise that peddles alcoholism among the Lakota people is unacceptable,” he said. LaMere continued:

The death toll exacted on the Lakota people by Anheuser Busch and its partners continues to rise, and the sooner the Sheridan County hell-hole can be leveled, the better off Nebraska will be. County, state and liquor industry officials have long known of the lawlessness and illegal activities that go on there, but they have been allowed to run from their responsibilities as public trustees by reducing the sad reality to a discussion about personal responsibility and market demand. (LaMere 2012)

The Oglala Lakotas’ \$500 million suit against Whiteclay’s beer dealers and distributors was dismissed in a federal court in Nebraska during the first week of October, 2012. After the dismissal, the Pine Ridge tribal government discussed another way to hobble the beer sales at Whiteclay: legalizing alcohol consumption on the reservation. That might reduce traffic accidents caused by drunken drivers in the Whiteclay area and allow the tribe to tax alcohol sales (Williams 2012b).

On April 19, 2017, the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission refused to renew the Whiteclay beer stores' licenses on grounds that the state was unable to supply adequate police protection. The stores were closed briefly in late April, as their owners obtained a ruling overturning the order from Lancaster County judge Andrew Jacobsen. In the meantime, beer business picked up markedly in nearby Rushville.

### **Mosques on the Prairie**

In 2016, as most meatpacking had departed Omaha's minority communities for much smaller cities west of the city, the industry remained a magnet for immigration, as well as a racial flashpoint. For example, witness Lexington, a city of 10,000 people where 32 languages are spoken in its public schools, where residents have been debating the location of a mosque. Lexington has been a draw for immigrants (Latinos and Vietnamese, as well as Somalis) since the packing plant opened in 1990. By 2016, Lexington's population was 60 percent Latino (Hammel 2016). The U.S. Census put the Somali population at 769 in 2016, but local people said that the actual figure might be closer to 1,500, 15 percent of the population (Hammel 2016).

The controversy began when workers from Somalia spread their prayer rugs across the floors of the old Longhorn Laundry, which they had purchased and renamed the Islamic Center of Lexington, as they held Muslim services five times a day. City officials complained that they were violating zoning ordinances requiring building permits and certification under the fire code. The Somalis said the city, caught up in "Islamophobia," was violating their rights to religious freedom after ignoring smaller prayer venues for eight years. No one was saying so in public, but privately the contest of opinions over religious discrimination and Islamophobia was also a racial debate. These Muslims are black Africans.

When the Islamic Center opened in its new location, city officials required 139 added stalls of off-street parking, which mosque owners could not afford to buy, nor pave. The city rated the mosque's capacity at 400, but its owners said that no more than 80 people used the space at any one time, and plenty of public parking was available nearby. The mosque was being harassed, they said. The city planning board rejected a permit for the mosque.

The American Civil Liberties Union agreed with the Somalis. "They're just trying to push us out," said Mohamed Alinor, a 28-year-old Somali who works at the Tyson Foods plant, which employs 2,700 workers (Hammel 2016). The Somalis sought protection from the U.S. Justice Department under the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000, which prohibits zoning ordinances that restrict freedom of religion. Lexington's main street already hosts a number of Somali, Latino, and Asian-owned businesses, as well as two mosques.

Paul Hammel of the *Omaha World-Herald* (2016) described other conflicts over Islam on the prairie: "There have been cultural clashes before for Muslims in Nebraska. In 2008, dozens of workers at Grand Island's JBS Swift & Co. meatpacking plant walked out in protest over a lack of accommodations for prayer

times during Ramadan, the Muslim holy month. After the plant proposed a schedule shift, non-Muslims staged counter-protests over the special treatment. Eventually some 90 Muslim workers lost their jobs.” Omaha by 2016 had four mosques. In January 2016, someone wrapped bacon around the handle of the front door at one of the mosques. Such instances of vandalism increased as Donald Trump proposed a ban on Muslim immigration during his campaign for U.S. president, labeling them as terrorists.

“It’s a label put on all Muslims now,” said Abdul Raheem Yaseer, assistant director of the Center for Afghanistan Studies at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, even though mainstream Muslims condemn the violence by a small group of extremists. The word “Islam,” he said, means “peace.” “Don’t generalize,” Yaseer said. “Try to expand your understanding of what mainstream is and what extremism is. There are extremists in every faith” (Hammel 2016).

## **NOTABLE FIGURE**

### **Chambers, Ernie (1937–)**

Representing North Omaha (the 11th District) in Nebraska’s Unicameral (a one-house state senate), Ernest William “Ernie” Chambers has become a consistent lightning rod for controversy. He has led a storied career of more than 40 years in the statehouse during which he was turned out by term limits in 2008—and then reelected again, after a four-year hiatus, in 2012. Although the term-limits law seemed aimed at Chambers, half of Nebraska’s 49 state senators were forced to retire after it took effect in 2008. As of 2016, Chambers was still a state senator, having served longer than anyone else in its history.

Chambers was born July 10, 1937, in the same North Omaha neighborhood that he would represent in the Unicameral, to Lillian and Malcolm Chambers, a minister. His father’s family stems from Mississippi and his mother’s from Louisiana. Ernie’s all six siblings were born in Omaha, where he graduated from Technical High School. He graduated from Creighton University in 1959 with a bachelor’s degree in history and minors in philosophy and Spanish. He began a degree program in law at Creighton in the early 1960s and completed it in 1979, but refused to join the state bar association, which precludes his practice of law (except that, as a state senator, he can write and advocate bills that may become law). Chambers began reading about the black Muslims in the late 1950s, as he went to work at the U.S. Post Office in Omaha, from which he was fired after he protested against supervisors’ practice of calling male black employees “boys.”

Chambers became a community spokesman during three riots in the summer of 1966, as he negotiated peace between members of the black community, the police, and Mayor A.V. Sorenson. Chambers led community groups to channel complaints about police behavior to the city through a Police–Community Relations Council and acquired funding for several projects that would assist young people. He also played a prominent role in a documentary, *A Time for Burning*, filmed in 1966, which was nominated for an Academy Award (Oscar).

Chambers's first foray into politics followed, as he filed for a position on the Omaha School Board. He was defeated. In 1970, however, he was elected to the Nebraska Unicameral to replace George W. Althouse, a short-term senator who had been appointed to replace Edward Danner after his death.

During his first term, Chambers's profile was raised by his defense of David Rice and Edward Poindexter, who were charged in connection with the death of an Omaha police officer, who was killed by a bomb in a vacant North Omaha house. Chambers built a case that Poindexter and Rice, both Black Panthers, had been set up by federal agents as part of the COINTELPRO campaign that was being used at the time to break up militant minority groups such as the Panthers, AIM, and Brown Berets. The justice of this case was still being debated decades later as Poindexter and Rice were repeatedly denied parole. Amnesty International considers Poindexter and Rice to be political prisoners.

Chambers is known for wearing muscle shirts and blue jeans on the Unicameral floor and sometimes brings a dog to work. During the early 1980s, Chambers pushed through a state law terminating investment in South Africa nearly single-handedly, making Nebraska one of five states to do so at the time (the others were Massachusetts, Michigan, Maryland, and Connecticut).

Senator Chambers at one time described himself as a black Muslim, and later as an atheist. He favors imposing property taxes on churches. He filed a lawsuit (*Marsh v. Chambers*) to terminate the Unicameral's practice of opening its sessions with a prayer, a suit which press accounts characterized as "suing God." A district court said the prayers did not violate church-state separation, but the Eighth Circuit upheld Chambers's argument. The U.S. Supreme Court in 1983 held 6–3 that the practice passed constitutional muster because of the "unique history" of the United States.

Nebraska's Unicameral meets within a short walk of the University of Nebraska's Memorial Stadium, which on many fall Saturday afternoons fills with more than 80,000 Nebraska Cornhusker fans, comprising one of the United States' most profitable college sports franchises. The Huskers have sold out every home game since the early 1960s. Senator Chambers has proposed that the players be paid as state employees—that, without monetary compensation, they are being exploited as cheap labor. Chambers has convinced the Unicameral to pass a bill in 2003 supporting the idea that college athletes should be paid a stipend. Even with Republican governor Charles Thone's signature (but without National Collegiate Athletic Association—NCAA—support), the idea has gone nowhere.

Senator Chambers also has been a long-time opponent of the death penalty, which he believes disproportionately affects black, Latino, and American Indian prison inmates. He introduced bills opposing it for 36 years (including one that was passed in 1979 but was vetoed by Republican governor Charles Thone). In 2015, Chambers was a major force behind passage of a ban on capital punishment that was vetoed by Republican governor Pete Ricketts. The Unicameral then voted to override the veto, with Chambers again in the lead, a most unusual action in what many people regard as a very conservative state. Voters reinstated the death penalty following a petition drive in 2016.

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# 29

## Nevada

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Lisa Bratton

### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **c. 10000 BCE**

The earliest indigenous nomadic people inhabit the region during the Paleolithic era

#### **c. 7000 BCE**

The onset of the Neolithic era when indigenous people built permanent shelters and develop agriculture

#### **1776**

First contact occurs between the Paiutes and two Franciscan priests

#### **1826**

Fur trader Jedediah Smith, the first white man to travel across the Sierra Nevada Mountains, makes initial contact with the Paiutes

#### **1848–1855**

When gold is discovered in California, thousands of white prospectors and their families travel by wagon through indigenous land; permanent trading posts are built throughout Washoe territory

#### **1850–1861**

Nevada is part of the Territory of Utah; in the territory, enslavement is legal, engaging in intercourse with “a servant of the African race” is unlawful, and basic education is required for enslaved individuals between the ages of 6 and 20

#### **1859**

When Europeans learn that the Great Basin holds deposits of gold and silver, African Americans, Europeans, Hispanics, and Chinese relocate to the region in search of economic opportunities; “Indian agent” Frederick Dodge proposes removing the Washoe and Paiutes (two groups with historically unfriendly relations) to shared reservations

**1860**

War erupts between Paiutes and whites, who were seeking to mine silver on tribal land; this silver strike near Virginia City is later known as the Comstock Lode

**1861**

State legislation mandating public schools is enacted without mention of segregation—African Americans and Chinese constitute less than 1 percent of the population; miscegenation laws are enacted as are laws prohibiting Negroes, Chinese, and Indians from testifying against whites; voting rights are limited to property-owning white male adult citizens

**1862**

Slavery is outlawed in the U.S. territories, including Nevada

**1864–1868**

The Snake War erupts between whites and the Paiutes (“Snake” was the whites’ term for the Paiute and other indigenous nations)

**1864**

Nevada enters the Union as the 36th state on October 31

**1865**

Nevada ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery on February 16

**1867**

The Nevada legislature decrees that “Negroes, Mongolians, and Indians shall not be admitted into the Public Schools, but the Board of Trustees may establish a separate school”

**1867**

Nevada ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment granting citizenship to former slaves on January 22

**1869**

Nevada becomes the first state to ratify the Fifteenth Amendment granting voting rights to black men on March 1

**1871**

Nelson Stoutmeyer, and African American man, takes legal action to ensure his son David, aged seven, is admitted to a public school in Carson City (*Stoutmeyer v. Duffy*)

**1872**

The Nevada Supreme Court opens the state’s public schools to children of all races

**1881–1888**

The Paiutes are forcibly removed to three reservations in Nevada and Oregon

**1887**

The Dawes Act redistributes western land held commonly by indigenous groups to families and individuals, thereby weakening the strength of ethnic groups

**1903**

An “Anti-Chinese” riot occurs in Tonopah

## **550 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1924**

On October 17, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) holds a rally in Reno

### **1931–1935**

Construction begins on the Hoover Dam and African Americans flock to Nevada in search of employment; less than 1 percent of the construction workers (44 of over 20,000) are African American and none can live in Boulder City, a federal town built to house construction workers

### **1939**

Las Vegas passes an ordinance to confine African Americans to the west side of town

### **1946**

African American entertainers, including Nat “King” Cole, Lena Horne, and Sammy Davis Jr., are banned from lodging in the Las Vegas hotels in which they entertain

### **1954**

*Ebony* magazine publishes “Negroes Can’t Win in Las Vegas” in its March issue, and Las Vegas is coined “the Mississippi of the West”

### **1955**

The Moulin Rouge, the first integrated upscale casino, begins operation near the African American community in the west side; it closes after seven months

### **Late-1950s**

Indigenous people who are on the streets of Reno after sundown can face arrest

### **1959**

Interracial marriage is decriminalized in Nevada

### **1960**

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) president Dr. James McMillan and other African American leaders meet with city officials and threaten a citywide boycott if Las Vegas is not desegregated within 30 days; on March 25, the day before the scheduled march, an agreement is reached to allow African Americans to lodge, dine, and be entertained in downtown hotels

### **1971**

A U.S. District Court consent decree mandates that African Americans work in the “front of the house” of casinos; some move into management

### **1992**

Columbus Day is no longer celebrated as a Nevada state holiday

### **2014**

Conservative Nevada rancher Cliven Bundy gathers national attention for racist statements made in a *New York Times* article as he refuses to recognize federal authority over land his cattle use for grazing

**2017**

Residents living on the Paiute reservation must travel up to 100 miles each way to register and to vote, while white residents of Washoe and Mineral counties have easy access to both

**2017**

August 9 officially becomes “Indigenous Peoples Day”

**NARRATIVE**

The indigenous people of the region, now known as Nevada, were the Northern and Southern Paiutes (who inhabited the western and southeastern tips of the state), the Shoshone (who inhabited the central region), and the Washoe and the Hualapai (who inhabited small regions near the Northern and Southern Paiute, respectively).

The Great Basin is bordered between the Sierra Nevada Mountains on the west and the Rocky Mountains on the east. To the north and south of the Great Basin lie the Columbia and the Colorado Plateaus. The entire state of Nevada is within the Great Basin.

The first inhabitants of the Great Basin, primarily the Paiutes (Numu, the name the people use for themselves) and the Shoshone (or Newe as they call themselves), are said to have come south from Asia across the land bridge that crossed the Bering Strait between 20,000 and 45,000 years ago. It is estimated that humans inhabited the Great Basin for over 12,000 years. They arrived in the region in a number of mass migrations and lived as nomadic hunters and gatherers. They migrated according to the season and the movement of their animal food sources.

The Paiute tradition of living in smaller communities was not an indication of lesser development, but of necessity. Although some communities such as the Southern Paiutes used irrigation, the relative scarcity of water mandated that fewer people live together.

The Shoshone depended primarily on the existence of wildlife including buffalo and deer to provide their food. They held a great respect for the resources of the earth. This aspect of their culture differed greatly from the settler who encroached upon their land as the settlers cut down trees and built permanent settlements throughout land that was home to their food sources.

These indigenous people migrated to the region approximately 12,000 years ago. Ethnographic studies indicate that the indigenous people of the Great Basin (parts of Nevada, California, Oregon, Utah, Idaho, and Wyoming) lived in semipermanent communities located near the pine nut forests during the winter. Fifteen or twenty families lived communally and hunted rabbits and antelope. In the warmer months, each family lived independently and lived primarily on seeds and root.

**Racism and the Indigenous People**

The first contact between the indigenous people and outsiders occurred on August 23, 1776, when two Franciscan priests, Francisco Atanasio Dominguez

(c. 1740–c. 1804) and Silvestre Velez de Escalante (c. 1750–1780), and eight other men embarked upon what is now known as the Dominguez–Escalante Expedition.

Historians report that their goals were to establish a land route to Monterey, California, avoid deserts and indigenous people fighting to protect their land, and spread Christianity to those who would accept it; however, Escalante’s journal indicates that their goal was to “conquer their land after seeing it” (Escalante 1776, 149). The priests traveled through the territory that would later become Nevada. Two members of the indigenous nations served as guides; others helped the Spanish survive the harsh winter. The initial contact was mutually beneficial as the indigenous people received flour, cloth, and other products that were new to them. The Spaniards received guidance through the terrain and assistance in survival. The relationship seemed so mutually rewarding that upon their departure, the Spanish were asked to return. They agreed, but they never did. This was the first of many broken promises whites would make to indigenous people.

In the 1830s, fur traders from the eastern United States began to populate the region. These travelers from the east posed a tremendous threat to the Paiutes as their cattle, horses, and wagons tramped through and destroyed their food supplies. Skirmishes broke out. Moreover, the arrival of the Mormons virtually destroyed the independence and traditional way of life of indigenous people throughout the region. Fur traders and other bands of white men who traveled through the region were seeking a route to California. Most were not interested in a permanent presence in the “barren” territory; however, the Mormons were. Their encroaching settlements further destroyed the traditional hunting grounds and agricultural establishments of the indigenous people and led the way to their eventual economic and cultural ruin. After just 25 years of contact with Mormons, 90 percent of the Paiute population had been exterminated. The Paiutes went from being peace-loving, independent foragers, hunters and farmers to landless, destitute menial laborers. When whites learned that gold and silver deposits existed in the Comstock Lode in Virginia City, thousands of fortune seekers descended upon the region—further decimating the traditional lifestyles of the indigenous people.

Today, maintaining the culture of the Paiute, Washoe, and other indigenous nations remain challenging. Most live in remote housing without Internet access or transportation. Voting, perhaps the most viable way of improving their life chances, remains elusive as some voters must drive up to 100 miles roundtrip to the closest polling location. White residents in the neighboring Washoe and Mineral Counties enjoy early voting and a sufficient number of polling sites. Residents living on the reservation can vote by mail by enclosing a copy of a valid government-issued ID; however, tribal identification cards do not qualify as “valid.” Also, access to copy machines is rare. Approximately 25 percent of the Pyramid Lake Paiutes live in poverty.

### **Racism and African Americans**

One of the first African Americans to settle in the Utah Territory (so named before Nevada was granted statehood on October 31, 1864) was Ben Palmer, his

sister Charlotte, and her husband D. H. Barber, who was white. Palmer, one of the most successful ranchers in the Carson Valley region, settled there in the early 1850s and employed African American, indigenous, and white ranch hands.

Residents of nearby Virginia City were among the first Nevada residents to organize and fight for their social and civil rights. Led by Dr. W. H. C. Stephenson (1825–c. 1873), the only practicing physician in the far west, citizens formed the National Executive Committee. Stephenson served as chairman and then president. The organization petitioned the Nevada state legislature for the right to vote, to testify against whites and to send their children to integrated schools.

In 1871, Nelson Stoutmeyer, a Carson City laborer, sued the Carson City schools for failing to admit his son David, aged seven. He and his lawyer argued, among other issues, that the Nevada was violating the Fourteenth Amendment's immunities, equal protection, and due process clauses (Green 2004, 60). This argument was also used in the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, but predates *Brown* by over 80 years.

African Americans moved to Nevada in slightly more significant numbers around 1905. Many settled in Las Vegas (founded on May 15, 1905) and worked as railroad porters or in railroad repair. Las Vegas, then little more than a depot for servicing trains headed to and from California, had a population of 945 in 1910 and approximately 4 percent of those residents were African American (African Americans in Las Vegas 2014). In the 1940s, African Americans moved to Las Vegas in greater numbers in search of employment in the defense industries. On June 25, 1941, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802, which stated that “there shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or government because of race, creed, color or national origin” (Executive Order 8802: Prohibition of Discrimination in the Defense Industry 1941).

The Basic Magnesium Corporation (BMI) processed magnesium used to manufacture bombs and other munitions. The company built a plant in Henderson, Nevada, and began operations in October 1942. Two housing projects were constructed: Carver Park for African American workers and their families and Victory Village for whites.

In Las Vegas, there was no official law that enforced segregation, but African Americans were “strongly encouraged” to reside in the west side near the area that included saloons and the “red light district.” Nonetheless, as in most cities and towns where segregation was the norm, African American citizens created their own entrepreneurial ventures and organizations.

By 1931, the state of Nevada offered employment opportunities in public federal building projects, such as the Hoover Dam, and in private sector projects, including railroad construction, casino construction, and casino services. However, a mere 44 of 20,000 people helping to construct the Hoover Dam were African American. No African Americans were allowed to live in nearby Boulder City, Nevada—a town built expressly for construction workers and their families. Due to the blatant exhibition of racism and the impending construction of the Hoover Dam, the Las Vegas chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was chartered in 1928.

African Americans moved to Las Vegas in greater numbers, and by 1931, their population had doubled. African Americans lived in downtown Las Vegas, but a 1939 ordinance forced them to the segregated West Las Vegas to allow room for the construction of casinos.

Las Vegas city officials never addressed the west side housing issues, due partly to the belief that African Americans would leave the city once war-related employment at BMI was no longer available. Instead, African American workers remained in Las Vegas and developed their own homes and businesses.

As in other parts of the United States, segregation was the norm in Las Vegas. The city was unique in that it was visited by a large number of African American entertainers; however, it lacked high-quality rooming houses or African Americans with larger homes that could accommodate celebrities. In 1954, there was only one motel owned by an African American in Las Vegas. Alma Shaw opened the Shaw Motor Court in 1942 and was in business for at least 12 years. The 13 units were bungalow-styled, contiguous, and furnished. Songstress and actress Pearl Bailey and her husband were among their visitors.

### *Las Vegas*

Policies on whether entertainers were allowed to stay in the hotels in which they played varied. For example, Nat “King” Cole, Sammy Davis Jr., and Pearl Bailey were not permitted to stay in rooms in the very hotels in which they were performing. After their shows, they were escorted through a back door to segregated lodging in the African American community. Alternatively, “most Negro performers who play Vegas are booked into the nightclub rooms of plush hotel-casinos on the Strip . . . but [are] not encouraged to socialize in the club or casino” (Goodrich 1954, 46).

A March 1954 edition of *Ebony* magazine featured an article entitled “Negroes Can’t Win in Las Vegas.” Later characterizations referred to Las Vegas as “the Mississippi of the West.” This characterization was likely meant to force lawmakers to acknowledge, and then change, the state’s racially restrictive policies.

The Moulin Rouge, the first integrated hotel and casino in Las Vegas, opened on May 24, 1955. It was located between the “whites-only” downtown hotels and the primarily African American west side. The customers were well-known entertainers, both black and white, including the casino’s co-owner and host, heavyweight boxing champion Joe Louis. The Moulin Rouge offered three, mostly sold-out, shows per night, while venues on the Strip only offered two nightly shows. Its dancers, who were lighter skinned African Americans, were featured on the cover of the popular *Life* magazine on June 20, 1955.

Why then did the casino close less than a year after opening? One likely reason has its basis in racism. Hotel owners on the Las Vegas Strip (located on the opposite side of town) were losing customers to the Moulin Rouge, especially after their artists’ shows were over. Instead of remaining on the Strip to spend money gambling and drinking, customers flocked to the late night shows at the Moulin Rouge—thus angering the Strip casino owners who may have been instrumental in forcing the closing of the Moulin Rouge.

Las Vegas observed strict segregation policies. “Anywhere along the Strip, a Negro is considered off limits unless he has a job there or entertains at one of the



clubs. Whenever a Negro is spotted in a downtown gaming hall, it is safe to wager that he is behind a broom, mop, or dish cloth” (Goodrich 1954, 46). African American leaders planned an anti-segregation protest march on the Las Vegas Strip on March 26, 1960. African American leaders met with elected officials prior to the march and reached a verbal agreement to integrate the city. Although absent, it was understood that casino owners supported integration; however, it was not until 1971 that African Americans began working in the front-of-the-house positions in the more expensive casinos.

In step with the rest of the nation’s black communities, African Americans also protested the segregation in the Las Vegas public schools. In *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), the U.S. Supreme Court mandated that the nation’s public schools be desegregated “with all deliberate speed.” School districts around the country responded in a variety of ways; Clark County, county seat of Las Vegas, implemented Sixth Grade Centers.

Clark County chose to close two elementary schools located on the African American side of town (west side), build a new school on the white side of town (North Side), and bus African American students there. A “prestige” school was built on the African American side of town to “encourage” white attendance. These measures failed to achieve integration.

In 1970, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals mandated that Clark County develop a desegregation plan. The result of this order was the creation of Sixth Grade Centers in the 1972–1973 school year. Under this plan, African American students would be bused to schools in white neighborhoods from grades 1 to 5 and 7 to 12. In the sixth grade, white students would be bused to the African American side of town to attend a Sixth Grade Center. There was no high school on the west side. African American students in grades 7 to 12 would again have to be bused to the north side.

This plan forced African American children to be bused for 11 of their 12 years in school and was opposed by the NAACP. Many white families opposed busing their children for even one year—even though improvements were made in the schools to attract them. The busing plan and the Sixth Grade Centers remained in effect for 20 years. It ended when a group of African American parents staged a boycott in support of their neighborhood schools. Today, the schools on the west side of Las Vegas are segregated by race, income, and more recently, language.

### *Hawthorne*

Hawthorne, the former county seat of Esmeralda County, is located in western Nevada and is approximately 134 miles southeast of Reno. It was founded in 1881 as a railway depot for trains traveling from Carson City to southern California. The town’s population expanded tremendously between 1906 and 1909 with the arrival of silver prospectors looking to capitalize on the Lucky Boy Mine. From approximately 1920 to 1940, Hawthorne was virtually an all-white town, bordered by the nearby, noncontiguous Walker River Indian Reservation.

According to the U.S. Census records of 1890, there was one African American living in Hawthorne. Six decades later, the 1950 census indicated that the numbers had swelled to 282. In the 1940s, African Americans were drawn to

employment opportunities at Hawthorne's Naval Ammunition Depot. While navy personnel were banned from Hawthorne in 1942, civilian workers were not and were able to secure employment and living accommodation in Hawthorne.

Hawthorne's African American residents faced discrimination and segregation in housing, public facilities, and entertainment venues, much the same as was practiced throughout the country. In 1960, members of the local NAACP branch met with city officials and business leaders to work out a plan on how best to deal with the discrimination. Business owners contended that their businesses would be negatively affected if they served African American customers; therefore, they argued that all businesses should agree to make the change simultaneously.

Two of the largest businesses in Hawthorne were Home Café and El Capitan Lodge and Casino; neighboring establishments that banned African American customers for decades. Once they entered the facility, African Americans were handed a printed statement that read: "Your Invitation to be in our El Capitan Club and Lodge, is revoked. We request that you leave the premises at once. The Management" (Rusco 2000, 54). The Home Café elected to ban African American customers using a separate menu with outrageously high prices. Coffee was priced at \$12.50 per cup, and there was a mandatory service charge of 50 percent (Rusco 2000, 53–54).

The management of El Capitan was not swayed by government pressure or threats. Nevada governor Grant Sawyer (1919–1996) sent a letter to El Capitan's owners reminding them of their non-compliance with the 1961 state law (Chapter 364, Section 2 Subsection 1), which granted the right to all people of the state "to seek and be granted services in places of public accommodations without discrimination, distinction or restriction because of race, religious creed, culture, national origin, or ancestry" (Full text of United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit). He also reminded El Capitan of their requirement to comply per their state licensure and asked them to respond indicating that the establishment "does not and will not tolerate racial discrimination in any sense" (Rusco 2000, 60). El Capitan's attorney responded by stating, "There is no federal legislation nor state legislation that requires legitimate private enterprises to conduct their businesses pursuant to directives of government officials, no matter how lofty their offices may be" (Rusco 2000, 60).

African American residents of Hawthorne made their opposition to discrimination known. Through the NAACP, African American patrons picketed and sat in at both establishments during the 1950s and 1960s. Partial victory was achieved when the U.S. Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which "outlawed discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, required equal access to public places and employment, and enforced desegregation of schools and the right to vote" (<https://www.nps.gov/articles/civil-rights-act.htm>).

### *Reno*

The 1900 census revealed that there were 134 "Negroes" living in the entire state of Nevada. Even though the numbers were low, outright discriminatory laws were targeted at them. In 1904, police chief Charles Leeper "decided to drive

every vagrant Negro from the city and those who do not obey the commands [*sic*] of his officers are immediately arrested and placed in the cells. This may be a little different from the regular proceedings of the law, but it is working good [*sic*] in Reno and the town will soon be cleared of the Black element” (Ringhoff 2011, 131). It is likely that the fear of integrated schools intimidated Ku Klux Klan members and sympathizers. On October 17, 1924, the Ku Klux Klan marched in full regalia down the streets of Reno. The march included both marching and mounted Klansmen, a burning cross, fireworks, and a float that read “One School.”

As was the case in most of the Nevada towns, the African American population grew exponentially during the 1940s, as war-related industries began to develop. Reno saw the construction of Stead Air Force Base just outside Reno and Sierra Army Depot in Herlong, California (approximately 56 miles away).

All of the issues regarding race in the civil rights era in Nevada have not been negative. In 1946, the University of Nevada at Reno was scheduled to play at Mississippi State in Starkville. Two weeks before the game, the Mississippi State athletic director C. R. Noble sent a letter to the Nevada team indicating their refusal to allow Nevada’s two African American players, Bill Bass and Horace Gillom, to play. The letter indicated that “it is not custom in the South for members of the Negro race to compete in athletics with or against members of the white race. . . . I am sure you understand this traditional custom which Mississippi State College cannot under any circumstances violate” (Murray 2015). The Nevada coaches responded by cancelling the game, stating that if they could not take their entire team, they would not attend.

Nevada held firm in its policy. In 1948, Nevada was scheduled to play the University of Tulsa. The Oklahoma governor and the university president wanted to cancel the game. Nevada refused to omit the players and the game proceeded. History was made as this was the first time African American men played a college game in the state of Oklahoma.

The challenges faced by African Americans in contemporary Nevada, including unemployment/underemployment, mirror those found in the rest of the nation. For example, in 2014, Nevada’s overall unemployment rate was 7.94 percent, but for African Americans, the rate was 17.7 percent. In December 2011, the African American unemployment reached a record high of 22.6 percent. Alternatively, unemployment for whites has remained around 7.6 percent. (Christiansen 2015).

One of the last visible reminders of the segregation era is the Harrison House, a west side boarding house built in 1942. Today, much of the housing in contemporary Las Vegas, built after the passage of the Fair Housing Act of 1968, does not carry the history of forced segregation. These modern communities are being built on desert land that has not been used residentially for decades or even centuries. In fact, Las Vegas has been cited as one of the least segregated cities in America (El Nasser 2014).

Integration in housing does not translate, however, to integration in economics. The first black-owned restaurant on the Strip, Tres Jazz, was opened in 1999 by Black Entertainment Television (BET) founder Robert Johnson (1946– ). The first black-owned casino on the Strip, Fitzgerald’s, was opened by Don Barden (1943–2011) in 2002. After his death, the property was sold to a non-African

American. Considering that there are 104 casinos in Las Vegas (40 of them are on the Strip), there are no African American entrepreneurs who are earning a portion of the \$6.376 billion of casino revenue earned in 2016 (Beauregard 2017). This should likely be the next fight for equality.

### **Racism and the Chinese**

Many history texts place Chinese immigration to the United States as commencing in the 1850s; however, missionaries brought Chinese students to the region as early as 1818. John Floyd (1769–1839) served in the U.S. Congress from 1820 to 1827. He advocated Chinese immigration as a way to help “civilize” the west. Floyd believed that they would welcome the opportunity to embrace a home in America where they would have “no prejudice, no fears, no restraint in opinion, labor or religion” (Chang 2012, 156). While Chinese did immigrate in large numbers in the 1850s during the California gold rush, their hopes of idyllic lives in America were not to be realized.

In 1854, in California, *People v. Hall* established the law that no Chinese person could testify against a white person in court. The territory of Nevada adopted a similar law in 1864–1865. This law was said to have been established because the Chinese were not Christians and as such could not take an oath using a Bible. However, this reasoning is more likely rooted in racism and resentment as subsequent laws would indicate.

For example, on May 6, 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act, banning Chinese immigration, was enacted by the U.S. Congress. This law placed a 10-year moratorium on all immigration of Chinese labor. It also forbade state and federal courts from granting citizenship to Chinese resident aliens. After the 10-year moratorium expired, the Chinese Exclusion Act was extended for 10 more years under the Geary Act, which included the additional requirement that Chinese residents obtain certificates of residence or face deportation.

The Chinese first came to Nevada around 1855 and founded the town of Dayton. They were attracted to the region by the lucrative mining industry, but also found work in a variety of industries including lodging, laundries, groceries, and restaurants. Their entrepreneurial endeavors thrived, and by the 1870s, there was a “Chinatown” in every major city in Nevada. Their success in business was a significant reason why whites advocated their removal from a number of Nevada towns.

One of the most discussed examples of racist practices occurred in the town of Tonopah, Nevada. Founded in 1900, Tonopah was the site of a silver vein in the San Antonio Mountains and was thought to be the “Second Comstock Lode.” By the end of 1902, the town was thriving with businesses, a “Chinatown,” and a 600-member miners’ union. Members of the union believed that the Chinese were becoming too competitive in the laundry and restaurant industries and that “‘John Chinaman’ was becoming too numerous” (Chung 2003, 47–50). On September 15, 1903, 60–70 whites descended on Chinatown demanding that the Chinese residents leave town immediately or be killed. The whites relaxed the initial demand of “leaving immediately” and gave the Chinese 24 hours to exit the town. They

left town, but not before the constables ransacked their homes and businesses under the pretense of searching for opium. Instead, they stole money and valuables from the Chinese residents. One man, Zhang Bingliang, was later discovered murdered. No prosecutions ensued. Appeals to law enforcement went unheeded, as these men were a part of the mob.

The city of Reno saw a similar expulsion of its Chinese citizens, but a different tactic was used. While citing “potential fire hazard” as the reason, the city mandated that over 60 Chinese-owned and operated homes and businesses be torn down. Over 100 people were left homeless. Other homes and businesses were razed, and there are no physical reminders of the communities they developed. The structures were considered “un-Christian” and therefore deserved demolition.

Today’s Chinese tourists are being lured to Las Vegas with as much fervor as Chinese citizens were once run out. The tourists are being lured to casinos—particularly for their love of the highly lucrative game of baccarat. Two casinos, the Lucky Dragon Hotel and Casino (opened in December 2016) and Resorts World (scheduled to open in 2019), are designed to attract Chinese gamblers. The Lucky Dragon features authentic Chinese food (as opposed to “Chinese American” fare), the lucky color red, and the lucky number 8. It does not use the number 4 or have four of any item, as it is considered unlucky in Chinese culture.

In 1995, Taiwanese businessman James Chen built Chinatown Plaza and a multitude of Asian-owned businesses sprang up throughout the neighborhood. Today the Chinatown in Las Vegas is thriving. There are dozens of restaurants and shops, and Chinatown features the only Chinese-language bookstore in the state. A race of people who were once given 24 hours to leave the state have again created a thriving community of their own—permanently.

## CONCLUSION

A tourist in modern-day Nevada will likely visit the multitude of casinos, theaters, and stores along the Las Vegas Strip, marvel at the vastness of the Hoover Dam, and drive through the beautiful landscapes of the state on the way to the Grand Canyon. While doing so, the racist history of the state may be easily missed, but racism served as the foundation for much of what the state is known for.

One might see indigenous people selling jewelry along the highways but not be aware that there are stringent federal restrictions on how indigenous people can use land on their reservations. According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2016 Population Estimates Program, the “American Indian and Alaska Natives” comprise a mere 1.6 percent of the Nevada’s population. Genocide, forced removals, and economic exploitation have contributed to the drastic decline in the indigenous population. Other challenges including alcoholism plague the reservations and create an environment that will continue to challenge the successful life chances of future generations.

African Americans casino dealers are now common, but management and ownership of casinos remain elusive. Old attitudes toward African American citizens seem to be long-lasting. If Nevada Assemblywoman Michelle Fiore (R) can,

in 2015 and on the debate floor, refer to her colleague in the legislature as “colored” and declare that “the color and the race issue should be put to rest,” then we know that there is still a long way to go in eradicating racism—in Nevada and in the world.

## NOTABLE FIGURES

### **Kellar, Charles Lionel (1909–2002)**

Charles Lionel Kellar was born on June 11, 1909, in St. Joseph, Barbados. His mother, Irene W. Smith, was sexually abused by the plantation owner for whom she had worked since she was 12. Her son Charles was born days after her 16th birthday. Kellar never had a relationship with his father, whom he saw occasionally as he rode past their house without stopping. He was known to be the richest black man in Barbados, but he never acknowledged his son. His mother bore a second child a year later and was sent by her mother to Bridgetown, where she met James Kellar, whom she later married. The family moved to Brooklyn, New York, in 1921 when Charles was 11. Within a few years, the family purchased a home. Kellar became a naturalized citizen in 1934.

Kellar won a scholarship to Cornell University but did not enroll due to a fire that destroyed all of his clothes. Instead, he attended the City College of New York. He later worked as a probation officer and witnessed the many injustices faced by African Americans. He decided to become a lawyer and earned his law degree from St. John’s University in New York.

He worked in private practice in the area of civil rights. He was successful in suing the police over excessive use of force in a time when it was believed that the police was considered part of the state and, therefore, above prosecution. Police abuse of power was rampant. They arrested African Americans for minor offenses, including “loitering” or gathering in groups of more than three.

Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP’s Bar Representation Program identified states where there were no African American lawyers and dispatched them there to establish residency. Because of his outstanding legal work in Brooklyn, and as president of the Brooklyn branch of the NAACP, Charles Kellar was tapped by Marshall and asked to move to Nevada. Kellar was the owner of over 50 properties abandoned by whites and was making close to \$1,000,000 per year with these investments. In 1960, he sold the properties and moved to Nevada with a \$285,000 cashier’s check.

When he tried to deposit the check in a Las Vegas bank, the police were called. “They assumed a black man with that much money had to be an escaping felon. Kellar said he did not lose his temper, but laughed so hard the police were too embarrassed to book him” (Hopkinslas 1999).

In 1960, an attorney was required to establish residency of one year to sit for the bar of Nevada. White attorneys usually did legal work for an established law firm, but Kellar was not afforded this option. He spent the year studying for his real estate license at Nevada Southern University (now the University of Nevada at Las Vegas) and resumed investing in real estate.

When he went to Reno to take the bar exam, he was denied lodging at the hotel where he had made a reservation. Without time to secure another reservation (and likely be denied again), he slept in the airport.

When the bar exam results were posted, his score was missing. His score was the highest of all applicants, so it was assumed that he cheated and he was denied entrance to the bar. He took his case to the airwaves and accused the state of Nevada of excluding blacks from the bar.

One of Kellar's first actions in Nevada was to file a lawsuit that ultimately desegregated Clark County schools. He then began to target practices and institutions that denied full citizenship to Nevada's African Americans. The schools had no stated policy of segregation, but it did have a clear school zoning system that, combined with segregated housing practices, had the effect of segregating the schools.

Kellar won a partial victory in that the school district decided to convert the West Las Vegas schools to integrated centers serving only the sixth grade. White students would be bused to the Sixth Grade Centers, and African American students would walk. For the other 11 grades, African American students would be bused out of the neighborhood.

Contrary to the practice in the case of white attorneys, the Nevada Supreme Court did not award Kellar any fees. The reasoning behind this decision was that Kellar was wealthy and the defendants had been amenable.

Kellar continued to file lawsuits over discrimination in employment, housing, and access to public accommodations. He also fought to overturn death penalties. He never lost a case before the Nevada Supreme Court.

Kellar served as branch president of the NAACP in Brooklyn and Las Vegas, and served for many years as the legal counsel for the Las Vegas group. He also helped bring about the March 26, 1960, agreement that allowed African Americans to be guests in Strip resorts.

In April 1967, he announced that the NAACP executive board would consider a protest march on the Las Vegas Strip hotels to protest discrimination. By May, he was threatening legal action. In June 1967, an unknown shooter fired through his residence. Even a \$5,000 reward brought no leads. In July, his office was fire-bombed; no arrest ensued.

These attempts to force him to leave the state were not successful. He publicly encouraged African Americans to apply for the almost 2,000 jobs that would be available at two new Las Vegas hotels and resorts. His actions resulted in a signed consent decree opening employment to African Americans.

Charles Kellar was married three times: first to Doris Hutchins with whom he had one son, Charles Jr.; second to Cornelia Street Kellar with whom he had one son, Michael Charles Kellar; and third to Bettye Clark Black, in July 1976, whom he preceded in death.

Kellar never forgot the life he lived as a child in Brooklyn where the tenement house had bathrooms shared by multiple families. He lived in a custom-built, five-bedroom, seven-bath home in Las Vegas and enjoyed an active social life.

Charles Kellar died in Los Angeles, California, on June 25, 2002, at the age of 93.

### **Preddy, Sarann Knight (1920–2014)**

Sarann Knight Preddy was born on July 27, 1920, in Eufaula, Oklahoma, to Carl and Hattie Childs. Her father owned a meat market, a restaurant, and did construction work. Her mother was a homemaker who also cared for Sarann, her

younger brother Clarence, and other children in her home. She also helped her husband run his businesses.

African Americans started relocating to Las Vegas as early as 1905, but they moved west in larger numbers in the 1940s in search of economic opportunities related to World War II industries. In 1942, Preddy, her husband, and father moved to the segregated west side in Las Vegas.

Like hundreds of other African Americans, her father and husband were employed at the BMI, which produced munitions during World War II. Her father, a carpenter by trade, built a house for the family (with full cash payments) when many low-income and newly arrived residents of Las Vegas lived in tents or shacks.

Preddy married her first husband, Luther Walker, soon after she graduated from high school. They had four children together: James, Richard, Janice, and Glen. Their marriage ended, and the cause is uncertain.

Preddy found few opportunities for success in Las Vegas. She moved to Los Angeles to attend secretarial school and later returned to Las Vegas where she secured employment in the Cotton Club as a Keno writer. This job involved managing customer wagers, operating the equipment, and announcing the winning Keno balls. In November 1950, she left Las Vegas when her second husband, William Scruggs, secured employment in Hawthorne, Nevada, where she was able to secure a gaming license in 1951. With \$600 in financial assistance from her father, Preddy purchased the Lincoln Bar in heavily segregated Hawthorne, renamed it the Tonga Club and operated it as a restaurant, bar, and casino for seven years.

She became the first African American woman to hold a gaming license in Nevada and was also one of the first women to work as a dealer in a Las Vegas casino. Earning her license was a formidable challenge for anyone—particularly an African American woman who likely had more detractors than supporters—and she was not successful on her first attempt. The process itself involved a long and detailed application, the aid of an attorney who specialized in gaming, and the tenacity to persist in an open court setting where details of one's life (arrests, residences, etc.) were discussed. The process was also expensive and required investment increases as more tables and slot machines are employed.

In the early 1990s, Preddy and her family purchased the once famed Moulin Rouge. In a 1997 interview with historian Dr. Claytee White, Sarann Preddy remarked, “The gaming is the main industry here and they want to keep a lot of small people out. And I do think that race had something to do with it. Because they told me that ‘it was a different thing when you were down at People’s Choice, now you’re moving up in the world so it’s a different criteria now, as you’re moving up in the world.’ So it wasn’t the same as it was and that remark was made at one of the Commission meetings. That there’s a difference when you’re down over here in the ghetto” (Preddy 1997, 40–41).

The Moulin Rouge, also called the nation's first fully integrated hotel and casino, is the only entertainment site recognized on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places for its significance to the civil rights movement. Ironically, however, one major barrier to securing the financing to purchase the Moulin Rouge was the negative perception of African American in West Las Vegas. Often, investors would verbally consent to be involved and would later renege on the agreement after



talking with others. Sarann Preddy stated: “Maybe it would be some officials, could be some of the leaders, could be some of the people in gaming. But they frowned on having anybody to get involved in West Las Vegas. They would claim, ‘It’s a blighted area. They have too much drugs. There’s too much this, there’s too much that.’ Which I hear people say that and it burns me up because that’s not the case. They have drugs everywhere. But the drugs are so minute over there, until you could almost say it’s none. They have more drugs probably in one hotel on the Strip than they’ve got in West Las Vegas, period, in one day” (Preddy 1997, 42).

The NAACP wanted to open the very lucrative job of card dealing to African Americans, but the management of Jerry’s Nugget Casino complained that they could not find qualified applicants. The NAACP wanted Sarann Preddy to apply because they knew she could qualify. This, the NAACP stated, would open employment opportunities for other African Americans. Her plan was to stay for six months; she remained for seven years. She lost her position when the city passed an ordinance barring women from holding card-dealing positions.

While in Hawthorne, Preddy served as the president of the NAACP. She did very well financially and purchased a home next door to a white bank president. Though warned by her friends that where she lived might be dangerous, she did not experience any racial incidents.

In 1957, she returned to Las Vegas and continued her entrepreneurial pursuits. She opened a dry cleaner, a dress shop, and a lounge. She also ran clubs known as the Playhouse and the People’s Choice.

In 1985, she and her third husband, Joe L. Preddy, purchased the once-famous Moulin Rouge with the hope of restoring it to its former glory. They were not able to secure adequate financing for the restoration and closed the establishment in 1997.

Although the Moulin Rouge did not become a success, Preddy continued her community activism. She was active in the NAACP, in politics, and in historic preservation. She ran for the Las Vegas City Council, was active in her business sorority Gamma Phi Delta, was a founding member of the Barbara Jordan Democratic Club, and continued to be active in the Las Vegas branch of the NAACP as one of the founders of the Women’s Auxiliary and a member of the Executive Board.

Sarann Preddy died on December 22, 2014, at the age of 94.

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# 30

## New Hampshire

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Laurence French

### **CHRONOLOGY**

**1623**

The first towns are settled in what is now Dover, New Hampshire—then part of the Massachusetts Plantation/Commonwealth

**1629**

John Mason receives a grant of that portion of the Province of Maine lying between the Merrimac and Piscataqua Rivers under the name of New Hampshire

**1642**

Massachusetts colony gains control of New Hampshire

**1645**

The first recorded black slave arrives in Portsmouth

**1675**

King Philip's War (named for a Wampanoag Indian chief) begins between the New England colonists and the Wampanoag and other tribes and leads to the extermination of the Indians in New England, including in New Hampshire

**1677**

The Dover massacre results in the enslavement of hundreds of friendly Indians by New Hampshire militia under pretense of a peaceful gathering

**1679**

New Hampshire obtains a royal charter

**1680**

New Hampshire's legislature is created by royal decree of King Charles II

## **566 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

**1739**

New Hampshire's first executions are the public hangings of two white women condemned for the death of their infant bastard child

**1740**

King George II settles a border dispute between New Hampshire and Massachusetts, giving New Hampshire 3,500 square miles along its southern borders with Maine and Massachusetts

**1755–1756**

French colonists are expelled from Acadia with the assistance of the Blue Coats from New Hampshire

**1759**

Rogers' Rangers raid displaced Abenaki Indians in St. Francis, Quebec

**1763**

The Treaty of Paris ends the French and Indian War (known as the Seven Years War in Europe); the treaty cedes New France (Quebec) to Great Britain

**1767**

John Wentworth becomes colonial governor of New Hampshire, serving until his expulsion to Canada in 1775 at the start of the American Revolution

**1769**

Colonial governor John Wentworth signs the Dartmouth College charter, which calls for the college to educate both whites and Indians; later the college becomes part of the Ivy League, catering mainly to the white privileged elite

**1775**

New Hampshire declares martial law under the authority of its Committee of Safety, disarming and detaining suspected Loyalists (Tories)

**1776**

New Hampshire joins the other 12 colonies in declaring independence from Great Britain, initiating the Revolutionary War; John Stark and John Sullivan, with military experience in the French and Indian War, become leaders of the New Hampshire militia

**1779**

The New Hampshire legislature ignores a petition for emancipation from 19 enslaved blacks, including Prince Whipple, the slave of a Continental Army officer

**1788**

New Hampshire enters the Union as the ninth state on June 21

**1789**

Slaves are removed from the New Hampshire tax rolls as taxable property

**1790**

The first U.S. Census counts 158 black slaves in New Hampshire

**1793**

Canada enacts an antislavery law, which leads to the gradual decline of slavery in Canada, although the institution remains technically legal until slavery is abolished throughout the British Empire in 1834

**1795**

New Hampshire abolishes black and Indian slavery, becoming a free state

**1796**

New Hampshire executes Thomas Powers for rape; he is the only African American executed to date in the state

**1796**

Public sentiment in Portsmouth prevents the return of a fugitive slave to President George Washington

**1800**

The U.S. Census counts only eight slaves resident in New Hampshire

**1820**

As part of the Missouri Compromise, neighboring Maine is separated from Massachusetts and enters the Union as a free state on March 15

**1822**

Black poet James N. Whitfield is born in Exeter

**1835**

Noyes Academy opens in Canaan with 28 white students and 14 black students, but the white residents of Canaan object to the integrated school and employ almost 100 yoke of oxen to forcibly remove Noyes Academy from its foundation

**1839**

The Amoskeag Manufacturing Company is established, becoming the largest textile mill in the United States

**1842**

The Webster-Ashburton Treaty ends the “Aroostook War,” establishing the disputed border between Maine and Canada

**1850**

The Compromise of 1850 reduces tension over the issue of slavery expansion into the western territories; a main component of the compromise, the Fugitive Slave Act, is unpopular in New Hampshire and the North

**1852**

Franklin Pierce, a New Hampshire native, is elected the 14th president of the United States; pro-Southern in sympathies, he enforces Fugitive Slave Act, which costs him support in his home state

**1857**

The New Hampshire legislature enacts a law forbidding any person to be denied citizenship because of the person’s “descent”

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### **1860–1890**

French Canadian mill workers begin a migration to New England textile mills; this migration continues until the Great Depression of the 1930s, making French Canadians New Hampshire's largest non-Anglo/non-Protestant ethnic minority

### **1860**

New Hampshire becomes one of only five states that allow blacks to vote

### **1863**

President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which frees all slaves in Confederate-held territory, takes effect on January 1

### **1865**

On July 1, New Hampshire ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

### **1866**

On July 6, New Hampshire becomes the second state to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing full civil rights to African Americans

### **1867**

The British Parliament passes the British North America Act creating the Dominion of Canada

### **1869**

The Red River Rebellion by Indians and Metis in Manitoba, Canada, is led by Louis Riel

### **1869**

On July 1, New Hampshire ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing African American men the right to vote

### **1873**

The first black Baptist mission is established in Portsmouth

### **1877**

New Hampshire passes an amendment to the state constitution (Article 83) forbidding state support to private schools; the decree is aimed at Catholic parochial schools in the state

### **1878**

Joseph Lapage, a French Canadian, is hanged for the murder of a Yankee teenager, Josie Langmaid, despite the exonerating testimony of four other French Canadians

### **1885**

Louis Riel is executed in Canada for the Indian/Metis rebellions of 1869

### **1896**

Sir Wilfred Laurier becomes Canada's first French-Canadian prime minister, serving until 1911

**1924**

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) burns a cross in a Portsmouth neighborhood

**1926**

Elizabeth Virgil becomes the first African American woman to graduate from the University of New Hampshire

**1930**

The United States closes its border with Quebec, stemming French Canadian migration into New Hampshire and other New England states

**1943**

The People's Baptist Church in Portsmouth celebrates its 50th anniversary

**1963**

On June 12, New Hampshire ratifies the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing the poll tax

**1964**

Wentworth-by-the-Sea Hotel and Restaurant in Newcastle is desegregated

**1979**

A bill for a Martin Luther King Jr. holiday is rejected by the New Hampshire legislature

**1995**

The Portsmouth Black Heritage Trail is incorporated to identify and mark sites important to the state's African American history

**1999**

The New Hampshire legislature passes a bill for Martin Luther King Jr. holiday in the state; the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday is observed in New Hampshire in 2000

**2000**

The U.S. Census puts New Hampshire's black population at 1.2 percent of a total population of over 1.3 million people

**2008**

Michael Addison, an African American, is sentenced to death for killing a white police officer; he becomes New Hampshire's only death row inmate

**2015**

According to the Pew Research Center, undocumented immigrants account for about 1.2 percent of New Hampshire's population, or about 15,000 people

**2015–2017**

New Hampshire has second highest per capita rate of drug-related deaths in the country; it trails only West Virginia

**2017**

Students at the University of New Hampshire complain of racist incidents on campus and demand that the administration double the number of students and faculty

of color, offer diversity training for all staff, and amend the student conduct code to expel students who post “racially insensitive” content; black students complain of being spat upon and being called racial epithets

**2017**

A federal judge in Boston temporarily halts deportation proceedings against nine members of the Maranatha Indonesian United Church of Christ in Madbury, who were in danger of being sent back to Indonesia after living for decades in New Hampshire

**2017**

The Roman Catholic bishop of Manchester tells New Hampshire churches that they should not shelter people who enter the country illegally

## **NARRATIVE**

### **The Colonial Era**

New Hampshire, along with Maine, was the northern wilderness of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, a Puritan outpost in the New World. Britain and France were also at war during this time, pitting French North America against British North America and forcing the indigenous peoples to take sides. This complicated era helped define New Hampshire as a state. Prior to the American Revolution in the late 1700s, France and Britain emerged as the major contenders for the portion of North America that is now Canada and the United States. The history of French/Catholic versus British/Protestant forces is a long and convoluted one. It extends back to the reign of Henry VIII, his break with the Catholic Pope, and his ascension as the head of Church in England, Ireland, and parts of France. Added to this mix was the British Civil War led by Puritan leader Oliver Cromwell and his Roundheads at about the time of the Pilgrims landing in Massachusetts. The Roundheads had a short-lived revolution against the British royalty that had an impact on the northern colonies of New England and the later divisions of loyalty between colonists. New Hampshire Territory also became a battlefield for the French and Indian Wars (1756–1763).

British settlements, often called plantations, consisted of 13 colonies along the Atlantic seashore, with Georgia being the last settled in 1732. While initially predominately Anglo-Saxon, other white European emigrants began to emerge in the late 1600s, including the Scotch Irish, German, Huguenots, and Swiss, challenging any attempt for a theocracy outside the New England section of British North America (the 13 colonies were eventually divided into three groupings—New England, Middle Colonies, and Southern Colonies). Kai Erikson noted that the religiously conservative, hence intolerant, Massachusetts Bay Colony was initiated during the British Civil War between the Crown and Oliver Cromwell’s Commonwealth, thus the term the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The genesis of John Winthrop’s plan for a colonial settlement in New England began with a group of prominent Puritans who controlled a trading company and were successful in acquiring commercial rights to a large land grant in the New



World. Winthrop and company were also able to transfer their corporate headquarters to their new home in New England, an unusual move at this time. Essentially, this became the first off-shore business corporation, which is commonplace today. Moreover, this corporate charter would also serve as the basis for a civil government. The Crown's charter defined their legal land holdings and their civil government, while corporate officers served as magistrates, and stockholder's meetings served as legislative sessions (General Court). Within this Calvinistic capitalistic system, the corporate chairman, John Winthrop, became the *de facto* governor. Some 20,000 Puritans soon joined Winthrop's New England Corporation, including many from the educated gentry, providing the foundation for the new White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASP) aristocracy. Winthrop's initial Massachusetts Bay charter was good for 60 years. Provincial governors were later appointed directly by the English Crown with the authority to authorize land grants to settlers. Provinces later became states, following the American Revolution.

In New England, three religious groups represented the British Protestants in the New World. There were those who subscribed to the Church of England (Anglicans); the Puritan Presbyterians (mainly Scots and Scotch Irish), who wanted to establish a national American church; and the more radical Congregationalists, who represented the most dogmatic Puritans (included among the Puritans were the French Calvinists known as Huguenots). The Congregationalists were the most selective, wanting to separate totally from the established Church of England. They were adamantly opposed to the Catholic Church and were the most restrictive in their membership, limiting it to "visible saints," those who were obviously among God's selective few—the "Chosen People." They considered themselves to be the elite of the WASP. Catholics were seen as being grossly inferior to WASP, while indigenous peoples were seen as pests to be eliminated.

New Hampshire became a separate colony in 1629, when the British Crown awarded a land grant to John Mason (former governor of the Province of Newfoundland) and Ferdinando Gorges. The colony was named after the English county of Hampshire. New Hampshire was still politically linked to Massachusetts until 1679, when King Charles II separated the two colonies naming New Hampshire a royal province with John Cutt as governor. Even then, from 1699 to 1741, Massachusetts's governor also served as governor of New Hampshire. In this sense, New Hampshire was the northern frontier for Massachusetts and played a significant role in the French and Indian Wars, including effectively removing all American Indians from the colony. So effective were the Puritans and their surrogates, the Scotch Irish, that New Hampshire has no official residual of Native Americans. It is not a part of the vast federally recognized Indian Country consisting of 556 separate tribal entities. Instead, the indigenous tribes were hunted to extinction or forced across the border into Canada.

Black slavery was evident in colonial New Hampshire, but pertained mainly to coastal shipping enterprises. While fewer than 200 black slaves were reported during the first U.S. Census in 1790 (158), the number of black slaves transported elsewhere by Portsmouth merchants is lost to history. But atrocities toward American Indians are part of New Hampshire lore, notably the Dover, New Hampshire, massacre of peace-seeking Indians during the King Philip's War—King Philip being the

moniker of Metacom, a Wampanoag chief. In 1677, the local New Hampshire militia leader Major Waldron, a wealthy shipbuilder in Dover, devised a way to trick and capture unsuspecting Indians by inviting tribes to a day of sporting events. Some 400 Indians accepted the invitation, only to have the Puritan settlers gun them down (survivors sent to England as slaves). New Hampshire's colonial heroes gained their distinction during the French and Indian Wars, with Robert Rogers starting his "commando militia" in Portsmouth in 1755. Rogers adopted the Native American "hit and run" tactic, creating a new type of warfare for colonists. His rangers are most famous for their attack on the Abenaki Indians residing in St. Francis, Quebec, in October 1759. The French mission at St. Francis consisted of the remnants of New Hampshire's Algonquin Indians, those who were not slaughtered outright by the Puritan settlers. The success of Rogers's raids provided the foundation for both the contemporary Canadian Army Rangers and the U.S. Army Rangers.

New England militias distinguished themselves from their British counterparts by wearing "blue coats" instead of "red coats." New Hampshire's "blue coats" played a significant role in the Acadian expulsion, the prototype for contemporary "ethnic cleaning." Here, the provincial governors of Massachusetts (William Shirley) and New Brunswick (Charles Lawrence) conspired to forcefully remove the French settlers from what is now Nova Scotia (then Acadia), many of which were Metis (of mixed French and Indian descent). In 1755, Shirley and Lawrence authorized the forceful removal of the Acadian French, citing their friendliness with the local Indian tribes. This unprovoked attack on French Catholics, most of mixed Indian blood, was promoted as a "noble scheme" to rid Acadia (Nova Scotia), opening its fertile lands and rich coastal fisheries to New Englanders, notably those of Scotch Irish descent (fiercely anti-Catholic Puritan Presbyterians). During the expulsion, Acadian families were rounded up and placed in stockades, while their communities were burned, animals were killed, and food supplies were destroyed. The Acadian French were loaded onto military transport ships in Halifax harbor and dispatched far and wide, many as slaves in the Caribbean. This became the prototype for the mass Indian removals under President Andrew Jackson (1829–1837) when the "civilized tribes," those who adopted Euro-American governments (Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, Seminole), were forced west of the Mississippi River into the new lands acquired under the Louisiana Purchase (in what is now Oklahoma). The "Blue Coats," like New Hampshire's militia, became the basis for the National Guard. In its North American colonies, the British Crown required all adult enfranchised Protestant males between the ages 16 and 60 to serve in the Provincial Defense Force (militia) and to muster at least four times a year for military exercises. Each Provincial Defense Force (i.e., colony/state) was headed by a major general, with each regiment headed by a colonel. While the intended purpose of this military readiness was to fight the French and Indians, it also provided a ready military force during the Revolution.

### **New Hampshire in the New Republic**

No battles were fought on New Hampshire soil during the seven years of the Revolutionary War (1776–1803), but their 18,000-strong militia remained prepared

with many serving under the state's local heroes, John Stark and John Sullivan, both staunch Scotch Irish Puritans. John Stark earned his initial fame during the French and Indian War where he was second-in-command of Rogers' Rangers. In 1775, Stark was made a militia colonel in command of the 1st New Hampshire Regiment. His superior in the Rangers, Major Robert Rogers, sided with the Loyalists during the Revolutionary War, where he held the rank of lieutenant colonel in the Royal Army. In this capacity, Rogers was responsible for the capture of Nathan Hale. Stark, on the other hand, went on to be commander of the Northern Department of the Continental Army rising to the rank of brigadier general. He is credited with coining the New Hampshire motto: "Live Free or Die."

New Hampshire was also unique in that it declared martial law in May 1775 during the Fourth Provincial Congress, prior to the official Declaration of Independence (e.g., declaration of war). Here, power was vested in the Committee of Safety, providing the rebels with autocratic powers over all New Hampshire residents (where only about a third supported the Patriots' cause). The Committee of Safety was in charge of the state's militia forces and could court-martial anyone who dissented. The militia was then authorized to confiscate the property of anyone suspected of being a Tory. The militia controlled the movement of individuals, materials, and ships, all under the authority of the Committee of Safety. By their decree of December 1775, the Committee of Safety of the Provincial Congress made a law that Loyalists had three months to sell their property and leave the state. Once expelled, Loyalists were forbidden to return to New Hampshire under the threat of death. This edict pertained to some of state's wealthiest families including the governor. The Loyalists (aka "Tories"), estimated to comprise up to 20 percent of the 13 colonies, did not take sides during the Revolution, yet they were forcefully expelled, with most escaping to Canada (British North America), notably Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Upper Canada (Ontario). The popular, native-born colonial governor, John Wentworth, was forced to flee and never return upon the threat of death. John Wentworth fled to Canada becoming the governor of Nova Scotia and resided there until 1820. New Hampshire was also unique in that it became an unabashed theocracy, making the Congregational Church, the official state church, compelling citizens to pay taxes for the church's support. Following the Irish famine of the 1840s and mass migration to Massachusetts, coupled with the successes of Anglicans in shipping and textiles, Massachusetts began to lose its title as the head of the Puritan Church (Congregational and Presbyterian), a title New Hampshire proudly accepted, making it one of the least tolerant states in the New Republic. Its conservative heritage survives to the present.

### **Franklin Pierce: New Hampshire's Favorite Son**

While New Hampshire had few black slaves, it played a major role in events leading to the War between the States (Civil War). President Jefferson (1801–1809) doubled the size of the New Republic with the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, while James Polk (1845–1849), the dark horse 11th president, is credited with expanding the United States to the Pacific Ocean by instigating the Mexican-American War (1846–1848), adding fuel to the slave state versus free state controversy dividing

the country. Franklin Pierce, a native son of New Hampshire, contributed greatly to the conditions leading up to the Civil War. As the 14th president (1853–1857), Pierce gained national status as a militia officer during the War with Mexico, going from private to brigadier general in the New Hampshire militia (his father, Benjamin Pierce held a similar rank with the New Hampshire militia during the Revolutionary War and also served as governor). Pierce initiated U.S. expansionism, gaining even more of Mexico with the Gadsden Purchase in 1853 followed by his efforts to expand U.S. influence in Asia (China and Japan) with “gunboat diplomacy.” Pierce’s administration also saw greater intrusions into Latin America under the guise of the Monroe Doctrine, which favored U.S. business interests, often at the expense of the indigenous population. His gunboat diplomacy forced Japan to open its ports to U.S. trade while endorsing clandestine attempts to take Cuba and other Spanish holdings in the Americas, setting the stage for the Spanish-American War. Pierce became president during an era when white Anglo-Saxon Protestants were attempting to reestablish their elite position in American society and at the height of the free state versus slave state controversy. Pierce clearly sympathized with Southern slave states, naming Jefferson Davis as his secretary of war. Pierce’s support for the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act clearly placed him in the slave-state camp, serving as a catalyst for the war over slavery four years later.

### **The Mass French Migration**

The next significant era in New Hampshire’s history was that following the Civil War and the rapid growth of the textile industry in New England. In the early nineteenth century, Francis Cabot Lowell, a partner in the Boston Associates, copied the successful power looms in Manchester, England, and started a machine shop copying these looms. By 1814, Lowell and his Boston Manufacturing Company were operating cotton mills, spreading this technology along the waterways of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine. Lowell envisioned a utopian textile manufacturing society, consisting of a company town and a protective environment for the Anglo daughters of Yankee farmers to work and augment the family farm. The war embargo during the War of 1812 gave Lowell’s companies a virtual monopoly on cotton textile production providing the impetus for further growth in New England. But while the cotton mills employed women, the woolen mills mainly employed men. The textile mills migrated north to New Hampshire along the Merrimack and Connecticut Rivers in the mid-1830s, where the largest textile complex emerged in Manchester, New Hampshire, the “Manchester of America.” At the same time, the workforce changed from Yankee working girls to Irish, French Canadian, Polish and Greek. French Canada was appealing in that its location was just beyond the international border. Recruitment was also easily facilitated by the expanding railroad system between Canada and New England. The French Canadian workforce gained the upper hand following the Depression preceding the Civil War and later during strikes by Irish mill workers. In the end, the French Canadians were used as strikebreakers, setting these two Roman Catholic ethnic groups at odds with each other.

During and immediately following the Civil War, the textile industry enjoyed rapid growth, but mill work was seen as low status work by Yankees. Instead, the mill owners looked to Quebec for a readily available, docile, easily controlled, low-salaried workforce. The peak immigration years were 1867–1873 and 1886–1893. The mass migration of French Canadians ended in 1900, with fewer coming until 1930; the worldwide Great Depression led to the closing of the international border. It is estimated that nearly one-third of rural Quebec migrated to New England during the period of the mass migration, making them the single largest ethnic population in northern New England, second only to the Protestant Yankees of Anglo-Saxon descent. The French Canadian culture differed markedly from that of their Yankee neighbors, causing considerable friction and discrimination that lasted up until the latter part of the twentieth century. New Hampshire's attempts at disenfranchisement included making reading and writing English a condition for state citizenship and voting. Toward this end, the parish priests established parochial schools where French was taught in the morning and English in the afternoon. Reaction to French parochial schools led to changes in Part II of the New Hampshire Constitution. The Blaine Amendment to Article 83, Encouragement of Literature, Etc., passed in 1877: "prohibiting tax money from being applied to schools of religious denominations." This was part of a nationwide effort to preserve the Protestant monopoly over public school funding.

Later, in 1903, Part I, Article 11 of the New Hampshire Constitution was amended: "to provide that in order to vote or be eligible for office a person must be able to read the English language and to write." This was seen as yet another blatant effort at disenfranchising Franco-Americans (French Canadians born in the United States) in New Hampshire. This action, in particular, was seen as a violation of Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which, in turn, gave New

### ***The LePage Case***

A classic example of an event that pitted New Englanders against French Canadians was the gruesome murder of a New Hampshire teen, Josie Langmaid, in the French Canadian village of Suncook on October 4, 1875. She was killed en route from her parents' farm to Pembroke Academy. Her decapitated body was found less than a quarter mile from the academy. The very nature of the crime fueled emotions, especially when the prime suspect was a French Canadian wood cutter, Joseph LePage. From his arrest, he was portrayed by the *Concord Monitor* as a monster, thus enflaming the local community against him. There was no evidence placing LePage at the scene of the crime, and there were four witnesses who testified that he was with them at the time of the murder. Being French Canadian, the witnesses were dismissed as liars. A local jury quickly convicted LePage, but their decision was overturned by the state Supreme Court. Following a year in jail, LePage stood trial again and was again convicted, and his witness's accounts were again discounted. A local newspaper editor even called for the arrest and trial of LePage's four witnesses. LePage's appeals were never given serious consideration, and he was executed in March 1878. Moreover, a permanent reminder of the Langmaid murder is a prominent stone obelisk that remains today, reminding people of this symbolic victory of Yankee descendants of the Puritans over the lowly French Canadians enticed to work cheaply in their textile mills.

Hampshire the dubious distinction of being among a small number of states with a history of voting discrimination (including Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, and Alabama). This distinction requires any changes in New Hampshire's voting laws to be vetted by the U.S. attorney general. Even with these restrictions the parish schools eventually qualified sufficient numbers of French Canadians to become bilingual and claim their right to vote. Moreover, French Canadian veterans of World War II, like Rene Gagnon who raised the flag on Iwo Jima in 1945, came home and began asserting their rights, demanding full citizen status. The Puritan element of intolerance continued in New Hampshire even as it diminished in other New England states. The anti-Jew, black, Catholic (French and Irish) exclusion from businesses prevailed well into the second half of the twentieth century, ending only with passage of the Civil Rights Acts in the 1960s. Many tourist establishments had signs stating "No Jews, Negroes, or Catholics," and Ku Klux Klan rallies were prominent in the state prior to World War II.

### **The Contemporary Scene**

New Hampshire is one of the "whitest" states in the United States. It basically exterminated its pre-Columbus indigenous population either through genocide, slavery, or forceful removal. A source of wealth for its colonial shipping elite was the slave trade. With ship owners acting as the middleman in this endeavor few blacks ended up actually residing in New Hampshire, a trend that continues to the present. Currently 93 percent of its 1,316,470 population is non-Hispanic white. Hispanics/Latina/os and Asians each constitute 2 percent of the population, with blacks or African Americans accounting for 1 percent. Yet, New Hampshire's only death row inmate is Michael Addison, an African American convicted in 2008 of killing a white police officer. His case is unique since other white offenders convicted of killing a police officer, or of another capital offense, were not given the death sentence. If executed, he will be the first since 1939. Given New Hampshire's colonial history of Indian genocide and forceful removal, American Indians and other Native Americans currently account for less than 1 percent of the state's population.

Yet, New Hampshire plays a major role in presidential elections with its "first in the nation primary," promoting its "town hall-type democracy" venues for candidates. New Hampshire is also a wealthy and politically conservative state with a marked difference between the affluent and those who are not. This divide has contributed to the state's districting in the current national drug crisis that targets white victims, with the state having the country's second highest drug overdose death rate, second only to West Virginia. Most of these deaths are attributed to OxyContin, fentanyl, heroin, methadone, and carfentanil. New Hampshire, like other states, places considerable blame for this epidemic on the overprescription of opioids for chronic pain, as well as big pharmaceutical companies for their promotion of these agents. Once their pain medication is discontinued, many seek street alternatives including heroin. Yet, law enforcement continues to target and blame minority "drug dealers" for this problem. Indeed, a 2016 candidate for governor, Jeanie Forrester, advocated using the New Hampshire National Guard to

***New Hampshire and the Prescription Drug Crisis***

New Hampshire has one of the most serious overdose death rates in the country. The state exemplifies the “white, middle-class” drug abuse phenomenon. It is one of the “whitest” states (94% non-Hispanic whites) and also provides a libertarian milieu for its professional class, including the medical professions. Historically, “drug abuse” was viewed as a problem among the poor and minority segments of American society, and drug users and dealers received harsh punishments. This view contributed to the high American incarceration rate—the highest for any developed nation—and accounted for the few resources dedicated to prevention or treatment. This perspective has changed markedly now that this problem has infected the white middle class, including the privileged elite. An emerging theme is one of people becoming addicted to legally prescribed pain medications (e.g., methadone, OxyContin, fentanyl) and then turning to the black market for heroin or fentanyl once these medications are no longer accessible. Another major factor is the onslaught of pharmacological advertisements that flood the U.S. media, notably television, promoting drugs for every conceivable illness, real or imagined. These advertisements are coupled with an aggressive sales force that targets medical doctors and others within the medical profession licensed to prescribe. A combination of these factors led to a society where it was considered a right to live “pain free,” hence the creation of a drug (licit)-dependent populace. Accordingly, psycho-pharmacologic agents are overprescribed, most for nonclinical diagnoses, including for psycho-enhancement and self-actualization. Now American society is paying a steep price for its drug-enhanced lifestyle with the focus now placed on the medical and clinical professions for their lack of oversight in both diagnoses and prescription practices, as well on drug companies that falsely advertise their products.

protect not only the United States–Canada international border, but the New Hampshire–Massachusetts border as well. The pressing question is how to address the factors surrounding the demand for these drugs and not just focus on more severe punishment for the providers and users.

**NOTABLE FIGURES****Hale, John Parker (1806–1873)**

John P. Hale was part of the New Hampshire aristocracy and represented New Hampshire in a number of positions, including in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1843 to 1845, and the U.S. Senate from 1847 to 1853 and again from 1855 to 1865. A native son of New Hampshire, Hale attended Philip Exeter Academy and graduated from Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, going on to become a lawyer. His colleagues at Bowdoin College were Franklin Pierce, the future U.S. president, and novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne, with whom Hale shared similar interests and membership in the Athenian Society. Although Hale opposed slavery and joined the antislavery Free Soil movement, he was appointed U.S. attorney in the Democratic administration of President Andrew Jackson (1829–1837). Hale gained national prominence in the 1840s due to his opposition to the extension of slavery into the western territories. Leading up to the War with

Mexico (1846–1848), Hale refused to vote for the annexation of Texas against the explicit instructions of the New Hampshire legislature to do so. This refusal led to the revocation of his appointment to the U.S. Senate by the state legislature (U.S. senators were appointed by state legislatures until passage of the Seventeenth Amendment in 1913). Hale was then renominated to the U.S. Senate from the Free-Soil Party, serving from 1847 until 1853. Hale ran for president of the United States on the Free-Soil ticket in 1852, but lost to the Democratic nominee, fellow New Hampshire native Franklin Pierce.

Hale, now a Republican, served a second tenure in the U.S. Senate (1855–1865) and then became U.S. ambassador to Spain on the appointment of President Abraham Lincoln. Hale never faltered from his antislavery, anti–military-sponsored expansionism stance during his lifetime. The major irony in Hale’s life was that his daughter, Lucy Lambert Hale, was engaged in 1865 to John Wilkes Booth, President Lincoln’s assassin. John Parker Hale died in 1873 at age 67.

### **Riel, Louis (1844–1885)**

Louis Riel is considered a folk hero to French Canadians in both Canada and the United States, having lived during the time of the mass migration from Quebec to New England. His exploits exemplify the sectarian (Catholic/Protestant) and ethnic (French/English) challenges of the time. Of French Indian descent (Franco-Ojibwa Metis), he held dual U.S. and Canadian citizenship; as a fugitive from Canada, he hid out in the parishes in New Hampshire, notably Suncook, the parish with the highest density of French in the state with descendants of Quebecois and Acadian heritage. The U.S. Civil War served as a catalyst for the British North American Act (Constitution Act) of 1867, creating the Dominion of Canada. Canada, although under British control, was 80 percent French. Western expansion beyond Quebec, Ontario, and the Maritime Provinces resulted in a fight between French/Catholic and English/Protestant control.

Caught in the middle of this ethnic/sectarian battle were the indigenous peoples including the mixed-bloods (Metis). At the same time, United States–Canada relations were strained given that some 30,000 black slaves were welcomed into Canada via the Underground Railroad prior and during the War between the States. Moreover, Scotch Irish in the United States were engaged in border scrimmages during the administrations of both Andrew Johnson (1865–1869) and Ulysses S. Grant (1869–1877), a time when the United States was actively engaged in its 30-year Indian War of the West (1862–1892). It was at this time of border tensions, Indian wars, and French–English confrontations, and mass migration of French Canadians to New England that Louis Riel emerged as the protector of both the French and Indians in Canada and in parts of the United States (New England and western border states/territories). Riel first became known during the Red River Rebellion (1869–1870).

Red River, only 70 miles from Minnesota in the United States, became the focus of cross-border tensions resulting in an armed uprising by the Metis and Canadian Indians. With the westward expansion following the creation of the Dominion of Canada, the Metis and Indians felt that their traditional lifestyle was



being challenged by English/Scotch Irish settlers. The traditional settlers then created the Metis National Committee with Louis Riel as their leader. During the ensuing battles, Riel's forces captured Fort Garry in what became known as the Red River Rebellion, with the main protagonist being the Catholic French/Indian Metis versus the Calvinist Scotch Irish settlers claiming the same territory. During this struggle, Thomas Scott, a Presbyterian and zealous anti-Catholic Orangemen and a member of the Canadian military, was captured, and after he escaped, recaptured, and executed by the Metis. The execution of Scott forced Riel into exile across the border in the United States. Nonetheless, the Manitoba Act of May 12, 1870, formally admitted Manitoba into the Canadian Confederation with Riel now viewed as the "father of Manitoba." Thus, while Thomas Scott's death became the rallying cry for the Anglophones, Louis Riel became the hero of the Francophones in both Canada and New England. Indeed, during his exile, he was elected three times to the Canadian House of Commons, although he never appeared to take his seat.

In 1884, he was called to lead the Indians and Metis in Saskatchewan in what is known as the North-West Rebellion (1884–1885). Again, the Metis and their First Nation (Indians) confederates formed an "illegal" provisional government, now in Saskatchewan, and fought a number of skirmishes. This rebellion was short lived due to the rapid deployment of the Canadian militia which quickly reached the region via the newly completed trans-Canada railroad. Riel surrendered and was charged with treason. These confrontations were similar to slave state versus free state dilemma afflicting the United States leading up to the Civil War. Here, the issue was the control of Canada's western provinces, pitting Anglophones (English/Scotch Irish Protestants) against Francophones (French/Metis/Indian Catholics). Riel's rebellions met with mixed results with Manitoba upholding the traditional French and Indian cultures, while the Anglophones gained control in Saskatchewan. Riel's notoriety was well known among the French Canadians throughout Canada and among those who migrated to New England. His exploits were also noted by the New England Yankees, further pitting the English against the French, especially in New Hampshire (which had the highest concentration of French Canadians working in the massive textile complex in Manchester and surrounding factory towns), as well as a strong presence of Presbyterian Scotch Irish residents.

Arrested and convicted of treason in 1885, Riel was executed despite numerous recommendations for clemency. His execution solidified Riel's martyr status, and also emboldened both the Yankees controlling New Hampshire's government and the French Canadians, who had long suffered from Protestant discrimination. A major issue in both Canada and New Hampshire at this time was the control of language and education. By 1891, the stage was set for a divided Canada along sectarian lines that also resonated in the ethnically divided New Hampshire. In 1896, the Remedial Bill allowed education and language to fall under provincial control and no longer under the authority of the federal government. Quebec and New Brunswick then became Catholic/French dominant provinces greatly influencing the advent of French/Catholic parochial schools in New Hampshire, which were virtually run by the Catholic Church in Quebec.

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# 31

## New Jersey

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John Thomas Mills and DeMond Shondell Miller

### **CHRONOLOGY**

**1626**

The first permanent African residents arrive in New Netherland

**1664**

New Jersey comes under English rule; settlers are offered additional land for bringing servants or slaves with them

**1668**

The earliest legislation in New Jersey regarding slavery is enacted by the General Assembly at Elizabeth-Town; the measure calls for the death penalty for anyone stealing slaves

**1675**

New Jersey passes an act against transporting, harboring, or entertaining apprentices, servants, or slaves

**1704**

New Jersey enacts slave codes

**1713**

The colony passes an act to prevent slaves from owning real property

**1726**

Slaves in New Jersey number 2,600, approximately 8 percent of the colony's population

**1734**

The Somerville slave conspiracy is uncovered; 30 blacks are apprehended and one is hanged

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**1741**

In Hackensack, three slaves are convicted and burned alive for setting fire to seven barns, marking New Jersey's second significant slave plot

**1752**

Innkeepers are prohibited from selling strong drink to slaves

**1758**

The first Native American reservation in the country is established as the Brotherton Reservation at Indian Mills in Shamong Township, Burlington County

**1760**

New Jersey prohibits the enlistment of slaves in the militia without the permission of their masters

**1786**

A heavy fine of £50 is imposed for bringing slaves from Africa, and the law also mandates the exportation of any slave who has been a resident for a year or more; manumitted slaves from other states are forbidden to travel in New Jersey

**1787**

New Jersey becomes the third state to enter the Union on December 18

**1788**

A supplement to the Law of 1786 provides for the forfeiture of vessels, appurtenances, and cargo for those who retrofit ships for the slave trade

**1801**

Slaves convicted of crimes such as rape and murder can be deported from the state

**1804**

Under the state's Gradual Abolition Act, every child born of a slave is to be free, but will remain the servant of the master of his mother until age 21 if female, and age 25 if male

**1828**

Theodore Sedgwick Wright becomes the first black graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary

**1840**

Lawnside, New Jersey, is developed as the first independent, self-governing black municipality

**1844**

The New Jersey Constitution declares all white men free

**1846**

New Jersey abolishes slavery as an institution in the state

**1855**

Two all black baseball teams play a game in Newark

**1865**

On March 16, New Jersey rejects the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

**1866**

On January 23, New Jersey ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery, one month after the amendment took effect

**1866**

On September 11, New Jersey ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing full civil rights to all citizens, including newly freed slaves

**1868**

On February 20, New Jersey rescinds its ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment

**1870**

On March 17, New Jersey rejects the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting voting rights to African American men

**1871**

On February 15, New Jersey ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment, almost one year after the amendment took effect

**1875**

A state constitutional amendment gives the Negro the right to vote, although some Negroes had voted prior to 1807

**1902**

Whitesboro, New Jersey, is established as a town for blacks in response to the resistance by whites to having black residents in Cape May County

**1915**

Florence Spearing Randolph establishes the State Federation for Colored Women Club; it is New Jersey's oldest black women's organization

**1928**

Emilio Carranza, a Mexican aviator on the return leg of a goodwill flight between Mexico and New York, dies in a Pinelands airplane crash during a thunderstorm on July 13; a memorial to him is located on Carranza Road in Tabernacle Township, Burlington County

**1944**

Japanese Americans are relocated to the Seabrook Farms in Cumberland County, New Jersey, from internment camps in the west

**1962**

On December 3, New Jersey ratifies the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing the poll tax

**1964**

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) is denied seating at the Democratic National Convention held in Atlantic City prompting Fannie Lou Hamer's televised speech to the nation

**1964**

Racial tension boils over August 3 as community members riot in the Lafayette section of Jersey City, after a 26-year-old black woman is arrested for disorderly conduct; similar civil disruption occurs in Elizabeth on August 12

**1967**

In July, rioting breaks out in Newark and Plainfield; in Newark, 26 people die and damages range in the millions

**1971**

Violence between black and white students at Bridgeton High School escalates to a riot on March 12; in October, fighting in the high school results in various altercations near the city's predominately black Second Ward initiating a dusk-to-dawn curfew and limiting hours for businesses

**1971**

In August, rioting breaks in Camden after a Puerto Rican man succumbs to injuries suffered after being beaten by two white police officers, who are not initially charged; this prompts the Hispanic community to take to the streets to demand their suspension, causing riots to erupt on August 20 with nearly 100 people injured

**1972**

A riot erupts between Puerto Rican and white youths disputing territorial rights on the boardwalk in Long Branch

**1981**

The first African Americans are elected to the office of mayor in Camden (Randy Primas) and Plainfield (Everette C. Lattimore)

**1988**

Riots breakout in Perth Amboy after the shooting of two Mexican brothers by an off-duty policeman

**1989**

Rioting breaks out in Vineland after the police shoot and kill a black man

**1990**

An African American teenager, Phillip Pannell, is shot and killed in Teaneck in April by a white police officer, which fuels racial tensions

**2003**

On April 23, New Jersey re-ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment, which it had originally ratified in 1866 but then rescinded ratification in 1868

**2006**

An unarmed Emil Mann, a member of the Ramapough Mountain Indian tribe, is shot and killed by a white park ranger

**2010**

Sheila Oliver becomes the first African American female speaker of the New Jersey General Assembly

**2012**

The attorney general of New Jersey rescinds recognition of the three previously acknowledged Native American tribes in the state

**2013**

Corey Booker becomes the first African American U.S. senator from New Jersey

**2015**

In September, the Hudson City Bank branch in Orange, New Jersey's largest savings bank, is fined \$33 million after the Justice Department filed charges that the company redlined African Americans and Hispanics by not offering affordable mortgages and intentionally did not build bank branches in minority communities from 2009 to 2013

**2017**

Immigration arrests are up 20 percent, and deportations are up 30 percent in New Jersey over the past year

**2017**

In January, Jefferson Township High basketball fans and students taunt members of their rival team from Dover High with chants of "ashy knees," directed at an African American player, and "build the wall" at Hispanic players, during the warm-up and game

**NARRATIVE**

Linking the past to the present is essential to framing issues of race and racism in New Jersey. We begin this chapter with the founding of New Jersey and briefly examine the legacy of slavery and the dispossession of indigenous peoples. The developments during the seventeenth century serve as a starting point, as population records prior to the 1790 census provides information about whites, Africans, Native Americans, and their social status in the colony. The Dutch, colonizers of the state, very quickly began to display their prejudice toward the indigenous people. Believing them to be inferior led to several violent encounters, near total decimation of the population, and the eventual removal of many Native Americans from the area. As for the African population, it is apparent that they were very instrumental in every facet of Dutch colonization. When examining slavery in the United States, the southern region of the country is usually the starting point. New Jersey (which is also referred to as the Garden State) is certainly not the first to come to mind. However, historical records indicate that from its earliest beginnings, some citizens and institutions exhibited harsh and discriminatory treatment toward those of African descent. Later, the state would commonly be referred to as the "Georgia of the North" (Peele 2012, 49) due to its reputation for the treatment of the American Negro.



The Delaware Indians originally lived on the lands that are now Delaware, New Jersey, and New York. Approximately 12 men from the Delaware Nation accompanied Col. John C. Frémont on his expedition to California during 1845–1846 and served as scouts, hunters, and soldiers. However, they would eventually lose their tribal lands to white settlers and were forced to live on reservations. (Corbis via Getty Images)

### **Native Americans in Colonial New Jersey/New Netherland and Beyond**

The Native American population known as the Lenni Lenape (the original people) was thriving when Europeans landed on the eastern seaboard. Archeological evidence indicates there were at least 8,000 Lenni Lenape throughout the late Woodland period (1000 BCE–c.1600 CE) in New Jersey (Kraft and Mounier 1982, 139). Their ancestors occupied land from Delaware to New Jersey and throughout Eastern Pennsylvania and Southeastern New York. They were members of the Algonquian-speaking peoples who lived along the Atlantic Coast and inland toward the Great Lakes. In New Jersey, the Lenni Lenape nation consisted primarily of three clans: the Munsee, Unami, and Unalachtigo. The Munsee (People of the Stony Country) lived in the north, while the Unami (People Down River) and the Unalachtigo (People Who Live near the Ocean) occupied the southern and central areas. Within the nation, the Lenni Lenape were known as peaceful people and often acted as the mediator between tribes that had disputes.

The Dutch initially prospered financially with the Lenni Lenape in the fur trade; however, they soon developed a negative disposition toward the Native American population. Dutch traders called them “wilden,” or “savages,” rather than Indianen or Indians, as they tended to call the indigenous people in much of South America. In 1643, the relationship between Native Americans and Europeans was forever changed when Dutch soldiers attacked the Lenni Lenape tribe and killed hundreds



of men, women, and children, despite having orders to spare the wives and children. A truce was negotiated in 1645 that lasted for 10 years. War again erupted after a Dutchman murdered an Indian girl for picking a pear from one of his trees. When the English gained control in 1664, relations were not as hostile, but just as dangerous for the Natives. European diseases, coupled with alcohol, devastated the indigenous population. By the 1700s, the English settlers had swindled large tracts of land from the Native people, who were unaccustomed to the idea of buying and selling land. When the Dutch arrived, there were an estimated 2,000 Lenni Lenape in the state. Thirty years later, after the English colonized the state, the Lenni Lenape population was significantly reduced to around 500.

New Jersey's Native American tribes were pushed westward by force during the 1700s. In the middle of the eighteenth century, the Lenni Lenape and other members of the Algonquin nation hoped to regain their lands by aligning with the French in the French and Indian War. That effort was futile. In their defeat, in 1758, the New Jersey General Assembly created the states' first and only Indian reservation in Burlington County. In exchange, the tribes surrendered all land rights, but they were not restricted from hunting and fishing. The reservation was supervised by Reverend John Brainerd, a white man, who named it Brotherton, to promote brotherhood among all people. The 200 or so occupants of Brotherton were able to sustain themselves for a while before Brainerd was unable to perform his duties due to illness in 1777. Circumstances changed, and by 1796, rumors depicting a deplorable environment prompted the Oneida tribe from New York to invite the remaining Lenape to relocate to New Stockbridge, New York. Despite making a public decree in 1798 that they would never leave New Jersey, they changed their mind and acted upon the invitation to become one with the Oneida. Four years later, at the turn of the century, the reservation was sold by the New Jersey General Assembly with the proceeds divided among the 85 remaining tribal members.

Concern about New Jersey's indigenous community virtually disappeared during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Yet, according to the 2010 U.S. Census, approximately 29,000 residents in New Jersey identified as Native American, with an additional 41,000 indicating a mixed racial heritage with some part Native American. Today, the area formerly known as the Brotherton reservation is called Indian Mills. Additionally, the Powhatan Renape Nation of Morrisville and Delair in Pennsauken Township, a state-recognized tribe, have managed the Rankokus American Indian Reservation near Morrisville and Medford since 1982, but have recently ceased operations in 2016. The state also recognizes the Ramapough Lenape Indian Nation who base their headquarters in Mahwah, New Jersey.

Somewhat ironically, in the second decade of the twenty-first century, racial tensions between state officials and the few remaining Native American groups renewed, as the struggle to maintain a presence, preserve their culture, secure affordable housing, and expand job opportunities continued. For example, local officials in Mahwah Township, in the northern part of the state, recently filed a lawsuit against the Ramapough Lenape Indians for erecting a village of teepees on 14 acres of land they own. The village had a dual purpose: (1) the tribal group wanted a place to observe their cultural practices; and, (2) like their brethren in North Dakota, they

wanted to organize a protest against the proposed Pilgrim oil pipeline that would be built throughout northern New Jersey. The township contends that the structures and site (an area which is also adjoined to a private community) are in violation of local zoning laws; permits were not obtained to build; and, the tribe is essentially using the area as a campground and permanent living quarters.

The Ramapough Lenape have also been in a long-standing battle for environmental justice and remedial health care stemming from the toxic Superfund Site in Ringwood, New Jersey. The site was initially placed on the Environmental Protection Agency's mandatory cleanup list in 1983 but was removed in 1994. Twelve years later, it was relisted, marking the first time a site with these types of toxins was relisted. New Jersey officials, attempting to address these issues, in 2006, formed the New Jersey Committee on Native American Affairs. This has proved to be a positive collaboration, and efforts are being made in the state to address issues for other marginalized groups.

Unfortunately, in 2012, New Jersey's attorney general, with the support of the Christie administration, declared that New Jersey would no longer acknowledge Native American tribes in the state. This action jeopardizes the tribe's eligibility for federal programs and funding. Moreover, without state recognition, annual income from selling authentic indigenous artwork and jewelry will potentially be lost. The Ramapough Lenape filed a federal civil rights lawsuit arguing that the attorney general's motivation for rescinding recognition is grounded in racial stereotyping surrounding the assumption that Native Americans today seek to open gaming establishments. The case is pending in federal court.

### **African Americans**

In 1626, the first Africans established permanent residency in the developing colony, four decades before the British takeover in 1664. Early in the seventeenth century, the Dutch West India Company regularly used "Negro slaves" when promoting its settlements. Contained in the colony's constitution were "Concessions." Every colonist that would make the venture to the new land would be granted 75 acres for each slave they brought, or procured, with the caveat that they were essentially to be a member of that settlers' family. The management and flow of human bondage was an impetus to growing the colony. The need for black labor was pivotal, as white laborers and settlers from Holland were not interested in being permanent residents. Moreover, many of the white laborers lacked the agricultural skills needed for the colony to prosper. Potential settlers were interested in earning their fortunes from the fur trade and then returning home to Holland. An even greater incentive for not staying was that conditions in Holland were far better than in an unsettled New Netherland colony. The instability of a consistent white workforce made slavery increasingly attractive to the Dutch, who had initially resisted introducing the slave trade. Nevertheless, with the need to resolve economic problems, the institution of slavery was adopted and grew throughout the colonial period to the point that New Jersey had the second-largest slave population, only outpaced by New York, until that state adopted its gradual emancipation act in 1799.

In 1804, state legislation was enacted as a means of gradual manumission by declaring children born of enslaved persons, after July 4, would be apprentices to their mother's master and have automatic freedom at the age of 21, for females, and 25 for males. Sixteen years later, in 1820, this action resulted in free African Americans (12,460) outnumbering those still in bondage (7,577) by nearly 5,000 (Barton 2009, 2). Around 1830, slavery had been virtually abolished in the North, as only 3,568 African descended persons remained in bondage, more than two-thirds residing in New Jersey. Thirty years later, in 1860, the number of enslaved African Americans in the state was reduced to 18. However, it is important to note that New Jersey did not vote to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment, which subsequently abolished slavery in every state of the Union.

Deconstructing slavery is essential with regard to understanding the history of race relations in the state. New Jersey was the only Northern state that enforced federal slave codes that otherwise may have ended slavery earlier. Moreover, New Jersey had one of the harshest slave codes of all the northern colonies and vigorously upheld the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. Social circumstances were further complicated by the nature in which New Jersey, as one of the Northern states, was viewed as the "Promised Land" by runaway slaves seeking freedom through the Underground Railroad that operated in the state beginning in the 1830s. The Underground Railroad was a network of social support predicated upon multiracial cooperation. Many escapees connected with the network as they sought freedom in the North. Some remained in the state, while others continued on the places like New York, Massachusetts, and Canada. Unfortunately, New Jersey proved to be far from idyllic for free blacks. Following the period of Reconstruction, and up until the modern-day civil rights era, New Jersey continued to engage in racist social practices (including racial segregation, employment discrimination, voter disenfranchisement, and lynchings) that effectively impeded African American progress.

An important note: In 2008, New Jersey became the third state to officially apologize for its participation in slavery in the United States in a resolution spearheaded by assemblymen William D. Payne and Craig A. Stanley. Moreover, this expression of regret also made New Jersey the first Northern state to take such action. The significance of this admission is crucial to the interrogation of slavery in the North American British colonies, as historians have not given as much attention to the "peculiar institution" above the Mason Dixon Line as the southern region of the country. In recognizing the gap in education around these significant historical issues, in 2002, the New Jersey legislature passed the Amistad Act, mandating African American history and culture be infused in the social studies curriculum across the state.

### **Hispanics/Latinos**

New Jersey has a large Spanish-speaking population, an estimated 20 percent in 2016 census reports, and can be from any racial group. Thus, Hispanics/Latinos are not a racial group and will not be treated as such in this chapter, but it is important to note that many do experience racial discrimination. New Jersey's

Hispanic population includes many ethnic groups, including Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Mexicans, Columbians, Costa Ricans, Dominicans, Ecuadorians, Guatemalans, and others. The largest population has been the migrants from Puerto Rico who began coming to New Jersey and surrounding states in the mid-1950s. Puerto Ricans settled in many of the state's urban areas and experienced the same patterns of racial discrimination as the African American community. Often referred to as "brown" or "people of color," Puerto Ricans have a mixed race heritage of African, European, and Taino Indians. For many members of the Spanish-speaking population, ethnic identity is a more important indicator of self and social status than racial identity. However, when forced to choose, the majority (56%) indicate their racial category as white (Garcia 2017).

### **Racially Charged Civil Unrest**

Cross-racial violence between citizens or full-scale rioting against public officials has been a reoccurring phenomenon in New Jersey history. In 1864, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* related the story, "Serious Riot in Camden, N.J.: Negroes and White Men in Collision," after a group of colored men, the story explains, entered an Ale House on Spruce Street and requested drinks. White men, who had been drinking there since the early evening, objected. The two factions began fighting in the establishment. The altercation ensued further when the white men followed the black men to their homes and, in some cases, broke down the doors to continue their assaults. Several blacks took to their roofs and fired shotguns, as others threw stones down upon their aggressors. Police were unable to quell the riot, and the mayor and other citizens were deputized to bring order. There were no fatal injuries; however, nine people were arrested—seven blacks and two whites ("Serious Riot in Camden, N.J." 1864).

Nearly a century later, racially charged civil unrest across America in the 1960s was all too common, and New Jersey was no exception. A federal report details how New Jersey became a hotbed for racial and ethnic disturbances in the cities of Paterson, Elizabeth, Jersey City, Newark, Plainfield, and New Brunswick. While the incidents that ignited civil unrest in each city were different, the flashpoints demonstrate a consistent frustration that the black community had with the lack of political representation, issues surrounding police brutality, and declining social conditions. In the midst of the civil unrest, social injustice, and riots that gripped major cities in the country and many communities in New Jersey during the 1960s, Fannie Lou Hamer, a Mississippi sharecropper and civil rights activist, traveled to Atlantic City, New Jersey, to deliver testimony on behalf of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) at the 1964 Democratic National Convention. The MFDP was refused seating at the convention in favor of a segregated, all-white delegation from Mississippi. In the summer of 1964, the speech of Mrs. Hamer before the credentials committee of the Democratic National Convention, vividly recounted specific cases of voter suppression, racist law enforcement violence upon minorities, and social inequality in America. Hamer questioned the very core of racism, social inequality, and racial injustice in America by publically stating, "And if the Freedom Democratic Party is not seated now, I question America."

### ***Civil Rights on the Atlantic City Boardwalk***

Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, a self-educated sharecropper, civil rights advocate, and leader of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), addressed the Democratic Party's Credentials Committee at its National Convention in Boardwalk Hall, Atlantic City Convention Center, on August 22, 1964. Hamer appeared before the convention's credentials committee to challenge Mississippi's all-white Democratic Party. She provided a chilling story of the constant threats, intimidation, and physical assaults endured daily by Negroes in Mississippi seeking to register to vote. Concerned about the public sharing of such horrific incidents of lynchings, house burnings, and violent attacks, President Lyndon Johnson aired a press conference during Hamer's speech. However, her presentation was so compelling that the major network's evening and nightly news broadcasted the story repeatedly for several days. Providing riveting details of racial antagonism, Hamer stated:

All of this is on account of we want to register, to become first-class citizens. And if the Freedom Democratic Party is not seated now, I question America. Is this America, the land of the free and the home of the brave, where we have to sleep with our telephones off the hooks because our lives be threatened daily, because we want to live as decent human beings, in America? (Fannie Lou Hamer, cited by Sturgis, 2014)

While attempts at winning a seat at the 1964 convention failed, the momentum that started with the protest by the MFDP in Atlantic City led to Hamer being seated as a voting delegate at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1968 (Dubovoy 1997). Fannie Lou Hamer had challenged the very seats of power in America. Her Boardwalk speech in Atlantic City, New Jersey, highlighting the struggle for racial equality in Mississippi reverberated throughout the nation.

In Newark, specifically, the onset of White Flight, beginning in the 1940s, and the subsequent departure of 70,000 white residents between 1960 and 1967 reordered the city's demographics in a very short timeframe, from 65 percent white to 52 percent black and 10 percent Puerto Rican and Cuban. This did not, however, change the political power structure as whites retained political control (U.S. Commission Kerner Report 1968, 57). When the city of Newark was engulfed in violence and mayhem in 1967, it was considered to be one of the most undesirable places to reside in the nation. Seventy-five percent of housing structures were old, or rapidly deteriorating, along with schools that had been built prior to the 1900s. The crime rate, coupled with meager employment opportunities for Newark's minority population altogether, had stirred tensions for some time. On July 12, 1967, riots broke out in response to police brutality in the beating of black cab driver John Smith. The uprising resulted in 26 deaths, 700 people injured, and property damages in the millions of dollars (Mazzola 2016).

The same concern about social and economic issues and the impact on racial minority members were being played out in nearby Plainfield, New Jersey, just 18 miles from Newark. Early in 1967, the Plainfield chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) posted a list of 19 demands they were seeking, hoping that it would quell tensions within the community. As in other places, the demands highlighted the discrimination found in public schools,

employment, and housing. The organization had repeatedly called out discriminatory hiring practices in the mayor's office, and also focused on the lack of recreational facilities for youth in the West End (most notably a swimming pool), as well as the racial makeup of the police force that had only five blacks on a force of 81 officers. Their demands had not been addressed, in any manner.

In the summer of 1967, the citizenry's calm was severely tested when a twenty-something African American man reportedly bully punched another African American teen, splitting open his face at the White Star Diner. A white, Plainfield police officer, moonlighting at the diner as a guard on July 14, did nothing to apprehend the teen's attacker when his friends reported the assault to him. This set off a gathering of 150–200 youth in the parking lot of the West End Gardens housing project. There, they spoke with an African American council member to vent their frustrations. Subsequently, they marched through the neighborhood for two hours before violence erupted that lasted for several days and nights. On July 16, the incident became graver with the death of Patrolmen John Vincent Gleason, who disobeyed orders and pursued a group of teens suspected of looting into the West End ghetto. Patrolman Gleason eventually fired upon Bobby Williams, a 22-year-old African American. Williams was seriously injured but survived. Gleason, on the other hand, was retaliated against by a group of angry youths and was beaten to death.

The structural decline in cities like Plainfield and Newark remain visible today. Five decades following the riots, some parts of New Jersey's major cities are home to abandoned buildings and unused lots. These cities, including Patterson, Elizabeth, Jersey City, Camden, and Trenton (the state capitol), are also home to large populations of racial minority groups. Moreover, the social conditions and issues that existed in 1967 (especially as they relate to concerns about police brutality) are not much different today in New Jersey or other parts of the nation, and we are witnessing civil unrest in other cities, for example, in Ferguson, Missouri, and Baltimore, Maryland. Some would argue that this should serve as a warning: the United States is moving in a similar manner that resulted in the most violent decade for civil unrest in American history.

### **Racial Segregation and Educational Achievement**

When examining race and racism in the state of New Jersey, two specific areas demand attention: education and housing. While other areas such as employment, politics, health, and social services deserve attention, education and housing needs provide a clear indication of the barriers caused by race and discriminatory racial practices in the state.

Despite an 1881 New Jersey law that prohibited segregated schools in the state (one of the first in the nation), segregation was prevalent throughout. The state's southern, rural counties were the biggest offenders. In the middle of the twentieth century, a state Division against Discrimination survey revealed 43 school districts, most in South Jersey, still operated segregated schools. For example, the president of the Westhampton Township Board of Education announced, in 1948, that "our plan is to have a separate school for colored children from the first grade

through high school. The reason is because the colored children are objectionable” (Douglas 2005, 156). In Northern New Jersey, the sentiments were not much different; school officials contended that integration could not work, as black children were inherently inferior and lacked the decorum to associate with white children. While the consistent, overt racist overtures that were commonplace during the de facto Jim Crow era in the North are no longer so blatant, the negative perceptions about the learning potential of black students have persisted.

Contemporary racism and segregation affect educational achievement and economic prosperity across racial groups in New Jersey. The achievement gap between whites, Asians, and high-income students, in contrast to black, Hispanic, and low-income students, has been wide for decades in the Garden State. State-wide tests indicate that the disparity appears to be greater than anticipated. Eighty percent of Asian American students and 61 percent of white students “met expectations” for the seventh-grade language arts test; the numbers for African American and Hispanic students were 30 and 35, respectively (Mooney 2015). The legacy and perpetuation of discrimination in housing and education have resulted in New Jersey consistently being at the top of the list for one of the most segregated states in the country.

Residential and educational segregation are two sides of the same coin. While the Garden State is one of the most diverse in the country as a whole, it is also intensely segregated, or as one group, NJ Advance Media, describes as containing “racial borderlines.” For example, Newark continues to be one of the most divided cities, with a large African American population that is residentially separated from both Hispanics and whites. Patterson offers another example. “Few places show as clear an example of geographic segregation as Paterson. Here, predominately African American and Hispanic neighborhoods give way to White communities the moment one crosses the Passaic River into Bergen County” (Stirling 2016).

Ethnic separation in New Jersey also occurs in a similar manner as racial segregation. For example, there has been a rapid increase in the white Orthodox Jewish population in Lakewood, one of the fastest growing municipality in the state. The white, Orthodox Jewish community have managed to create an ethnic enclave for themselves, separate from the Hispanics and African Americans living there. This has created an “ethnic borderline,” resulting in tensions between the Jewish community of Lakewood, other neighboring towns (like Toms River), and the black and Latino communities.

### **Residential Segregation: Levittown (Willingboro) and the Mount Laurel Doctrine**

Racial segregation in residential housing has always been problematic in New Jersey. In some areas, particularly in the southern part of the state, African Americans incorporated their own towns in an effort to create safe haven for their families. Examples include Skunk Hollow, Gouldtown, Whitesboro, Snowhill (now Lawnside), and Timbuctoo. These communities continue to exist and maintain the cultural continuity that allowed them to thrive for more than a century.

While segregation was not legalized in the North (as it was in the South), de facto segregation did exist; racism and prejudice were widespread. After the U.S. Supreme Court in *Buchanan v. Warley* declared racially based housing ordinances unconstitutional in 1917, some residential neighborhoods enacted racially restrictive covenants, requiring white property owners to agree not to sell to blacks; these would remain legal until the Court struck them down in 1948. In response, real estate practitioners began to show homes in white neighborhoods to whites, and homes in black neighborhoods only to blacks. This practice is known as *racial steering* and would play a prominent role in the construction of a southern suburban town: Willingboro, New Jersey.

William J. Levitt was a housing developer who built a number of successful suburban communities in Pennsylvania and New York during the baby boom era. His marketing strategy: Sell only to whites. Given his success in other communities, he had no motivation to change his disposition in New Jersey, lamenting that, “If we sell one house to a Negro family, then 90 to 95 percent of our White customers will not buy into the community. That is their attitude, not ours. We did not create it, and we cannot cure it. We can solve a housing problem or we can try to solve a racial problem, but we cannot combine the two” (Patterson 2012, 5). However, the passage of the 1968 Fair Housing Act made these actions illegal. Thus, Levitt would be judicially inspired to reconsider his practices when Willie R. James, an African American barred from buying in Willingboro, filed discrimination charges in the summer of 1968. His lawyer, Emerson Darnell, a mild-mannered Quaker from Mount Holly and future founding board member of the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey, argued that the whites-only policy was discriminatory and illegal. The New Jersey Supreme Court decided in his client’s favor and Willingboro was integrated. Less than a decade later, another race-based historical development, with regard to housing and public policy, would take place just 7 miles from Willingboro in Mount Laurel, New Jersey.

### **Mount Laurel I and II**

The groundbreaking New Jersey Supreme Court ruling in the fair-housing case, *Southern Burlington County NAACP v. Township of Mount Laurel*, known as Mt. Laurel I-1975, and the proceeding Mr. Laurel II-1983, are heralded as one of the most significant civil rights decisions in contemporary times. Together, these legislative mandates encouraged the construction of affordable housing in the state’s suburbs is now referred to as the Mt. Laurel Doctrine and greatly influenced the limitation for the use of exclusionary zoning as a means of preventing the construction of affordable housing in high-income communities nationally.

In Mount Laurel I, the court sought to redress the practice of exclusionary zoning due to the efforts of Ethel R. Lawrence and other African Americans who initiated a lawsuit against the municipality in the late 1960s. The town had been zoned for large, single-family homes and officially declared that persons residing in dwellings that were unfit for human habitation and could not afford to buy one of the single-family homes proposed would have to leave the township. Essentially, the court ruled that the township used its zoning authority to effectively



### ***The Mount Laurel Doctrine***

The Mount Laurel Doctrine was intended to legally circumvent discrimination in housing in New Jersey and has been credited for seminal rulings across the nation in respect to land use and affordable housing opportunity. Inclusionary housing (IH) is now a term to describe the measures for providing low- and moderate-income housing in relation to marketplace values. IH's purpose is to increase the supply of affordable housing and, consequently, foster economic and residential integration. In New Jersey, the doctrine shaped the 1983 Fair Housing Act that created the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH).

The COAH was charged with calculating the obligation towns were to have in providing fair share housing. Proponents argue that the legislation allows builders a way to overturn zoning laws that limit development, referred to as "builders remedy." Essentially, a builder can file suit if zoning limits the number of units on a particular parcel of land. More specifically, if a zoning restriction is set at four units, and the developer is proposing 20 to accommodate for affordable housing, they may seek adjudication to proceed. This has made way for condos and apartments, as builders do not want to have affordable housing intertwined with higher-priced market value single dwelling homes. The caveat is that if the threat to sue does not make it to court, there is no additional measure to force the builder to provide affordable housing. The builder then can utilize more dense zoning for market-rate housing. The state of affairs surrounding the Mount Laurel Doctrine prompted Brett Schundler, former mayor of Jersey City, to comment, "It's been a total failure. Builders go out to suburban areas, sprinkle a few houses in the mix and get to cut down trees" (Ingle and McClure 2009, 156).

disregard lower-income residents. This action was declared unconstitutional as the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled that developing municipalities have a constitutional obligation to provide a realistic opportunity for the construction of low- and moderate-income housing. In Mount Laurel II, the state Supreme Court went even further to rule that all municipalities share in this obligation. The Mount Laurel II case gave greater teeth to the original case in that the court established a three-judge team that would hear cases and wording that allowed for "builders remedy." This measure supported developers who had succeeded in suing municipalities that rejected development projects that included a reasonable share of affordable housing; they could receive permission to build those projects directly from the court. The ruling also resulted in the creation of the New Jersey Fair Housing Act and placed New Jersey at the forefront in the fight for affordable housing.

### **Conclusion**

Racial tensions in New Jersey continue to be tenuous. While overt racist overtures have dissipated, segregated New Jersey has many obstacles and barriers to achieving racial equality. For example, disparities in housing and educational achievement continue to exist; racial minority groups are concentrated in the poorest sections of the major cities. Moreover, New Jersey registers one of the highest levels of hate groups in the nation. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), New Jersey has maintained a high ranking for over a decade

due to the number of skinhead groups, multiple neo-Nazi groups, a record label operating in the state that produces white-supremacist music, and at least one recognized chapter of the Ku Klux Klan. However, the SPLC also points out that hate groups have been on the decline in New Jersey and the rest of the country. One can only hope for a brighter future for the state's multiracial and ethnic population.

## **NOTABLE FIGURES**

### **Basie, William "Count" (1904–1984)**

William "Count" Basie, jazz pianist and bandleader was born on August 21, 1904, in Red Bank, New Jersey. As a child, Basie enjoyed music and performance. He first studied piano at an early age with his mother, and then with a local teacher. Before the age of 16, he played in an assembly of theatrical performances consisting of several individual acts, or mixed numbers. A showcase of vaudeville performers included comedians, singers, dancers, acrobats, and magicians appeared at a local movie theater in his hometown of Red Bank, New Jersey. While Basie's preference was for the drums, at age 15, he switched to piano, exclusively. The 1920s proved to be a pivotal time in his life and career. In the early 1920s, he went to Harlem, New York, where he met many of Harlem's leading jazz musicians of the time. Between 1925 and 1927, he toured with several acts as a solo pianist, accompanist, and music director for blues singers, dancers, and comedians. Two of the performance groups that benefitted from Basie's talents included Katie Krippen and Her Kiddies, as well as the Theater Owners Bookers Association (TOBA), which booked acts on the vaudeville circuits in Kansas City, St. Louis, New Orleans, and Chicago.

While in Harlem, he met Fats Waller, who was playing organ at the Lincoln Theater, accompanying silent movies. Waller taught him how to play the organ. In 1928, Basie returned to Tulsa, after performing in other cities, and met Walter Page and the Blue Devils. A few months later, he was invited to join the band, which played mostly in Texas and Oklahoma. By 1935, he had his own band, which included men who had played with him in earlier times. The band broadcasted nightly from the Reno Club in Kansas City. Basie's band developed into an internationally known act. It was during the 1930s that the works of Basie and his orchestra made its most impressive mark on the music world, by integrating the orchestral rhythmic flow with the soloist. His combination of different elements ultimately elevated the jazz rhythm to a four-beat flow, which gave a whole new meaning to the "swing" style.

In 1950, Basie dissolved his big band for financial reasons and toured with a small group. He reorganized it again in 1952 and continued to tour until his death. He left quite a legacy for all bandsmen to emulate. From the very beginning, Basie's band was innovative and left an indelible impact upon the history of jazz and American music, via its swinging style, riffs, blues repertory, and distinctive solos. Most notable among its illustrious list of numerous popular recordings are "One O'Clock Jump," "April in Paris," "Jumping at the Woodside," and "Li'l

Darling.” His influence resulted in the emergence of numerous bandleaders during the era, including Freddy Green, Illinois Jacquet, Clark Terry, Don Byas, and J. J. Johnson. Over the span of his career, Basie receives nine music Grammy Awards; four of his singles have been inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame. Basie served as bandleader and continued to perform until his death. He died April 26, 1984, in Hollywood, Florida.

### **Still, James (1812–1882)**

James Still, born on April 9, 1812, in Burlington County, New Jersey, to two former slaves, Levin and Charity Still. His father purchased his own freedom and vowed to return to purchase the family from the Maryland slave owner. When Levin returned, the slave owner required more money than Levin could afford, and he was forced to return to his home without them. Charity attempted to escape to freedom with her children, but was captured, returned, and locked away in an attic. On her second attempt, she was successful, but only with her two daughters. The couple’s two sons were left behind. Charity and her daughters were reunited with Levin in New Jersey, where they changed names and lived in a remote area of the Pine Barrens to avoid capture and return to slavery.

The family, partially reunited, lived sparsely, and all the members of the family worked to avoid starvation. James, before the age of 10, was hired out as a laborer: chopping wood, getting rails in the cedar swamp, and making charcoal. He was also indentured to several local farmers in his teens where one of the farmers provided him with a rudimentary, educational foundation during one month in the summer over the course of the years during his employment. Still wrote, “three months’ instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic, which completed me to start out in life” (Still 1877, 3).

When Still was only three-and-a-half years old, a physician came to the house to vaccinate the children. He later described his immediate interest in medicine:

From that moment I was inspired with a desire to be a doctor. It took deep root in me, so deep that all the drought of poverty or lack of education could not destroy the desire. From that day I did not want any knowledge save that of the healing art. It grew with my growth and strengthened with my strength. My thinking faculties were aroused, and I soon commenced to practise. Among the children I procured a piece of glass, and made virus of spittle; I also procured a thin piece of pine bark, which I substituted for a lancet. Thus was the little acorn, which was intended to become an oak, thrown into the thicket, not knowing that it should ever again be seen or heard from, but there was One, unseen, who cared for and watered and protected. (Still 1877, 77)

During the later years of his indenture, Still read and learned more about medicine and botany. He also learned all he could from the Native Americans in the area. Upon release from his hired service, Still’s social and financial barriers prevented him from attending medical school.

Still met and married Angelina Willow on July 25, 1835; however, his wife died from tuberculosis in August 1838. Still later remarried Henrietta Thomas. They

had two sons, James and Joseph. After his second marriage, Still began experimenting with herbs and created a “cough balm” that successfully treated a local man. Word of his herbal remedies spread and by 1842, Still began to manufacture essences and concentrations of flavors, such as peppermint and vanilla, while also producing extracts and tinctures of sassafras roots and herbs of various kinds. As Still later recalled, pharmacists and physicians from Philadelphia began buying the cough balm.

I did not know that the time had come for me to practise. I made up some tinctures for my own family, and one of the neighbors was known to it. One of the daughters of this neighbor developed scrofula, and he had me visit her. I gave her medicine which soon cured her. I thought it no great thing, for it always seemed to me that all diseases were curable, and I wondered why the doctors did not cure them. . . . The neighbors began to call upon me, and I administered to them with great satisfaction. (Still 1877, 76)

While Still helped many in the area, others in the medical profession disparaged his work and referred to him with crude and offensive names. As challenges to his credential continued by local doctors, Still consulted with a local attorney where he was advised to sell, but not prescribe, medicine. James Still, known as the black doctor of the Pine Barrens, continued to share his herbal balms and extracts until he suffered a stroke in in 1877. In 1882, James Still died of a second stroke at his New Jersey home.

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## New Mexico

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Matthew Gritter

### CHRONOLOGY

**12000 BCE**

The estimated first settlement of Clovis People in what is present-day New Mexico

**1536**

The first possible Spanish entrance into New Mexico by the expedition of explorer Cabeza de Vaca

**1540**

The Spanish explorer Francisco Vasquez de Coronado arrives in New Mexico

**1598**

Juan de Oñate establishes the first Spanish capital of New Mexico at San Juan de los Caballeros at the Tewa village of Ohke, north of present-day Espanola; among Oñate's colonists are six blacks—two soldiers, three female slaves, and one mulatto slave

**1680**

The Pueblo Revolt temporarily drives out the Spanish colonizers

**1692**

The Spanish return and recolonize New Mexico

**1786**

Peace is achieved in New Mexico between the Spaniards and the Comanche

**1821**

Mexico, of which New Mexico is a territory, declares independence from Spain

**1821**

The Santa Fe Trail opens; running from Independence, Missouri, to Santa Fe, the trail facilitates trade between New Mexico and the United States

**1828**

Mexico bans slavery throughout its territories, including New Mexico

**1846**

The United States invades New Mexico at the start of the Mexican-American War

**1847**

The Taos Rebellion, an insurrection of Mexicans and their Pueblo allies against American occupation forces, erupts in northern New Mexico during the Mexican-American War

**1848**

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ends the Mexican-American War; New Mexico is part of a vast tract of Mexican Territory ceded to the United States by the treaty

**1850**

Congress creates the New Mexico Territory, which also includes the present-day state of Arizona

**1856**

The territorial legislature passes a law restricting the entrance of free blacks into New Mexico

**1859**

The territorial legislature enacts a slave code for New Mexico

**1860**

According to the U.S. Census, 40 black slaves are resident in New Mexico

**1862**

The U.S. Congress bans slavery in the western territories; New Mexico Territory repeals its slave code

**1863–1868**

The “Long Walk” of the Navajo and Apache occurs in New Mexico and Arizona; the “Long Walk” was a deportation of the Navajo and Apache peoples to reservations established by the U.S. government; the Native peoples were forced to walk up to 13 miles a day at gunpoint

**1863**

The New Mexico Territory is partitioned, with the western portion becoming the Territory of Arizona

**1866–1917**

The black buffalo soldiers of the 9th and 10th Cavalry are assigned to forts in New Mexico

**1870**

Dora, in the Cimarron Valley, is settled by freed slaves from Texas

**1886**

The Apache warrior Geronimo surrenders, ending formal conflict in the Southwest

## **602 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

**1889**

Fred Simms, an African American stenographer, cofounds the University of New Mexico

**1907**

Three black female students at Albuquerque High School are not allowed to graduate with their white classmates

**1912**

New Mexico enters the Union as the 47th state on January 6

**1913**

The Albuquerque chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is established

**1914**

The Home Circle Club, the oldest continuously active black social club in New Mexico, is chartered in Albuquerque

**1914**

M.T. Malone becomes the first African American to pass the New Mexico bar exam and practice law in the state

**1914**

Birdie Hardin is the first black graduate of Albuquerque High School

**1917**

Ezequiel Cabeza De Baca becomes the first Latino governor of New Mexico, and the first Latino elected as governor of an American state

**1924**

Native Americans gain U.S. citizenship

**1925**

Separate schools for blacks are legalized in New Mexico

**1930**

Romeo Lewis becomes the first African American medical graduate of the University of New Mexico

**1930**

Latino politician Dennis Chavez is elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from New Mexico

**1934**

Congressman Dennis Chavez is elected to the U.S. Senate from New Mexico

**1948**

Native Americans are allowed to vote in state elections

**1949**

The New Mexico legislature passes an antidiscrimination bill

**1952**

The New Mexico legislature enacts the state's first civil rights law



**1963**

On March 5, New Mexico ratifies the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing the poll tax

**1968**

Dr. Lenton Malry becomes the first African American to sit in the New Mexico legislature

**1970**

Blue Lake is returned to the people of Taos Pueblo

**1970**

Albert Johnson is elected mayor of Las Cruces, becoming the state's first black mayor

**1982**

Latino Toney Anaya is elected governor of New Mexico

**1999**

The State Office of African American Affairs is created

**2005**

African American Representative Sheryl Williams Stapleton is elected majority whip in the New Mexico State House of Representatives

**2006**

African American James B. Lewis is elected New Mexico state treasurer

**2010**

Susana Martinez is elected as the state's first Latina governor

**2012**

According to the Pew Research Center, undocumented immigrants account for an estimated 3.4 percent of the state's population, numbering about 70,000 individuals

**2016–2017**

Almost 20 anti-Semitic incidents occur in New Mexico, including bomb threats at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Albuquerque, verbal harassment of Jews, cyber threats of violence against Jews, anti-Semitic graffiti, and anti-Semitic bullying and slurs in schools

**2016**

Former New Mexico governor Gary Johnson wins 9 percent of the state's vote as the Libertarian candidate for president; Democrat Hillary Clinton takes the state's electoral vote by winning over 48 percent of the popular vote

**NARRATIVE****Latinos in New Mexico**

In 1954, a film about race, ethnicity, and labor set in New Mexico entitled *Salt of the Earth* was produced by a group of people blacklisted in the Red Scare of the

early 1950s. Based on the 1951 strike against Empire Zinc in New Mexico, the film portrays a group of Latino zinc miners who go on strike against their Anglo owner. Told from the point of view of a young Latino mother married to a miner, it shows how Anglo miners had taken over a small New Mexico community even to the point of renaming it Zinctown. The main character begins the film by noting that “the house is not ours, but the flowers, the flowers are ours” (<http://www.aellea.com/script/salt.txt>). However, the film also portrays the strong organizing of Latinos, the leadership of the women in the community, and even cooperation with a sympathetic Anglo. One story of New Mexico is represented in this film. However, in northern New Mexico, there is also a story of people who often called themselves Spanish Americans and distanced themselves from the conflicts over race while also participating in society. While racial and ethnic discrimination have occurred in New Mexico, Latinos have managed to gain political power. New Mexico also represents a place where Anglos arrived through conquest and economic development and brought many of the racial problems and discrimination evident in other parts of the country. It is also a place where different cultures have coexisted throughout the centuries, often in conflict, but sometimes in cooperation and community. New Mexico is revealed fundamentally as a paradox but also as a place to explore in depth many aspects of race and racism. Rather than the fixed categories of black and white often focused on in American history, New Mexico presents a unique and complicated blend of shifting racial and ethnic identities that defy easy classification.

New Mexico has a unique racial trajectory that is different from any other state. Native, Spanish, and Anglo cultures have all been part of the New Mexico story. While other southwestern states such as Arizona and Texas have substantial populations of Mexican origin, New Mexico has the clearest link with the Spanish empire. It helped to create a unique political culture in New Mexico. African Americans have a place in New Mexico, and as a majority-minority state, it continues to become more diverse, but New Mexico’s population of Spanish and Mexican origin has shaped its racial history. Anglo migration from other states, most notably Texas, has shaped race and racism in New Mexico. As a majority-minority state, most likely soon to be a majority Latino state, New Mexico exhibits the difficult relationship between race and racism. Northern New Mexican Latinos were often characterized as Spanish Americans grounded in a colonial heritage. While people of color held political power in New Mexico long before the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, discrimination has never been absent. New Mexico is the home of the first Latina governor in the United States, but it also housed a Japanese internment camp. New Mexico has a history like no other; it has not been immune to the problems of race and racism that have emerged throughout the United States.

The place of Latinos in the American racial-ethnic taxonomy has changed and evolved since New Mexico joined the United States, reflecting the varying origins, skin color, and language of people. To the South, Mexicans have embraced the idea of the *mestizo*, a combination of Spanish and indigenous origins, as a category embracing much of the nation. In New Mexico, terms such as *Hispano*, Spanish origin, and other have been utilized in various times and places. This

racial and ethnic ambiguity has extended into politics and society. As Lieberman (2005) notes, “guaranteed American citizenship by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848, Mexicans in the Southwest were largely excluded from political rights and consigned to subordinate status in the labor market through patterns of coercion parallel in many ways to the subordination of African Americans in the post–Civil War South. Nevertheless, the status of Latinos in the complex American racial palette, navigating between color-blind and race-conscious models but rarely as persistently and deeply racialized as the status of African Americans” (215). As a result, Latinos occupy a position that changes based on time and place.

Until 1930, Latinos were classified as white by the U.S. Census Bureau. In 1930, the U.S. Census Bureau created a Mexican racial classification that was strongly resisted by Mexican Americans in the Southwest and was promptly abolished. However, in conducting the 1940 census, “the Bureau introduced a series of questions that enabled the so-called Spanish population to be counted as a distinct subgroup tabulated by Spanish surname rather than race. Initially the separate Spanish population questions were used in five southwestern states (Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas)” (Hattam 2007, 105–6). Procedures were developed to more closely identify a particular population; “the Census Bureau explicitly identified two different population streams in the Southwest: Spanish-America, Spanish-Colonial or Hispano group” (Hattam 2007, 107). In 1977, the Office of Management and Budget promulgated Directive 15, which constructed four racial categories (American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, black, and white) and the ethnic category of Hispanic (updated to Latino in 1997) for tracking in federal statistics and classifications. In 2000 and 2010 censuses, this ambiguous classification allowed Latinos to identify as any of

### ***The Forgotten People: George I. Sanchez and the Latinos of New Mexico***

In 1940, Mexican American educator George I. Sanchez published a book entitled *The Forgotten People: A Study of New Mexicans*. This book illustrated the difficult conditions faced by Latinos in New Mexico, particularly in the educational system. Sanchez studied school statistics and noted that “the educational level of the Spanish-speaking population is most vividly portrayed by school statistics. . . . Generally speaking, the achievement of the Spanish-speaking child in school subjects is not only far below national standards but also below state averages” (Sanchez 1940, 30–31). During a period when attitudes toward Latinos often saw them as racially or ethnically inferior, Sanchez identified the inherent problems in the school system noting that “the explanation for these conditions is to be found in the nature and quality of the educational facilities available to these children. In the counties with the largest proportions of Spanish-speaking people, school terms are shorter, teachers are less well prepared and their salaries are lower, and materials of instruction and school buildings are inferior to those found elsewhere in the state” (Sanchez 1940, 31). Sanchez also brought attention to the fact that language was an issue. Many people of Mexican origin lacked knowledge of the English language. George I. Sanchez was an important figure in promoting education and civil rights for people of Mexican origin and other Latinos in New Mexico. Sanchez’s book is an important time capsule into the lived experience of people in New Mexico.

the four main racial groups or as “some other race.” This ambiguity is characteristic of the ways Latinos have been identified throughout U.S. history. Language, skin color, and national origin have all been considered in various venues. Unlike discussions based on the traditional black–white binary, New Mexico shows the way in which race and racism function in a world of complex and shifting classifications. By the same token, outward migration has often brought in racial attitudes typical of other regions of the country.

New Mexico provides an additional wrinkle to the complicated place of Latinos with several unique factors. Throughout this chapter, Latinos will be used to refer to the people of Mexican origin and other Latin Americans living in New Mexico. Many of them were classified as white under various forms of the U.S. Census at various times; others have been identified as indigenous and still others are newcomers to New Mexico. This chapter will look at the way people that today would be classified with the ambiguous ethnic classification of Latino have experienced discrimination and racialization in New Mexico.

### **African Americans in New Mexico**

While Latinos, Spanish colonialism, and indigenous New Mexicans have dominated discussions of race and racism, African Americans also have a unique history as well. Many African Americans moved to New Mexico between 1910 and 1915, but migrated elsewhere. Those that remained were subject to Jim Crow conditions and discriminations reminiscent of the segregated South. Segregated conditions occurred in New Mexico and southwestern states including Arizona. New Mexico’s influx of African Americans between 1910 and 1915 came searching for a better life and for opportunities but confronted discrimination. While northern New Mexican Latinos held political power unheard of for people of color, the situation for other people of color remained difficult. The African Americans that remained in New Mexico faced segregation and discrimination that lingered until after World War II. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) did work with Jewish and Latino civil rights groups to pass a comprehensive antidiscrimination bill in 1949, a full 15 years prior to the extension of national protections in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. However, the African American community in New Mexico has remained small and the discrimination experienced and the assistance given to promote civil rights have not always received attention. The establishment of the Office of African American Affairs by the state of New Mexico is one attempt to give greater recognition to the community.

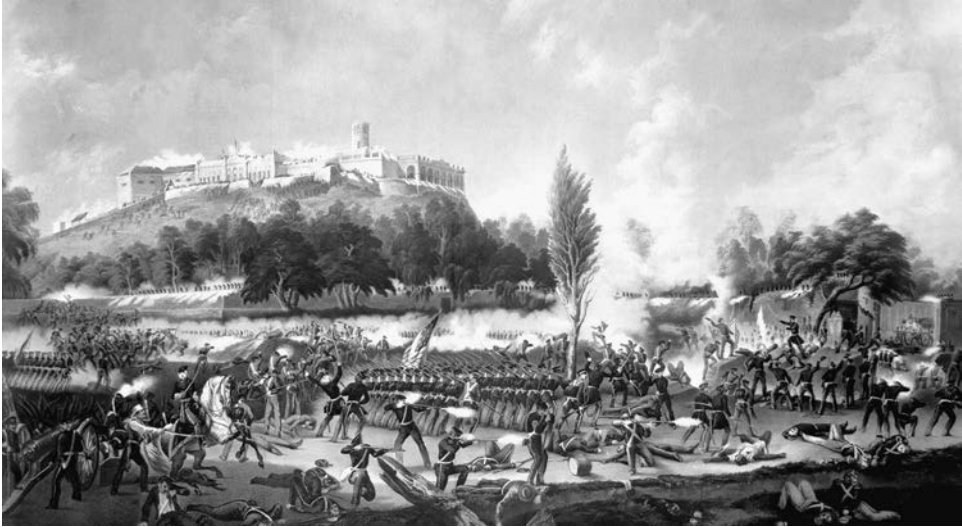
Currently less than 3 percent of the population of New Mexico is African American. Albuquerque has what has been characterized as “a long-standing black community of 19,000 or so in Albuquerque” (<http://www.sfreporter.com/santafe/article-7838-black-in-santa-fe.html>). Some observers have noted the unique aspects of New Mexico. “New Mexico is the home of the only state-funded Office of African American Affairs in the nation; the University of New Mexico has an Africana studies program. Santa Fe supports an annual Fela Festival (a celebration of African culture) and the state NAACP branch sponsors a popular

Juneteenth commemoration; Santa Fe's high altitude has made it a popular training spot for African runners; race-conscious writers such as Michelle Alexander (*The New Jim Crow*) have filled seats at the Lensic" (<http://www.sfreporter.com/santafe/article-7838-black-in-santa-fe.html>). While New Mexico's community has often been overshadowed by the large Latino population, African Americans have played a role in New Mexico for over a century. While New Mexico is unique in many ways, the racial issues and problems of the large United States remain present.

### **Indigenous Peoples and New Mexico in the Nineteenth Century**

New Mexico's indigenous people had deep roots in the region, and many communities existed prior to contact with Europeans. Thriving cultures were present in New Mexico prior to contact with European explorers and settlers. The first possible entrance of the Spanish into New Mexico potentially occurred in 1536. In 1598, Spain colonized New Mexico. During the next three centuries, New Mexico was part of the Spanish empire (with the exception of 1680–1692 after the Pueblo Revolt), and after Mexico declared independence, New Mexico became part of a new and struggling country. Native people resisted the Spaniards and Mexicans in several significant ways. This early contact differentiates New Mexico from other parts of the United States, New Mexico continues to be one of the nation's most unique states joining other diverse states such as Hawai'i in having a history that bears little resemblance to standard narrative of American history. New Mexico joined the United States under difficult circumstances and waited decades to achieve statehood.

The Mexican-American War began in 1846 and resulted in a vast expansion of the territory of the United States. New Mexico was invaded by the United States in 1846. The 1847 Taos Rebellion represented resistance by the people of New Mexico. The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo between the United States and Mexico made most of contemporary New Mexico a part of the United States, as Mexico forfeited a significant portion of its territory. It also allowed people living in New Mexico to obtain American citizenship and to maintain their land holdings. The 1853 Gadsden Purchase completed the acquisition of territory of present-day New Mexico. The people of Spanish origin and Native peoples were now part of the New Mexico Territory, created in 1850. New Mexico would have to wait over half a century before being admitted as a state. While Anglo settlement would change New Mexico, it would remain one of the only places in the country where people of color had any political power. That political power would remain with the people of northern New Mexico, often identified as being of Spanish origin. While generally classified as white by the U.S. Census Bureau, they occupied an ambiguous position where they were sometimes racialized and subject to discrimination. However, just as Mexican Americans operated in other parts of the Southwest, the Spanish-origin community would often be reluctant to ally with African Americans and would even be wary of newly arrived Mexican and Central American migrants.



The southwestern part of the United States was originally occupied by an indigenous Mexican population. At the Battle of Chapultepec in 1847, the U.S. Army decimated the Mexican Army, causing a Mexican officer to proclaim “God Is a Yankee.” Mexico City fell on September 14, and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed on February 2, 1848. (Library of Congress)

While ostensibly Latinos living in New Mexico were provided with citizenship rights, the reality soon became more complicated.

At the onset, the provisions of the treaty conferring citizenship rights on Mexican living in the ceded territories seemed clear. The evolving practices of denying or suppressing these rights would prove otherwise. In the context of the nineteenth century United States, where ethnocentrism and racism enjoyed a long history vis-a-vis white-black relationships, Hispanics had to fight for their rights. The struggle took on many forms from armed resistance to alienation with Anglo-American society. Within a generation, Hispanics learned to use the court system to challenge perpetrators who violated their citizenship rights. In general, they hoped to gain recognition of the treaty in the courts in order to protect their land and water rights. (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 112–13)

It was in these land issues that many Latinos experienced the power and discrimination of the state. “In regard to land issues, Hispanics had filed a thousand claims by 1880, but the federal government had only considered 150 of them. Many cases were never appealed beyond the jurisdiction of the district court, where it appeared Justice was final. Hispanics’ experience in the court system encouraged the belief that the Anglo-American judicial system, administered by Anglo-American politicians, legislators and judges, particularly at the district court level worked against Hispanic interests. Thus, property and voting rights of former Mexican citizens in California, Arizona and New Mexico proved vulnerable to the interpretation by district and territorial courts” (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 113). The promise of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo did not always match with the reality.

The Native peoples of New Mexico did not fare well in the new United States, after a long history of tension during the colonial era. During the 1860s, the

“Long Walk” of the Navajo and Apache occurred. In 1864, “In a forced removal, the U.S. Army drives the Navajo at gunpoint as they walk from their homeland in Arizona and New Mexico, to Fort Sumner, 300 miles away at Bosque Redondo. Hundreds die during 18 days of marching. About 9,000 Navajos reach the fort, where 400 Mescalero Apaches are already held. The tribes have a history of dispute; many arguments ensue. Food and water run short because there are twice as many people imprisoned as planned” (<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/nativevoices/timeline/332.html>). Formal conflict ended in the Southwest with the 1886 surrender of Geronimo. However, the Native population of New Mexico was never completely eliminated, and in the twentieth century, they strove to gain civil and political rights, in particular advocating for the right to vote.

The unique intermingling of Anglo, Spanish, and Indian cultures in northern New Mexico shaped a distinctive trajectory for New Mexico particularly in terms of the Anglo Spanish relationship. Often referred to as “Spanish Americans” in public life, Latinos in northern New Mexico experienced discrimination but were also able to participate politically, making New Mexico an outlier after the resurgence of segregation and restricting voting legislation ended much of African American political participation in the South. It also provides important insight into the possibilities of a diverse society. As Charles Montgomery notes,

By 1880, now lying at the boundary of American power, it was the setting in which a vibrant Hispano civilization confronted Anglo migrants and the dynamics of industrial capitalism. As is true of any clash of cultures, the confrontation laid bare the character of both peoples. Pitting Anglo merchants and bankers against a largely agrarian society, the collision brought to light the character of America’s “machine civilization” and offered critics a model to challenge it. Exposing the biases of the newcomers, the confrontation revealed the complex and contradictory nature of racial perceptions. Exerting pressure on Hispanos, the standoff made clear the diverse layers and interest of a southwestern Spanish-speaking culture. Above all, in pitting two formidable rivals against each other, the encounter prompted Anglos and Hispanos to find a common ground of historical symbols, a place where amicable memories of New Mexico’s past inevitably obscured the full story of power and loss. (Montgomery 2002, xv–xvi)

This relationship not only created opportunities for power for the Spanish Americans of northern New Mexico but also obscured the way that New Mexico was not exempt from the realities of country dominated by conceptions of race and institutional racism.

### **The Twentieth Century**

By the early twentieth century, more African Americans began to live in New Mexico. “Increasing numbers of African Americans drifted into several of the coal towns, railroad centers and lumber camps to find work. The U.S. Census of 1910 enumerated 1,628, a figure that swelled to approximately 10,000 during the next five years” (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 192). African Americans came to New Mexico primarily searching for opportunities but soon ran into problems they often encountered elsewhere. “As one African American Vado resident stated, he

moved to New Mexico seeking to ‘farm my own land, live in my own home, and put my kids through college’ like everyone else. However, 1920 census figures indicated the number of African Americans had plummeted to a mere 5,733” (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 192). The quick rise and fall of the African American population showed that while many people of Spanish origin in northern New Mexico had social and political power, other people of color were subject to a great deal of discrimination. Albuquerque continues to have a long established African American community, but their presence in the rest of the state and in the prevailing narrative of New Mexico history has been more limited.

New Mexico’s ascension to statehood in 1912, and the creation of a state constitution, showed a conflict between Latinos and African Americans that was often found in the Southwest in the early twentieth century prior to the passage of civil rights legislation. As Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez (2013) note: “the most striking part of the constitution concerned the territory’s Hispanic citizens. In light of existing and expanding segregation laws and discriminatory practices against African Americans, Hispanic lawmakers pushed to protect their rights and traditions. In public schools they protected Spanish-speaking students from segregation. Also, they sought to preserve the citizenship rights awarded under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. They ensured that voters could not be disenfranchised because of their religion, race, color, or ability to use English” (195). As a result, the Constitution did include explicit protections.

Latino lawmakers worked to ensure that the Constitution would guarantee their rights and not be subject to weakening amendments. “Equally important to Hispanics was a clause that made it nearly impossible to amend the constitution. Future changes to the document required a three-quarter majority vote in the legislature” (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 195). The institutional structure of the new state of New Mexico’s Constitution was designed to preserve their rights. After seeing the false promise of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Latino New Mexicans wanted to ensure that their new state protected their rights.

The debate over the Constitution illustrated the power of political bosses in New Mexico. “Republican Party boss Solomon Luna proved to be crucial to the passage of these proposals. It is said he had but ‘to raise a finger or an eye brow’ to influence delegates votes” (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 195). New Mexico’s Republican Party became a powerful machine and was sometimes criticized for their tactics and their methods of gaining victory. People of Mexican origin, specifically the people of Spanish origin in northern New Mexico, often gained political power through this machine. Future governor Octaviano Larrazolo helped to conceive of these voters as “Spanish Americans.” And just as people of Mexican origin in Texas would seek to claim Caucasian rights, many of the Spanish Americans of northern New Mexico claimed their formal white census classification as a way to access the privileges of whiteness. Future political leader Dennis Chavez, whose background and family were very much grounded in northern New Mexico, helped to bridge these ideas with the emerging language of civil rights at the national level.

The new state included Latinos in the highest levels of political power, although they conceived of themselves as Spanish Americans during the first few decades of statehood. In 1917, Ezequiel de Baca became the first Latino governor in the



United States. Octaviano Larrazolo served as governor from 1919 to 1921. Jerry Apodaca would later serve as governor from 1975 to 1979, Toney Anaya from 1983 to 1987, Bill Richardson from 2003 to 2011, and Susana Martinez was elected governor and began her service in 2011. Larrazolo would go on to become the first Latino U.S. senator, followed by later senators such as Dennis Chavez and Joseph Montoya. Republicans had a very strong political machine in Texas, mobilizing many Latino voters. Senator Dennis Chavez would later help to bring in support for civil rights as an important part of the New Mexico Democratic Party but would often be opposed by people in his own party.

Despite the political power held by Latinos in New Mexico many elements of racism also existed in the state. Lynching of people of Mexican origin occurred in New Mexico as well. While the practice of lynching has been well documented when performed against African American in the South, people are less likely to be aware of the other racial and ethnic groups in the United States that lost their lives. "Another type of hanging that was an integral part of territorial justice in New Mexico was the lynching. These took place when a group of men, usually described as a 'mob' or 'vigilantes,' forced their way into the jail where a suspect was being held, took the prisoner, and hanged him without the benefit of a trial. So far, research has found ninety-seven reports of lynching between 1852 and 1893, but it is rumored that the lynchings took place in New Mexico as late as the 1920s" (<http://newmexicohistory.org/people/hangings-and-lynchings-in-new-mexico>).

Unlike African Americans, whose representation in public office diminished considerably following Reconstruction, representatives from the assimilated northern New Mexico elite continued up to the highest office. And unlike other American states, Latinos on various occasions served as governor, senator, and representative in New Mexico prior to the civil rights movement. The growth of the mining industry and the discovery of oil helped lead to greater Anglo migration and political power. The progressive Republican governor Bronson Cutting was among those who sought to support and assist communities of Latino origin.

The racial problems of the rest of the United States increasingly began to be felt in New Mexico. The southern portion of New Mexico became known as Little Texas. As many Texans moved to the region, they brought many of their prejudices with them. Greater civil rights organization began to occur in New Mexico. The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and Mexican American civil rights leaders such as George I. Sanchez were active in New Mexico. Interestingly, education was a strong focus for many of these leaders, both in promoting adequate education and supporting education that included Latinos in the curriculum. Conflict between the northern and southern portions of New Mexico occurred in terms of an understanding of the place of people of Mexican origin. People who considered themselves of Spanish origin in the North often experienced little discrimination, while many cities in the southern portion of the state had segregated facilities similar to Southern states.

After World War II, the diverse group of people who had fought to make the world safe for democracy returned to a nation where discrimination endured. The 1949 passage of a comprehensive antidiscrimination bill occurred as national civil rights legislation stalled at the national level. As Gonzales notes,

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In New Mexico's own struggle for the FEP, all but one Spanish surnamed legislator voted in favor; all who voted against it were Anglo. The rhetoric in the battle was reminiscent of ethnic politics in the twenties, with opponents saying the bill originated in Russia and proponents crying out that the legislation was needed or "the heavy influx of European American residents from Oklahoma, Texas and other states" would bury New Mexicans. However, the fact was that FEP advocacy reflected a national liberal ideology and so was not pointed enough to openly challenge on the particular ethnic lines of conflict in New Mexico. As one of the legislators told Duran, "not once did we question or challenge the powerful interests in our homeland, nor did we dare mention words like racism . . . for fear we would be chastised and accused of being ungrateful Mexicans." (quoted in Duran n.d., 20, 17, 27; Gonzales 1993, 169–70; Gritter 2017, 151)

As a result, the national civil rights movement began to shape racial and ethnic politics in New Mexico. Senator Dennis Chavez in particular helped to connect the emerging possibilities of civil rights policy with the problems of discrimination faced in New Mexico.

Native Americans also sought greater incorporation in New Mexico after gaining American citizenship in 1924. "By 1947 states with large Indian populations, except Arizona and New Mexico, had extended voting rights to the nation's newest citizens. . . . While the tribes as a whole were reluctant to challenge the provision for fear they might jeopardize their status as sovereign nations, Michael H. Trujillo, a schoolteacher from Laguna Pueblo and former staff sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps, refused to be denied his right to vote. Trujillo, at the time an employee of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, became a dissident voice representing twenty thousand Indian people in New Mexico" (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 307). Trujillo worked with an emerging civil rights infrastructure and "challenged the state constitution in federal court and won. In a stunning reversal on August 3, 1948, a federal triumvirate ruled that the New Mexico statute violated the Fifteenth Amendment and was, therefore, null and void. Thirty six years after gaining statehood, New Mexico finally granted the right to vote to its Native American citizens" (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 307–8). The Native American experience continued to be difficult in New Mexico, but political and civil rights were beginning to be achieved.

On December 15, 1970, President Richard Nixon, whose accomplishments in terms of civil rights and affirmative action are not always recognized, signed legislation that returned Blue Lake to the Taos Pueblo people. In signing the legislation, he noted that "This is a bill that represents justice, because in 1906 an injustice was done in which land involved in this bill, 48,000 acres, was taken from the Indians involved, the Taos Pueblo Indians. The Congress of the United States now returns that land to whom it belongs. . . . I can't think of anything more appropriate or any action that could make me more proud as President of the United States" (<http://taospueblo.com/blue-lake/>). This represents an attempt by the U.S. government to respond in part to the long history of discrimination, oppression, and land seizure by the U.S. government.

Changes in demographics and political possibilities continued to influence and change New Mexico. The opportunities in military and science development continued to bring in Anglo out-migration, although not the same extent as in

neighboring Arizona. The 1930s to 1960s contained what scholars have referred to as the “Mexican American Generation.” These leaders, active in organizations such as LULAC in New Mexico and elected officials such as Dennis Chavez, were largely middle class, often supported assimilation, and shied away from militant tactics. The civil rights movement of the 1960s brought the leadership of Reies Lopez Tijerina. Tijerina, a Pentecostal minister, had a “rural-based movement brought a unique twist to the civil rights movement” (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 308). Tijerina founded the Alianza Federal de Mercedes, and the organization focused on the land rights from the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Tijerina’s increasingly radical tactics alienated the more traditional leaders. “Most viewed Tijerina at best as an outsider and at worst as a dangerous agitator. U.S. senator Joseph Montoya, who won Senator Chavez’s seat in 1964 shortly after the latter’s death, publicly denounced Tijerina and his organization, saying, ‘The last thing Spanish-speaking New Mexicans need is agitation, rabble-rousing and the creation of false hopes.’ Montoya further cautioned, ‘Tijerina is an outsider who sparked violence, set back racial relations and [is] an enemy of the United States’ ” (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 308).

The 1982 election of progressive Democrat Toney Anaya represented a continuation and institutionalization of the growing activism in New Mexico. As the National Governors Association noted in their description of Anaya, “His agenda as governor was based on the premise that government should provide services that individuals cannot provide for themselves. Anaya pursued his program as governor energetically, regardless of the consequences. He took a strong controversial stand opposing the death penalty; declared New Mexico a sanctuary for political refugees as a response to the turmoil in Central America in the mid-1980s; and vehemently opposed discriminatory immigration legislation” ([https://www.nga.org/cms/home/governors/past-governors-bios/page\\_new\\_mexico/col2-content/main-content-list/title\\_anaya\\_toney.default.html](https://www.nga.org/cms/home/governors/past-governors-bios/page_new_mexico/col2-content/main-content-list/title_anaya_toney.default.html)). Anaya served a single contentious term but exemplified the way in which the activism of the 1960s became part of the traditional governance structure.

New Mexico has become a so-called majority-minority state. “The 2010 census also indicated that New Mexico’s population once again has a Hispanic plurality accounting for some 46 percent of the state’s residents, followed by Anglos at 41 percent” (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 337). Other factors continued to characterize racial and ethnic relations. Conflict between the established community of northern New Mexico that characterized themselves as of Spanish origin and newer migrants also occurred. “Many native-born New Mexico Hispanic harbor antipathy toward migrant Mexican and Central American construction workers and service industry employees, fueled more by economic and class distinctions than racial differences. Immigrant labor, whether legal or illegal, poses an immediate threat to the economic livelihood of the local population especially in today’s troubled economy when jobs are scarce” (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 335).

While New Mexico’s Asian population has always been small, the state was part of one of the darker moments in the history of Asians in the United States. As “few *nuevoamericanos* care to admit that Santa Fe was host to one of several Japanese American internment camps during World War II. . . . In 1990 the Santa Fe

City Council voted to erect a monument near the obscured camp site” (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 334). A controversy would rage over building a monument with no large-scale tribute ever constructed. Gail Okawa, granddaughter of a survivor was involved. “In April 2012, Okawa returned to the state capital to cohost a symposium to honor the memory of her grandfather and the thousands of other Asian American citizens who spent the remained of World War II in questionable confinement” (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 334). Despite a small Asian population, New Mexico did play a role in the Asian American experience.

As Latinos became the largest minority group in the United States, New Mexico politics represented a unique microcosm of changing demographic trends. Barack Obama visited New Mexico during his 2008 campaign, following the surprise narrow win of the state by George W. Bush in 2004. This was a rare visit. “Not since John F. Kennedy’s brief stop in the remote, mostly Hispanic community in 1960 had a nationally viable presidential candidate visited northern New Mexico” (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 296). This represented the growing importance of Latino voters. “In his address, Obama challenged New Mexico voters, especially those of Hispanic origin” (Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez 2013, 296). As Latino voters became more important nationally, New Mexico provided interesting insights and a model for how to exercise political power.

The 2010 election of Republican Latina Susana Martinez (the first Latina elected governor in the United States) was another wrinkle in the unique context of New Mexico’s racial and ethnic politics. While Nevada elected a Republican Latino during the 2010 election cycle (Brian Sandoval), the conservative Martinez represented a potential for the party to recruit Latinos. While calls for construction of a border wall and heightened immigration restriction may make this more difficult, the 2016 Trump-Pence campaign did attempt to win New Mexico.

New Mexico presents a history of race and racism that is truly unique. As Sanchez, Spude, and Gomez (2013) note, “New Mexicans take pride in the fact that three distinct cultures have for the most part, ‘harmoniously’ coexisted for much of the state’s modern history. Nevertheless, racial and social pensions persist to this day” (334). New Mexico’s growing diversity and history of both racism and incorporation can provide for a country that continues to become more diverse.

## **NOTABLE FIGURES**

### **Chavez, Dennis (1888–1962)**

Dennis Chavez served as a Democratic senator from 1935 to 1962. Known affectionately as “el Senador,” he served as a strong advocate for civil rights in New Mexico and nationally. His role as a national leader in civil rights has traditionally been neglected. Chavez was a lead sponsor of antidiscrimination legislation in the U.S. Senate during the 1940s. In New Mexico, he served as a prominent political figure for three decades, often helping to bring mobilization efforts from the national level to New Mexico.

One of Chavez’s key contributions was to bring national civil rights attitudes to New Mexico. Northern New Mexicans of Spanish origin traditionally were

reluctant to see themselves as a minority group and were often referred to as Spanish Americans. Chavez worked nationally and in New Mexico to advance civil rights and over time began using the language of rhetoric derived from the national movement for civil rights and against discrimination. The Dennis Chavez Papers, available at the University of New Mexico, contain many letters from New Mexicans describing discrimination and telegrams of support from across the nation for Senator Chavez as he fought for federal antidiscrimination legislation.

Chavez's government service is influenced by emerging understandings of race and ethnicity in New Mexico and the way in which local New Mexico issues intersected with national civil rights debate and policy development. In his career, "Dennis Chavez served in the House of Representatives from 1931 to 1935 and then served in the U.S. Senate from his appointment in 1935 to his death in 1962. Replacing progressive Republican Bronson Cutting after his death, Chavez was a leading figure in New Mexico politics for three decades." (Gritter 2017, 147).

Chavez helped to incorporate emerging national civil rights ideas into New Mexico.

Chavez straddled traditional conceptions of Spanish origin with emerging ideas of being Mexican and Mexican American. As New Mexico grew and European Americans moved in to work in defense and technology industries he was a strong advocate for his community. In addition, Chavez participated in issue networks at the national level that sought to pass fair employment legislation as New Mexico become more racially stratified. He gained a vocabulary and a set of policy options regarding civil rights and discrimination. He provided a level of elite leadership and had an impact both nationally in the Senate and regionally in New Mexico. Chavez was able to use the emerging national language of civil rights to a changing New Mexico. (Gritter 2017, 147)

Chavez in a sense served as a bridge between emerging national civil rights politics and New Mexico.

Like many leaders of Mexican origin, Chavez continued to exhibit an ambiguous attitude toward racial and ethnic labels. As Gonzales notes,

But the term "Mexican" did get some interesting play in 1958 by the same Senator Dennis Chavez. The banner story of New Mexico's largest newspaper reported that Chavez had offered "words of advice" to newly elected Governor John Burroughs, that a "Mexican" should be named to the State Highway Commission. As Chavez was quoted, "I do hope that in his sense of fair play he will appoint so-called Mexicans to state agencies. . . . This would be a sense of fair play, for these Mexicans are the ones who really nominated and elected him to office. . . ." Chavez pushed the point: "A Mexican as such is not entitled to anything. . . . But a Mexican as such should not be deprived of anything either" (*Albuquerque Tribune*, November 6, 1958; see also November 15). This "Mexican" reference was a stunning use of nomenclature for a native son whose political apprenticeship took place in the flourishing Spanish American era of the 1920s, who moreover had married an Espinosa and thus into the state's most notable Spanish American clan. The experienced European American reporter who took the story double-checked Chavez's use of the term "Mexican." Chavez, according to the report,

“said that it was the term he wanted to use.” The ensuing controversy represented all manner of positions on the use of ethnic labels. (Gonzales 1993, 170; Gritter 2017, 152)

As a result you can see how Chavez’s own background reflected the traditional concept of Spanish Americans, but over time, he began to use the term Mexican, which would have been shocking to earlier Spanish American politicians from the 1910s and 1920s.

Chavez worked on issues of civil rights and Indian affairs, but also played a strong role in promoting a growing New Mexico in the postwar era. Dennis Chavez also played a key role in the 1960 “Viva Kennedy” campaign that sought to utilize support from Mexican Americans. Until his death in 1962, he continued to support civil rights efforts, including voting in support of the Civil Rights Act of 1957, which was the first national civil rights bill to pass in the twentieth century.

### **Martinez, Susana (1959– )**

Susana Martinez, elected as governor of New Mexico in 2010 and reelected in 2014, is the first Latina to be elected governor of any state in the United States. Her story is one not typical of many civil rights activists; she is a conservative Republican. However, her rise does show that Republicans can be successful in attracting culturally and fiscally conservative Latinos. Past recent Latino governors have ranged from the activist Toney Anaya to the establishment Democrat Bill Richardson. She joined a series of Republican governors of color including Bobby Jindal in Louisiana, Nikki Haley in South Carolina, and Brian Sandoval in Nevada.

Martinez was born in El Paso, Texas, in 1959. She graduated from the University of Texas at El Paso and gained a law degree from the University of Oklahoma School of Law. Martinez went on to serve as a prosecutor.

Beginning her adult life as a Democrat, Martinez often tells the story of how she joined the Republican Party when she was serving as an assistant district attorney. “We talked about welfare as being a hand up and not a way of life. We talked about the freedoms, the Second Amendment. And I remember walking out of there and getting into the car with my husband Chuck and saying, well, I’ll be. I’m a Republican!” (Robbins 2012). Martinez exhibits the support for personal responsibility common to many Latinos; she is far from the first Latino to become Republican in New Mexico politics. Former congressman and secretary of the interior Manuel Lujan is another example of a Latino Republican.

Martinez was one of the few Latina elected officials in New Mexico. “Prior to being elected governor, Martinez was a prosecutor for 25 years. She was the elected District Attorney for the Third Judicial District in Doña Ana County in Southern New Mexico, a position she held for 14 years. Martinez was first elected to that office in 1996 and was re-elected three times, running unopposed for the office in 2008. In addition to managing the second-largest District Attorney’s office in the state, Martinez personally tried some of the toughest cases, including

child physical and sexual abuse and child homicide” (Official website of Governor Susana Martinez). Martinez like many politicians came from a background of emphasizing being tough on crime.

After becoming governor in 2011, Susana Martinez became the third New Mexico governor in a row to have a national profile. Gary Johnson served from 1995 to 2003 and went on to become the 2012 and 2016 Libertarian candidate for president. Bill Richardson served from 2003 to 2011, gained prominence in the Democratic Party, and sought the Democratic nomination for the presidency in 2008.

Martinez’s policies as governor were notably tougher on undocumented immigrants than her predecessor Bill Richardson. Quickly after taking office, she issued an executive order empowering law enforcement in their dealings with undocumented immigrants. In issuing the order, she noted that “This order takes the handcuffs off of New Mexico’s law enforcement officers in their mission to keep our communities safe,” said Governor Martinez. “The criminal justice system should have the authority to determine the immigration status of all criminals, regardless of race or ethnicity, and report illegal immigrants who commit crimes to federal authorities. Meanwhile, it is important that we safeguard the ability of victims and witnesses to report crimes to law enforcement officers without fear of repercussion” (<http://www.governor.state.nm.us>). Her actions and rhetoric differentiated her from many other Latino politicians who promoted concepts such as sanctuary cities.

Depending on future strategies of the Republican Party, Susana Martinez could represent a missed opportunity or a sign of the future development of the party. Considered as a possible Republican vice presidential nominee, Martinez’s social and economic conservatism have conflicted with the increased opposition to open immigration and the controversial campaign tactics of Donald Trump. Indeed during his 2016 campaign, Trump, the presumptive GOP presidential nominee, accused Martinez of not doing her job when he showed up in her back yard Tuesday night for a rally that Martinez declined to attend. “She’s got to do a better job. Okay? Your governor has got to do a better job,” Trump said. “She’s not doing the job. Hey! Maybe I’ll run for governor of New Mexico. I’ll get this place going. She’s not doing the job. We’ve got to get her moving. Come on: Let’s go, governor” (Phillips 2016). While Trump did campaign in New Mexico during the 2016 general election, Democrat Hillary Clinton prevailed.

As governor of New Mexico, Susana Martinez presided over the continuing recovery of New Mexico from the deep recession caused by the financial crisis of 2008 and was reelected despite weathering some controversies. She presents a different picture of Latino incorporation into politics and differs from previous New Mexico politicians such as Senator Dennis Chavez and Governor Toney Anaya and contemporary Latino politicians such as former secretary of housing and urban development Julian Castro. The changing national political environment of her second term challenged her in many ways and left open the question of the future of Latinos as a major force in the Republican Party both in New Mexico and in the nation as a whole.

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# 33

## New York

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William B. Noseworthy

### **CHRONOLOGY**

**1626**

Dutch traders from the East India Company bring the first slaves to what is now New York

**1664**

The British Province of New York is founded; English settlement of the province dramatically increases

**1697–1794**

Because of the Trinity Church burial ban, the “Negros Burial Ground,” is founded

**1697**

The central British church, Trinity Church, bans people of African descent from being buried in the graveyard

**1741**

A notable slave revolt ends in the death of 30 blacks charged with the organization of the revolt; they are either burned alive or hanged

**1754–1763**

The French and Indian War results in significant conflict between the Iroquois and Algonquian Native American nations in New York

**1771**

One-third of the population of Brooklyn is enslaved

**1775–1783**

The American Revolution results in the manumission of many former slaves as a condition of their service

## **620 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1775**

More than 20,000 slaves are found within 50 miles of central Manhattan; 3,000 of them leave the same year for Nova Scotia as British loyalists

### **1788**

New York becomes the 11th state to enter the Union on July 26

### **1790**

Despite the revolution, there are 3,500 free blacks and 10,000 slaves in the New York City area

### **1799**

The state's Gradual Emancipation Act is passed; it states that children born to slaves after July 4, 1799, are free, but owe service to their masters until the age of 25 for women and 28 for men

### **1817**

Another Gradual Emancipation Act is passed that mandates the end of slavery in New York by 1827

### **1827**

Slavery becomes illegal in the state of New York

### **1838**

Frederick Douglass arrives in the home of Theodore S. Wright, at 2 White Street; Wright is the founder of the New York Committee of Vigilance, famous for assisting runaway slaves

### **1848**

The last unfree blacks in New York are manumitted under the terms of the Gradual Emancipation Acts of 1799 and 1817

### **1860s–1890s**

Transformation of migration patterns results in a shift of New York minority populations to being largely eastern European as Poles, Hungarians, Austrians, Russians, Germans, and Ashkenazi Jews arrive in significant numbers

### **1863**

The Enrollment Act results in de facto racial discrimination in the form of conscription, on the part of the Union; furthermore, during the second round of the draft, the class conflict transforms into a violent race-motivated riot in the streets of New York, as Irish workers attack abolitionists and free black folk

### **1865**

On February 3, New York ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

### **1867**

On January 10, New York ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing citizenship to African Americans

**1869**

On April 14, New York ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing African Americans the right to vote

**1870**

On January 5, New York rescinds its ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

**1870**

On March 30, New York rescinds its rescission of its ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment

**1880**

T. Thomas Fortune, an African American, cofounds the *New York Globe*, a paper that is later known as the *New York Age*

**1882**

The Chinese Exclusion Act bars Chinese migration to the entirety of the United States, save in a few rare cases; the Chinese community that had been growing in the 1870s remains quite nominal for the following decades until immigration reform in the 1960s

**1890**

Brownsville becomes one of the first and most significant Jewish enclaves in the state of New York: 50,000 Jews live in the settlement by 1905 representing 80 percent of the population of the area; the population of Brownsville is 200,000 by 1925 and still 80 percent Jewish

**1895**

The New York state legislature passes the Malby Law, which extends to all citizens full and equal accommodations, facilities, and access to restaurants, inns, and public conveyances

**1918**

*Negro World* is established as the lead publication of the “Garveyist” Pan-African movement, under the leadership of Marcus Garvey; the publication, known as anti-racist, also uses racial slurs to attack political opponents

**1920s**

The Harlem Renaissance puts the northern Manhattan neighborhood on the world stage as a center for the arts and intellectual innovation of African Americans

**1920**

Clark Wissler, anthropologist of the American Museum of Natural History, sits on the Committee on Race Characters; as a scientific racist, he argues that National Research Council projects ought to receive significant funding, based upon the need to address the question of “assimilation”

**1930**

Oren Lyons, a leading Native American activist, author, political figure, and highly skilled lacrosse player, is born; he develops a political career involving more than a decade of work with the United Nations on indigenous rights issues

## **622 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1934**

The German American Bund holds a rally at Madison Square Garden; in the 1940s, American democracy was widely criticized as hypocritical, given the nature of persistent racism in the climate of World War II

### **1944**

Negro History Week, established by Carter G. Woodson, is first held as a celebration

### **1950s–1970s**

During the civil rights era, New York experiences protests and multiple efforts to organize for social justice

### **1965**

Malcolm X, formerly of the Nation of Islam, is assassinated at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem

### **1968**

Shirley Chisholm is elected to the U.S. House of Representatives by New York's 12th District, becoming the first black woman elected to Congress from the state

### **1969**

Twenty-one members of the New York chapter of the Black Panther Party are arrested and charged with conspiracy to bomb several sites in New York City

### **1972**

The African American community of Weeksville, formerly the second-largest free black community in the antebellum United States, is excavated through community work

### **1972**

The Onondaga nation, in upstate New York, becomes the sanctuary of Dennis Banks, cofounder of the American Indian Movement (AIM)

### **1973**

After a successful boycott, Lloyd Elm becomes principal of the Lafayette School District; he is the first Native American principal in the state of New York

### **1976**

A police shooting results in the death of 15-year-old Randolph Evans

### **1980s and 1990s**

A new structure of impoverished urban and rural settings emerges, while scientific racism reemerges from hiding and hate groups spread; *The Bell Curve*, which featured thinly veiled scientific racism in significant portions of the publication, is given significant positive press by the *New York Times*

### **1984**

Bernhard Goetz shoots four African American men attempting to rob him; the shooting sparks a series of marches led by the Reverend Al Sharpton

**1986**

Three black men are beaten by a gang of whites in the Howard Beach neighborhood of Queens; one of the black men is killed during the assault

**1989**

Yusef Hawkins, a 16-year-old African American, is killed in Bensonhurst by a group of white teenagers

**1990**

David Dinkins is elected as the first African American mayor of New York City

**1991**

Riots and protests occur in Crown Heights after a Jewish motorist accidentally strikes two black children with his car

**1993**

The seventeenth-century African American burial ground in New York City, which was rediscovered in 1991 by a construction crew erecting a new federal building, is placed on the National Register of Historic Places and is officially recognized as a National Historic Site

**1997**

New York City Police brutally beat and sodomize Abner Louima with a broomstick

**1999**

An unarmed black man, Amadou Diallo, is killed by police while he reaches for his wallet to retrieve an ID

**2003**

A 57-year-old African American woman, Alberta Spruill, dies during a no-knock police raid

**2006**

An African American man, Sean Bell, is murdered when plain-clothes police fire 50 rounds into his car

**2008**

David Paterson becomes the first African American governor of New York upon the resignation of Governor Eliot Spitzer

**2010**

Governor David Paterson signs the Dignity for All Students Act, which seeks to create a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment, intimidation, taunting, and bullying in New York public schools

**2014**

Eric Garner, a black man, dies in Staten Island after a New York City Police officer puts him in chokehold

**2017**

The "Muslim Ban," believed to be linked to racist sentiments, sparks protests from activists and legal officials in the state of New York

## NARRATIVE

The history of race and racism in the state of New York is a challenging topic to address without weighing the narrative toward New York City, given that the population of the metropolitan area became significantly larger than other centers in the state from the nineteenth century onward. However, such an approach would be erroneous. New York is a large, diverse state with a long history of indigenous populations, enslaved and free Africans, and immigrant arrivals, mostly through Ellis Island, from every continent in the world.

### Colonial New York through the Civil War

During the first half of the seventeenth century, European invaders arrived in the region that, eventually, would become the state of New York. Explorers, who discover New Amsterdam (as it was originally named), desired to engage in trade with the Native population. There was clear evidence of conflict between the indigenous groups. These initial conflicts between different ethnolinguistic groups—all of whom were Native Americans—may very well have dated to before the European invasions of the so-called New World. Much of what would become the state of New York bordered on contested lands between the Iroquois and Algonquian. However, there is scant evidence to suggest how any conflict between the groups was “racialized” prior to the French and Indian Wars (1754–1763). The Dutch were first to colonize the area. History suggests that the Native Americans “sold their land for trinkets” to the colonists and the pattern of racial domination unfolded. However, it is notable that the first permanent resident of the Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam was a Caribbean creole, classified as a person of color by today’s standards and of African descent by the standards of the seventeenth century.

The Dutch East India Company brought the first African slaves to what is now New York in 1626. Their conditions differed from later British chattel slavery, since slaves could earn wages, marry relatively freely, and hold property under the Dutch. Still, the Dutch used slaves as a buffer against Native American raids. Slaves became human shields, called upon to protect settlements, but constantly on the front lines of all conflicts. Furthermore, conditions for slaves became worse upon the founding of the British Province of New York (1664), and British law dictated the treatment of all citizens by race until the American Revolution (1775–1783). As slavery was just as brutal in the Province of New York as it was in the nineteenth century Southern states, revolts were not uncommon, the most famous of which was the Slave Revolt of 1741, which resulted in 30 blacks being either burned alive or hanged following the investigation of the revolt’s planners. The British prided themselves on their belief in Christian practices; however, they forbade the burial of African descended peoples at the Trinity Church as of 1697, resulting in the foundation of a “Negros Buriel [*sic*] Ground” that remained open until 1794. The size of the burial ground would have been significant, given that there were 20,000 slaves within 50-mile area of central Manhattan by 1775, and by 1771, one-third of the population of Brooklyn was enslaved. Following the American Revolution, *The Book of Negroes* recorded the evacuation of 3,000

former slaves, who moved to Nova Scotia, as they were British Loyalists; others later decided to migrate to Sierra Leone and became part of the community that established Freetown.

It was not until the nineteenth century that a free African American population emerged of any considerable size. Of the nearly 3,500 free blacks in the city in 1790, only about one third were African American. By comparison, there were also almost 10,000 slaves in the area during the same period. The dynamics quickly changed, however, and African Americans made up 95 percent of the “free black” population of the city by 1820, a significant portion since slavery was not abolished in the state until 1827. Before then, there had been an active slave market on Wall Street. Leading up to abolition, African Americans established substantial community organizations and associations, including but not limited to several churches: African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Abyssinian Baptist Church, African Methodist Episcopal Wesleyan Church, and more (Weil 2004, 50). These institutions collaborated with abolitionist institutions and organizations to respond to slavery. For example, at 36 Lispenard Street, one can still find the house of David Ruggles, a famed African American abolitionist who was active in Baltimore, Philadelphia, New England and upstate New York. He founded the antislavery New York Committee of Vigilance to assist runaway slaves, and welcomed Frederick Douglass into his home in 1838 when Mr. Douglass, himself, was a “runaway.” Theodore S. Wright, who lived at 2 White Street, was another famous local leader of the day. He criticized those who condemned slavery, but did nothing to assist African descended peoples. Wright argued “to call the dark man a brother . . . to treat the man of color in all circumstances as a man and brother—that is the test,” of whether an abolitionist could live up to the meaning of their statements. At the same time, in 1838, the African American community of Weeksville was founded in Brooklyn. James Weeks, a former slave, and several colleagues, purchased rural land parcels and later redistributed to interested buyers. The settlement became the second-largest community of free blacks in antebellum America, following the largest free settlement in Cartagena, Ohio.

During the antebellum period, upper-class New Yorkers tended to think of themselves as comparatively more enlightened than those in other states, particularly those in the South. This point of view was not entirely without reason, as the state was home to many famous luminaries and literary figures, including Washington Irving, whom notably wrote quite extensively in the field of Islamic Studies, including a biography of the Prophet Muhammad. Washington Irving’s penname character, Diedrich Knickerbocker, may be most famous for his role in the narrative of Rip Van Winkle. Less known is the *History of New York* parody, a vividly written account, describing itself as an exercise in fun and creativity. It offers a revealing view regarding acceptable humor of the day for Irving’s readers. Even among the illuminated, the presentation of humor is almost too close to the actual treatment of Peoples of Color (POC) in New York in the nineteenth century.

The next inquiry at which we arrive in the regular course of our history is to ascertain, if possible, how this country was originally peopled—a point fruitful of

incredible embarrassments; for unless we prove that the Aborigines did absolutely come from somewhere, it will be immediately asserted, in this age of skepticism, that they did not come at all; and if they did not come at all, then was this country never populated—a conclusion perfectly agreeable with the rules of logic . . . but wholly irreconcilable to every feeling of humanity. (Knickerbocker 1848, 52)

The language, intended to be comedic, is representative of the attitudes of the day. Furthermore, it is notable that various populations and individuals in the state of New York had problematic relationships with numerous nonwhite communities in the nineteenth century.

The state of New York, often portrayed as an enlightened, abolitionist community, demonstrated a different sentiment during the Civil War. After the passage of the Enrollment Act (1863), all males between 20 and 45 were required to register for a military draft. Conflicts quickly emerged as one could pay \$300 to escape the draft. The nature of military service itself rapidly developed as a function of class and, *de facto*, by race. Furthermore, historical records suggest that large numbers of Irish in Manhattan did not want to serve in a “n\*\*\*\*r war,” as they feared, in paranoid fashion, that large numbers of emancipated slaves would come to the North and take their jobs. Irish-led mobs looted and destroyed the property of well-known abolitionists.

### **The Twentieth Century**

Although many non-English populations migrated to New York in the nineteenth century, at the turn of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, European migration to New York, including Irish, Italians, Polish, Hungarians, Austrians and many others, represented the lions’ share. While there was much conflict between the various European ethnic groups, white Europeans and their descendants eventually emerged as the state’s socially dominating class. This was the result of new restrictions on American immigration, which gave high preference to white European immigrants. Europeans, forced out of their countries by poor working conditions, economic crisis, and, in the case of Jewish migrations from the Pale of the Settlement, a significant eastern European refugee crisis, flooded the United States. In the case of Jews, who became the most significant recognized white ethnic community in New York City by 1910, the refugee crises were a direct result of pogroms and persecution in Europe (Weil 2004, 201). In 1921 and 1924, U.S. immigration policy introduced quotas based upon country, making it extremely difficult for specific groups to increase in size. For example, as a direct result of the Chinese exclusion policies, between 1882 and 1940, the Chinese population of the city only increased from 6,000 to 20,000. The immigration limitations shaped the eventual linguistic dynamics of that community (Weil 2004, 202).

Large Jewish settlements developed under very stringent conditions, mainly restricting them to areas outside the main thoroughfares of the city. These communities experienced a dramatic increase in size. The Lower East Side was the first significant enclave community, hosting three-fourths of the city’s Jewish



### ***Languages in the New York Chinese American Community***

The New York metropolitan area has been the most significant overseas Chinese community since the middle of the twentieth century. Chinese populations emerged in the New York City area in the 1870s and 1880s, with as many as 1,100 individuals living in the Five Points area. The passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act dramatically slowed the growth of this population. The language of the early community was predominantly the Yue dialect of Taishanese, from Guangdong. After the passage of the immigration reform act of 1965, the vernacular of the Chinese population of the state and the metropolitan area shifted, as other dialects became more popular, such as Hakka and Hokkien. Because many families were from Hong Kong and the nearby regions on the mainland, Cantonese rapidly became the standard language of the Chinese community in New York. By the 1970s and 1980s, the Taiwanese and Fuzhou languages also became popular, although these new groups spoke Mandarin as a standard between them, rather than Cantonese. Gradually, from the 1990s onward, Mandarin has been emerging as the standard language of the overseas community in New York.

population in the 1890s. Brownsville, in East Brooklyn, founded as a Jewish enclave in 1890, was home to more than 50,000 Jews. By 1905, Jews represented 80 percent of its population. By 1925, the population had grown to 200,000; the percentage of Jewish residents remained proportionally the same, at 80 percent of the neighborhood. As the Jewish population grew, so did other racial minority communities. Caribbean migrants from the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Puerto Rico, and Cuba became significant populations throughout the state, but especially in the metropolitan area. For example, during the early part of the twentieth century, the Harlem Renaissance put the northern Manhattan neighborhood on the world map as a transnational literary scene. Influenced by Garveyism, pan-Africanists, socialists, liberals, conservatives, and artists of all stripes, it was the cultural mecca of the African American community. Eric Walrond and many others graced the pages of *Negro World* (established 1918), a publication notable both for its racist and anti-racist stances. There were many commonalities and differences between the experiences of blacks and Jews; both shared histories of oppression and discrimination, one based on race, the other on religion.

Like many other states, New Yorkers struggled with the “assimilation” question. Could all groups share in the freedom and opportunities for equality that the state offered? Although the concept had emerged gradually, scientific racism, rooted in the “advancements” of many notable New Yorkers, gained fervent popularity in the nineteenth century and seemed to increase in popularity by the early twentieth century. The concept promoted the notion of the superiority and inferiority of different racial groups. For example, in the 1920s, Clark Wissler, a notable proponent of scientific racism, was an anthropologist at the American Museum of Natural History in New York and member of the Committee on Race Characters. He argued that National Research Council (NRC) projects ought to be urgently and significantly funded “since the most complex situation confronting our nation today is the assimilation and Americanization of the large and diverse racial groups now present in our population” (Yudell 2014, 58). Leading up to World

### ***African American–Jewish Relations***

Widespread press reports on African American–Jewish relations in New York State during the latter part of the twentieth century painted a picture of consistent tension and conflict, betraying a more historically nuanced narrative of the relations between the two populations. While it is true that a few Jews held slaves, most of the migration of American Jewish families dates to the Ashkenazi and Sephardi migrations from Europe during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In this context, Jewish newspapers drew parallels between manumission of African American slaves, and the Jewish escape from Egypt, further referring to antiblack violence as “pogroms” and highlighting the parallel experiences of the communities in the nineteenth century.

The American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, and the Anti-Defamation League were all anti-racist organizations. Meanwhile, Jewish activists, such as Henry Moskowitz, the cofounder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), along with the members of the Niagara Movement Mary Whit Ovington, a social worker, and William English Walling, a notable socialist, supported black causes. As Garveyism emerged and Pan-Africanism became more popular in the early twentieth century, the movement drew comparison to Zionism—both were portrayed as pan-nationalist return movements. Still, Garvey himself regularly criticized Jews in the *Negro World*.

In the twentieth century, the Jewish people, caught between a majority white Christian population and a considerably less well-off urban black population, were scapegoats for both. This did not prevent alliances, however, as individuals such as Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel were deeply involved in the civil rights movement. However, a serious rift in black–Jewish relations occurred in 1991, following the incident in Brooklyn’s Crown Heights, when a station wagon carrying Hasidic Jews killed one black child and critically injured another.

War II, the German American Bund (German American Nazis), an affiliate of the Nazi Party in Germany and a symbol of the fight for “white racial purity,” is astoundingly popular. They hosted a rally in Madison Square Garden on the eve of World War II. Protesters, criticized as violent and disorderly, wanted to shut down the gathering; however, Nazi Party members found protection with the New York City Police Department (NYPD). By the late 1940s, the concept of scientific racism was discredited due primarily to its association with the Nazi Party of Germany.

Unfortunately, scientists who continued to emphasize race as a primary factor in scientific assessment returned to prominence both nationally and in the state of New York in the following decades. For example, William Shockley, who won a Nobel Prize for developing the transistor, continued to claim that “blacks” were inherently inferior. Arthur Jensen (Berkeley) and many of his colleagues claimed that there were racial differences in intelligence based on IQ tests (Perry 2007, 16). At the same time, World War II called into question the false notions of American democracy. Did the Negro experience the same democratic freedoms fought in a war to “make the world safe for democracy”? Leaders in the African American community frequently raised the question. In an effort provide the black community with historically accurate information, Carter G. Woodson launched Negro History Week in 1944. This weeklong celebration allowed blacks to reassert

their claims to historical greatness. And in 1945, Ashley Montagu gave a lecture at the event in New York, printed in the *Negro History Bulletin*, which asserted that racism was a disease, created by white people, to maintain a color-based caste system, designed to keep rich whites in power. He characterized any notion related to scientific racism as an “infection of the mind” (Snyder 2018, 130). It seems that Montagu’s position would win out the majority position in the following decades, although the remnants of scientific racism would continue to appear, repeatedly.

The 1950s and the 1960s reflect a period of increasing racial tensions in the United States as the modern-day civil rights movement unfolded. There were challenges to the existing social order, with numerous protests and legislative actions leading to significant social gains for racial equality. Fueled by decades-long migration from the South to the North, large numbers of African Americans resided in New York’s urban centers, including Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Harlem.

In the mid-1960s, widespread rioting erupted throughout the nation. In 1964, Harlem, too, erupted over the shooting of a 15-year-old black teenager by a white police officer. According to official reports, during the rebellion, one person was killed, more than 100 were injured, and hundreds more were arrested. Those interested in joining the social movements that were notably active during the period had many outlets. There were traditional civil rights organizations, including the National Association for the Advancement of colored People (NAACP) and the Congress for Racial Equality (CORE). The newly formed Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) popular in the South was also finding supporters in the North. And while the majority of blacks were supporters of Dr. King and the civil rights movement, frustrated urban youth formed the basis of the newly formed Black Panther chapter organized in the city in 1966. Before the decade ended, Harlem again erupted in violence after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.

Over the next several decades, Harlem transformed from a high-class area once known for music, theater, and literature, to one known for gangs, drugs, poverty, and inadequate education and social systems. In addition, Spanish Harlem was home to a large population of Puerto Ricans, resulting from continuous migration that began in the 1940s. Puerto Ricans were American citizens, identified as “nonwhite” by most and treated accordingly. Like blacks, they faced oppression and discrimination. There were common elements to their struggles, but conflicts between the groups as well. However, the community was poised to fight back, as many, both the blacks and Spanish-speaking, wanted to remain in their community. There were positive transformations as well. Puerto Ricans, too, organized social, civic, and political organizations, and there were efforts at collation building. A community-led archeological excavation rediscovered the sites associated with Weeksville, the formerly second-largest free black settlement in antebellum America, and placed the location on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972.

Also in the 1970s, the American Indian Movement (AIM), an important indigenous rights organization and activist movement, worked throughout the state of

New York. Inspired by the civil rights and Black Power movements, Red Power took hold. Figures such as Oren Lyons emerged out of local politics from the reservations of upstate New York and rose rapidly on the national and international political scenes. The famous AIM cofounder, Dennis Banks, spent two years upstate, hiding from the U.S. federal government, in a sanctuary on the Onondaga nation's land. Nevertheless, the successes of the 1970s must be qualified, with the desperate poverty of urban and rural settings in the state, emerging unequally across communities of color evident in the 1980s and 1990s. Furthermore, in the 1990s, it was evident that the remnants of scientific racism had not been entirely defeated.

Charles Murray and Richard Herrnstein's book *The Bell Curve* claimed, erroneously, that African Americans have, on average, less intellectual ability than whites. The book was widely critiqued as putting forward a white supremacist argument. Nevertheless, the *New York Times* gave the book a cover story in the Sunday section, the most prized spot for the paper at the time (Perry 2007, 16). To be fair, the *New York Times* also published a report by Rick Weiss. Weiss illustrated the counter position indicated by the research of Eric Turkheimer, which showed that environmental conditions of poverty were a significant factor in the results of any form of IQ testing, although Turkheimer's position won significantly less follow-up attention (Perry 2007, 40).

It is important to note that New York City, often viewed as the print and media capital of America, houses major media outlets, including newspapers, magazines, books, and broadcasting. The leading newspaper, the *New York Times*, focuses on local, national, and international stories of interest. The *Times* has played a critical role in bringing issues surrounding race and racism to the surface for public discourse. And it is through the reporting of the *Times* that the state of New York has again raised the issue of the moral geography of the "enlightened North." For example, most recently, the *New York Times* reported on the issue of voting rights, in relation to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the ongoing problems associated with race and racism in the South. According to Elisabeth MacNamara, the state of Georgia's 2005 legislation mandating the requirement of a government ID would prove difficult for the "hundreds of thousands of Georgia voters who do not drive or are not in the military. Furthermore, for thousands of Georgian residents who do not work for the government and do not travel abroad, getting an acceptable form of ID for voting at the polls will prove difficult. Many would be required to travel "to one of only 56 locations in the state that issue such identification, waiting in long line and paying a fee or declaring indigence" (Perry 2007, 206). Overt acts of racism are problematic in the South, but is racism primarily a "Southern" phenomena?"

### **Racial Profiling and Police Brutality**

Among the most recent cases of race and racism in the United States, none has drawn greater attention than questions about racial profiling and police brutality. The state of New York, especially the city of New York, has been the focus of

several horrific acts against people of color, primarily the black and the brown. It is safe to argue that the NYPD has been one of the most violent and notorious departments in the history of the country. The 2014 chokehold death of Eric Garner sent shockwaves throughout the nation. However, the case was merely a continuation of the same department responsible for death of 15-year-old Randolph Evans in 1976. In 1997, the department made national headlines with the brutal beating and sodomization of Abner Louima with a broomstick. Unarmed Amadou Diallo lost his life in 1999; he was hit with 19 out of 41 shots fired by the police, while he was reaching for his wallet to retrieve an ID. In 2003, 57-year-old Alberta Spruill died during a no-knock police raid, because police ignored her statement that she had a heart condition. And in 2006, unarmed Sean Bell was murdered when plain-clothes police fired 50 rounds into his car. In a few cases, settlements were paid to the families; in other cases, the officers were acquitted of their crimes. Nationwide, the long-standing gains of the civil rights era turned upon its head by the 1980s and 1990s. Urban police units, especially the NYPD's "stop and frisk" practices, became extremely notorious for racist policing, while judiciaries became equally notorious for issuing differential sentences dependent on the race of the defendant (Taylor 2013; Falcón 2015; Giroux 2016, 109–23). In the twenty-first century, police brutality gave birth to a new generation of activists in the state of New York. Following the death of Eric Garner, the young and old and the blacks and the whites joined the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, with cries of "no justice, no peace."

### **State versus Nation**

Issues surrounding race, immigration, and religion collided with the 2016 election of President Donald Trump. Often deemed as the "racist president," Trump's calls for deportation and a ban on Muslims resulted in many labeling his actions as racist. The call to protect "Dreamers" is a case in point. Dreamers are young immigrants brought to this country illegally by their parents. There are, overwhelmingly but not exclusively, members of the Spanish-speaking community, granted temporary sanctuary by an Executive Order from the President Obama administration in 2014. As the new presidency increasingly threatened to remove protections for "Dreamer" immigrants, the "Sanctuary Movement," gained popularity statewide, placing New York at the forefront in efforts to protect these primarily communities of color from deportation. Ithaca, New York City, Rochester, and Syracuse all established themselves as "Sanctuary Cities," which promised that they would not cooperate with federal immigration officials. Furthermore, when President Trump issued Executive Order 13769, known on paper as the "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States," but known much more widely as the "Muslim Ban," charges of racism resurfaced. To be clear, a ban against Muslims speaks to religious intolerance; however, many viewed the targeted population as part of the nonwhite minority. (The term "Muslim Ban," came directly from a confession from the former mayor of New York City, Rudy Giuliani, who confessed that Trump had asked him for the "way to do it legally," which sparked further protests and legal battles.)

Activists, including those in the BLM movement, the Sanctuary Movement, and the Anti-Islamophobia Movement, have gained prominence in state of New York. While this is a proud moment for social activism, there is still much forward progress needed to overcome a long history of racial inequities in the state.

## **NOTABLE FIGURES**

### **Lyons, Oren (1930– )**

Oren Lyons was born in upstate New York, raised in both the Seneca and Onondaga nations of the Iroquois. He served in the U.S. Army before receiving an athletic scholarship at Syracuse University for his talent on the lacrosse field. He played for the New York lacrosse club before moving to New Jersey, and then settling at the Onondaga Athletic Club (1970–1972). He viewed lacrosse as a spiritual game. At the same time, during the formative days of his youth, he was also an artist by passion. In later life, he devoted himself to the promotion and understanding of Native American peoples, cultures, cosmologies, and ethics with his art, which advocates for peace as well as respect for the natural world. While in New York, he had been a commercial artist but in 1967 assumed the position as a faith keeper in his community. This eventually resulted in his full-time relocation to reservation land. Nonetheless, he became renowned in international settings for his advocacy. He is perhaps one of the most overlooked and yet notable individuals from the state of New York who has stood for anti-racists causes in the twentieth, and now, twenty-first centuries.

The Onondaga reservation in upstate New York would become nationally famous in the 1970s, as a sanctuary for AIM cofounder Dennis Banks (1937–2017). Banks would remain at the reservation for two years. During the same period, the Onondaga Chief, Lloyd Elm led a boycott of public schools, demanding a voice in matters of organization of local school districts, appointment of teachers, educational leadership, and in oversight over the curriculum. After the successful boycott, Elm, a former student of the local Lafayette school, became the first Native American principal in December 1973. The fervor of successful activist movements inspired Lyons, although the success of others was not his pure motivation.

Lyons joined the Red Power movement in the 1960s and was a participant in the Unity Caravan. The caravan traveled through Native American lands throughout the United States in an effort to foster cross-communal dialogue. In 1972, Lyons was a leader in the Trail of Broken Treaties Caravan to Washington, D.C. This was the movement's attempt to urge the Bureau of Indian Affairs to adhere to their treaties with Native American nations. The same year, Holiday House published his first book project, a collection of illustrations in *Jimmy Yellow Hawk*, authored by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve. A year later, he penned and illustrated his second book, *Dog Story*, also with Holiday House. He continued to be active on the national scene, working for Native American rights for the next four years. In 1977, he became part of the Haudenosaunee delegation to the inaugural World Conference on Racism. Two years later, in 1981, he traveled to New Zealand to

give a series of lectures and workshops, beginning work with local Maori land rights activists. He then went on assist with the development of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations with the United Nations, in 1982. A year later, he was a founding member of the Iroquois national lacrosse team, who then traveled to play internationally in 1984.

Lyons would take part in several meetings in Geneva and developed 14 years of experience working with the indigenous peoples group of the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations. After a hiatus from publication, he released *Wilderness in Native American Culture* in 1989, with the University of Idaho Wilderness Center. During this time, he was called to work as a negotiator during the Oka Crisis in the summer of 1990, negotiating between the governments of Canada, Quebec, the state of New York, and the Mohawk. Two years later, he addressed the UN General Assembly as an opening speaker for the International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples. In the same year, Clear Light Publications, Santé Fe, published *Exiled in the Land of the Free: Democracy, Indian Nations, and the US Constitution* with Vine Deloria Jr., John Mohawk, and others.

Lyons continued his advocacy in his written works throughout the end of the twentieth and into the twenty-first century. For his accomplishments, Syracuse University bestowed an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree; he received the Audubon Society Medal, the Earth Day International Award from the United Nations, and the Elder & Wiser Award from the Rosa Parks Institute for Human Rights. In 2010, he wrote the introduction to *Dignity: In Honor of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (powerHouse Books, 2010), authored by Dana Gluckstein of Amnesty International, which also included a forward by Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

### **Walrond, Eric (1898–1966)**

Eric D. Walrond was an author of the Harlem Renaissance. Although he was born in British Guyana, his mother was from Barbados, and his family lived in Panama. He, however, was part of the transnational black Atlantic community that formed the peak of the Harlem Renaissance. He published his most famous book *Tropic Death* (1926) from New York. His style utilized dialect in writing, as his characters would predominantly speak English, but mixed with many other tongues readily recognizable to his audience.

Walrond arrived in New York in June 1918, just under the age of 20. He told the officials at Ellis Island that he was a journalist and gave proof of \$160 in personal funds, proving that he could nominally support himself. He moved to the Brooklyn home of his aunt Julia King Nichols, in Bedford-Stuyvesant, an area that already had a large African descended population, resulting, in part, from the heritage of slaves, escaped slaves, and free folk, who had lived in the area throughout the nineteenth century. Additionally, the area featured large numbers of Jewish, Polish, and Italian families, but with few Dutch or English families. His family soon joined him in the area, as his mother, father, two brothers, and two sisters arrived quickly after his initial migration. He quickly began to write, earning \$140 per month, just above the median family income for New York City at the time, with much of the money earned used to care for his parents and siblings.

Nonetheless, within four years, he had ascended to prominence, dining regularly with Langston Hughes, James Weldon Johnson, and Alfred and Blanche Knopf.

Walrond first came to literary prominence with a piece on “A Senator’s Memoirs” in 1921, which gave a utopian portrayal of a unified Africa. Because of the nature of the thesis presented, in combination with the skill of the author, the piece attracted the attention of Marcus Garvey, whom famously presented Walrond with a literary prize the same year. His position was unique: he criticized both the black socialists on the one hand and the NAACP on the other. This won him significant attention in the literary circles of the 1920s, as an even-handed and carefully thought-out critic. He directly criticized W.E.B. Du Bois for appealing for the support of white Americans in the politics of the time, as he deemed the approach completely unrealistic. Walrond served as the editor and cofounder of the *Brooklyn and Long Island Informer*, before assuming the role of associate editor of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) publication, *Negro World*, between 1925 and 1927.

During these years, he portrayed himself as a typical Garveyite, arguing that the UNIA, in contrast to the NAACP, was a “true black” association with a definitive program of establishing black political power. Although these debates, during which critiques hurled in both directions, were over matters of policy, it was common for both UNIA and NAACP figures to launch additional critiques at authors, based on class and color. Walrond was certainly a participant in the fray. In the socialist and communist camp of the far-left were Cyril Briggs, Richard B. Moore, A. Philip Randolph, and Chandler Owen, as well as Hubert Harrison (who later joined the UNIA). The major matter at stake between the two camps was nothing more than the acceptance of collaboration with the white working class. The black socialists invariably held that since the root of racism was a class-based matter, lifting up the working class would lead to black liberation. The UNIA, including Walrond, spoke plainly, frequently referring to this position as delusional. They believed that the only way for blacks to attain liberation was for them to reach out and grab it for themselves. In the debates, Walrond’s approach emerged as notable. In the 1921 essay “Between Two Mountains,” he would play the NAACP and black socialists against each other. He referred to Du Bois as a “sphinx,” and “sneering god,” who “gazes at the sublime prospect of a warless world,” while “Leninists” were just “parading their intelligence” (Davis 2015, 57–58). In short, both groups had words and intellect, but no action.

However, in 1927, the *Negro World* demoted Walrond over a dispute with Garvey and other leaders and dissolved all ties with the UNIA. Walrond moved to the National Urban League’s publication, *Opportunity* magazine, which aimed to promote African American contributors in the artistic and political scenes of the 1920s. He regularly contributed to the *Smart Set*, the *New Republic*, and *Vanity Fair*, in addition to his substantial contributions to *Negro World*. In 1927, the same year that Duke Ellington began his career in the city and the Harlem Globetrotters founded, Walrond published one of his most famous essays, “City Love.” The following year, his work resulted in a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship for the field of fiction. He would later meet Garvey in London, in 1935, and would leave that meeting on better terms, than the initial time together in the 1920s.



Following the Harlem Renaissance era, Walrond left New York for England in the 1930s. He collapsed and died in London in 1966 at the age of 67.

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## North Carolina

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Na'im Madyun

### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **1550**

About 100,000 indigenous people are estimated to be living in the area of present-day North Carolina

#### **1653**

The colony of Carolina is founded by Virginia colonists

#### **1663**

King Charles II designates eight supporters as lord proprietors over the land of Carolina

#### **1691**

Thomas Jarvis is appointed as deputy governor over the northern part of the colony; Phillip Ludwell is declared Carolina's first governor

#### **1711–1715**

The Tuscarora War leads to the migration of the Tuscarora tribe to New York and the killing or enslaving of approximately 900 indigenous people

#### **1711**

Cary's Rebellion erupts when Deputy Governor Thomas Cary refuses to acknowledge Edward Hyde as the new governor of the colony

#### **1715**

First slave codes of North Carolina are enacted; slaves are required to carry a ticket from their master when leaving the plantation

#### **1729**

North Carolina reaches a population of approximately 6,000 slaves

**1741**

Additional slave codes are enacted; no slave is allowed to raise horses, cattle, hogs, or sheep and no slave can hunt or be armed in any way whatsoever

**1769**

Johann Samuel becomes the first black Moravian in North Carolina; initially a slave, Samuel is emancipated in 1800

**1774**

The punishment for the killing of a slave changes from replacement of property value to imprisonment

**1789**

On November 21, North Carolina becomes the 12th state to enter the Union

**1790**

The population of slaves in North Carolina reaches approximately 101,000

**1798**

George Moses Horton, the first black poet to be published in the southern United States, is born in North Carolina

**1810**

The population of slaves in North Carolina reaches 169,000

**1823**

Although not applicable for assault, the North Carolina Supreme Court rules that the murder of a slave could be punishable by common law

**1830**

Additional slave codes are enacted; for example, no slave is to teach another to read

**1831**

Further additions to the state slave codes are enacted; for example, no slave is to go at-large as a freeman

**1831**

Omar Ibn Said, a well-educated slave from North Carolina, publishes his autobiography

**1847**

Israel Braddock Abbot, a freeborn black carpenter who involved himself in local politics, is born in New Bern

**1857**

Hinton Rowan Helper publishes *The Impending Crisis of the South: How to Meet It*

**1861**

Harriet Jacobs publishes *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

**1861**

On May 20, North Carolina secedes from the Union

## **638 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

**1865**

James City becomes one of the largest refuges for blacks in North Carolina

**1865**

Shaw University, the oldest of 12 North Carolina historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), is founded

**1865**

On December 4, North Carolina ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

**1866**

On December 14, North Carolina rejects the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution assuring citizenship to African Americans

**1868**

On July 4, North Carolina ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment and is readmitted to the Union

**1869**

On March 5, North Carolina ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting black men the right to vote

**1895**

Three black investors establish the first of several businesses that will form the foundation of Black Wall Street

**1898**

Charlotte Hawkins Brown, a black author and educator, is born in Henderson

**1898**

A white supremacy campaign strategy is launched in North Carolina

**1898**

The Wilmington Massacre, a race riot in Wilmington, leads to more severe racial segregation and further restriction of African American voting rights

**1900**

The newly enacted Suffrage Amendment to the North Carolina Constitution includes a poll tax and a literacy test meant to restrict black voting rights

**1920**

The poll tax in the Suffrage Amendment to the state constitution is repealed due, in part, to its impact on white citizens

**1921**

The Division of Negro Education is established in North Carolina

**1928**

The North Carolina Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers is formed

**1938**

Responding to a state ban against showing blacks in film on an "equal social basis," the Greensboro Theater boycotts begin

**1942**

The Durham Manifesto is published and articulates an anti-segregationist stance

**1951**

Four black students attend law school at the University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill

**1953**

North Carolina officially recognizes the Lumbee Indians

**1957**

Ella Baker of North Carolina helps to form the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)

**1958**

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) forces the displacement of the Lumbee Indians

**1960**

Joseph McNeil, Franklin McCain, Ezell Blair Jr., and David Richmond sit at the whites-only section of the Woolworth's lunch counter

**1960**

Ella Baker helps to form the Southern Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)

**1961**

Ella Baker helps to coordinate the first of the Freedom Rides

**1962**

the Freedom Highway campaign begins in Durham and Greensboro

**1963**

The Freedom Movement begins in Williamston

**1968**

After the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, rioting occurs in Wilmington

**1969**

In Chapel Hill, Howard Lee becomes the first black mayor of a predominately white city in the South

**1970**

Vietnam veteran Henry Marrow is shot and beaten to death for making an inappropriate comment to two white women in Oxford; the incident initiates a race riot

**1972**

Floyd McKissick secures a \$14 million bond from the Department of Housing and Urban Development to create Soul City in rural North Carolina

**1973**

Henry Ward Oxendine becomes the first American Indian to serve in the North Carolina General Assembly

**1979**

At a Death to the Klan March in North Carolina, KKK and the American Nazi Party members have their trucks hit; the members fire into a crowd of Communist Working Party marchers

**1982**

Led by Reverend Ben Chavis of North Carolina, a national campaign against environmental racism begins

**1983**

Harvey Gantt becomes the first black mayor of Charlotte

**1986**

The Meherrin Indians are recognized by the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs

**1989**

On May 3, North Carolina ratifies the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing poll taxes in federal and state elections; the amendment took effect in 1964

**1990**

Senator Jesse Helms's reelection campaign sends over 125,000 postcards to residents in predominately black districts with inaccurate information regarding voting eligibility accompanied by the penalties for ineligible voting

**1993**

U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Shaw v. Reno* places scrutiny on redistricting based on race; Justice Sandra Day O'Connor writes that the North Carolina redistricting plan resembles political apartheid

**1997**

The North Carolina General Assembly restores state recognition for the Indians of Person County after inadvertently removing the recognition in 1970

**1998**

The KKK holds a rally in Henderson; the Southern Poverty Law Center reports 21 organized hate groups headquartered in North Carolina, giving it the rank of no. 4 in the nation for such groups

**2002**

The North Carolina State Board of Education begins a review of the appropriateness and impact of American Indian mascots; by 2005, 40 percent of the schools with Indian mascots change their names

**2006**

Three white Duke lacrosse players are falsely accused of raping a black woman; Steven Miller, who would later become a senior White House advisor under President Donald Trump, strongly defends the three players in the local Duke newspaper and gains national attention

**2006**

Richard Spencer, a member of the Conservative Union group works with Steven Miller at Duke on an immigration policy and joins the lacrosse debate; Spencer drops out of college and becomes a full-time writer for the *American Conservative*, and a leading voice in the alt-right movement

**2009**

North Carolina implements the Racial Justice Act to allow death row inmates to file for a reduced sentence to life in prison if they can prove their death sentencing was influenced by race

**2011**

William Barber, the president of the North Carolina National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), states that Tea Party extremists have declared war on African Americans

**2011**

Representative Stephen LaRoque of Lenoir calls William Barber a racist

**2013**

The United State Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals overturns North Carolina's Voter ID Law for targeting African Americans

**2015**

Bree Newsome takes down the Confederate flag after scaling the North Carolina statehouse flagpole

**2015**

North Carolina's governor signs a bill banning state cities from adopting sanctuary policies for undocumented immigrants

**2017**

The U.S. Supreme Court rules that the state's congressional districts relied on racial gerrymandering

**NARRATIVE**

In 1984, James Baldwin delivered a speech to a University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill audience of approximately 1,500. He spoke on how racism in the United States makes whites feel more human by dehumanizing blacks. His 1984 comments were similar to his civil rights era critiques, with an additional dimension regarding the toxicity of racism. Baldwin conveyed to the North Carolina audience that whites are possibly more damaged by racism than their counterparts. The argument is that whites are in need of reconciling the internal moral and psychological tensions resulting from allowing history to function as their sole creation in which they are positioned as a morally superior collective, yet directly benefitting from and sanctioning racial subjugation. Whites must ask themselves: "Who is Sambo and who is Scarlett O'Hara really?" Baldwin argued that during the 1960s, whites began to realize that they were falling into the

very trap they laid for blacks. A view into a racial history of North Carolina is a model case to examine Baldwin's racial identity trap.

### **North Carolina: The Founders**

Virginia colonists founded the colony of Carolina in 1653. By the late 1660s, it became clear that governance over the entire Carolina region was time consuming and complex. In 1691, Thomas Jarvis gained appointment as deputy governor over the northern part of the colony, while Phillip Ludwell was declared Carolina's first governor.

The appointment of the deputy governor was not only a recognition of the complexity in governing all of Carolina, but also the geographic and demographic differences between the northern and southern regions. The northern settlements consisted of more swamp and less farming territory. Layered upon the geographic difference was a demographic in the northern region. Politicians viewed residents as lazy lubbers, a refuge of waste people, lacking the ability to understand their own interests and function without any governing structures.

In 1706, an opposition challenge to Deputy Governor Thomas Cary resulted in a push for him to leave office, due to his strong political and historic ties with the South Carolina region and the Church of England. For two years, Cary refused to give up his seat, thus outlasting the political resistance. However, the disarray in the government led to serious economic challenges and allowed for additional social strain on an already "lazy" population. In 1710, Governor Edward Tynte commissioned Edward Hyde to be the first governor of North Carolina. Unfortunately, Tynte died shortly after commissioning Hyde, and documentation of the agreement could not be produced. Unable to rely on the honor of Edward Hyde's claim, Deputy Governor Cary refused to acknowledge the change in governance and led to rebellion. Months of fighting ensued until Hyde was finally able to end Cary's rebellion in September 1711. An already ineffective and struggling region was further weakened by Cary's rebellion. In addition, tensions between the indigenous people of the land, the Tuscarora Indians of Central North Carolina, heightened. Coexistence between the Tuscarora and the North Carolinians involved so much dissonance that in 1710 the Tuscarora Indians petitioned the Pennsylvania government for relocation so that their children could play without fear.

Years of confiscating land, spreading disease, and selling Tuscarora family members into slavery led to the first of several coordinated attacks by the Tuscarora Indians. On September 22, 1711, between 120 and 130 settlers were killed in an attack. The acting governor of North Carolina characterized the 1711 Tuscarora attack as one without cause. This sentiment was further reflected in the letters of Colonel Barnwell of the colonial militia. The Tuscarora eventually signed a peace treaty in 1715, shortly after a battle that resulted in the killing, capturing, and fleeing of over 950 Tuscarora Indians. The loss of life, the displacement of families, and the inability to coexist must be examined alongside the sentiment of "without cause" reflected in Colonel Barnwell's letters, a sentiment fundamentally aligned with elements of James Baldwin's 1984 assertion.



The narrative of North Carolina's history was written from the pen of white settlers who saw themselves as struggling to live out their dreams in the midst of poverty and poor governance. Their struggles were compounded by Natives who were not only unwilling to share the land, but also trying to harm their already vulnerable families. To believe the Tuscarora attack was without cause required a belief that the dehumanizing treatment of the Tuscarora was in some ways appropriate. Whether this was a narrative believed by all of the North Carolinians is less important than the reality that this historicized narrative is what was bequeathed. About four days before the start of the Tuscarora attack, English explorer and historian John Lawson was killed while on Tuscarora land. He lived without conflict for years but was arguably a victim of a people committed to attacking the white settlers. Before the Tuscarora attack, John Lawson wrote his observations of the North Carolina Indians:

[They were] really better to us than we have been to them, as they always freely give us of their victuals at their quarters, while we let them walk by our doors hungry, and do not often relieve them. We look upon them with disdain and scorn, and think them little better than beasts in human form; while with all our religion and education, we possess more moral deformities and vices than these people do. (Rights 1957, 44)

Despite their civility and humanity, the North Carolina Indians were arguably not treated as human. In 1838, the Cherokee Indians were forcibly removed from the western part of North Carolina and the surrounding lands. This treatment occurred even though the “beasts in human form” narrative was difficult to apply. Many Cherokee Indians converted to Christianity or developed cordial relationships with whites in part due to missionary efforts and the presence of the Moravian Church. The intelligent and “civilized” nature of the Cherokee, who debated their rights and desires with members of Congress, challenged the savage narrative many government officials and settlers held. The Cherokee were among a few other “civilized” tribes in the southeastern part of the United States who were intentional about adopting practices of whites in order to nonviolently protect their land. Government officials felt incapable of preventing settlers from continuing to take and settle on Cherokee land especially after gold was found in the northern Georgia region during the late 1820s. Even though many efforts were employed since the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, government officials were unsuccessful in convincing Indians to relocate west of the Mississippi, particularly the Cherokee. By even white standards, the Cherokee were not behaving as savages, yet their removal was deemed appropriate.

After imprisoning Chief Ross and identifying a small segment of the Cherokee nation that was not part of the Cherokee National Council, the Treaty of Echota was signed in 1835 to orchestrate the relocation. Many Cherokee “volunteered” to leave, but a large portion remained until President Van Buren sent troops in to complete the removal. One Confederate colonel, reflecting back on his volunteer efforts during the removal, wrote:

I fought through the Civil War and have seen men shot to pieces and slaughtered by the thousands, but the Cherokee removal was the cruelest work I ever knew. (Rights 1957, 195)

From Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, and North Carolina, over 16,500 Cherokee were removed from their homes, resulting in 81,000,000 acres of land ceded to the government. Although several hundred Cherokee were able to escape into the mountains of North Carolina, 3,600 Cherokee were officially removed from the state. As many settlers saw it, they were only struggling to live out their dreams of owning land and raising a family with good civilized and Christian values. However, this “struggling to live” narrative existed alongside an established practice of racial subjugation. Settlers would receive additional land to live out their dreams if they chose to emigrate slaves. By 1729, North Carolina had approximately 6,000 slaves. The emerging system of enslavement was brutal in the state, enforced by legislative slave laws. Slaves, stripped of the basic human rights, were treated like property, denied opportunities for intellectual development, and prohibited from free movement from one place to another. In 1790, there were 100,783, and by 1810, there were 168,824. For whites to attach their livelihood to a system that required the dehumanization of a people who at times actually appeared “human” had to cause a few existential dilemmas. Ironically, among the enslaved (and a spiritual ancestor of James Baldwin) was George Moses Horton who was born in 1798. He voiced the despair of the victims both slaves and free.

Due to the location of his plantation, George Moses Horton would become a regular visitor to the nearby University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He was known to sell original poetry on the campus and could produce new pieces upon demand. He became the first black man to publish a book in the South and one of the preeminent black poets of the nineteenth century. Horton would publish three books, yet remained a slave. After the Civil War, he migrated to Pennsylvania and later settled in Liberia to live out his life. Reflecting on his journey, he wrote:

What sudden ill the world await,  
 From my dear residence I roam  
 I must deplore the bitter fate  
 To straggle from my native home  
 Alas! Sequestered, set aside,  
 It is a mournful tale to tell;  
 Tis like a lone deserted bride  
 That bade her bridegroom fare thee well.

The George Moses Horton poem entitled, “The Southern Refugee,” captures the socially forced movements of many blacks and the accompanying painful sacrifices.

In an earlier example, in 1863, Union forces sieged a Confederate plantation owned by Colonel Peter G. Evans that included 90 slaves. This settlement became one of the largest refuges for blacks in North Carolina and was named James City after the Civil War. Up to 3,000 black residents cultivated the land, started business and established churches. In 1867, the land was granted to the family of Colonel Peter G. Evans who sold it to Mary and James Bryan. The Bryans evicted many black residents who settled the town, and few blacks chose to remain to maintain the institutions they founded. An elegant, yet complex lure within the

Baldwin trap was the construction and existence of social structures that supported the development of blacks yet still recognized them as socially separate from whites.

### **The Construction of Black Institutions**

The state of North Carolina is significant when one examines the racially segregated society that arose in the South following the Civil War. Years of enslavement coupled with the emergence of Jim Crow laws required blacks and whites to coexist in two separate social spheres. Moreover, there was a need to construct separate social institutions, perhaps, none most important than educational centers and institutions of higher education. North Carolina is home to 12 historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

Founded in 1865, Shaw University is the oldest of the 12 institutions and the first HBCU in the South. Shaw University has the distinction of being one of the first universities in the nation with a four-year medical school and also the first HBCU to admit women. Fayetteville State University followed Shaw University, in 1867, and functioned as a training institute for black teachers. Also founded in 1867, Barber-Scotia College began as an institution to train women to become teachers and social workers. Barber-Scotia College was among the first North Carolina institutions to admit students without regard to race while also becoming a coeducational institution.

Located in Charlotte, North Carolina, Johnson C. Smith was founded in 1867 by Presbyterian leaders and has the distinction of being the first HBCU in the South to offer professional courses in education. Johnson C. Smith was also the first southern four-year institution with a black professor and a black president. The Freedman's Commission of the Protestant Episcopal Church partnered with local religious leaders to found St. Augustine as an institution for former slaves in 1867. St. Augustine was the first HBCU to develop on-campus commercial radio and television stations. In 1873, Bennet College was founded as a school for freed slaves. In 1926, Bennet College became an institution exclusively for women and, in 1955, the first HBCU with a black female president.

Exclusively for clergy in the African Methodist Church, missionaries founded Livingstone College in 1879. The original vision of the school was to educate blacks in both academic and real-world situations to serve the black community. Founded in 1886, Kittrell College began as a normal and industrial school for African American youth. Over time, Kittrell College also operated as a high school and junior college. North Carolina Agricultural and Technical was established as an agricultural and mechanical college in 1891. Although originally in Raleigh, it was relocated to Greensboro in 1893. From 1901 until 1928, admissions focused exclusively on men.

Founded in 1891, Elizabeth City State University's mission was specifically to train black teachers for North Carolina. Students who were from North Carolina and intended to teach were not charged tuition fee in the early 1900s, while students not fitting the criteria were charged upward of \$18.00 in 1927. Lastly, Winston-Salem State University began as a one-room schoolhouse in 1892. A significant

contribution given for the founding of Winston-Salem came from the local black community. It has the distinction of being the first black school to grant elementary education degrees.

In addition to the development of places of higher learning, there also existed in North Carolina one of the pioneering institutions for the support of black orphans. Started as the Grant Colored Asylum in 1883, Central Children's home of North Carolina impacted countless lives. It served as many as 300 orphans at one time and was placed on the National Register for Historic Places in 1988. North Carolina was also home to the only tuberculosis facility in the South, specifically for blacks. The construction and existence of these institutions in North Carolina was a partial testament to black capacity, as well as, in some ways, white compassion to those formerly enslaved. However, throughout the nineteenth century, North Carolina struggled to transition to a moral, progressive, post-Civil War state that could also maintain the power and social comforts generated during slavery.

### **African American Achievement**

Under the yoke of racist practices and discrimination, African Americans committed themselves to strive for excellence. There were gains in education, politics, literature, and social and economic development. For example, Israel Braddock Abbot was a free black who was a skilled carpenter, labor organizer, and orator served in the state legislature as a Reconstruction Republican for the state of North Carolina. Abbot ran for the U.S. Congress in 1886 but was defeated by Democrat Furnifold Simmons. The accomplishments of Charlotte Hawkins Brown were particularly noteworthy given the period of darkness that would follow from Abbot's loss to Simmons. Later, in 1895, three black investors would establish the first of several businesses that would form the foundation of Black Wall Street. Born in 1898 in Henderson, North Carolina, Brown emerged as a nationally renowned educator. She led the establishment of the Palmer Missionary Institute, which developed many of the more successful black citizens of North and South Carolina. In 1919, she published, *Mammy: An Appeal to the Heart of the South*. It was a novella, offering a critique on the South for its dependency on domestic help from black women, but its unwillingness to apply humanity to the dependency. The main character of the novella dies in a snowdrift on her way to make biscuits for her boss. However, from the period of emancipation and throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the strides toward black achievement ran parallel to the ongoing campaign for white supremacy.

### **The White Supremacy Campaign**

In 1857, Hinton Rowan Helper wrote an influential text, *The Impending Crisis of the South: How to Meet It*. The popular book, banned in North Carolina, influenced the victory of Abraham Lincoln. Historians remember Helper as an abolitionist who fought against slavery; however, he was more of an advocate for the

economic development and sustainability of poor whites. Helper felt that slavery posed a direct threat to white labor. His position was clear on blacks being inferior. This complex abolitionist role of Helper reflected a pervasive, subconscious anxiety regarding the capacity of a critical mass of blacks. The presence of the anxiety in part provides a partial explanation for the identity trap Baldwin referenced. To rationalize concerns of a large black presence and to morally excuse their racial subjugation, whites became intentional and explicit about the negative construction of the black identity.

In the late 1800s, Republicans and Populists of North Carolina agreed to split the ballot for elections in a political pact coined Fusion. The Fusion pact effectively combined the electoral power of blacks and poor whites in the state of North Carolina. The strategy led to a sound defeat of the Democratic-controlled legislature in 1894. The strategy worked again in 1896. As a result, more liberal election laws were passed that further strengthened the electoral base of both constituent groups. In the months leading to the election of 1898, Democratic chairman Furnifold Simmons decided to launch a campaign strategy to sever the Fusion strategy of the Republicans and Populists. The strategy was to simply seed, cultivate, and harness white supremacy beliefs, leanings, and desires. The campaign unapologetically stated that only whites were fit to hold elected office. It declared that North Carolina was in danger of becoming a Negro state and the Democratic Party was the true party for white men. One of the leaders within this movement was future North Carolina governor Charles Aycock. With strong argumentative and oratorical skills, Aycock eventually became the voice of the Democratic Party's white supremacy campaign. Newspapers became a powerful medium for generating and cultivating white supremacy beliefs. Cartoons and editorials depicted blacks as dangerous elected officials who would use their positional power to seduce white women and discriminate against white men. Narratives were developed to justify methods for socially controlling the very same danger that was socially constructed.

One particularly popular means of socially controlling the danger was the practice of lynching. Before 1890, the documented black lynchings disproportionately included blacks at a ratio of 4:1. In North Carolina, lynching, customarily, was used to control deviations from social expectations and to maintain social and sexual boundaries between whites and blacks. For example, in August of 1869, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) lynched Jefferson and Daniel Morrow, two African American farm workers from Orange County. They were charged with barn burning and insulting white women. In December 1869, Cyrus Guy was accused of making a snide remark to a white woman. He was first cut so that his blood could be used as ink for writing his punishment. He was hanged at a public intersection. In July 1888, John Humphreys was accused of assaulting a 13-year-old white farm girl outside Asheville. Even though he did not fit her original description, 20–30 men who were never identified, pulled Humphreys from a jail and lynched him. After 1890, the national ratio of documented lynching increased to six blacks for every one white.

In December 1894, Dick Wofford was accused of raping an 18-year-old white woman in Polk country. He was acquitted of charges, but a mob formed and forced

him to flee to a black town in South Carolina. He was later found and hanged near the North Carolina border. In April of 1896, Pastor Robert Chambers was accused of attempting to use chloroform on a white woman with criminal intent in the small town of Cranberry. A group of white men tied him to a tree and shot him until he died.

In 1898, women's activist Rebecca Felton once argued that lynching of a thousand a week would be justifiable if it led to the protection of white women from ravenous beasts. In 1898, when a black newspaper, the *Wilmington Daily Record*, challenged the legitimacy of lynching as a means of controlling black men, Democrats reprinted and published the editorial throughout the state under headlines of vile slander. These reprints continued in every Democratic newspaper issue until the day of the 1898 elections. Accompanying the media campaign were armed men dressed in red shirts marching through predominately black neighborhoods to scare citizens and suppress voter turnout. Even though the 1898 campaign was successful in removing many Republicans from office, Wilmington, North Carolina, remained a Republican city with a strong black population.

On November 10, 1898, former Confederate officer Alfred Waddell led a well-armed group of white citizens into the city of Wilmington and burned down a local black newspaper, killed a few dozen black citizens, chased many other black residents into nearby swamps, and forced the Republican mayor and city council members to resign.

The 1898 white supremacy campaign normalized the use of media to influence the narrative of blacks as dangerous in general and as unfit for government. The campaign also legitimized the value in taking the power of the black vote and using white supremacy to harness and regulate it as its own political power.

In 1899 leading into 1900, Charles Aycock led the movement to amend the North Carolina Constitution by placing an education qualification and a poll tax on suffrage. All voters were required to pass a literacy test. Since slaves were not allowed to read, few black citizens at the time were literate. However, many whites were also illiterate. The Suffrage Amendment included two key exceptions to voting eligibility to account for illiterate whites.

1. If the potential voter was already eligible to vote before 1867, he could vote. Since the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was not passed until 1869, few black citizens were eligible to vote prior to 1867.
2. If the potential voter was a descendant of an eligible voter regardless of educational qualifications, he could vote.

Even though the legislation was proposed by the Democratic platform, many whites were critical and grew concerned about this proposed amendment until Aycock delivered his speech on April 16, 1900, shortly after accepting the Democratic nomination for governor. Aycock declared:

It was drawn with the deliberate purpose of depriving the Negro of the right to vote, and of allowing every white man to retain that right. And I tell you now and here, did I believe that it would cause the oppression of a single man, or deprive one white

man, however ignorant or humble, of his suffrage, I would not support it. On the contrary, its passage will mean peace to the land, it will mean an end to an era of crime and lawlessness. (Connor and Poe 1912, 81)

As late as 1948, the registered black voting population in the state of North Carolina was only 15 percent. Interestingly, leaders of the white supremacy campaign were recognized and historicized for bringing order, pride, and economic prosperity to the state of North Carolina. The unspoken belief was that the white supremacy campaign was necessary and appropriate for progress. Aycock, in particular, became memorialized as the education governor due to his strong commitment to funding education and a leader in the Progressive Era. Although funding education was a priority, it came at the expense and as a consequence of a disenfranchised black population that ironically supplemented the education movement with a disproportionate share of the suffrage taxes. After taking office, Aycock softened on his white supremacy rhetoric and shared in a 1903 speech to the North Carolina society a statement that hauntingly aligns with Baldwin's declaration of the identity trap capturing the wrong "animal."

As a white man I am afraid of but one thing for my race and that is that we shall become afraid to give the Negro a fair chance. The first duty of every man is to develop himself to the uttermost and the only limitation upon his duty is that he shall take pains to see that in his own development he does no injustice to those beneath him. This is true of races as well as of individuals. Considered properly it is not a limitation but a condition of development. The white man in the South can never attain to his fullest growth until he does absolute justice to the Negro race. (Connor and Poe 1912, 163)

### **Race in North Carolina at the Turn of the Twentieth Century**

From the 1900s to the 1960s, race was complex within the state of North Carolina. The state was perceived as progressive, racially tolerant and Christian-driven while maintaining racist structures and economic principles that unfairly privileged upward mobility for whites. Senator Josiah Bailey, recognized as a strong and brilliant fiscal conservative Democrat, led the economic responsibility movement against Woodrow Wilson and later Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Bailey replaced Furnifold Simmons in office by positioning himself as more progressive. He was known as a man guided by principles, Christian values, and ethics. Bailey successfully challenged President Roosevelt's attempt to stack the Supreme Court and also authored a strong Conservative Manifesto articulation against the New Deal. Senator Bailey also delivered the following remarks during a filibuster of an anti-lynching bill.

In the hour that you come down to North Carolina and try to impose your will upon us about the Negro, so help me God, you are going to learn a lesson which no political party will ever again forget. The civilization in the South is going to be a white civilization; its government is going to be a white man's government. (Christensen 2010, 204)

Bailey was ethical, Christian, principled, and yet comfortable being prejudiced against blacks.

### Continued African American Progress

The number of black freemasons in North Carolina increased significantly shortly after the turn of the twentieth century with a broadening of membership to include laborers and farmers. Masonic lodges increased exponentially and provided a physical and psychological space for community organizing and development. During this same period, Alexander Manly (editor of the *Wilmington Daily Record*), George White (the last black elected to Congress from the South until the 1950s), and over 57,000 other blacks left the state of North Carolina. Alexander Manly fled during the Wilmington Riots, and George White left following the Suffrage Amendment, stating “I cannot be a man and live in North Carolina.”

James Shepard was among the black leaders who remained. In 1895, Shepard along with other black investors founded the Durham Drug Company. Two months before the 1898 Wilmington Race Riots, Shepherd was one of the first seven investors in the North Carolina Mutual Insurance Company. In 1907, Shepard was one of nine investors in Mechanics and Farmers Bank, and in 1910, Shepard founded the National Religious Training School and Chautauqua for the Colored Race. One of several notable business investors with Shepard was former slave John Merrick. Merrick partnered with other black investors to found Merrick Moore Spaulding Real Estate Company in 1910 and the Durham Textile Mill in 1911. Merrick was critical in the negotiations to finance Lincoln Hospital, which would serve descendants of slaves. These collection of business became known as the Black Wall Street District, which would also attract a critical mass of black lawyers and other professionals. It was said that Durham was the capital of the black middle class during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. W.E.B. Du Bois once declared that the collective economic development of the blacks in Durham was more striking than any other similar group in the nation.

James Shepard would campaign well into the 1940s about the opportunity and potential for blacks in North Carolina. He described North Carolina as a civilized and Christian community and said that the critical mass of blacks in the South made it a better option for settlement in comparison to the North. Shepard would often share in his many speeches that whites were blacks’ best friends in the South because they understood one another. Consistent with Shepard’s belief, two key funders for Black Wall Street were wealthy whites, Julian Carr and Washington Duke. Julian Carr provided capital for the founding of the North Carolina Mutual Insurance Company and the National Religious Training School. Washington Duke supported many black businesses on Black Wall Street and was the chief funding source for Lincoln Hospital.

However, underneath the success of a great number of black citizens and the documented positive partnerships were racial truths that were difficult to ignore. Even in Durham, black death rates were increasing, while white death rates decreased, and the overwhelming majority of blacks lived in poverty. In progressive North Carolina, where an overwhelming number of blacks prospered in comparison to other states, race was a determining factor of well-being. By the 1930s, the manufacturing began to fall off. By the 1950s, civil rights began to integrate into the popular narrative of North Carolina and the nation. In 1954, the landmark



*Brown v. Board of Education* decision reversed the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* Supreme Court decision of separate and equal with regards to schooling. North Carolina would have an interesting response to a seemingly progressive, racially tolerant Supreme Court decision that supported Negro education.

### Caught in Their Own “Trap”?

In 1895, less than 20 miles north of Durham’s Black Wall Street, future governor William Umstead was born in the township of Bahama. He graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1916 and served as a congressional representative for parts of Durham County during the 1930s. He also served as a state senator, taking the seat of Josiah Bailey in the late 1940s. Umstead ran on a gubernatorial platform to maintain segregation. In 1955, as governor of North Carolina, he appointed a commission to deal with the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. Although Umstead died in office, the commission led by Thomas Pearsall eventually shared a report that stated:

The mixing of races forthwith in the public schools throughout the state cannot be accomplished and should not be attempted. The schools of our state are so intimately related to the customs and feelings of the people of each community that their effective operation is impossible except in conformity with community attitudes. The committee feels that a compulsory mixing of the races in our schools on a statewide basis and without regard to local conditions and assignment factors other than race would alienate public support of the schools to such an extent that they could not be operated successful. (Willink 2009, 33–34)

The commission gave the authority of assigning students to schools to the local school boards and thus created a legal, voluntary compliance response to the first *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. After the second *Brown* decision, then governor Luther Hughes appointed Thomas Pearsall as chairman of a North Carolina Commission on Education to determine the course of action. The Pearsall Plan (named later) removed compulsory education requirements for students who might have to attend a court-ordered integration school and set aside state funds to for private tuition grants if parents did not want their children attending an integrated school.

North Carolina leaders felt their approach was thoughtfully deliberate: slowly integrate quality education, as opposed to being racially intolerant. Pearsall’s widow would later share that the citizens were not ready for complete integration and her husband felt his plan allowed for a strategic, careful embracing of the inevitable. Governors Hodges and Umstead would point to the many educational and social advances in North Carolina that seemed to defy any discriminatory tendencies or racist undertones. For example, in 1921, the Division of Negro Education was established; the North Carolina Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers was formed in 1928. In 1939, a law school specifically for blacks, North Carolina Central College, was established, and in 1951, the first four blacks attended the University of North Carolina’s Law School.

There was racial progress in other areas as well. In 1920, citizens witnessed the repeal of the voting poll tax, empowering the black vote. In 1938, North Carolina lifted its ban on showing films with blacks on an equal social basis with whites. In 1947, Kenneth Williams became the first black in the New South to defeat a white opponent when elected to Alderman in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The list of social and educational progress positioned North Carolina as a leader of progressive and racially tolerant policies and practices in the South. Mandating the state to do what they were already doing “better” than other Southern states was considered not only offensive, but ill-conceived to many North Carolinians. They were progressive, Christian, and believed in the value of education. (Even the existence of the Moravian Christian settlements that dated back to the late 1700s in Forsyth County, North Carolina, was clear evidence of a progressive, racially tolerant state as free blacks, slaves, and whites coexisted as a spiritual family.) They were not the “them” that the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision was intended to impact. Nevertheless, the North Carolina General Assembly implemented the Pearsall Plan in 1956.



Ella Jo Baker was a founder of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) during the civil rights movement of the 1960s. SNCC was at the forefront of many lunch counter protests, sit-ins, and pray-ins. (Library of Congress)

### Civil Protests

North Carolina natives were leaders in the civil rights movement. In January 1957, North Carolina native and Shaw graduate Ella Baker attended a conference in Atlanta that led to the development of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). The local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) fought for black rights, for example, in the “Kissing Case.” In the Kissing Case, a juvenile court sentenced eight- and nine-year-old black boy to indefinite time at a reform school for playing and witnessing a kissing game between a small group of interracial children. The case gained worldwide attention in 1958. In 1959, Golden Frinks led one of the first successful desegregation protests in Edenton, North Carolina, and becomes a national name. In February 1960,

four college students, Joseph McNeil, Franklin McCain, Ezell Blair Jr., and David Richmond, sat at the whites-only section of the Woolworth's lunch counter until it closed. The next day, they recruited others, and in less than a week, the number reached over 1,000. By March 1960, the sit-in movement reached over 13 states. In April 1960, Ella Baker of the SCLC organized a meeting at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina, of sit-in students from across the nation. From that conference, the Student Nonviolent Coordination Committee (SNCC) was formed. In 1961, coordinated by the Congress of Racial Equality, SNCC, and Ella Baker, the first of the Freedom Rides occurred to test segregation on transportation in the South, and they conducted local sit-ins. John Lewis of SNCC was on the initial bus, and SNCC over time led the Freedom Ride movement. In November 1962, Martin Luther King Jr. delivered a speech with the "I Have a Dream" refrain, used later in 1963 at the Lincoln Memorial. From 1962 to 1963, the Freedom Highway campaign led to sit-ins and protests in Durham and Greensboro that eventually led to the desegregation of all hotels in North Carolina by the end of 1963. In June 1963, Golden Frinks, field secretary for SCLC, led the Freedom Movement in Williamston, North Carolina. To some, these events occurring in North Carolina were surprising; to others, they were logical.

### ***The 1958 Kissing Case***

In Monroe, a white girl, Sissy Sutton, and a black boy, James Hanover Thompson, kissed during a "kissing" game among interracial kids. David Simpson, a black boy, was a witness. Sissy was seven years old, David was eight, and James was nine. Sissy told her mother. A few days later, the two black boys were arrested, charged with assault and molestation, and held without parental access. The police beat the boys hoping for a confession and then declared their silence evidence of guilt. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) burned crosses in the yards of the families; both mothers lost their jobs. The children were sentenced to the Morrison Training School for Negroes, with the possibility of release at age 21 with good behavior.

Local National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) chapter president Robert Williams intervened, and New York civil rights lawyer Conrad Lynn offered his services. Lynn quickly discovered that David Simpson did not participate; however, the court felt witnessing the kiss also required years of reform. Lynn and Williams worked to publicize the case and locate a different judge.

News articles appeared in the *New York Post* and local papers in Charlotte and Monroe. Joyce Eddington, a reporter representing the *London News Chronicle*, traveled to the reform school with Williams and the mothers. Williams smuggled in a camera. On December 18, the story appeared in the *London News Chronicle* under the headline, "Why?"; protest letters soon followed from around the world.

Attorney General Malcolm Seawell defeated Lynn and Williams in court after their successful efforts to get a hearing, and the original sentencing was upheld. However, after a visit by social workers verifying new residences and employment for the mothers, the boys were released. Governor Hodges cited improved living conditions; however, many noted that a coordinated effort with the NAACP resolved the case without angering Hodges's constituents.

### The Deceptive Trap of Race and Racism in North Carolina

From the period of enslavement until the peak moments of the modern-day civil rights movement, racism in North Carolina functioned in some ways as a legal narcotic. North Carolina was balancing being progressive on top of realities of benefitting from racial inequality. Given that North Carolina was not as racist as its Southern peers, it allowed for the adoption of a false narrative of actually upholding morality. The sedative properties of racism allowed many white citizens to sleep more soundly at night even though their black neighbors were suffering. Black suffering was explained away as the result of poor cultural habits, lowered intelligence, or perhaps how things were just supposed to be in the South. Accepting racism as a way of life “medicated” many citizens when challenged with visible signs and symptoms of racial intolerance. Relying on racism was an acceptable way of life until North Carolina was legally and socially forced to lessen its dependency on racism after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. In the 1960s, North Carolina began to go through the withdrawals of trying to sincerely maintain its rich tradition of progressiveness, tolerance, and strong Christian values during the post-*Brown v. Board* era while becoming less dependent on a racist social system in order to do so. One of their most notable leaders during this period epitomized not this withdrawal behavior, but the deeply held views of a racist South.

### Jesse Helms, North Carolina, and Race

Born in 1921, in the small Democratic town of Monroe, North Carolina, Jesse Helms Jr., perhaps, encapsulated the engagement of whites with race in North Carolina more than any other figure. Monroe was a small, segregated town that was very traditional, conservative, and Christian. His father and mother identified as Southern Baptist Fundamentalists. Known to be against drinking, dancing, and playing cards, Jesse Helms Sr. was also the local police chief. For Chief Helms, law and order meant being tough on crime and blacks. This was the home of young Jesse Helms. He was characterized as verbose for a small town kid and applied his skills in covering sports for the local newspaper. He eventually moved to Raleigh and became the sports editor for the *News and Observer* newspaper. Later, Helms became the news director of the local radio station in Raleigh, WRAL. In his news director role, Helms was a backer and publicist for candidate Willis Smith for the Senate seat against incumbent Frank Graham. Helms used the airwaves to rally Smith supporters in a primary runoff after a closely fought primary battle. The successful rally led to a fierce Graham versus Smith campaign in which race became the central issue.

Helms and Smith were on the side of the white racists; Graham was supported by members of the black community. Similar to the 1898 white supremacy campaign, flyers distributed catered to whites’ fears around racial intermingling, including promises of whites forced to eat, sleep, and share public facilities and spaces with blacks if Graham was elected. Moreover, a political ad detailed how Graham was able to secure the black vote and ran the headline “Bloc Voting by

Any Group Is a Menace to Democracy.” The ad included a 1901 quote from Governor Aycock as a political aid that further tied the campaign to an historical familiarity:

When we came to power (1898), we desired merely the security of life, liberty and prosperity. We had seen all these menaced by 120,000 Negro votes cast as the vote of one man.

Smith won the election, and Helms insisted that he had no role in the campaign except that he was a supporter of Smith. After the election, Helms was named Smith’s top aide in Washington and charged with running Smith’s Senate office. Helms’s time as the senator’s aide was short-lived. After the untimely death of Smith, Helms returned to Raleigh as head of the North Carolina Banker’s Association (NCBA). In this role, Helms wrote editorials for the NCBA’s trade magazine. His editorials directly linked racial integration to following Karl Marx. He stated that the push for integration was unwise as it compromised freedom of choice.

In 1960, Helms moved his editorial style to television after returning to WRAL to provide nightly commentary to their news broadcasts. Although on occasion, Helms would invite Attorney Malcolm Seawell to provide commentaries, Helms owned the segment. In one particular commentary, Helms attacked Dr. Martin Luther King and the SCLC. He characterized their work as “hardly synonymous with Heavenly” and detailed how the leadership itself was immoral. Helms declared the 1964 Civil Rights Bill as the single most dangerous piece of legislation ever introduced into Congress, as it was “taking liberties away from one group and giving them to another.” In another WRAL Viewpoint, Helms challenged audiences to consider that Negroes might need special attention due to the “purely scientific and statistical evidence of natural racial distinction in group intellect.” Helms declared this was a critique of forced integration and subsequently funding Negro education similarly to whites. Helms’s editorials were popular, and many were adopted by white supremacists publications outside North Carolina.

Helms evolved his public image into a Senate seat where he would later lead a 16-day filibuster to block the vote to celebrating Dr. King’s birthday as a national holiday. He would argue that his stance was not racial but about the lack of knowledge ordinary citizens had regarding Dr. King and the congressional efforts taken to seal King’s Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) files. Helms took the initiative to provide each senator with a 300-page report of King’s connection to communist and anti-American efforts. Helms later stated that it took 80 years for the George Washington to be honored; King in less than 15. The challenge to the King Holiday, in addition to “baiting” Reverend Jesse Jackson to travel into North Carolina to increase black voter turnout, functioned to improve Helms’s standing with his North Carolina base. Helms was reelected to the Senate in 1984.

In 1990, Helms ran against Harvey Gantt for Senate. Gantt was the first black student to attend Clemson University and the first black mayor of Charlotte, North Carolina. Helms challenged the potential of the same bloc voting behavior that played a major role in the Graham versus Smith campaign by sending over 125,000

postcards to predominately black voters with inaccurate information regarding their eligibility. The postcards also provided information on the penalty for ineligible voting. The Helms campaign responded to criticism of their behavior by declaring that the postcards were a security measure put in place to prevent voters from losing their option to vote or having someone vote in their place. Later, Helms's campaign ran an ad directly stating:

You needed that job and you were the best qualified, but they had to give it to a minority because of a racial quota. Is that really fair? Harvey Gantt says it is.

Helms shared that skin color should not be used to provide or deny anyone a job and expressed that his run against Gantt was based on his progressive political positions and not his race. He was reelected in 1990. Helms later spent the end of his time in political office being a strong advocate for addressing and solving the AIDS pandemic, which actually makes sense. He was against policies that “disagreed” with his religious core, and he was dedicated to serving the non-elite, small town people of North Carolina by protecting them from federal intervention. Helms once shared that as a youth, he never saw racial intolerance in his hometown and race relations were much better then. One must conclude that Helms felt strongly that forced integration, communist infiltration, and moral infidelity were responsible for centering race as a problem in North Carolina and not the existence and usefulness of racism itself.

As Baldwin shared in the 1980s and as the timeline of events highlight into the twenty-first century, the recovery process is not an easy one. At some point, one must wonder what it does to one's own health to try and continuously rationalize tying the prosperity of one race to the racial oppression of others. And while much of the contentious racial conflicts are evinced in the black–white experience, the twenty-first century also calls for a reconciliation of how years of white supremacist activities have caused destruction to the indigenous populations of the state.

## **NOTABLE FIGURE**

### **Baker, Ella (1903–1986)**

Ella Baker was born in Virginia in 1903 and was raised in the town of Littleton, North Carolina. She described her mother as an independent woman, activist, and talented public speaker. Her grandfather once mortgaged the family farm to buy food for families who were suffering after a flood. She received her high school diploma and bachelor's degree from Shaw University. Prior to graduating from Shaw University as the valedictorian in 1927, Baker protested a policy of having students sing Negro spirituals for white visitors.

Baker eventually migrated to New York. Intentionally avoiding what she called the expected career path of a school teacher, she gravitated to pockets of intellectual discussion and activism. She was on the editorial board of two newspapers and was the national director for Young Negroes Cooperative League, an organization that encouraged cooperative economics for poor blacks. Baker became the field secretary in the South for the NAACP in 1941 and in 1944 its national

director of branches. Critical of the NAACP for catering too much to whites, membership numbers, and its national profile as opposed to supporting local and regional black citizens, Baker left the national office 1946 and focused on regional efforts.

Ella Baker became the president of the New York office of the NAACP, where she developed networks, alliances, and sociopolitical capital that would become critical to the civil rights movement. In the early 1950s, Baker connected with the educational psychologist team of Kenneth and Mamie Clark and the reading tutor for their child development center to lead educational reform. Baker launched Parent in Action against Educational Discrimination, which resulted in an alliance between black and brown parents in New York that insisted on decision making education policy. She followed that movement with a series of strong protests of police brutality in New York, which led to the commissioner to announce antibias trainings as a concession.

After the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955, Baker worked with well-connected lawyer Stanley Levison (husband of Bea Levison) and Bayard Rustin to create In Friendship coordinate capital for civil rights causes needing both material and legal resources. In a late night meeting at Levison's house, Rustin, Baker, and Levison decided to connect with Reverend C.K. Steele to create an organization to enlarge the impact of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Steele contacted Dr. King, who contacted other ministers, which led to a gathering of 60 ministers in January 1957 to the Southern Negro Leaders Conference. From the conference, the SCLC was formed with Dr. King as president and Reverend C.K. Steele as vice president. After the first year, the SCLC was struggling with organization and purpose. Rustin and Levinson convinced Baker to assist the SCLC by leading its Citizenship Crusade for a couple of months. After the resignation of its first executive director Reverend John Tilley, Baker led the organization for two years. Toward the end of her leadership, she convinced the SCLC to hold a conference in 1961 at Shaw University to capture the energy and emerging philosophies of the youth in the civil rights movement. From that conference, the SNCC was formed.

SNCC allowed Baker to address some of the gaps she identified in the SCLC but that organization was unwilling to address. SNCC focused more on rural and women participation and pioneered a nonhierarchical leadership style of activism. Her emphasis on rural outreach led connecting SNCC member Bob Moses with Amzie Moore to play a critical role in Mississippi's civil rights movement. Her emphasis on empowering women helped develop SNCC members Casey Hayden and Mary King. They later wrote "Sex and Caste a Kind of Memo," an honest reflection that became important part of early feminist literature.

Ella Baker was affectionately known by many as the Fundi, a Swahili word that means the person who passes skill from one generation to the other, of the civil rights movement. She was credited with organizing and founding over three dozen civil rights organizations, but her legacy is also most visible in her desire to not be visible. She championed grassroots and group-based leadership. She was leery and highly critical of leaders who sought out or relied on popularity and recognition. Baker was confident and relentless around the many men of the civil rights movement that she challenged, criticized, and held accountable, yet history has

mostly “overlooked” as a leader, in part because she did not look upon herself as one; she was a participant in a democracy, and she dedicated her life to making our democracy inclusive of its participants.

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# 35

## North Dakota

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Frances Kay Holmes

### CHRONOLOGY

#### **11000 BCE**

The first Lakota ancestors inhabit the territory of present-day North Dakota

#### **900 CE**

Through carbon dating, archaeologists document the presence of the Mandan in North Dakota

#### **1550**

Archaeological evidence places the Hidatsa at the mouth of the Knife River

#### **1738**

The French explorer Sieur de la Verendrye and his party arrive at a Mandan village located near present-day Bismarck; they are believed to be the first white men to enter the territory that will become central North Dakota

#### **1782**

Smallpox devastates Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara villages

#### **1787**

Congress passes the Northwest Ordinance, claiming good faith toward Indians; Article I of the U.S. Constitution gives the federal government power to regulate trade between the United States and Native nations, which are considered sovereign entities

#### **1789**

Indian relations are placed within U.S. War Department

#### **1790**

Congress passes the Trade and Intercourse Act to regulate commerce with Natives

**1803**

The United States purchases the Louisiana Territory from France; comprising 828,000 acres of land, the acquisition includes most of present-day North Dakota

**1804**

The Corps of Discovery led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark reaches the North Dakota area as they undertake an exploration of the Louisiana Purchase

**1818**

North Dakota becomes part of the Missouri Territory

**1823**

Lieutenant Colonel Leavenworth attacks Arikara for their hostility toward white travelers; the brief conflict results in the signing of a peace treaty

**1823**

James Beckwourth, an explorer and trader of African American descent, joins the Smith Company, a trading enterprise active in the Dakota Territory

**1824**

The Bureau of Indian Affairs is created within the U.S. War Department

**1825**

Indian Agent Benjamin O'Fallon and General Henry Atkinson are appointed commissioners to conclude treaties of friendship with the tribes of the upper Missouri River, including the Teton, Yankton, Cheyenne, Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara; under the treaties, the tribes acknowledge U.S. supremacy in the region

**1829**

John Brazo, a mulatto man, works as a trapper in and around the Fort Union fur trading post; Employed by the American Fur Company, Brazo speaks fluent Sioux and French

**1832**

The U.S. Supreme Court hands down its ruling in the case of *Worcester v. Georgia*, the third and final of the Supreme Court cases known as the Marshall trilogy, a series of decisions that affirm the legal and political standing of the Native nations

**1837**

Hundreds of Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara die during another smallpox outbreak in the region

**1845**

The first trading post is established in what will become North Dakota area; the post will become Fort Berthold

**1851**

The Fort Laramie Treaty is signed; the agreement defines tribal boundaries, opens negotiations for roads, and compensates Native nations for anticipated loss of game

## **662 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1854**

The Overland Trail War erupts between the Great Sioux Nation and other tribes and the United States over the increasing passage of white settlers on the Overland Trail through sacred lands of the Native nations

### **1857–1858**

The federal government establishes frontier forts in northern-most part of the Dakota region; the first is Fort Abercrombie

### **1861**

Congress creates the Dakota Territory, which includes North and South Dakota as well as most of Montana and Wyoming; the Dakota Territory bars African Americans from voting

### **1862**

William Jayne, the first governor of the Dakota Territory, recommends that the territorial legislature enact a bill prohibiting slavery; Congress abolishes slavery in all U.S. territories in June

### **1862**

The Dakota Sioux War begins over the failure of the U.S. government to live up to treaties wherein the Sioux ceded large tracts of land in Minnesota and the Dakotas for annuity payments; when the government failed to make the payments due to the Civil War, the Sioux, who were suffering crop failures, raided white settlements; the war resulted in the public execution of 38 Dakota

### **1863**

The Dakota Territory is opened for homesteading

### **1863**

General Alfred Sully attacks the Yanktonai and Lakota to punish them for the Dakota Sioux War, even though most of the Indians attacked were not involved in the Minnesota uprising; Sully orders the Yanktonai winter meat supplies and household goods burned, and Yanktonai prisoners of war are taken to Crow Creek Agency

### **1864**

General Sully attacks Yanktonai, Hunkpapa, Sicasu, and other Tetons; the federal government seeks a treaty with the Dakota and Lakota people after the battles of the previous two years

### **1865**

Treaties with the Hunkpapa and Yanktonai end hostilities; the Natives withdraw from the Overland Trail routes in return for annuity payments, but the treaties limit tribal hunting territories and lead to starvation among the tribes

### **1866**

The 9th Cavalry Regiment, U.S. Colored Troops, is stationed in the Dakota Territory after the Civil War; the regiment's primary mission is to prevent Indian raids and assure the Indians remain on their reservations

**1866**

Bozeman Trail War erupts between the United States and the Lakota and Cheyenne over the passage of whites along the Bozeman Trail, which was a shorter route to the Montana goldfields that passed through tribal hunting grounds

**1867**

Congress passes the Territorial Suffrage Act, which allows African Americans in the western territories to vote and immediately enfranchises about 800 black male voters

**1868**

The Treaty of Fort Laramie ends the Bozeman Trail War; the treaty establishes six small, separate Sioux reservations, requires three-quarters of Sioux adult males to approve any treaty changes, and leads to the abandonment of some forts and the removal of whites from reservation lands

**1868**

The territorial legislature ends discrimination against African Americans in public schools by changing a provision in the territorial constitution to state that schools be “equally free and accessible to all children”

**1870**

The Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara territories are reduced by 8 million acres; Fort Berthold reservation is established

**1870**

The U.S. Census counts 94 African Americans in the Dakota Territory out of a total population of 2,405; most of these black residents came to the territory as part of the gold rush or on military service

**1874**

Colonel George A. Custer surveys the sacred Black Hills for gold; this action violates treaty provisions

**1875**

The Great Sioux Nation leaders refuse to sign away the sacred Black Hills

**1876**

Custer and part of his command are wiped out by a large Native American force at the Battle of Little Bighorn in southeastern Montana; Congress terminates subsistence payments in an effort to force the Sioux to sell the Black Hills; this action leads to starvation among the Lakota

**1877**

Congress passes the Black Hills Act, which officially takes away Sioux land and permanently establishes reservations; Crazy Horse, one of the Lakota leaders at the Battle of Little Bighorn, is killed while attempting to escape from military custody

**1878–1887**

The railroads spur settlement in the Dakota Territory, bringing thousands of African Americans into the region as railroad porters, cooks, and dining car attendants

## **664 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

**1878**

Congress authorizes Indian police forces to be filled by Native peoples

**1880**

About 2.1 million acres belonging to the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara are ceded to the United States; the United States begins sending Native children to boarding schools

**1880**

According to the U.S. Census, there are 113 African Americans living in the Dakota Territory

**1883**

The Sun Dance is outlawed by federal government

**1884**

Seventeen African Americans leave Bismarck to settle in the Mouse River area, near Pendroy, where each acquires 160 acres of land

**1885**

The Major Crimes Act gives the federal government jurisdiction over reservations for specific major crimes

**1889**

The Sioux version of the Dawes Act results in the creation of six separate reservations and a reduction in Sioux lands of 11 million acres

**1889**

The Dakota Territory is divided into North Dakota and South Dakota; North Dakota enters the Union as the 39th state on November 2

**1890**

Lakota leader Sitting Bull is killed by Indian police; members of his family and supporters are killed as well

**1890**

On December 29, the Wounded Knee Massacre occurs near Wounded Knee Creek, South Dakota, when troops of the 7th Cavalry open fire on a group of captive Natives after a scuffle breaks out during an attempt by the troops to disarm the Natives; 300 old men, women, and children are killed

**1893**

The 25th Infantry Regiment, including 272 African American enlisted men, is stationed Fort Buford

**1900**

The U.S. Census counts 286 African Americans resident in North Dakota

**1903**

In *Lonewolf v. Hitchcock*, the U.S. Supreme Court gives the federal government power across Native reservations with the authority to break treaties

**1909**

The North Dakota legislature enacts an anti-miscegenation law

**1910**

Homestead Act opens up more land in North Dakota for white settlement

**1910**

The U.S. Census finds 617 African Americans living in North Dakota

**1930**

The University of North Dakota (UND) adopts a mascot known as the fighting Sioux, which is considered by many to be demeaning to Native peoples

**1934**

Congress passes the Indian Reorganization Act, which requires Natives to establish governments modeled after the U.S. government

**1940**

Due to the economic effects of the Great Depression, the 1940 census counts only 201 African Americans in the state, the smallest number since 1880

**1941**

During World War II, the Lincoln Internment Camp is established in North Dakota for German, Italian, and Japanese enemy aliens

**1944**

The Flood Control Act of 1944 and the Pick-Sloan Missouri River Basin Project are established to control flooding on the Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, Standing Rock, and Cheyenne River reservations, where hundreds of thousands of acres are lost to flooding, along with timber, wildlife, and traditional homelands

**1944**

The National Congress of American Indians is formed in Denver

**1946**

The Indian Claims Commission (ICC) Act is passed; it allows the federal government to be sued on both moral and financial grounds

**1947**

Garrison Dam construction begins

**1950**

The U.S. Census counts 257 African Americans resident in North Dakota

**1951**

Lucky Mound, Twin Buttes, White Shield, and Mandaree are established as segments of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara nation (MHA nation), also known as the Three Affiliated Tribes; the tribal government and Bureau of Indian Affairs headquarters move to New Town

## **666 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1953**

Congress passes House Concurrent Resolution (HCR-108), which cuts off federal funding and services to tribes deemed self-sufficient; Public Law (PL) 280 is passed, giving states civil/criminal jurisdiction on reservations

### **1955**

North Dakota repeals its anti-miscegenation law

### **1963**

North Dakota ratifies the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing the poll tax

### **1975**

Congress passes the Indian Self Determination and Educational Assistance Act

### **1976**

Era Bell Thompson, an African American farm girl from Driscoll, who is a noted author and international editor of *Ebony* magazine, receives the Rough Rider Award, North Dakota's most prestigious official honor; Thompson's portrait is hung in the North Dakota Hall of Fame in 1977

### **1978**

In *Oliphant v. Suquamish*, the U.S. Supreme Court decides that tribes do not have criminal jurisdiction over non-Indians on reservations; the Indian Child Welfare Act passed

### **1980**

The U.S. Census counts 2,471 African Americans resident in North Dakota; the great majority were associated either with U.S. Air Force bases or with the state's colleges and universities

### **1981**

The Reagan administration makes huge funding cutbacks in Native social programs

### **1990**

Martin Luther King Day becomes an official state holiday in North Dakota

### **1999**

A bill to change UND fighting Sioux mascot fails in the North Dakota House of Representatives

### **2000**

African Americans constitute about 0.06 percent of North Dakota's population

### **2005**

Congress passes the Violence against Women Act, which provides additional funding to Native law enforcement agencies

### **2006**

Congress passes the Native American Languages Preservation Act; the Bakken oil field is discovered in western North Dakota



**2010**

The United States endorses the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

**2013**

A group of North Dakota high school students attend a hockey game dressed in white gowns and hoods; the attire is justified as an expression of the school's "white-out" tradition, which encourages wearing all white to hockey games

**2014**

UND students wear T-shirts emblazoned that read "Siouxper Drunk"

**2015**

A Somalia-Muslim restaurant in Grand Forks is bombed

**2015**

Craig Cobb takes up residence in Leith with the intention of making the town an enclave for white supremacists

**2015**

The UND fighting Sioux mascot is changed to the Fighting Hawks

**2016**

North Dakota is ranked second in the nation for hate crimes per capita

**2016**

Construction on the Dakota Access Pipeline comes dangerously close to the Standing Rock Sioux Missouri waterway and sacred Native lands

**2017**

A woman in a North Dakota Walmart parking lot is recorded berating and threatening three Muslim women

**2017**

Four UND students pose in blackface in pictures posted on Snapchat and labelled "Black Lives Matter"; the university takes no action claiming the images are a matter of free speech

**2017**

White supremacist Craig buys a building in the town of Nome, but the building is burned to the ground shortly afterward

**NARRATIVE****The History of Racism in North Dakota**

North Dakota is a state whose nondominant majority consists of indigenous peoples. For millennia, these people were not just the original people, but they were the only people. North Dakota was once the home to only the Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, Chippewa, Dakota, Lakota, and Yanktonai (Schneider 1986). Because of colonial invasion, racist hierarchies, and land theft, circumstances are much different today. Native peoples living in North Dakota are among the state's

most financially poor. More than 40 percent live below the poverty line, with an unemployment rate of approximately 86 percent.

Euro-Americans came to this continent to establish a new egalitarian order, yet brought with them an ideology of individual and societal worth built on difference. This racist ideology established a sociocultural hierarchy that justified the colonization of this continent's First Peoples, land, and resources. Colonial actions, justified by the Doctrine of Discovery and then Manifest Destiny, resulted in the death and destruction of indigenous peoples. Through war, removal, and assimilation, Euro-Americans stole and killed for the land that is now North Dakota. Therefore, the predominant focus of this chapter is the relationship of North Dakota expansionists and the land's indigenous peoples.

### **Early Dakota Territory**

The Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota (Yankton and Yanktonai) peoples have occupied the Dakota Territory since 11,000 BCE. Evidence of the Hidatsa, Arikara, Mandan, and Chippewa peoples can be traced to 900 CE. In 1803, the United States negotiated the Louisiana Purchase, acquiring what would become 13 states. North Dakota was part of this area known as the Dakota Territory. Like many other U.S. land purchases, treaties, and negotiations, the fate of Native peoples and their lands was determined without their presence or input. Lewis and Clark embarked on their expedition and spent the winter of 1804 with the Mandan and Arikara, establishing partners in the fur trade.

In 1823, Colonel Leavenworth attacked the Arikara for their aggression toward travelers. The casualties were minimal, and a peace treaty signed. In 1824, the United States sent General Atkinson and Indian agent O'Fallon up the Missouri River. After the white traders signed treaties with 16 tribes, the Natives promised to protect white traders. The westward movement increased with the discovery of gold in California in 1849. Frustrated, the Teton Sioux requested the government to compensate them for the use of their trails. Many travelers felt intimidated by the skirmishes among Native tribes, demanding that the federal government provide protection.

### **Battling for the Northern Plains: Laramie Treaty (1851)**

In 1851, the U.S. commissioner of Indian Affairs set out to negotiate a treaty. Over 10,000 Natives attended the Fort Laramie negotiations; they included the Assiniboine, Arikara, Hidatsa, Mandan, Blackfeet, Cheyenne, Crow, and Lakota. Those in attendance agreed to peace, which included the discontinuation of intertribal fighting. As a result, the United States promised to protect Native peoples from wrongdoing by the settlers. Designated territories were established for hunting, including parts of North Dakota. Tribes received merchandise, domestic animals, and agricultural implements valued at \$50,000 yearly for 10 years (Lazarus 1999, 16–20). However, what followed were a series of wars, pitting the indigenous peoples against the white newcomers and the U.S. government.

In 1854, fighting broke out between the Great Sioux Nation and the United States. The multiple skirmishes are part of the Overland Trail War. The issues

concerned the trail itself, which cut through a significant portion of sacred land on the way to gold mines in Montana. There were four primary battles. The first battle occurred after native warriors were denied passage on a ferryboat. The second battle began when a fight erupted over malnourished oxen that had escaped from a Mormon camp. The third battle occurred at Blue Water Creek between the Lakota and General Harney, whose plan was to overtake any group of Natives—men, women, and children—and burn entire villages. In the fourth major engagement, Harney surrounded Chief Little Thunder's camp and held women and children hostage until Spotted Tail would surrender.

The Dakota War of 1862 soon followed. In 1849, when Congress organized the Territory of Minnesota, the Santee or Dakota Sioux existed in the southern and western prairies. As a result of the 1851 Treaty of Traverse des Sioux, the tribe relinquished what has been speculated as 24 million acres of land, which was a majority of their land in Minnesota. They received \$1.4 million for the sale; however, the Office of Indian Affairs used a third of that money for debts owed. In 1858, again the Dakota ceded, by force, another million acres to the government. In exchange, they were to receive \$97,000, but that sum, too, withheld for debts owed. In 1861, Dakota crops had failed, and annuity payments, delayed by the civil war, never came. The Natives were starving. Dakota warriors broke into a hen house and stole eggs, subsequently killing the owner. The incident ignited a war, and at its close, 2,000 Dakota were marched to Fort Snelling; 38 Dakota were hanged in the largest public mass hanging in the world.

The attacks on the indigenous people continued. Army Colonel Henry Sibley and General Alfred Sully set out to teach the Sioux a lesson by attacking them in North Dakota in three different battles: Big Mound, Dead Buffalo Lake, and Stony Lake. Using 5,000 troops, they followed the Sioux northward. Most of these Natives had not been involved in the Dakota War, and many consisted of families. Hundreds of women and children were murdered; others drowned in the Missouri River (Robinson 1966, 100). Sully was responsible for opening several forts, including Fort Rice, Fort Berthold, Fort Buford, Fort Stevenson, Fort Totten, Fort Ransom, and Fort Pembina followed by Fort McKeen, which was later renamed Fort Abraham Lincoln.

The Bozeman Trail War began in 1866. The Bozeman Trail was also a thoroughfare used to reach the gold mines. It split off from the Oregon Trail and cut through Sioux sacred lands. There were eight specific battles fought in the Bozeman Trail War. One was the Battle of Hundred Slain or Fetterman's Battle. In late 1866, Fetterman set out to defend a wood supply train, but was determined to attack the Sioux. Unfortunately, he was lured into a valley, surrounded by Sioux warriors; he and his entire command were wiped out (Lazarus 1999, 38–39). Subsequently, in the Wagon Box Fight, led by Red Cloud, warriors attacked soldiers near Fort Kearney; however, the soldiers held them off with their new, time-saving weaponry.

After the Fetterman's Battle, the government sought out another treaty: the Laramie Treaty of 1868. This time they wanted to confine the various tribes to reservations. However, Red Cloud refused to participate until the closing of the Bozeman Trail and the shutting down of area forts. At this time, the Great Sioux reservation was established, encompassing the land west of the Missouri River.

Tribes had to agree that trails, railroads, roads, and mail stations would not be harmed (Calloway 2012, 345). Seventy-five percent of the Native adult males had to sign the treaty for final approval.

Following the signing of the second Laramie Treaty, gold was discovered in the Black Hills. President Grant demanded that the Lakota sell the Black Hills; they refused. In an attempt to starve the Sioux, treaty annuities were withheld (Lazarus 1991, 84). The Black Hill War broke out from 1876 to 1877, resulting in 27 military engagements (Douville 2004). In 1869, tribes were required to report to their reservation, and those that did not were considered hostile (Calloway 2012, 372). The military provoked the tribes, and three significant battles resulted: the Reynolds Fight, the Battle of the Rosebud, and the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

At the Battle of the Little Big Horn, over 12,000 Native peoples gathered, using a three-pronged attack to surround the military. The allied tribes won the battle, but the Black Hills Act of 1877 passed, legalizing the theft of 22.8 million acres of land—including the Black Hills (Matthiessen 1991, 13). The Sioux Act in 1889 justified the theft of another 9 million acres, and yet again, rations to the Natives were diminished (Calloway 2012, 374).

### **The Death of Sitting Bull and the Massacre at Wounded Knee**

It is safe to say that many Americans considered Sitting Bull, among one of the most prominent leaders of his people, dangerous. He had refused to sign the Laramie Treaty (1868) and had led the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Having suffered such a great loss, the federal government was determined to capture and confine him. To evade the army, Sitting Bull and his followers spent four years, from 1877 to 1881, in Canada. After surrendering at Fort Buford, he stayed on the Standing



Following the massacre of Sioux warriors by the United States Seventh Cavalry at Wounded Knee in 1890, the remaining chiefs of the Lakota Sioux were disarmed and gathered at Pine Ridge, South Dakota. (National Archives)

### **Marshall Trilogy**

Three U.S. Supreme Court cases decided in the 1820s and 1830s when John Marshall was chief justice of the Supreme Court are known as the Marshall trilogy because these cases collectively defined the political and legal standing of American Indian nations and are the foundation of Indian sovereignty and the paternalistic role that the U.S. government has historically played in regard to Indian nations.

The first case is *Johnson v. McIntosh* (1823), which involved a dispute between white men over ownership of former Indian land. One man had purchased land from the tribe, while the other purchased the same land from the state of Georgia. By studying how Europeans acquired land in North America, Marshall evolved the Discovery Doctrine, which assumed the right of European nations over any lands they discovered, whether or not aboriginal people already occupied that land, so long as other European countries acknowledged that right. Under this doctrine, Marshall declared that Indians did not have title to the land they occupied; title to that land ultimately belonged to the U.S. government.

The second case was *The Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (1831), in which the Court found that the Cherokee nation could not prevent the state of Georgia from implementing state and federal laws on Cherokee reservations. The Cherokee nation was declared to be not a foreign nation, but a “domestic dependent nation” subject to the sovereignty of the federal government.

The third case was *Worcester v. Georgia* (1832) in which the Supreme Court overturned a Georgia state law that sought to regulate the residence and travel of whites in Cherokee Territory. The court found that the “whole intercourse between the United States and this nation [the Cherokee], is, by our constitution and laws, vested in the government of the United States.”

Rock reservation. He spent several years in prison and traveled for a few months with Buffalo Bill's Wild West show. In 1890, the plains tribes had adopted the Ghost Dance religion. Concerned about Sitting Bull's influence, Indian agent McLaughlin had him arrested. In the confusion, Sitting Bull and many of his followers were murdered.

Following the murder of Sitting Bull, a number of his people went to Spotted Elk's (Big Foot) Hohwoju Camp at Red Shirt table. From there, they fled to Pine Ridge Agency. On the way, they were intercepted by the 7th Cavalry and taken as prisoners to a settlement near Wounded Knee Creek. The next morning, on December 29, 1890, soldiers opened fire on unarmed Natives under a white flag of truce. Subsequently, 300 elderly men, women, and children were murdered (Matthiessen 1991, 20). After several days of blizzard, the remains of those murdered were disposed of in a mass grave. For many people, this was the final battle of the Sioux wars. The soldiers of the 7th Cavalry received medals of honor for their accomplishments.

### **Assimilation through Legislation**

Following several hundred years of war with Native nations and losing many of the battles, the United States determined that assimilation would be cheaper than

attempts at extermination. These efforts occurred through education and legislation, many of which remain in effect today.

Beginning in 1823, a series of three cases involving Indian rights made their way to the Supreme Court, presided over by Justice John Marshall. These cases, often referred to as the Marshall trilogy, are the basis of American Indian law. In the first case, *Johnson v. McIntosh*, the Court recognized that Natives had the right to the land, but could only sell their land to the federal government. In 1831, the court ruled in *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* that Native tribes were domestic dependent nations, essentially wards of the government. In 1832, in *Worcester v. Georgia*, Marshall ruled that the Cherokee were occupying their territory and that the state had no jurisdiction over them (Calloway 2012).

In 1830, the House of Representatives and the Senate passed the Indian Removal Act. This legislation allowed the president to negotiate treaties, forcefully removing all tribes to land west of the Mississippi River. The outcome of the *Worcester v. Georgia* ruling was contrary to this act; however, President Andrew Jackson continued to carry out his removal plan.

The General Allotment Act of 1887 required the division of all reservations into smaller parcels of land. Based on various criteria (head of household, single male or widow), these smaller parcels of land were distributed to Native peoples. Unassigned land was available for purchase by non-Natives. As a result, whites owned most of the land in North Dakota.

Throughout 1880–1940, educating Natives, to “kill the Indian, save the man,” became the goal. Native children were required to attend school; many of them were removed from their families to attend off-reservation boarding schools far from cultural influences. There were numerous efforts made to alter their appearance and behaviors: their hair was cut off, their clothing was burned, and if they spoke their Native language, they were beaten (Adams 1995). Typically, children were malnourished, and combined with poor living conditions, many children died. The first off-reservation, government-run, Indian Boarding School was in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. There was also one in North Dakota—the Wahpeton Indian School.

In 1934, Commissioner John Collier worked to address the inadequacies of reservation life through the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). The IRA legislation allowed local self-government and sought to consolidate Indian lands. An economic package with a \$10 million lending fund was developed (Calloway 2012). However, to access the benefits of the legislation, tribal government had to emulate the federal government structure. The oppressive nature of this program prevented the use of traditional tribal government.

In 1946, the Indian Claims Commission (ICC) Act passed. Natives, previously barred from the court, could sue the federal government for wrongdoing. While several awards for grievances were made, no land was returned. The most noteworthy case addressed the theft of the Black Hills. The ICC Act provided the United States with the opportunity to address previous wrongdoing and future liabilities with little accountability. Certain aspects of Indian life and culture were priceless: the lives of ancestors and the return of the land.

In 1952, the government began a program to relocate Native families from rural reservations to major cities. To promote the program, the government promised

training, housing, and employment. Over 100,000 Natives participated in the program, but impoverished circumstances and cultural detachment sent over a third of the participants back to their reservations (Calloway 2012).

After World War II, the United States experienced a period of super patriotism. The communal existence of Native nations did not fit within the country's ideals of individualism. War debts left the United States searching for budget reductions. These factors, along with the goal of assimilation, which had begun with Thomas Jefferson, prompted the country to excuse itself from treaty obligations. In 1953, the House Concurrent Resolution (HCR-108) or termination bill passed. It cut off federal funding and services to tribes deemed self-sufficient. Within a few weeks, PL 280 transferred criminal jurisdiction to state control for terminated tribes or other states wanting to take on that role. Eventually, this legislation was reversed, but many tribes now suffered from lack of health care and a lack of funding.

### **Racism in Contemporary North Dakota**

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, racism continued in the northern plains in a variety of ways. In 1920, the Kass Kounty Klan, an affiliate of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), lasted until the 1930s. Similarly, in Grand Forks, KKK members engaged in political campaigns and were successful in their election to public offices (Springer 2013).

North Dakota also played a role in the U.S. government's response to Japanese Americans following the attack on Pearl Harbor. Under suspicion of being subversive, Japanese Americans were jailed, and then transferred to internment camps. Eventually, over 120,000 Japanese occupied these camps. The Lincoln internment camp in North Dakota was the largest camp, as it housed Japanese, Italian, and German civilians. Some of these internees provided labor for railroad industry.

In the 1960s, a Job Corps facility was located outside Bismarck to isolate black youths. Race and religion, combined, were targets of hate crimes. In 2015, a Somalia-Muslim Restaurant was bombed in Grand Forks. In 2016, North Dakota ranked second in the nation for hate crimes per capita. In the summer of 2017, a woman in a North Dakota Walmart parking lot was recorded when berating three Muslim women—telling them “we’re going to kill every one of you f\*\*\*ing Muslims.” In 2015, Craig Cobb moved to Leith with the intent to turn it into an enclave for white supremacists. After his release from a felony jail sentence for terrorizing, Cobb tried to move to the town of Antler. In March 2017, he purchased a building in the town of Nome, North Dakota. Not long afterward, the building burned to the ground.

Racialized attitudes have also immersed from North Dakota schools. In 2013, a group of high schoolers attended a campus hockey game dressed in white gowns and hoods. The behavior was justified as an expression of the school's “white-out” tradition, which encourages wearing all white to their hockey games. In 2014, University of North Dakota (UND) students wore T-shirts emblazoned with the words “Siouxper Drunk.” In the fall of 2017, four UND students proliferated two pictures of themselves on Snapchat with the captions “locked the black b\*\*ch out”

and posed in blackface stating, “Black Lives Matter.” The students were unchallenged and not reprimanded in any way. UND’s Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities stated it was an issue of free speech. Moreover, the North Dakota State University deserves special mention for its school song, which celebrates Manifest Destiny and the genocide of Native peoples.

In 1930, UND adopted the mascot known as the fighting Sioux, the caricature often perceived as a romanticized, yet comic image of Native peoples. In the 1970s, people began questioning its appropriateness. However, many non-Natives argued that it was a way of honoring Natives, yet their effort to preserve North Dakota’s Indians resulted in “misrecognition, possessiveness, compromise, denial, deferral, endorsement, and terror” (King 2002, 1). Many Natives, particularly students at that campus, felt threatened by the constant bombardment of logos and images and therefore experienced significant amounts of anxiety. In 1999, the North Dakota House of Representatives proposed a bill to change the mascot; it failed to pass. In 2005, the National Collegiate Athletic Association sanctioned UND, which prevented them from playing until the mascot and logos were changed. This ruling and the decision process associated with it, which included alumni, students, faculty, staff, tribal nations, and the athletic community, was lengthy and fraught with anger. Finally, in 2015, the mascot was changed, permanently, to the Fighting Hawks.

### **Environmental Issues**

For Native peoples, issues associated with natural resources are as old as the land theft that began with invasion. However, circumstances associated with the environment move beyond conservation and financial value for indigenous peoples as the land and all supported by her are their relatives. Assaulting the land or the water is on par with killing a relative or destroying a cultural framework. As such, this long history of environmental violence constitutes a very foundational aspect of racism.

**The Black Hills Claim.** In 1950, the Lakota refiled their claim with ICC for the theft of the Black Hills. The court ruled that the Lakota should receive \$17.5 million, but the decision was repealed, because the courts had already rejected the claim in 1942 (Douville 2004, 15–19). The case was repeatedly refiled. In 1980, the court awarded the tribe \$122.5 million. But the Great Sioux Nation rejected the offer, stating, “the Black Hills are not for sale” (Calloway 2012, 374), and they demanded that the Black Hills be returned. The award has grown to over \$1.3 billion (Streshinsky 2011). Tribes continue to work toward a solution that includes land return.

**Pick-Sloan Plan.** In 1947, the Army Corps of Engineers began construction on the Garrison Dam on the Berthold reservation to establish flood control for the Missouri River basin. The full plan consisted of building five main dams. Once completed, water covered hundreds of thousands of acres including all of the agricultural land (Schneiders 2016). Most of the Arikara, Mandan, and Hidatsa had to relocate. A cash settlement of \$12 million was awarded to the Three Affiliated Tribes. Overall, 23 tribes were affected, negatively.



**Bakken Oil Fields.** In 2012, North Dakota began experiencing an oil boom generating millions of dollars in revenue. It occurred because sophisticated technology and an increasing demand for oil made extraction from the Bakken Basin lucrative. Along with an increase in jobs and financial stability, North Dakota's tribes have also experienced an increase in violence stemming from a male-majority population, prostitution, skyrocketing drug use, higher levels of alcohol abuse, gun violence, and murder (Buckley 2014). With each drilling site, Man Camps emerge. These camps are particularly dangerous as men working in the oil fields are away from their families; while they are highly compensated, they occupy very rural areas with minimal law enforcement. While tribal nations experience an increase in business, it is short-lived. When the Man Camps move to the next city, they leave behind reservation towns scarred by increased drug and alcohol use and weakened infrastructures due to overused roadways, utilities, and law enforcement (Buckley 2014).

**Dakota Access Pipeline.** In 2014, Energy Transfer Partners planned to run an 1,100-mile oil pipeline from Iowa to North Dakota, to carry 570,000 barrels of oil a day. Initially, the pipeline was 10 miles north of Bismarck, but it was rerouted because it would have been too close to the city's water supply. As a result, the pipeline would be laid under the Missouri River, Standing Rock Sioux's main water source, endangering Native peoples yet again. After many months of meetings, tribal chief David Archambault halted all consultations with the Army Corps of Engineers. Yet, the Army Corps of Engineers issued permits to lay the pipe.

### ***Standing Rock Sioux Statement on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Decision***

Reproduced here is an excerpt from the statement of the Standing Rock Sioux issued on December 4, 2016, in response to a refusal by the Department of the Army to grant an easement for construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline under Lake Oahe. The lake is a large reservoir behind Oahe Dam that extends from South Dakota into North Dakota. The Standing Rock Sioux and other groups had opposed the easement, fearing its detrimental impact on the environment.

Today the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced that it will not be granting the easement to cross Lake Oahe for the proposed Dakota Access Pipeline. Instead, the Corps will be undertaking an environmental impact statement to look at possible alternative routes. We wholeheartedly support the decision of the administration and commend with the utmost gratitude the courage it took on the part of President Obama, the Army Corps, the Department of Justice and the Department of the Interior to take steps to correct the course of history and to do the right thing. . . .

We want to thank everyone who played a role in advocating for this cause. We thank the tribal youth who initiated the movement. We thank the millions of people around the globe who expressed support for our cause. We thank the thousands of people who came to the camps to support us, and the tens of thousands who donated time, talent and money to our efforts to stand against the pipeline in the name of protecting our water. We especially thank all of the other tribal nations and jurisdictions who stood in solidarity with us.

Source: Stand with Standing Rock. <http://standwithstandingrock.net/standing-rock-sioux-tribes-statement-u-s-army-corps-engineers-decision-not-grant-easement/>.

The Standing Rock Sioux immediately filed suit to have construction stopped, but the court upheld its decision. Hundreds of protesters came in support and were met by a militarized police response funded by Dakota Access LLC, Humvees, BearCats, long-range acoustic devices, attack dogs, water cannons, pepper spray, rubber bullets launched at close range, and jail time. Law enforcement personnel included paramilitary from TigerSwan, N.D. National Guard, West Dakota SWAT, and Wisconsin State Troopers. In December, the Army Corps of Engineers halted construction to look for another route, but in January 2017, President Trump ordered that the pipeline approved and expedited.

## **NOTABLE FIGURES**

### **Deloria, Vine, Jr. (1933–2005)**

Vine Deloria Jr. was Hunkpapa, as was Sitting Bull, and was born in 1933 in Martin, South Dakota. While Deloria did not experience racist violence in the way that Sitting Bull had, he was like Sitting Bull, a critical thinker that lived for the betterment of the Great Sioux Nation.

Deloria Jr. came from a long line of deep thinkers. His great-grandfather was a medicine man and leader of the Yankton Sioux tribe. Deloria Jr.'s grandfather was one of the first Native Episcopal missionaries. His father, Vine Deloria Sr. enrolled at the Standing Rock Sioux reservation and was the first Native American named to an executive post in the Episcopal Church (DeMallie 2006). Deloria Sr. was charismatic, but often frustrated by the racism that continued to exist within the denomination. Deloria Sr.'s sister was Ella Deloria. Ella grew up on the Standing Rock reservation and was known for her anthropological work under the tutelage of Frank Boaz. Ella translated several Sioux texts into English and participated in research on the Navajo reservation. She went on to write *Waterlily*, which was published 1988.

Deloria Jr. attended grade school in Martin, South Dakota and went to high school in Minnesota. He then served in the Marines and subsequently received a bachelor's degree from Iowa State University in general science, where he also met his wife. Interestingly, he also received a degree in theology. In 1970, Deloria obtained a law degree (DeMallie 2006). He taught at several colleges: Western Washington University, University of California at Los Angeles, the Pacific School of Religion, the New School of Religion, Colorado College, University of Arizona, and the University of Colorado in Boulder.

The Delorias received several awards. Ella Deloria, Vine Deloria Sr., and Vine Deloria Jr. each received achievement awards from the Indian Council Fire in Chicago for their leadership to Native people. Deloria Jr. also received many awards, including the Wallace Stegner Award from the Center of the American West in 2002. Also in 2002, he received the National Book Festival Honoree Award; in 2003, the American Indian Festival of Words Author Award; and in 2005, the Annual American Indian Visionary Award from the *Indian Country Today* (ICT). Finally, in 2008, Deloria Jr. received the Peace and Justice Award, posthumously, from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

Deloria Jr. was active in many organizations that supported Indigenous issues. From 1964 to 1967 Deloria Jr. was the executive director of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI). The NCAI was established in 1944 as a response to the assimilation policies of the federal government to support treaty rights, maintain traditional cultures, promote the sovereignty status of Native governments within the American government structure, and improve the lives of Native peoples. Deloria Jr.'s experience with NCAI was just the beginning of his advocacy work.

After earning his law degree he founded the Institute for the Development of Indian Law, a public interest firm in Washington, D.C., and served as its chairman until 1976 (DeMallie 2006). He was also involved in many other organizations: Citizens Crusade against Poverty, the Council on Indian Affairs, the National Office for the Rights of the Indigent, the Indian Rights Association, and he was one of the first board members of Native American Rights Fund in 1970. Additionally his ideas and writings played significantly in the passage of legislation that included the Indian Education Act (1972), Indian Self-Determination Act (1975), and the American Indian Religious Freedoms Act (1978). Deloria was also an expert witness for the defense team in the Wounded Knee Trials in 1974. He was a charter member of the National Museum of the American Indian's Board of Trustees and served on the Heye Foundation Museum of American Indian Board.

Throughout his incredibly busy life, he wrote over 25 books and at least 200 articles, along with many other types of writing, including many book prefaces and introductions. His first book was one of his most seminal works, *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*. The book, published in 1969, just as the United States was in the throes of the civil rights movement. Dee Brown had just published *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* for popular audiences. In California, college students had taken over Alcatraz, demanding that the American public and federal government address the needs of Native peoples, including the establishment of Native studies departments in academic institutions. Within the same timeframe, the American Indian Movement (AIM) emerged in support of Native peoples. While AIM publically supported many issues, the organization gained national attention, known for its takeover at Wounded Knee. Prosecuted for their activism, leaders of the takeover were defended by the Deloria Jr. support team.

*Custer Died for Your Sins* truly served as a manifesto for all Native peoples across the continent. Topics included mainstream stereotypes of Native peoples, issues associated with termination, Native law, the history, exploitation and fallacies inherent in anthropology, colonial religion, and the mythology of the Bering Straits theory. Native humor and Native leadership are also part of the discourse. His other books address treaties and Native law, Native spirituality, colonial psychology, Native education, and Native nationhood.

Deloria Jr.'s lifelong pursuit of supporting tribes through advocacy and providing avenues for legal counsel, predominately through education, guided him in the work that he did. Native studies practitioners across college and university campuses regard Vine Deloria Jr. as the father of Native studies, as his texts are the backbone of the discipline. His passing in fall 2005 sent a profound sadness across Indian country. His passing only assuaged by the fact that he continues to be with

us through his writings. Those who knew him personally, or through his writings, would agree with *Time* magazine's assessment that Vine Deloria Jr. is one of the greatest theologians of the twentieth century.

### **Sitting Bull (1831–1890)**

Born in 1831, Sitting Bull, or Tatanka Iyotanke was a Hunkpapa known for defending his people. He was a leader in many battles; however, he was not the one to pick a fight. In addition, while he was a great leader, he believed that the community had to make decisions together.

As a young boy, Sitting Bull's name was Jumping Badger, yet his nickname was Slow because he was so very thoughtful. Raised predominately by his father and uncles, he addressed each of them as father, which is customary for the Dakota/Lakota/Nakota cultures. These influential men helped hone his riding and hunting skills. At the young age of 10, Sitting Bull had shot many buffalo and given them to those who could not hunt. When he was 14, he, along with other warriors, came across a group of Crows. In the process of chasing them down, Sitting Bull killed at least one of the warriors. Afterward his father celebrated his son's victory, giving him an eagle feather and a new shield with a design from his dreams. He then named his son, Buffalo Bull Who Sits Down. Sitting Bull always carried the shield with him into battle. Because of his high-ranking warrior status, Sitting Bull was a member of both Kit Fox and Strong Heart warrior societies. In the late 1850s Sitting Bull became a War Chief for the Strong Heart society and the Hunkpapas overall (Utley 1993).

Societies also existed for dreams, and those with dreams of similar content came together. Sitting Bull belonged to the Buffalo Society as well as the society that dreamed of thunderbirds. This society of the Heyoka required that he do things completely opposite of social norms. This could include walking backward or wearing little clothing when it was freezing cold. Because of his dreams and visions, he was also a singer whose songs were sung in times of crisis or to achieve some purpose for the community.

Sitting Bull had special relationships with children, animals such as wolves and buffalo, and particularly with the birds. One day while Sitting Bull was sleeping, a golden woodpecker in an adjacent tree advised him to lay still. Immediately after the warning, a bear came bounding out of the brush and ran by him without notice. Once the bear was gone, Sitting Bull thanked the woodpecker with a song and pledged himself to the bird nations as a relative forever (Utley 1993).

Sitting Bull participated in many of the battles throughout the Sioux War. After the military invaded the Black Hills, designated as the territory of the Great Sioux Nation, the government demanded that the plains tribes return to their agencies until they agreed to sell the Black Hills. Sitting Bull refused. The military chose to pursue the Hunkpapas, as well as other tribes, that had refused to return to the reservations. These actions led to the Battle of the Little Big Horn. Sitting Bull and his band were among 10,000 Natives that had camped while participating in the Sun Dance ceremony. As a spiritual leader for the encampment, Sitting Bull supported his warriors in their defense of their

homelands, and the military subsequently suffered a significant loss. Sitting Bull had seen this battle in a vision—the soldiers had come as thick as grasshoppers. As the soldiers came into the camp, they landed upside down, indicating victory for the northern plains tribes.

The American public was outraged and bent on vengeance. Sitting Bull and his people crossed into Canada and stayed there for four years. While there, he developed a close relationship with Major James M. Walsh, who told him that British law protected, as well as punished, all men equally. Walsh had no fear of Sitting Bull or his men and felt that the U.S. government had greatly wronged Sitting Bull. As time proceeded, Sitting Bull had to return to the United States as he and his family were near starvation. First, he surrendered at Fort Buford, and from there Sitting Bull was taken to Fort Yates, which was next to the Standing Rock reservation. Shortly thereafter, he was sent to military prison at Fort Randall for close to two years.

Sitting Bull traveled with Bill Cody's Wild West Show for four months, and he became friends with Annie Oakley. He received a weekly income and was paid for his photographs. Instead of keeping the money, Sitting Bull gave it away to the homeless. He then returned to live on the Standing Rock reservation. In 1890, the Ghost Dance had come to the reservation. Outside Sitting Bull's home, people gathered and danced. This made the whites in the area increasingly nervous. The Standing Rock agent James McLaughlin was nervous as well. He decided that he would have his Indian police arrest Sitting Bull in the early morning hours to avoid a confrontation on a larger scale. At 4 a.m. on the morning of December 15, 44 regular and special police, along with several volunteers, made their way to Sitting Bull's home. Once there, led by family who had fought with him and struggled with him in Canada, the Indian police burst through the door. In the sleepy darkness, Sitting Bull gathered himself and once dressed began to walk through the door. A crowd had gathered outside and demanded that the police not take their chief. A warrior shot one of the police, who in turn shot Sitting Bull. A scuffle ensued, shots rang out, and soon there were eight dead Natives, and four dead police, along with three wounded police. While this scene played out, another was about to occur for Spotted Elk and his people that would signal the end of the Sioux wars, at least for that moment in time.

Few surpassed Sitting Bull in the virtues of Sioux life: bravery, fortitude, generosity, and wisdom (Utley 1993, 13). He will never be forgotten; as his life was not his own, but was for his people.

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# 36

## Ohio

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Barbara Alice Mann

### **CHRONOLOGY**

**c. 2500 BCE**

Ohio Mound Builder cultures flourish

**c. 200 BCE**

The Cherokee arrive in the Ohio region

**c. 100 CE**

The Iroquois and Lenape arrive in the Ohio region

**c. 1500 CE**

By this date, other indigenous groups, including the Shawnee, Ottawa, and Miami, arrive in the Ohio region

**1600–1650**

European Beaver Wars kill untold numbers of indigenes

**1673**

Louis Joliet guides Jacques Marquette tours “French” Ohio

**1682**

René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, “claims” Ohio for France

**1753–1754**

Lieutenant George Washington surveys Ohio land for his family’s Ohio Company

**1763**

Intentional smallpox distribution from Fort Pitt kills many Ohio indigenes

**1779–1782**

American military actions in the region during the Revolutionary War adversely affect Ohio indigenous populations; untold numbers die from military action, starvation, and disease

## **682 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1783**

United States recognizes only “occupancy rights” of indigenes to their land

### **1784–1794**

Recurrent U.S. invasions of Ohio to seize land kill untold numbers of indigenes through direct attack, induced hunger, and disease

### **1787**

Article IV of the Northwest Ordinance outlaws slavery in the Northwest Territories, but most incoming Euro-settlers bring in their African slaves with impunity; free blacks can vote

### **1789**

Thomas Jefferson sets up the legal structure for Euro-ownership of indigenous land, under the doctrine later termed “Manifest Destiny”

### **1795**

The Greenville Treaty forces land cessions on Ohio indigenes

### **1802**

The Ohio State Convention hotly debates slavery; Ohio becomes a free state by just one vote

### **1803**

Ohio becomes the 17th state to enter the Union on February 17; although a free state, Ohio immediately disenfranchises free blacks and bars blacks from serving in the state militia

### **1804**

The first Ohio Black Code gives blacks only “occupancy rights” to the land, thus placing them in same category as indigenes; the state requires a per capita fee for all black children, restricts, under penalty of enormous fines, black employment to those with a “free” certificate only, heavily fines employers of escaped slaves, and heavily fines anyone abetting an escaped slave

### **1807**

The second Ohio Black Code makes blacks (and indigenes) ineligible to testify in court, putting all Ohio blacks in danger of being claimed as “runaways”; the state forces any blacks coming into Ohio to post two expensive “surety” bonds

### **1808–1856**

Slave traffickers seize free Ohio blacks for sale into Southern slavery, despite a series of (unenforced) laws to stop the practice

### **1829**

A race riot in Cincinnati results in the burning of a black neighborhood, forcing 1,200 blacks to flee the city

### **1830s**

The Ohio Underground Railroad begins its secret operations



**1831**

The Ohio Black Code is strengthened against abolition, beefing up the ineligibility of blacks to serve on juries; the Ohio Supreme Court allows anyone of 51 percent Euro-descent to be considered legally “white”

**1838–1839**

The Ohio legislature repeals the acts of 1804, 1807, and 1831 restricting the rights of blacks and allows black emigration into Ohio, but also segregated education

**1839**

Ohio passes an act requiring law officers to enforce the return of runaway slaves

**1843–1845**

The federal removal of Ohio indigenes to the West occurs, although large numbers of holdouts refuse to sign treaties or to leave their homeland

**1843**

The 1839 law requiring officers to enforce the return of runaway slaves is repealed

**1849**

Ohio blacks are taxed to support segregated schools

**1857**

Personal Liberty Law are enacted, giving due process to runaway slaves

**1858**

The Ohio Supreme Court reverses 1831 decision allowing anyone of 51 percent European descent to be considered legally “white,” now saying that anyone “looking black” is officially black

**1865**

Ohio ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery on February 10

**1867**

Ohio ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment granting citizenship to blacks on January 11; however, the legislature rescinds its ratification on January 13, 1868, and does not re-ratify the amendment until March 12, 2003

**1870**

After rejecting it in April 1869, Ohio ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment granting voting rights to black men on January 27

**1876**

The 1858 decision of the Ohio State Supreme Court stating that anyone “looking black” is officially black is reaffirmed

**1878–1906**

Lynchings of African Americans occur across Ohio

**1881–1914**

Lebanese-Syrians, many of whom are Christian, immigrate in large numbers to Ohio

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### **1881**

The Ohio State Supreme Court appearance of blackness decision of 1858 is vacated

### **1885**

In *The Eastern Band of Cherokees v. The United States and the Cherokee Nations* decision, federal courts declare indigenes, in Ohio and elsewhere, who refused to be sent west during the Jacksonian removal to be no longer Indians; thus, during the period (1887–1907) when the government is extending federal recognition of tribes under the Dawes Act, these individuals are denied even the legal right to claim their indigenous heritage, part of a tactic since dubbed “documentary genocide”

### **1886**

Full school segregation is established

### **1887**

School segregation is abolished

### **1894**

The Ohio Revised Code disallows citizenship to any Chinese immigrant (following the federal Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882)

### **1904**

The first Springfield race riots occur when whites break into jail and lynch black prisoners

### **1906**

The second Springfield race riots occur, forcing the intervention of the National Guard

### **1921**

The third Springfield race riots occur, again forcing the intervention of the National Guard

### **1924**

When the Wood County Ku Klux Klan attacks Irish and Italian Catholics in Niles, an 18-hour firefight erupts between the two groups

### **1930**

Ohio deports 630 Latino immigrants, some U.S. citizens

### **1935**

Lucas County deports 300 more Latinos to Mexico

### **1940s**

There is a significant Latino influx into Ohio, especially following passage of the Second War Powers Act of 1942 granting citizenship to those who enlist in the military

**1954**

When U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* desegregates education in the United States, the city of Hillsboro immediately circumvents the ruling

**1957**

The U.S. Sixth District Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court force Hillsboro to integrate its schools

**1963–1964**

Cleveland public schools fight school integration

**1967**

Second influx of Middle Eastern immigrants, many Muslim, into Ohio

**1967**

Baldemar Velasquez founds the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC)

**1979**

FLOC is recognized as a labor union; Cleveland public schools start integrating

**1985**

FLOC negotiates improved wages and working and living conditions for farm laborers

**1986**

Arson destroys Guadalupe Center, which provides self-help to 10,000 northwest Ohio Latinos

**1993**

Ohio passes a law requiring improved conditions for farm laborers

**2005**

Neo-Nazis attack a North Toledo neighborhood; residents fight back

**2012**

Arson is committed against the Islamic Center of Greater Toledo

**2015**

Neo-Nazis hold a march in Toledo; march protestors are restrained by police

**2017**

Four statewide Ku Klux Klan branches exist in Ohio, along with other white-supremacist groups

**NARRATIVE**

Because the history of racism is the history of Europeans in lands not their own, it is important to start the history of racism in Ohio with the European invasion of Ohio. The immensity of that precipitating act reverberates to this day, for genocide was committed against Ohio's inhabitants to seize the land, which was

then worked through the enslavement of Africans. Thereafter, descendants of the Euro-invaders put a “no vacancy” sign in the window should other immigrants come “a knockin.” Racism in modern-day Ohio echoes this origin story.

### Native Americans

Conventional Western histories all begin with French and British incursions, erroneously but cheerily asserting that Ohio was a no man’s land of open “hunting grounds” (see, e.g., Walker, 1869, 4; Nagle, 2015, 521–22). First, for thousands of years before any European set foot on Turtle Island (North America), the Land of the Three Miamis (Ohio) was claimed by indigenous peoples. There are oral traditions referring to the Ice Age, its onset, and subsequent melt. During the Pleistocene era following the ice melt, Ohio became host to the vibrant Mound Builder cultures starting 4,500 years ago, according to Western scholarship, although indigenous traditionalists claim that the mound cultures started much earlier. The “Moon-Eyed People” were the original Ohio Mound Builders, with Cherokees invading around 200 BCE, holding Ohio until the Iroquois and Lenape arrived around 100 CE. The Iroquois settled below Lake Erie. Indeed, *erie* is Seneca for “cat,” meaning the lynx. As the rest of the Iroquoian nations moved eastward, starting around the tenth century, the Western Seneca stayed put in Ohio.

Meantime, the Lenape, took the southeastern half of Ohio, around the Tuscaroras River basin. In the extreme northwestern tip of the state lived primarily the Ottawas of the Three Fires Confederacy. Certain clans of the Shawnees took the central southwestern portions of the state, with some Miamis coming in from the West during the seventeenth century. Each group knew and respected its territory and that of its neighbors.

The state name, Ohio, is also Seneca (*ohi'yo?*) for “Beautiful River,” in reference to the indigenous concept of what constituted the Mississippi River. “Ohio” originally encompassed much more land than the Ohio of today, with what is now Ohio traditionally called the “Land of the Three Miamis,” a term picked up by the earliest French in the 1670s. Only two of the Three Miamis—the Great Miami River and the Little Miami River—retain their original names. Due to a French mispronunciation of Miami as “*Au Mi*,” the “Miami of the Lake” transmuted into the present-day Maumee River in about 1812.

The Euro-instigated Beaver Wars of the seventeenth century particularly devastated Ohio indigenes to the point that European powers could enter the land with impunity and establish their military forts. The initial French “exploration” of the area began at the same time. It is typically credited to René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, who “first” explored the river in the winter months of 1669–1670 as a leg of his travels along the Mississippi River, during which he “claimed” the land north of the Ohio River for France on March 14, 1682. La Salle was followed in the summer of 1673 by Louis Joliet, who spent actual time in Ohio, guiding Jacques Marquette there in the mistaken belief that he was traversing the Wabash River, which is in Indiana. Undoubtedly, many nameless fur traders were out and about in Ohio before either French nobleman,

with the well-known trader Nicolas Perrot actually running into La Salle along the Ohio River in 1670.

The English were behind the French in staking out Ohio, but not the least of them was Lieutenant George Washington in 1753–1754, who used his military appointment to Ohio during the French and Indian War to survey the land for his family’s Ohio Company. At the end of that war, peeved over the success of Ohio’s Ottawa War Chief Pontiac in his drive to throw out all European interlopers, the settler militia commander and British commander at Fort Pitt jointly distributed smallpox-infected goods to an Ohio Lenape peace delegation, resulting in a massive, lethal epidemic across Ohio that killed untold numbers of indigenes. The British commander at the time applauded their effort to “Extirpate this Execrable Race” (Mann 2009 16). Other methods of mass murder were used in the subsequent American Revolution. In the pitched effort to seize Ohio under cover of the war, unremitting scorched earth incursions from 1779 to 1782 starved Ohio indigenes, often to death, with the horrifying 1782 militia massacre of the Lenape and Mahican—allies of the United States—galvanizing resistance by the horrified Ohio union of indigenous nations.

Following the 1783 Treaty of Paris, Washington initiated waves of coerced treaties, backed by military might, from 1784 until the U.S. victory over the Ohio Union at Fallen Timbers in 1794. The conquest paved the way for the forced land concessions of the Greenville Treaty in 1795, which had transferred all of indigenous Ohio into Euro-American hands by 1817, despite the treaty-guaranteed reservations. Having already surveyed Ohio, Washington now set up Ohio lands as his



The Goschocking massacre of the Lenape and Mahican Indian tribes, including women and children, on March 8, 1782. Lenapes and Mahicans were brutally murdered on the outskirts of Goschocking by the 160-strong Pennsylvania militia out of Fort Pitt under the authority of General George Washington. (Library of Congress)

so-called Western Reserve, handing them out to Revolutionary War veterans as pay for their service. This program funneled battle-hardened Euro-settlers into southeastern Ohio. Land forfeitures did not, however, mean that indigenes left Ohio, for they demonstrably stayed. For instance, despite missionary assurances to U.S. commissioners that only 2,600 indigenes remained in the entirety of north-west Ohio in 1817, over 7,000 showed up for the 1817 treaty talks, and they represented just that fraction of peoples in the area around Toledo.

Euro-settlers owned the law, so they could make the law say anything that suited their purposes. One major purpose was to delegitimize indigenous rights to North America, so the concept of “occupancy” of the land was divorced from that of “ownership” or rights to the land. Defined as “aboriginal,” Indians were granted only an alienable “right of preoccupancy,” that is, they could live on their land only until they were forced to “sell” it to Europeans (Fitzpatrick 1931–1944, vol. 27, 18). Neither was aboriginal “preoccupancy” a citizenship right, for Indians were not U.S. citizens, but citizens of their own nations, now seen as internal enemies of the United States, some of those “foreign powers” mentioned in Section 8, No. 3 of the U.S. Constitution.

After rocky initial attempts to confine Ohio Indians to treaty “reserves” run by missionaries, Ohio indigenes were forcibly transported west between 1843 and 1845 under Jacksonian Removal, although significant numbers hid in the swamps of the north and southwest and the hills of the southeast, refusing to be dragged west, with some deportees sneaking back home, once west. In the Dawes era, from 1887 to 1907, federal courts flatly declared all such eastern holdouts *no longer to be Indians* but merely residents of the states in which they lived, their cultures redefined as mere “social clubs” (*The Eastern Band of Cherokees v. The United States and the Cherokee Nations*, 1885). This move denied Ohio (and other eastern) indigenes the legal right even to claim their indigenous heritage, part of a tactic since dubbed “documentary genocide” (Smith 1993, 89–100, 111).

Still used as the gold standard of “Indian authenticity,” the Dawes Rolls are, and were admitted at the time, to be inaccurate, wildly incomplete, and even downright fraudulent. They were, besides, never intended as an inventory of all living Indians, because enrollment involved grants of land and financial entitlements, while eastern Indians had been legally barred from enrollment (24 Stat. 388, ch. 119, 25 USCA 331, Section 5). The “free” acreages that came with enrollment were why Euro-settlers fraudulently enrolled. African Americans also enrolled.

Worst of all, the Dawes Commission assigned racist and fictitious “blood quantum” to enrollees in a direct reflection of the commission’s unabashed usage of eugenics “science” (Mann 2003, 281–90). Today, the Native American Alliance of Ohio urges a review of the entire federal “recognition” system, which continues to punish those indigenous to Ohio and still living in Ohio with a refusal to acknowledge their very existence, because their ancestors flatly refused to sign land-stripping treaties or to be pushed out of Ohio.

Even as Ohio indigenes were being denied not only their homeland but also their identities, Africans were being dragged into Ohio as slaves. The popular misconception is that Ohio had, from its inception, been a proudly free state, but Article IV of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which famously prohibited

slavery, did not stop Euro-settlers from dragging their slaves into the territory or the first governor of the Northwest Territories from owning slaves in Ohio, both actions in open defiance of the Ordinance. There were Euro-Americans entering the new territory from Northern states not favoring slavery, but “the vast majority” of the Euro-settlers racing into Ohio were former Kentuckians, Virginians, or North Carolinians, who brought their slaves and their proslavery agenda with them. Thus, the state was politically schizophrenic from the outset, for slavery was neither liberating, nor equal, nor brotherly.

### **African Americans**

As eighteenth-century European Enlightenment ideals, liberty, equality, and fraternity were based in and reflective of European struggles. These had focused on the systemic abuses of Europe’s caste-by-class structure, into which equation race had not entered. Because, however, there were three continents represented in the early United States, an alternative caste system took hold here, one made of race. For governmental reasons, the United States cemented “race” into the law with “white” as authority; “Indian” as enemy; and “African” as de facto slave. The grand prize of “whiteness” was handed out to *all* Euro-Americans, regardless of arrival date or European class status by way of corralling them into the larger scheme of Manifest Destiny. The plan worked only so long as any old Euro-settler, no matter how lowly, had free license to exploit *any* African or *any* indigene. Under this rubric, “free black” was a nonsense category, despite the existence of free blacks.

Not surprisingly, slavery formed a burning, open wound during the 1802 Ohio Constitutional Convention, held preparatory to gaining statehood. Although technically, slavery was prohibited in the Northwest, the slavers “needed” as much “fresh” land as possible, because plantation crops quickly exhausted the land while “conservation” of land was expensive and not deemed necessary, when so much new land was constantly available. The upshot of the conflict was that the Ohio Constitution prohibited slavery, but only weakly, its article passing by just one vote. Moreover, Ohio’s Constitution made sure to disenfranchise free blacks in the state by confining the vote to Euro-settler men, even though free blacks had previously held the vote while Ohio was yet a territory. In 1803, for good measure, the state passed an act limiting the militia to Euro-settlers, presumably because the thought of blacks with rifles and war training unsettled the settlers. Consequently, Ohio technically entered the Union on March 1, 1803, as a free state, but the designation was honored more in the breach than in the observance.

Continued Euro-American squeamishness over racial inclusion was demonstrable in the Black Code, on the drafting board as immediately as Ohio entered the Union, culminating in the 1804 “Act to Regulate Black and Mulatto Persons” (2 *Laws of Ohio* 63, 1804). Under this code, free blacks were categorized as “aborigines” who could, begrudgingly, live in Ohio but only as occupants, not as full citizens. Although seldom remarked, the Euro-settler legal terminology of “aborigine” and “occupant” placed blacks in exactly the same legal limbo as indigenes, who also had only “preoccupancy” rights to the land.

Notwithstanding, the covalency of Africans and indigenes in the Euro-American mind could not be clearer, and it was openly fostered. In 1789, the architect of the legal structure that eventually became known as Manifest Destiny, Thomas Jefferson, opined that the indigenous “aborigines” might originally have been blown to America “from the coast of Africa . . . by the trade winds”! The indigenous “aborigines” had not, but the African “aborigines” of Middle Passage certainly had (Washington 2011, 109).

The 1804 Black Code was not yet done regulating people. It also required all black residents of Ohio to register with the state, listing the names of all their children, with a 12.5 cents charged affixed each. No one could employ a black for an hour without seeing his or her certificate of freedom, with any employer who did, fined \$50 per offense, and should anyone show up claiming to own the “runaway” black, the employer had to pay the claimant 50 cents for each day of employment. The black had to prove that he or she was free, whereas white claimants were taken at their word. Anyone caught harboring a runaway was fined \$50 per offense. These fines may look penny-ante to modern readers, but in 1804, they were significant. Based on the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Consumer Price Index, in today’s dollars, a man with 10 children would have owed nearly \$26 for the privilege, while a \$50 fine would today be worth approximately \$983. Should a purported runaway have worked for an employer for 200 days, the employer would have had to shell out a fine worth almost \$20,000 today.

The 1807 modification of the 1804 Code, probably passed in anticipation of the 1808 federal ban on the Atlantic slave trade, strengthened the constitutional ineligibility of Africans to act as witnesses offering evidence in court against a Euro-settler. To dampen free black emigration to the state, the law required two or more “surety” bonds, backed by Euro-settlers, to “ensure” the good behavior of the blacks, so that they never became a burden to the state, with insurers having to pay the state up to \$500 for each infraction of Ohio law that the insured might commit. Five hundred dollars in 1804 would today amount to over \$9,800, an impossible sum for anyone, especially now that the abolitionist could not afford to employ the black he or she vouched for. By the 1830s, nearly one-third of the 7,500 blacks in Ohio were actually slaves, working for pay to buy their own freedom.

Predictably, the 1807 Black Code unleashed a slew of slave hunters in the state, whose claims to be apprehending runaway slaves could not be disputed legally. Obviously, this further eroded the likelihood of black employment in the state. The ferocious law also caused a riot in Cincinnati when, in 1829, the city gave free blacks 30 days to comply with it. Even as blacks scouted Canada for alternative homes, an enraged Euro-settler mob invaded and burned down the black section of Cincinnati, forcing 1,200 blacks to flee town. Driving out the free black population was arguably another submerged purpose of the 1807 bond law.

Under Article I, Section 8, No. 3, the U.S. Constitution gives Congress the power to regulate foreign trade, so Congress cut off the foreign trade in slaves with the Abolition Act of 1808, which intensified the interstate slave trade, perhaps the law’s purpose, although encouraging the foreign smuggling of slaves that immediately erupted was probably not. In either case, kidnappings of free Ohio



blacks ramped up, as prisoners could be easily sold into Southern slavery as alleged runaways. Between 1804 and 1856, Ohio passed a series of acts, purportedly aimed at ending this human trafficking, but clearly, ignoring these laws was easy. Especially in the southern portion of Ohio, free blacks were liable to be abducted and carted South as slaves, as was the mother of Jermain Loguen, when she was only seven years old. In 1833, William Hayden, a free black from Ohio, was arrested in Maryland as a runaway and sold into slavery; ironically, this occurred while he was moving to the District of Columbia to get away from Ohio's new and draconian black laws, enacted to suppress the state's growing abolition movement.

Much better recorded and discussed than the half-century struggle between "free-" and "slave-"minded Euro-Americans in Ohio was the minority of Euro-abolitionists who openly harbored and helped escaped slaves. Polarization gave Ohio a vigorous if illegal Underground Railroad. Some of its stops are well known. In the South, across the Ohio River from Louisville and Lexington, Kentucky, was Cincinnati, Ohio, one of the first and most obvious stops a runaway could make. The tiny town of Perrysburg in the far northwest of the state was another regular stop, due to its proximity to Lake Erie and Canada. It pretty openly sheltered numerous runaways, as escapee Henry Bibb recorded in 1837 (Bibb 1849, 55). In his hair-raising account of escape from slavery, Henry Goings provided a chapter describing the residents of Perrysburg overtly conspiring in 1842 to ferry him out of the clutches of a sheriff on the prowl for him (Goings 2013, 46–55). Many oral narratives of escape from slavery, into and through Ohio, were recorded under the Federal Writers' Project between 1936 and 1938 (Federal Writers' Project, c. 2006).

In 1831, the Ohio General Assembly replied to growing abolitionism by intensifying its Black Codes, nailing down blacks' ineligibility to serve on juries. Noticing, perhaps, that its laws were as cruel as any in South Carolina, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled in *Polly Gray v. Ohio* (1831) that any black (or indigene) whose "white" quantum exceeded his or her black quantum was legally white, just barely reaffirming the decision against challenges in 1834 and 1848. In 1838 and 1839, two acts essentially ended public schooling for blacks (and indigenes) in Ohio by specifying it for white youths, only, so as not to make Euro-settlers help pay for it, but it did not explicitly forbid black students in "white" schools until 1849, when the state began to tax blacks to support segregated schools.

In 1849, the Ohio "repeal act" reworked, if it did not actually repeal, the 1804, 1807, and 1831 laws. Segregated education was allowed, but so was free black immigration into the state. Although free blacks could now testify against Euro-settlers, they still could not sit on juries, vote, or be viewed as legal residents of the state. This semi-repeal came in pained response to the realization that Ohio's Black Codes had become nationally "notorious" (Quillin 1913, 36–37). Nevertheless, at the Ohio Constitutional Convention of 1850–1851, the proposal to extend the vote to all was emphatically defeated by a vote of 75 to 13. The proposal to allow free blacks in the militia lost by a vote of 62 to 22, while desegregating schools lost by 61 to 27. Clearly, abolition was a minority view among the Euro-settlers with electoral clout.

The repressive U.S. Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 bulked up the U.S. Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 by criminalizing Euro-Americans not snitching on escapees, while intensifying the danger to all blacks of being spirited away into slavery. If the 1793 act had been greeted with “Personal Liberty Laws” in some Northern states, then Ohio went back and forth on the matter, passing a law in 1839 requiring law officers to enforce fugitive return, only to repeal that act in 1843. Accordingly, when in 1850, the new Fugitive Slave Law replaced the 1793 version, Ohio did not respond with an intensified Personal Liberty Law until 1857, but this law did attempt to secure due process rights to runaway slaves.

In 1858, the Ohio Supreme Court reversed its generosity in allowing anyone even a tad more than “half white” to pass legally, by declaring that just looking black made one as black, regardless of racist quantum counts. This decision was reaffirmed in 1876, but undercut in an 1881 decision, presumably because it violated the Fourteenth Amendment, with the assembly finally abolishing segregation outright in 1887—over howls of protest. After considerable legal foot-dragging and half-measures from 1869 to 1888, the Fifteenth Amendment was finally honored by Ohio, which granted blacks voting rights in 1894.

However halting, the law was still in advance of social attitudes in Ohio, which begrudged the presence of any but Euro-Protestant Americans. Following Reconstruction, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) was fairly active in Ohio, suppressing minorities socially, if not legally. Lynchings and riots occurred, seemingly without any pushback from the law. When the white servant Alice O'Donnell was raped and murdered in 1878, William Taylor, a free black man, was promptly arrested, tried, and found guilty, despite his pleas of innocence and his actually naming the guilty party. When the sheriff attempted to transport Taylor to Norwalk, Ohio, for execution, a mob forcibly took his wagon along with Taylor, and proceeded to hang Taylor, twice, although he was already quite dead from the first lynching.

In 1882, Frank Fisher was lynched, accused of raping a “young white girl” in Galion, Ohio, then a black community in the lower northwestern part of the state (Howard 1999, 87–90). Meanwhile, in Springfield, Ohio, just east of Columbus, a man was dragged from jail and killed, which did not prevent him from having been strung up, too. The Ohio “militia” (National Guard) was removed just in time to allow this lynching. In every instance, mob instigators and members were known but not prosecuted. In the Taylor instance, the 20 questioned at an inquest all suffered deplorable memory lapses, but because something had to be done, the sheriff was booted off the next ballot as “weak” (Howard 1999, 85).

A frenzy for lynching broke out in 1894 (coinciding with the new extension of voting rights to black). First, Roscoe Parker was jubilantly lynched in North Liberty, Ohio, the black village to which the mob had dragged him after it had sledgehammered open the (white) West Union town jail to seize him. Seymour Newlin was also lynched in 1894, in Rushsylvania, Ohio. When the sheriff called in the militia to guard the jail, the mob flew into a frenzy, pushing the jail off its foundations to enter and seize, beat, and string up Newlin.

Another 1894 “lynching bee” erupted in Washington, Ohio, with Jasper Colby the target, and the Ohio guard firing on and killing three while wounding 10 to ward off rioters who had used a battering ram to break into the jail. Colby was

spirited out of the Washington jail and taken to Columbus. In this instance, the lynch mob was forestalled, but only because 450 armed Ohio guardsmen were present. Guardsmen also broke up another attempted lynching, that of Benjamin Ward, in 1894, in Newark, Ohio. When a feverish mob attempted to seize and lynch Charles O'Neill in 1894, Sheriff Marshall Frey and his deputies held it off in a pitched, night-long battle.

In its well-known summary list of lynchings nationally from 1885 to 1912, the *New York Times* listed Ohio as having had but two, yet that is clearly false. The Springfield Riots of 1904 and 1906 were, for instance, true mob frenzies of riot and murder. In 1904, jails were broken into with men spirited out for lynching. In 1906, the mob returned, intending to lynch again but then turned to riot and property destruction, when it found that its victims had been quietly moved to Dayton before the break-in. In retribution, a second night of rioting targeted "different parts of the city, wherever there was any considerable number of coloured families" ("Punishment of Lynchers" 1906, 1177). The Ohio National Guard showed up to quell this outbreak, arresting 29 rioters. The original rioters from 1904 escaped all legal repercussions, but in 1906, three men were found guilty of carrying concealed weapons and fined the maximum \$200 allowed by law. Thirteen adolescent males were found guilty of rioting and were fined \$1 each.

The 1906 riots were not the end of Springfield's troubles, however, for they erupted again in 1921, during the economic downturn exacerbated by unemployed veterans, including blacks, returning home in 1919, following World War I. Annoyed, Euro-Americans generally rioted to put the returning black veteran "back in his place" (James 1980, 35). Seeing trouble brewing, Springfield's blacks, many army-trained, organized, and armed themselves, determined not be victimized, again.

A tense quiet was maintained until 1921, when a black stranger was accused of assaulting a young girl, leading a Euro-mob of several hundred to surround and then enter the Clark County jail on March 9 in search of him. Two days later, the mob—accompanied by "several Springfield police officers"—descended on the black part of town, but armed blacks were ready for them. The all-Euro police moved on the blacks, resulting in one policeman being shot in the face, which resulted in a quick police retreat back to headquarters (Carter 1993, 66–68).

A thousand enraged whites assembled, and police reattempted entry into the black district, but were ordered back by armed blacks, at which point the state sent in 60 National Guards armed with eight, truck-mounted machine guns. In negotiations, the blacks agreed to go home—*after* the Euro-mob was proven to have dispersed. By March 14, negotiations and Guard patrols had quelled tensions. The 1921 Springfield unrest is often omitted from race riot recitals, perhaps because organized, armed black veterans turned back the intended Euro-mayhem.

### **Other Minority Groups**

Native and African Americans are hardly the only historical targets of racism in Ohio. Middle Easterners, Asian Americans, and Latinos have been given a hard time, along with Catholics. Most Americans figure that Arabs and Middle

Easterners have but recently arrived in the United States, but most Americans are quite wrong. For starters, although no clear calculations are available, circumstantially, it has been estimated that up to 15 percent of Africans enslaved in the Americas were Muslims (Diouf 2013, 17, 70). Certainly, American slave raids were conducted in Morocco—an Ottoman state—from the beginnings of the United States, helping to bring on the so-called First Barbary War of 1801–1805. Other Arabs, both Christian and Muslim, came of their own accord. In 1862, the Homestead Act, giving away indigenous land, attracted Druze farmers to Appalachia, which includes southeastern Ohio.

A heavy influx of Syrian-Lebanese immigrants began coming into Northwest Ohio from the Ottoman Empire in 1881, with the first wave of Middle Eastern newcomers peaking in 1914 as the Ford Motor Company pulled Arab factory workers into Ohio. Stereotype has every last one of them a Muslim, but solid percentages were actually Christian. In fact, the Syrian-Lebanese influx into Toledo between 1881 and 1914 consisted primarily of Christians. Notables produced from this era included the television star, Danny Thomas, who was instrumental in creating St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital, and a little later, the Lebanese-Toledoan Jamie Farr, “Corporal Klinger” of *M\*A\*S\*H\** fame.

After World War I, especially with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, a second influx of Middle Easterners, building though the 1960s, began coming into Ohio. Following the Arab-Israeli War in 1967, the newcomers included a significant Muslim population, which was so successful in establishing itself in Northwest Ohio that, today, one of the largest Arab communities outside the Middle East, lies along the Dearborn, Michigan, to Toledo, Ohio, corridor, with large Muslim groups also residing in Cleveland.

Their long tenure in Ohio does not, however, save Arab Americans from violence, especially since recent U.S. wars in the Middle East whipped up anti-Muslim racism, with dangerous results. One of the most remarkable vistas in Ohio is the Islamic Center of Greater Toledo, a magnificent mosque rising out of the cornfields along I–75. Its visibility attracted attention on September 20, 2012, when armed Indiana trucker Randolph Linn stopped to set fire to its prayer room, as “payback” (Blake 2012)—somehow, 57 percent of Euro-American evangelical Protestants fantasize that they face harsher discrimination in the United States than Muslims (Green 2017). Caught on surveillance cameras, Linn was arrested, tried, sentenced to 20 years in prison and ordered to make restitution of \$1.4 million.

Although the Black Code of Ohio is popularly conceived as having applied exclusively to African Americans, it actually applied to anyone deemed iffy by the overwrought, white supremacist eye test of identity. This included Italians, Middle Easterners, and Native Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans. The sentiment against “foreigners” in the state did not appear out of nowhere but was coddled by the larger national, anti-immigrant racism of the day. The justly infamous Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, for instance, reflected Euro-American hostility to Asians, generally. The anti-Chinese acts of 1911, 1912, 1913, 1917, and 1924 progressively strengthened the original 1882 legislation, with particularly vicious revisions in 1917 and 1924. The General Immigration Act (1917) banned incomers from specific locales, globally, while the 1924 National Origins Act, or

Second Exclusion Act, set a limit of 150,000 immigrants per year, all told, from anywhere not in the Western hemisphere.

These laws were felt in Ohio. Forced unemployment and underemployment are deliberate racial violence when visited on select groups by Euro-Americans, especially during a depression, when Euro-Americans face job losses of their own. Thus, in 1936, when Ohioan Yee Jock Leong went to Chicago, desperately seeking work, while his Latina wife maintained their laundry business in Dayton, the restaurants and laundries of Chicago afforded him no more hope than had those of Dayton. Ohio was not unwitting as to this discrimination. The Ohio Revised Code in 1894 cited the infamous Ah Yup case of 1878, in which the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court judge Lorenzo Sawyer choked on Ah Yup's contention that he was "white," declaring instead that, "A citizen of the Empire of China cannot be naturalized" (*Revised Statutes of the State of Ohio*, 1894, 2752; *Ah Yup*, 5 Sawyer, 155, Fed. Cas. No.104, 1878). Chinese Americans were not allowed to live and work as citizens until the Magnuson Act of 1943 lifted the 1882 ban, in hopes of Chinese aid against Japan in World War II (Pub.L. 78-199; 57 Stat. 600).

Like Chinese Americans, Latinos were also unwelcome in Euro-American Ohio, deported throughout the 1930s under various pretexts. In 1930, alone, 1 million Latinos—60 percent of them U.S. citizens—were deported to Mexico (Jensen, 2012 161-71). Of the 8,250 deported just through Laredo, Texas, in October and November 1930, 660, or 8 percent, came from Ohio (Balderrama and Rodríguez 2006, 154-55). Under the shameful federal Mexican Repatriation Act of 1935, Lucas County, Ohio, alone rounded up and deported 300 people to Mexico, via a "special repatriation train commissioned by state authorities" (Balderrama and Rodríguez 2006, 125).

Notwithstanding, in the 1940s, Latinos began a significant entry into Ohio, as the federal government granted citizenship in exchange for military service in World War II under the Second War Powers Act of 1942 (56 Stat. 182, 186), but Latinos thus naturalized were more in pursuit of manufacturing jobs than of uniforms, so that worker communities such as the Mexican enclave in Toledo sprouted up. Like Mr. Lee's wife, however, Latinos, generally, faced acknowledged labor repression in Ohio. Many were migrant farm workers, picking tomatoes and cucumbers and laboring under deplorable conditions for pittances, leading to the 1967 founding of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC). Under the leadership of Baldemar Velasquez, FLOC became a recognized union in 1979. In 1983, taking notice of FLOC's complaints, the Ohio legislature legally established minimum housing standards for farm laborers who had been forced to live in plywood shacks of 14 by 16 feet, without running water. It was, however, another two years before FLOC's determined boycotts and marches forced a clever, three-way agreement among Campbell's Vlasic operation, farmers selling produce to the corporation, and 800 Latino FLOC members, guaranteeing improved wages and living conditions, including running water.

This success was immediately followed by one of the worst racist attacks on Latinos, this in Toledo, home of FLOC. On April 4, 1986, the Guadalupe Center, which served as the heart of the Latino community, was firebombed in a clear arson. It was generally regarded as a white supremacist attack, although the police

and fire departments (somehow) could never pin down the culprits. A motive seemed to have been that, by 1970, the center was providing services to 10,000 local Latinos, and just two months before the firebombing in 1986, it was doing such stellar work, which then Ohio governor Richard Celeste keynoted a celebration of the center. Apparently, racist forces did not wish to see official celebrations of Latino self-help.

### **Ku Klux Klan and Neo-Nazis**

The rumor persists that Northwest Ohio is “more liberal” than the rest of the state, notwithstanding that some of the most egregious white supremacy is documented as having been headquartered in Wood County in the northwestern portion of Ohio. Regardless of the illegality of the KKK, its Wood County section retained sumptuous documentation of its actions. Its membership rolls included some of the most illustrious citizens of the county, from the Reverend Rush A. Powell, of the United Brethren Church in Bowling Green, Ohio, who preached Klan doctrine in church in the mid-1920s, to a Junior-League-style women’s group that openly advertised and then held a fund-raiser for the Klan at Woodman Hall in Bowling Green in 1924. There are records of this Bowling Green Klan chapter that stretched into the 1940s (Brooks 2014, 116–17). Although careful not to record its directly illicit activities, illegal actions attributed to the Wood County KKK include a botched lynching and one shooting of a gambler.

The Wood County KKK did more than hold church services and fund-raise, though. It looked to control the local media and impact the Statehouse. Accordingly, Reverend Powell decided that he would make an excellent Republican state senator and launched his bid with the help of the local *Wood County Republican* newspaper, whose publisher, editors, and reporters were all KKK members, too. Not only was Powell’s opponent, Frank Thomas, not a Klansman, but Thomas was also a Democrat who ran a rival newspaper. An unknown person leaked Powell’s Klan affiliations to Thomas, who reprinted the story in his paper, but Powell won the election with nearly 75 percent of the vote. Once in Columbus, Powell was promptly seated on some of the most influential committees in the legislature.

Anyone not conforming to the Klan’s illusory “whiteness” was subject to attack, including Catholics. In 1924, in the Mahoning Valley, on the far northeastern edge of the state, the town of Niles, population with population of about 13,000, was ravaged by KKK activity because of its large and “un-American” Irish and Italian Catholic populations, both of which actively resisted the Klan. In May, a Klan parade squared off against town residents, with shots anonymously fired, but the townsfolk rallied to drive the Klansmen off with rocks, bricks, and fists. Furious, the Klan put out a call for a “Konklave” that, in June, pulled as many as 10,000 Klansmen into the town of 13,000. Undaunted, the joint Catholic forces of Niles rallied once more, with subsequent rioting forcing a halt to the Konklave.

Because the “Protestant residents” of Niles were purportedly threatening to move away, due to the “dangerous” hostility of the Catholics, the Klan somehow

received another parade permit, with a charismatic Klan “Kleagle” calling on fellow Klansmen not to allow “a bunch of Wops” to “scare” them out. Meantime, the pro-Klan *Wood County Republican* circulated stories that the “Dago foreigners” were gathering up “thousands of gunmen” to attack the Niles Klan. In response, 1,000 Klansmen again descended on Niles, this time, bearing weapons. Seeing trouble brewing, the town of Niles canceled the Klan’s parade permit, while the National Guard was called in to suppress the growing violence. Nevertheless, for 18 hours, the Klan engaged in a firefight with the “Dagos” and the “Wops.” No lives were lost, but 12 people were injured. After the dust settled, 104 people were indicted, yet 101 were let off after paying minimal fines. Three went to prison.

Meanwhile, education in Ohio continued on its grossly unequal footing even after national developments intervened in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). For instance, Hillsboro, Ohio, a southwestern Ohio town near Cincinnati boasting 5,000 residents in 1954, was reluctant to give up the white privilege that had smiled upon public school segregation, despite Ohio’s 1887 repeal of the 1886 law enacting school segregation (84 *Ohio L.* 34, 1887). To get around the 1954 ruling, Hillsboro instantly dreamed up “attendance zones,” deftly assigning the African American students to an all-black school “zone.” This precipitated a discrimination case that was not resolved until the U.S. Sixth District Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court forced integration in Hillsboro in 1957 (Alexander 2004, 300). In Cleveland, ceaseless demonstrations and pitched legal battles from 1963 to 1964 failed to force integration of Cleveland’s public schools, which did not begin to desegregate until 1979. The Brookfield Local School District in Northeast Ohio was still under an open desegregation order in 2013.

On October 15, 2005, again in Toledo, the neo-Nazi “National Socialist Movement” targeted a north Toledo neighborhood for a march it billed as opposing “black crime,” even though the neighborhood was peaceful (“Planned Neo-Nazi March” 2005). The Nazis’ spokesman, Bill White, claimed that his group had been invited into the predominantly African American neighborhood by a Euro-American resident, later identified as Thomas Szych, who had complained to the Nazis about “black criminal behavior” (“Over 100 Arrested” 2005). Szych had already made hundreds of calls to the Toledo Police demanding action against African American children and referring to two African American policemen as “gorillas with guns.” Toledo Police continued to find no gang activity, however (Maag 2005). Undeterred, the Nazis appeared, provoking violent opposition to their presence, with 114 counter-protesters arrested for “rioting” during a counter-march so determined to prevent the Nazi march that then-mayor Jack Ford called a “state of emergency” in the city (“Over 100 Arrested” 2005, “Planned Neo-Nazi March” 2005).

On October 19, 2015, the Nazis returned to north Toledo hoping to inflame passions, again. Trailing swastikas and other Nazi paraphernalia, they maintained the old saw that (presumably minority) crime was rising but added the new twist that Toledo was “on the front line of illegal immigration” (McCray and Messina 2015). Heavily armed and mounted Toledo Police provided protection to the 30 Nazis for their new march, but there was no violence from the 200 counter-protestors who showed their dismay by booing and shouting obscenities at the Nazis. After the

racist rally, as policemen on horseback were advancing on the counter-protesters to disperse them, one person was arrested for disorderly conduct, a charge he challenged.

Nice as it would be, then, to think that racism in Ohio is a thing of the past, but that is clearly not the case. According to the Poverty Law Center, there are currently 35 hate groups operating in Ohio, including four statewide branches of the KKK. Other white supremacist groups include the statewide “White Vanguard” and the anti-Muslim “Soldiers of Odin.” Some hate groups claim a Christian connection, including the “Divine Truth Ministries” of Bainbridge, Ohio. Unfortunately, racism remains a social value across certain and, sometimes, surprising swaths of Ohio. As long as Euro-Americans continue to benefit from racism, racism will continue in Ohio.

## **NOTABLE FIGURE**

### **Velásquez, Baldemar (1947– )**

Born on February 15, 1947, in Texas, Baldemar Velásquez was the third of nine children of a family of United States citizens. From the time he was four years old, Velásquez was picking crops, living in poorly constructed, one-room shacks, and enduring racial slurs, yet not even guaranteed to receive the promised pay.

In 1954, the Velásquez family permanently relocated to Gilboa, Ohio (population 181 in the 1950s). Now in the northeastern agricultural portion of Ohio, the family enjoyed year-round work, picking in the summer and canning in the winter, but his family was Spanish-speaking, whereas school was English-only, exposing Velásquez to further ethnic denigration. Once functional in English, however, he excelled in his studies, and in 1966, Velásquez enrolled as an engineering student in the Pan American University, in Texas. While there, he began to realize the depths of the oppression suffered by Mexican American farmworkers, facilitating his switch to sociology. Returning to Ohio, Velásquez finished his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1969, first, at Ohio Northern University and, then, at Bluffton University. His pacifist professor at Bluffton, Lawrence Templin, greatly influenced his philosophy of social equity and justice.

Even before he had finished his degree, in 1967, Velásquez began the FLOC to represent farm laborers in Ohio, based heavily on the model of César Chávez, who was then leading the grape pickers’ boycott in California. Originally and perhaps naïvely, Velásquez attempted to bargain with the farm owners for improved wages and living conditions. His efforts were, however, roundly rebuffed, perhaps because a 21-year-old did not seem to the growers to have had much power. In 1968, Velásquez nonetheless proved to have been a force to be reckoned with, calling a major strike against 10 growers in Ohio. The farm laborers honored his call.

Seeing that Velásquez was not dissuadable, first 5 and, finally, 21 growers caved and signed a contract to raise wages (to the U.S. minimum wage), improve housing, and stop harassing FLOC members. Velásquez looked now to be pulling a major rabbit out of his hat, but the next year, the anti-labor pushback began, as backed by the American Farm Bureau Federation, commonly called the “Farm



Bureau.” Despite its governmental-sounding name, the Farm Bureau is a nonprofit organization, large, moneyed, and powerful. Although nonprofit organizations are restricted by their tax status from engaging in political action, the Farm Bureau unabashedly moved to stymie FLOC. The major impact was that the tomato growers pulled out of the contracts that they had just signed, discouraging the farmworkers enough that many left FLOC.

Velásquez was not about to give up the fight. Instead, in the 1970s, he unveiled a new tactic: he started targeting the media, publicizing the plight of farmworkers. A chance to test his new strategy came in 1976, when farmworkers in Indiana asked FLOC to negotiate a labor dispute with employers, who were deliberately driving down wages by over-hiring workers. Velásquez did not get far with the employers, who not only secured a federal injunction against the strikers’ sit-in, which had idled the factory, but who also used the Immigration and Naturalization Service as a cudgel to coerce workers. Velásquez was able to mobilize the media, however, and attention fixated on the horrendous working conditions and unlivable wages offered, opening to the public the unsavory origins of their food stream, while giving Velásquez an increased understanding of how to push his case.

The seminal FLOC showdown came in 1983, with Campbell Soup Company and the associated Libby canning plant. As an admirer of Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., Velásquez trained the farmworkers in nonviolent action preparatory to striking. Knowing the power of the media, he staged a dramatic 550-mile march from Toledo, Ohio, headquarters of FLOC, to Camden, New Jersey, home of Campbell, everywhere spreading the word of the appalling wages and conditions with which workers contended. Campbell sniffed that the strike was having no effect, while the United Food and Commercial Workers opposed FLOC’s strike, seeing it as, essentially, a boycott that would result in the unemployment of its own workers. Although associated with FLOC, the AFL-CIO never endorsed the strike.

Not intimidated, Velásquez responded with yet another new tactic. FLOC picketed the Campbell shareholders’ meeting while submitting a resolution (voted down) that Campbell recognize FLOC. Simultaneously, Velásquez pressured the directors of the Prudential and the Equitable Life insurance companies and the Philadelphia National Bank to resign their seats on Campbell’s board, on the threat of a shareholders’ action against them, as well.

Campbell held out for three years, but so did FLOC, in the interim coming up with the idea of a three-way contract among the farmworkers, the growers, and the corporations, in this case, Campbell and Libby. Finally on February 2, 1986, with about one-fourth of Ohio crops not being harvested, Campbell agreed to sign the clever, three-way collective bargaining agreement—the first such agreement in the country. In view of what had transpired, in 1990 other major corporations, including Heinz and Vlasic, signed similar agreements.

Next, FLOC looked to spread by organizing the South, particularly farmworkers in North Carolina, starting in 1998. Once more, over pitched resistance, FLOC succeeded. In 2004, FLOC signed its collective bargaining agreement with the North Carolina Growers’ Association, covering the 10,000 migrant workers in the state, annually.

Today, after 50 years of FLOC, Velásquez is actively looking to groom up-and-coming leaders. For his lifetime achievements, which immeasurably improved the lives of many thousands of farmworkers, Velásquez has received numerous awards, including the Bannerman Fellowship in 1988; the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fellowship, the so-called Genius Grant in 1989; and in 1994, both La Raza's National Hispanic Heritage Leadership Award and the *Aguila Azteca* (Order of the Aztec Eagle) Award, a national Mexican award that honors non-Mexicans. In 2010, the governor placed him on the Hispanic/Latino Affairs panel of the state of Ohio.

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## Oklahoma

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Wendy McBurney

### CHRONOLOGY

#### 1830–1850

The “Trail of Tears,” a series of forced removals, sometimes at gun point, brings members of the Choctaw, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Creek, Seminole, and Ponca tribes to present-day Oklahoma, which has been designated the federal Indian Territory; African American slaves also enter the territory during this period with their Native American masters

#### 1830

Congress passes the Indian Removal Act, which empowers the president to negotiate for removal of Southern tribes from their homes in the Southeast to federal territory west of the Mississippi in present-day Oklahoma

#### 1842

Black slaves in the Indian Territory revolt against their Cherokee masters, with a group of more than 25 men, women, and children attempting to escape to Mexico; the runaways are caught by the Cherokee militia and five slaves are executed, with the others returned to bondage

#### 1866

The United States concludes Reconstruction treaties with Oklahoma’s five Indian nations—Choctaws, Cherokees, Chickasaws, Creeks, and Seminoles—that abolish slavery among the tribes and provide for full citizenship, including the rights to land, for the freed slaves

#### 1866

Allen Wright, a principal chief of the Choctaws and a member of the Choctaw delegation that concludes the tribe’s Reconstruction treaty, suggests the name “Oklahoma” for the Indian Territory



**1889**

Edward McCabe arrives in Oklahoma and begins a campaign to attract African Americans to the area for the creation of an all-black state

**1889**

The federal government declared the unassigned lands—those lands in central Oklahoma not granted to any Native American group—open for settlement; both whites and a few black settlers descend upon the territory to stake out homesteads, and various cities and towns—such as Oklahoma City, Guthrie, and Norman are established

**1890**

Congress creates the Oklahoma Territory on May 2

**1890**

Green I. Currin becomes the first African American to serve in the Oklahoma territorial legislature

**1890**

The Oklahoma territorial legislature mandates segregation in public schools

**1896**

The U.S. Supreme Court issues its “separate but equal” doctrine in the *Plessy v Ferguson* case

**1897**

Langston University, the western-most historically black college in the country and the only one in Oklahoma, is established in Langston

**1901**

Whites drive blacks from Sapuls, Oklahoma; whippings and lynchings of blacks are widely reported

**1906**

The Oklahoma Missionary Baptist Convention is formed

**1907**

On November 16, Oklahoma enters the Union as the 46th state

**1907**

Oklahoma’s legislature begins passing a series of Jim Crow laws, separating blacks from whites in railroad cars and prohibiting interracial marriages

**1907**

The Oklahoma Association of Negro Teachers is formed

**1908**

A.C. Hamlin, a Republican, becomes the first African American elected to the Oklahoma legislature

**1910**

The Oklahoma State Constitution is amended to disfranchise anyone who is unable to read or write a portion of the U.S. Constitution or who had not been

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eligible to vote or descended from someone eligible to vote on January 1, 1866; the amendment effectively prevents most Oklahoma blacks from voting

### **1913**

The first Oklahoma chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is established

### **1915**

The U.S. Supreme Court declares Oklahoma's "grandfather clause" for the restriction of minority voting unconstitutional

### **1915**

Roscoe Dunjee founds the Black Dispatch newspaper in Oklahoma City

### **1915**

Oklahoma becomes the first state to segregate public pay telephone booths

### **1916**

Restrictive housing laws are enacted in Oklahoma City and Tulsa

### **1921**

Believed to be the single worst example of racial violence in U.S. history to that time, a race riot erupts in Tulsa, leading to the destruction of more than 1,000 homes and businesses and the deaths of perhaps as many as 300 people

### **1935**

The Oklahoma State Supreme Court, in *Allen v. Oklahoma City*, strikes down the state's restrictive housing laws

### **1947**

Oklahoma City ends discrimination in teachers' salaries in the face of a lawsuit by black teachers

### **1948**

The U.S. Supreme Court, in *Sipuel v. Oklahoma*, declares that the University of Oklahoma must admit blacks

### **1950**

The U.S. Supreme Court, in *McLaurin v. Oklahoma*, rules that once admitted, African American students cannot be segregated and must be treated the same as other students

### **1958**

On August 20, the first lunch counter sit-ins occur at Katz Drug Store in Oklahoma City

### **1964**

On January 23, the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing the poll tax takes effect; as of 2018, Oklahoma has not ratified the amendment

### **1964**

The Oklahoma legislature is reapportioned, allowing more blacks to be elected to office

**1964**

Edward Porter Miller becomes the first African American elected to the Oklahoma State Senate

**1968**

Hannah Atkins, an African American librarian from Oklahoma City, is elected to the Oklahoma House of Representatives

**1970**

Coretta Banks becomes the first African American to participate in the Miss Oklahoma Beauty Pageant

**1978–1979**

Rubye Hall serves as the first black president of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

**1986**

Vicki Miles-LaGrange becomes the first black woman elected to the Oklahoma State Senate

**1991**

In a landmark ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court declares that the Oklahoma City School Board has fulfilled its obligation to integrate even though resegregation is occurring in some schools

**1994**

Vicki Miles-LaGrange becomes Oklahoma's first African American federal judge

**1994**

J.C. Watts wins election to the U.S. House of Representatives from Oklahoma's 4th District, becoming the only black Republican in the House

**2001**

The state of Oklahoma officially apologizes for the 1921 Tulsa race riot and endorses reparations for the African American victims of the riot

**2003**

When Oklahoma loses one House seat and his district is merged with another, J.C. Watts retires from Congress and founds the J.C. Watts Companies, a business lobbying and consulting firm in Washington, D.C.

**2003**

A bill is introduced into the legislature to replace the Confederate flag that had flown at the Oklahoma state capitol until 1988; the bills fails

**2004**

A white supremacist is arrested in Arkansas for allegedly attempting to firebomb a synagogue in Oklahoma City

**2007**

The governor signs House Bill 1804, which was overwhelmingly passed by both houses of the Oklahoma legislature; the measure ends public assistance benefits to

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undocumented immigrants; empowers state and local police to enforce federal immigration laws; and punishes employers who knowingly hire undocumented immigrants

### **2008**

Barack Obama, an African American senator from Illinois, loses Oklahoma in the November presidential election to Republican John McCain, who wins over 65 percent of the vote

### **2014**

The Pew Research Center estimates that about 75,000 undocumented immigrants, mostly from Mexico are resident in Oklahoma

### **2015**

A video surfaces showing Sigma Alpha Epsilon members at the University of Oklahoma reciting a bigoted, hateful, and discriminatory chant

### **2017**

Flyers appear on the Oklahoma State University campus promoting white supremacy and urging students to “embrace white identity”

## **NARRATIVE**

### **Native Americans in Oklahoma**

Thriving between about 500 and 1300 CE, the first indigenous people living in the territory that is today Oklahoma were the Spiro Mound Builders, who constituted a westward extension of the Mississippian Mound Builder culture of the Mississippi River valley. By the sixteenth century, when the first Spanish explorers, such as Francisco Vásquez de Coronado, crossed the American West, the Kiowa, Comanche, Arapaho, Apache, and other Plains tribes were living and hunting across the territory of present-day Oklahoma.

The United States gained control of Oklahoma in 1803, when the region was part of the Louisiana Purchase from France. In 1830, Congress passed the Indian Removal Act, which empowered the president to negotiate with the native tribes of the Southeast for their removal to federal territory west of the Mississippi in exchange for their lands in Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, and other states. The series of forced removals that resulted from this act were accompanied by great hardship and suffering and came to be known collectively as the Trail of Tears. By the 1840s, this removal process had brought the Cherokee, Creek, Seminole, Chickasaw, Choctaw, and other southeastern peoples to Oklahoma. Beginning in the 1860s, the government also relocated members of northeastern tribes to Oklahoma, including the Delaware, Sac and Fox, Shawnee, Potawatomi, Kickapoo, Peoria, Ottawa, Wyandotte, and Seneca. In the 1870s, the government settled various Plains tribes, such as the Comanche, Kiowa, Cheyenne, and Arapaho, and tribes from farther west, such as the Nez Perce and Modoc, in Oklahoma. By the twentieth century, the federal government had removed members of 67 different tribes from their traditional homelands to a reservation in Oklahoma.

In the antebellum period, Christian missionaries, particularly Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians, worked among the Oklahoma tribes, converting many Indians to Christianity. However, many of these converts continued to follow traditional beliefs and to practice traditional rituals in combination with their Christian worship. Encouraged by tribal leaders, many missionaries built schools among the various Indian territories in antebellum Oklahoma.

In 1860, Oklahoma's population comprised over 50,000 Indians, but only about 3,000 whites. The territory was also home for over 8,000 African American slaves, most of whom were owned by Native American masters. At the start of the Civil War in 1861, federal troops withdrew from the area and Confederate forces moved into Oklahoma from Texas. The major tribes signed a treaty of alliance with the Confederacy and were allowed to send a delegate to the Confederate Congress in Richmond. However, sizable minorities within the tribes supported the Union and a small-scale civil war erupted in the territory between pro-Confederate and pro-Union Indians. In response to the Confederate–Native American alliance, the U.S. Congress enacted a bill empowering the president to suspend payments to and abrogate treaties with any tribe actively engaged in hostilities with the United States. On July 23, 1863, federal troops and pro-Union Indians won the battle of Honey Springs, which led to the eventual restoration of federal control in the territory. Nonetheless, Confederate forces continued to operate in Oklahoma, with Stand Watie, a Cherokee, becoming the last Confederate general to give up the fight when he surrendered to Union forces on June 23, 1865. In 1866, the federal government compelled the Five Civilized Tribes (i.e., Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, Seminole), so-called because of their centralized governments, adoption of Christianity, and high literacy rates, to sign treaties of reconstruction. These agreements reduced Indian lands and allowed railroads to cross Indian Territory.

In 1887, Congress passed the Dawes Severalty Act (General Allotment Act), which was an attempt to break down the native tradition of tribal, rather than individual ownership. The act promised American citizenship and ownership of a parcel of tribal land to individual members of the tribe. The Jerome Commission and the Dawes Commission carried out the surveying and distributing of allotments to the tribes. In this way, the major Oklahoma tribes lost almost 27 million acres of land. On April 22, 1889, the first land run, which opened to settlement thousands of acres in the Unassigned Lands of central Oklahoma, brought more than 50,000 non-Indian settlers into Oklahoma. Later land runs, especially in western Oklahoma, and the creation by Congress of a formal Oklahoma Territory in 1890, brought white ranching and mining interests flooding into the region and increased pressure on the tribes to adopt white culture.

Passage of the Curtis Act in 1898, which sought to end tribal sovereignty, led to the dissolution of formal tribal governments and the neutralizing of tribal judicial and educational systems. When the territory's growing white population clamored for statehood, Indian leaders called for creation of the Indian state of Sequoyah, but they had little influence in Washington and all the Indian territories were incorporated into Oklahoma when it entered the Union as the 46th state on November 16, 1907. Despite the Curtis Act, informal tribal governments continued to function and the distinct Indian nations of Oklahoma continued to exist. However,

many of the tribal members who had received individual allotments of land under the Curtis Act lost that land to white deception and fraud.

During World War I, more than 10,000 Native Americans, many from Oklahoma, served in the U.S. military. During the Great Depression in the 1930s, Native communities in Oklahoma suffered economic hardship and, like many white Oklahomans, fled the Dust Bowl for California. Under the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) of 1934 and the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act of 1936, Congress allowed the Oklahoma tribes to reestablish tribal governments patterned on the U.S. government and provided much needed economic assistance to the tribes.

During World War II, many native Oklahomans served with the military, especially the U.S. Army's famed 45th Division. Two Oklahomans—Ernest Childers, a Muscogee Creek, and Jack Montgomery, a Cherokee—received Congressional Medals of Honor for their service, becoming the only Native Americans to do so during World War II. In the 1950s, the federal government launched a new Indian policy known as termination, which again sought to end all tribal self-government. The Oklahoma tribes largely avoided the effects of this policy and tribal governments remained under the control of the Bureau of Indian Affairs of the Department of the Interior. However, Oklahoma tribes did not avoid the consequences of the Relocation Program begun in 1952 and continued into the 1970s. This program moved many young tribal members to cities where they were given employment and housing, but where they were also separated from their families and isolated from tribal life and culture.

In 1975, Congress again changed policy with passage of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, which supported and reinforced tribal governments. As a result, Oklahoma Indians formed 39 tribal governments that won federal recognition. These nations are self-governing and have formed business councils and tribal courts. By 2000, Oklahoma tribes owned and ran 23 gaming establishments, and eight tribes had negotiated gaming compacts with the state of Oklahoma. Besides gaming, Oklahoma tribes invested in various other businesses and industries, and provided their members with college scholarships, health care, and other social services. Many tribes in the twenty-first century host annual heritage day or homecoming festivities, as well as powwows and dances, both private and public. Traditional arts and crafts have also revived and now serve to unify Native communities and generate income.

Nonetheless, social and economic hardships such as poverty, lack of health care, and alcoholism still plague the Oklahoma tribes. Racism against Native Americans is also still alive in Oklahoma. In 2014, Christina Fallin, the daughter of Oklahoma governor Mary Fallin, publicized a photo of herself wearing a Native American headdress, which was titled “appropriate cultururation,” a play on the term “cultural appropriation.” When Ms. Fallin was criticized for the photo, she issued an apology, which only further ignited controversy. Several weeks later, Fallin's band played at the Norman Music Festival, where, according to some Native American protestors who were present, she appeared on stage wearing a fake Native shawl. Governor Fallin and the music festival apologized, but Christina Fallin denied that she had done anything wrong. Incidents like this and controversies, such as the fact the Oklahoma has no Native American history or

culture curriculum in its public school systems, continue to complicate white–Native relations in the state.

### **African Americans in Oklahoma: The Rise of Black Towns**

The all-black towns of Oklahoma reflect an interesting and unique achievement in American history. The rise of these towns was an unprecedented occurrence; it had not occurred in any region of the United States before that time. It was the first time that a group of black men and women came together to create self-governing and independent communities. From 1865 to 1920, African Americans were responsible for creating more than 50 towns and settlements in Oklahoma, some of short duration and some still existed at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

These towns arose in Indian Territory after the Civil War when the former slaves of the Five Civilized Tribes settled together for mutual protection and economic security. These communities grew even more when the U.S. government forced the Indians to accept individual land allotments, and they chose lands that were adjacent to their African American neighbors. This pattern of settlement resulted in the creation of cohesive and prosperous farming communities that supported businesses, schools, and churches, and that eventually evolved into farming towns. As news of the prosperity of these towns spread throughout the South, it attracted more African American settlers to Oklahoma. Blacks in the South were willing to migrate to a new territory that offered them a life of promise and freedom.

With the opening of more lands to non-Indian settlement in the Land Run of 1889, African Americans from the Old South rushed to the newly created Oklahoma Territory. E.P. McCabe, a former state auditor of Kansas, was a very influential leader in the drive for African American settlement in Oklahoma. He helped to found the town of Langston, and he encouraged African Americans to settle in that all-black town. Additionally, he founded the *Langston City Herald*, which he circulated widely in the South with the aim of attracting more migration to the area and in an attempt to create an African American power block in the Oklahoma Territory.

The towns established during the period of expansion in the Oklahoma Territory included Marshalltown, North Fork Colored, Canadian Colored, and Arkansas Colored, which were founded in the 1860s. Other Indian towns that developed in the period, but which no longer exist, include Sanders, Mabelle, Wiley, Homer, Huttonville, Lee, and Rentie. Other Oklahoma Territory towns that no longer exist are Lincoln, Cimarron City, Bailey, Zion, Emanuel, Udora, and Douglas. Towns that have survived are Boley, Brooksville, Clearview, Grayson, Langston, Lima, Red Bird, Rentiesville, Summit, Taft, Tatums, Tullahassee, and Vernon. The largest and most renowned of these towns was Boley, which was visited by Booker T. Washington on two occasions.

In these towns, African Americans could initially live free from the antiblack prejudices and hostilities found in other racially mixed communities of the Midwest and the South. They relished the idea of being able to escape discrimination and abuse as the norm for their lives. These towns also offered blacks the ability

to depend on their neighbors for financial help and access to open markets for their crops. These towns were founded on notions of economic freedom, self-help, and racial solidarity. However, the coming of statehood in 1907 brought a complete reversal of the freedoms that these communities had enjoyed previously. The introduction of many Jim Crow laws by the state legislature resulted in widespread disillusionment among the African American communities. Thus, when Canada began to promote settlement of its territories, many blacks answered the call and relocated to that country's western plains. Another exodus from Oklahoma took place with the "Back to Africa" movements of the twentieth century. Some black Oklahomans also migrated to Mexico during this time.

In addition to the reduction of black communities due to the migrations, the economic hardships of the Great Depressions of the 1920s and 1930s served to compound the difficulties of black towns, coupled with the increased taxes that were levied against the residents. During these years of nationwide economic decline, whites would not extend credit to black farmers and businessmen, and this inevitably led to the complete decline of many of the black towns that had previously been centers of black commercial activity. Boley, for instance declared bankruptcy in 1939 and today only 13 of the all-black towns still survive in Oklahoma.

### **Racial Tensions: Civil Rights and Segregation in Oklahoma**

Blacks first came to Indian Territory as slaves of members of the Five Civilized Tribes, who were removed to Oklahoma by force in the 1830s and 1840s. According to the influential black newspaper editor Roscoe Dunjee, "following the Civil War these slaves were freed and entered into the tribal life of the Indians, intermarrying and becoming an integral part of [their] life and customs" (Henry). Generally, it was believed that these freedmen were able to make considerable progress in these societies; however, it has never been confirmed exactly what level of equity they enjoyed under Indian tribal laws and customs.

The next black migrations to present-day Oklahoma took place in the various land runs and lotteries of 1889 and subsequent years. Many African Americans who came from the Old South had already experienced the pervasive degradation Jim Crow and were eager to migrate to the newly organized lands where there was hope of avoiding these limiting and oppressive laws. A second wave of migrating blacks was encouraged and mobilized by the success that the freedmen seemed to enjoy within the tribal communities. The second group was exemplified by Edward P. McCabe, a visionary and energetic Kansas businessman who helped found the town of Langston. His vision encompassed "a free atmosphere for progressive development, isolation from the kind of oppressive environment that characterized the 'New South,' and a healthy political setting unmarred by unwarranted restraints" (Henry). Under these conditions, black people could flourish and fulfill their promise. McCabe's influence was instrumental in the creation of a new city, and in the founding of the Colored Agricultural and Normal University in 1897. Later renamed Langston University, it was one of Oklahoma's only state-supported institutions originally devoted to the education of blacks.



Despite the initial promise that Oklahoma represented for black citizenry, it soon became apparent that the same policies of discrimination and inequality that existed in the South were being introduced into the new territory. The increasing white population in Oklahoma soon resulted in acute reversals of the preliminary freedoms that had promoted growth and expansion for Oklahoma's black population. The expansion of the white population ensured a push for statehood, and thus the conditions of life for African Americans in Oklahoma began to dramatically decline. The 1906 Constitutional Convention introduced a series of "race distinction" passages that included provisions for segregation of schools and transportation facilities. President Theodore Wilson strongly opposed these clauses, and his reservations delayed the introduction of the measures. Ultimately, the new legislature reintroduced Jim Crow as soon as statehood was granted to Oklahoma in 1907. Thus, Senate Bill 1, the first bill passed in the new state senate, reintroduced the discriminatory transportation provision the president had earlier disapproved.

When Oklahoma became a state, blacks comprised about 9 percent of the voting population. Most of them were loyal Republicans. However, Republicans soon abandoned their alliance with blacks, running a party ticket that excluded them completely. Subsequently, the first black to serve in the Oklahoma legislature, A.C. Hamlin, of Guthrie, remained for only one term in the 1908 legislature. His defeat was ensured by the severely restrictive laws introduced to limit the voting rights of blacks. The "grandfather clause," which required voters to pass a literacy test, proved to be an effective instrument to disenfranchise the black voting population. Although, this clause was later struck down as unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, its replacement proved to be equally restrictive and it promoted further disenfranchisement for blacks.

Two generations passed before another African American sat in the Oklahoma legislature. Systematic discrimination in restricting votes, transportation, accommodations, public schooling, college and professional training, and housing locked African Americans into positions of second-class citizenship in Oklahoma. This situation came to a head in the 1921 Tulsa race riot, in which hundreds of blacks were killed or wounded. The once vibrant Greenwood District of Tulsa was almost completely burned to the ground by antiblack factions. Thirty-five square blocks of once-prosperous businesses and homes were destroyed. Justice was never achieved for the victims of this tragic incident; cover-ups and a corrupt legal system worked together to prevent this from happening.

### ***The Lynching of Laura Nelson***

On the night of May 2, 1911, a sheriff's posse in the east-central Oklahoma county of Okfuskee burst into the home of Laura and Austin Nelson, a local African American couple. The officers were looking for stolen cattle; however, their sudden entry into the home startled the sleeping couple and their two children—a 14-year-old son, L.D., and a two-year-old daughter, Carrie. Seeking to defend his family from unknown intruders, L.D.

grabbed a rifle off the wall. His mother tried to wrestle the gun away from him, but it discharged and fatally wounded Deputy Sheriff George Loney. The next day, police arrested Laura and her son L.D. for murder. Denied bail, the two were held at the county jail awaiting arraignment. On May 25, a lynch mob of about 40 men entered the jail and seized L.D., Laura, and Carrie, who was there in her mother's care. After placing Carrie at the foot of the railroad bridge that crossed the North Canadian River, Laura was sexually assaulted by men in the white mob. Laura and L.D. were then lynched. Afterward, as the bodies swung in the wind, the mob posed for local photographer George Henry Farnum, who captured an image that was later used on postcards. Although a district judge convened a grand jury, no charges were ever filed because no witnesses could be found who were willing to identify the murderers.

Subsequent to this crisis in the relations between blacks and whites in Oklahoma, there arose a cadre of strong political leaders from the African American community. Through their interventions and activism, they were able to bring about change to the old order of complete discrimination and segregation for blacks. Roscoe Dunjee's position at the forefront of this movement cannot be overlooked. He founded and funded the Oklahoma chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He brought in lawyers like Thurgood Marshall to defend blacks unfairly charged with crimes, or deprived of their rights. Dunjee's writings and financial support catalyzed the civil rights movement in the state.

### **Tulsa Riots of 1921**

The catalyst for the most serious Oklahoma race riot was a chance encounter between two strangers of different races. A young white woman, Sarah Page, claimed that she had been assaulted by a black male, Dick Rowland, in an elevator. This claim, which was never proven, ignited a wave of racial tensions that resulted in a violent collision between the races. The accused, Dick Rowland, was not allowed any chance to prove his innocence but was immediately condemned. White Oklahomans were convinced of his guilt and intent to do harm. They immediately mobilized their forces to punish the accused by lynching. It seems that fear of the consequences that he faced compelled him to flee from the scene. In the minds of his accusers, this was sufficient proof of his guilt. In their minds, white womanhood had been threatened and so they were determined that the transgressor be punished.

When black men heard of Rowland's confinement, they feared for his life and offered to protect him from the threatening mob. The sheriff refused their assistance, but they still gathered at the jail to come to his defense. A group of 25 black men from the Greenwood area went to the jail where he was detained in downtown Tulsa. They were turned back by the sheriff who insisted that their help was not needed. Subsequently, the group returned but it had tripled in size and they were all armed. The sheriff again attempted to maintain the peace by trying to



African American families lost everything in the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921, if not their lives. Many fled the city, not to return. Reparations to the families were never made, and the perpetrators were never prosecuted. (Library of Congress)

persuade the group of black men to return to their town. However, when one member of the white group tried to disarm a black man a violent confrontation could no longer be avoided. The conflict escalated out of control as both sides responded with violence toward the other. The white armed group was intent on driving the blacks back to their section of town; when they had achieved their objective, they proceeded to attack the black town. They set fire to many houses and very soon the entire city was in flames. Governor J.B.A. Robertson sent out the National Guard to help police Tulsa.

Nevertheless, their intervention was too late to reverse the damage that had already been done. Many homes and businesses, including those along Greenwood Avenue (known as Black Wall Street) had already been destroyed by fire. The loss of lives that resulted from the violence was also unprecedented, and it is still unknown how many people were killed in the riots. Walter White, in his article "The Eruption of Tulsa," contended that it is very doubtful if the exact number of casualties will ever be known. He indicated that the figure "originally given in the press estimate[d] the number at 100." However, White was convinced that the numbers were suppressed by the officials, and he believed that the figures obtained in Tulsa were far higher: "Fifty whites and between 150 and 200 Negroes is much nearer the actual number of deaths."

The journalist claimed that this information was obtained through eyewitness accounts and that, 10 whites “were killed during the first hour of fighting on Tuesday night.” Six white men drove into the colored section in a car on Wednesday morning and never came out. Then 13 (more) were killed between 5:30 a.m. and 6:30 a.m. on Wednesday. The casualties among blacks were even higher. Accounts indicated that during the “first two days (grave diggers) dug 120 graves in each of which a dead Negro was buried. . . . Added to the number accounted for were numbers of others—men, women, and children—who were incinerated in the burning houses in the Negro settlement.” Another eyewitness related one incident in which five men were trapped in a fire. While four of them burned, another tried to escape but was shot and pushed back into the fire to be incinerated as well. Therefore, for the most part, scholars are still unable to determine the exact number of lives that were lost due to the catastrophic riots that engulfed the area.

The tragic destruction of the riots did not have a great impact on racial policies in Tulsa. Without acknowledging blame, many whites blamed the tragedy on the aggressive response of militant black agitators for social equality from outside the state. In 2001, Oklahoma officially apologized for the tragic events of 1921, and the Tulsa Race Riot Commission was established by the state legislature. The commission called for reparations for the victims of the violence.

Between the 1920s and the civil rights movement of the 1960s, two main themes appear in African American history in Oklahoma—legal action against Jim Crow, especially in education, and black community building. Black newspapers played a critical role in the struggle to achieve equality for blacks in the state. They attacked racially conservative politicians who sought to limit black progress. The most forceful pro-rights journals were found in the larger cities of Tulsa, Oklahoma City, and Muskogee.

### **Segregation in Higher Education: *Sipuel v. Board of Regents* and *McLaurin v. Board of Education***

Ada Lois Sipuel accepted the challenge to become a human experiment when she agreed to Roscoe Dunjee’s proposal to apply to the University of Oklahoma’s College of Law. This led to the opening of the landmark case of *Sipuel v. Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma* in 1948. This lengthy struggle, led by Thurgood Marshall, included two trips to the U.S. Supreme Court, where Sipuel won a partial victory. The Court declared that Oklahoma had to provide her with a legal education. In response to this order, the state created a one-person school for Sipuel, with a couple of professors, and the state capitol library as the school’s library. She returned to the state court, litigating whether the separate but equal school created for her met the Court’s standards. Finally, she was admitted to the Law School, but the state still insisted that she maintain a certain degree of separation from her white classmates. She had to occupy seats that were situated at the back of the room in special alcoves. This designated seating was usually partitioned off by ropes or chains in the classrooms, or in the cafeterias.

On June 5, 1950, while Sipuel was still at Law School, the Supreme Court ruled to end this discriminatory practice in the watershed case, *McLaurin v. Oklahoma*

*State Regents*. It ruled that the “conditions under which this appellant is required to receive his education deprive him of his personal and present right to the equal protection of the laws” (Henry). This case was central to Chief Justice Earl Warren’s efforts to prove that separation was unequivocally tantamount to inequality, and it is largely the precedent that made *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* possible in 1954. Sipuel also recognized the significance of *McLaurin* when she stated in her biography that after that ruling she never again sat at the back of a classroom. The *Sipuel* decision further made possible the dismantling of segregation policies for school children. It was then clear that if a state could not constitutionally ship adult students out of state for their education based on race, then why should it be done to children? This dilemma was finally resolved in the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* ruling.

That case was considered Thurgood Marshall’s greatest legal triumph. He insisted that separate but equal schools were unconstitutional. Thus the struggle to implement the changes ensued when Democratic governor Raymond Gary, a white Southern Baptist, endorsed the decision. Then the lower federal courts sought to implement *Brown*’s directive, but they faced considerable opposition. Federal District judge Luther Bohanon followed the Warren Court’s precedents and issued comprehensive federal court orders that eventually integrated Oklahoma’s schools. This victory was finally achieved through the intervention of the Supreme Court in a one-justice decision by Justice William Brennan, who sustained Judge Bohanon’s order.

### **Social and Community Activism: The Role of the Black Church**

The black church was situated at the very center of black community life in Oklahoma. It represented not only a place of worship, but a valuable social outlet in an era when Oklahoma limited black access to publicly supported facilities. Generally, Baptists and Methodists accounted for the majority of black worshippers, but a smaller number of them also belonged to other religions. By the mid-twentieth century, roughly 8,000 blacks had membership in the nearly 800 churches in Oklahoma. The state of Oklahoma had a number of ministers, such as E.W. Perry of Oklahoma City, who preached the social gospel and taught that Christianity should reject injustice.

### **Oklahoma in the Twenty-First Century**

In 2007, Governor Brad Henry signed House Bill 1804, which was passed by overwhelming majorities in both the House and Senate of the Oklahoma legislature. Sponsored by State Representative Randy Terrill, the bill covered identity theft, ended public assistance benefits to undocumented immigrants, authorized state and local police to enforce federal immigration laws, and it punished employers who knowingly hired undocumented immigrants. The bill illustrated the unfriendly atmosphere that the undocumented encountered in Oklahoma.

The new century has witnessed a number of racial incidents in Oklahoma. In March 2015, the black student group Unheard at the University of Oklahoma posted a video of members of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity singing a racist song about violence against blacks. In April 2015, former Tulsa County reserve sheriff's deputy Robert Bates accidentally killed Eric Courtney Harris, an unarmed black man, who was suspected of selling drugs. Bates claimed that he only intended to use a stun gun, but a jury found him guilty of manslaughter and sentenced him to four years in prison. Late in 2015, Daniel Holtzclaw, a former Oklahoma City police officer, was convicted of sexually assaulting 13 black women while on duty. Holtzclaw was sentenced to over 200 years in prison.

## **NOTABLE FIGURES**

### **Dunjee, Roscoe (1883–1965)**

Roscoe Dunjee was a dynamic journalist and, from 1915 to 1954, the editor of the *Black Dispatch*, Oklahoma City's only black newspaper. From this vantage point, he was able to provide leadership in the struggle for civil rights in Oklahoma and in the Oklahoma City black community.

He was born in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, on June 21, 1883, to Lydia Ann Taylor Dunjee and John Dunjee. In 1892, his father, who was a Baptist minister, was sent to the Oklahoma Territory to organize Baptist missionary work there. Because his father died at an early age, Roscoe did not have the privilege of an extensive formal education, and he had to work to assume the financial responsibilities of the family. However, armed with an enterprising spirit, Roscoe bought a small-job printing plant and printed the first issue of the *Black Dispatch* on November 5, 1914. Although he had no formal training as an editor, and was basically self-taught, having inherited an extensive library of 1,500 volumes from his father, his natural ability for precise analytical thinking and his oratorical skills served him well as editor of the *Black Dispatch*.

He became a vigorous and influential advocate in the struggle against the discrimination and segregation endured by people of color in the state. He was a member of the national board of directors of the NAACP and served for 16 years as the president of the Oklahoma State Conference of Branches of the NAACP. In 1932, the Guthrie, Tulsa, Chickasha, Muskogee, and Oklahoma City branches convened a meeting, which was the nation's first state conference of NAACP branches. Dunjee believed that this type of solidarity would lead to a more effective opposition to discrimination and segregation.

Dunjee, along with other black leaders, struggled to bring about changes to the system of inequality and discrimination that deprived blacks of a fair and just treatment in the state. After World War II, their efforts at challenging the judicial system generated positive results, especially in education. One significant victory in that field came in 1948 in the case *Sipuel v. Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma*. Supported by Dunjee and represented by attorney Amos Hall of Tulsa, Ada Lois Sipuel applied for admission to the University of Oklahoma College of Law but was not accepted. The subsequent appeal resulted in the

overturning of that decision, since the U.S. Supreme Court ordered Oklahoma to admit the Chickasha native. Around the same time, another black student, George McLaurin, entered the University of Oklahoma, but was segregated from white students. In 1950, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents* that the university had to treat him the same as white students. These cases were groundbreaking because they overturned the legal basis for segregation in higher education in the state.

Roscoe Dunjee was also a fervent promoter of black economic advancement and the establishment of fraternal societies. He served as president of the National Negro Business League in Oklahoma City. This organization, which was founded by Booker T. Washington in 1900, had at its core the values of thrift, industry, self-help, and black support of black businesses. Dunjee was also an avid supporter of the fraternal society, the Knights of Pythias, which played an important role in promoting fellowship and leadership in the black community.

### **Luper, Clara (1923–2011)**

Educator and civil rights leader, Clara Luper was born in Okfuskee County, Oklahoma. In 1944, Luper received a bachelor's degree from Langston University. In 1951, she obtained a master's degree from the University of Oklahoma and was the first African American admitted to the graduate history program at that university. She subsequently taught history and public relations at Dunjee High School in Spencer, Oklahoma, and at John Marshall High School and Classen High School in Oklahoma City. During her tenure as a teacher she wrote, directed, and produced a play based on the life of Martin Luther King Jr. entitled *Brother President*.

Luper was a dedicated and committed member of the NAACP and participated in marches and demonstrations organized by the Association. In 1957, she became advisor to the Youth Council of the NAACP, and in August 1958, she led the members of the council in a nonviolent "sit in" at Oklahoma City's Katz Drug Store. Under the guidance of Luper, the nation's first sit-in movement was carried out successfully. The council continued to conduct sit-ins throughout the early 1960s, and their protests and activism resulted in the elimination of policies that promoted segregation in public accommodations in Oklahoma.

From the 1960s to 1980, Luper hosted her own radio show, and wrote her autobiography, *Behold the Walls*. She was a member of the Zeta Phi Beta sorority, the Oklahoma Education Association, and the National Education Association. Her 154 awards include the Langston Alumni Award, Zeta Phi Beta Woman of the Year Award, the Oklahoma Confederated Women's Club Award, and the National Voter Registration Award. She died on June 8, 2011, in Oklahoma City.

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# 38

## Oregon

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Patricia Reid-Merritt and Darrell Millner

### CHRONOLOGY

#### **10000 BCE**

Paleo-Indian era—earliest human inhabitants of America live in caves and are Nomadic hunters of large game

#### **7000 BCE**

Archaic Period—Indigenous populations build basic shelters, make stone weapons and stone tools, and live in small communities

#### **1000–1500**

Diverse tribal groups live in area, including the Ahantchuyuk, Alsea, Bannock, Calapooya, Cayuse, Chastacosta, Chetco, Clatsop, Cowlitz, Hanis, Kathlamet, Kuitsh, Miluk, Modoc, Nez Perce, Shasta, Snake, Takelma, Tillamook, Walla Walla, and Yamel

#### **1579**

The first blacks arrive on the Oregon coast with the English privateer Sir Francis Drake

#### **1788**

The first documented presence of a black person in the Oregon area is the death of Markus Lopus, an African American crewmember of Captain Robert Gray, who is killed by Tillamook Indians

#### **1804–1806**

York, the black slave of William Clark, passes through Oregon as a participant in the Lewis and Clark expedition

#### **1830**

Congress passes the Indian Removal Act

**1832**

Department of Indian Affairs established

**1839**

Methodist Jason Lee establishes an “Indian church” at The Dalles in an effort to convert members of the Klickitat tribe to Christianity

**1844**

American Provisional Government of Oregon enacts first black exclusion law, banning slavery and requiring all slaveholders to free their slaves; subsequently expels all newly freed slaves from Oregon and prescribes whipping as punishment for anyone who remains

**1845**

Black exclusion law of 1844 is repealed after first being amended to substitute hard labor for whipping as a punishment for any blacks who stay in the territory illegally

**1848**

The Oregon territorial legislature enacts second black exclusion law, allows African Americans already in the territory to remain; prohibits any further black settlement in the territory

**1848**

The Cayuse War (1848–1855) causes an influx of disease and settlers to Oregon

**1850**

The U.S. Congress passes the Oregon Donation Land Act, allows white immigrants up to 640 acres of free land, but prohibits blacks and other nonwhites from claiming these donation land grants

**1855**

Winna’s expedition against Snake Indians; the Klamath and Salmon River Indian War; and the start of Rogue River War

**1859**

On February 14, Oregon enters the Union as the 33rd state; it is the only free state to join the Union with a black exclusion article in its state constitution

**1862**

The Oregon legislature passes miscegenation law preventing whites from marrying nonwhites; the law is strengthened in 1867 and enforced until 1951

**1862**

The state legislature enacts a special “poll tax” that applies only to blacks, Chinese, and Hawaiians; they must pay an annual tax of \$5 to vote

**1863**

The Oregon legislature declares that only adult white males are eligible to serve as jurors in state courts

## **726 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1864**

Start of the Snake War—the U.S. Army wages war against tribal groups who lived along the Snake River, including those in Oregon, Nevada, and California, and Idaho

### **1865**

Campaign against Indians in southern Oregon

### **1865**

On December 8, Oregon ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution outlawing slavery in the United States; Oregon's ratification comes two days after the amendment takes effect

### **1866**

On September 19, Oregon becomes the fifth state to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution extending citizenship rights to former slaves

### **1867**

The Portland school board forbids black children to attend public schools and creates instead a separate “colored school” that operates until 1872

### **1868**

On October 15, Oregon rescinds its ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, three months after the amendment takes effect

### **1872**

Modoc War starts, led by Captain Jack; the Modoc Indians leave the Klamath Indian reservation and fight against government forces for six months; Captain Jack is captured and later hanged

### **1877**

Nez Perce War occurs in Oregon, Montana, and Idaho; unable to win the war against U.S. forces, Chief Joseph leads his tribe 1,700 miles to Canada, later forced to surrender near the border

### **1882**

Federal government passes the Chinese Exclusion Act prohibiting all immigration of Chinese laborers

### **1883**

The transcontinental railroad reaches Portland; the arrival of the railroad results in a large influx of black railway workers into the state during the 1880s

### **1887**

Dawes General Allotment Act passes Congress; leads to the breakup of large Indian reservations and the sale of Indian lands to white settlers

### **1887**

A group of white men massacre 34 Chinese miners in Hells Canyon, Wallowa County

**1893**

A resolution demanding removal of the black exclusion article in Oregon's State Constitution is introduced into the state legislature, but fails to achieve repeal

**1900**

The U.S. Census counts 1,105 African Americans living in Oregon

**1906**

The Oregon Supreme Court affirms the legal right to discriminate based on race

**1913**

The Portland chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is founded

**1915**

The Portland chapter of the NAACP leads an unsuccessful campaign to prevent the screening of D.W. Griffith's racist film *The Birth of a Nation* in Portland

**1916**

Repeal of the black exclusion article in the state constitution is narrowly defeated in a statewide referendum vote

**1923**

Walter Pierce, a card-carrying member of the Ku Klux Klan, is elected governor of Oregon

**1927**

The black exclusion clause is finally removed from the Oregon State Constitution

**1941–1945**

The Kaiser Ship Building Company imports thousands of black workers to its Portland shipyards, housing them in a special housing project called Vanport, which, for a brief time, is the second-largest city in the state

**1942**

President Roosevelt signs Executive Order 9066, creating internment camps for Japanese Americans

**1945**

The Urban League of Portland is established

**1948**

Vanport, a wartime housing project built to house many of the new workers who came to Portland during the war to work in the shipyards, is flooded by the Columbia River, leaving more than 5,000 African Americans homeless; their forced absorption into Portland creates racial tension over housing

**1950**

The Portland City Council adopts a comprehensive civil rights ordinance, but the measure is defeated in a general election vote

## **728 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1951**

The Oregon legislature bans racial discrimination for admittance to vocational schools

### **1954**

Oregon passes Western Oregon Indian Termination Act, ending recognition of all Native groups west of the Cascade Mountains

### **1957**

Oregon enacts a state Fair Housing Law

### **1959**

On February 24, Oregon ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution preventing any restriction of the right to vote on racial or ethnic grounds; the state's ratification comes 89 years after the amendment had taken effect

### **1964**

The Portland chapter of the NAACP campaigns against racially segregated schools

### **1967**

A race riot erupts on Union Ave in Portland

### **1969**

All Indians declared citizens of United States

### **1972**

The median family income for nonwhites in Portland is approximately \$7,000 per year compared to \$11,500 for whites

### **1973**

The Oregon legislature re-ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

### **1975**

Ricy Johnson, a young unarmed black man, is shot and killed by Portland police while attempting to flee from them

### **1977**

A plan by the Portland school board to close Jefferson High School leads to protests in the local black community and the eventual formation of the Black United Front

### **1979**

American Indian Religious Freedom Act passes

### **1983**

In the so-called Possum Incident, Portland police leave dead possums on doorstep of a popular black restaurant

### **1984**

Margaret Carter, a Democrat, is elected to the Oregon State Senate, becoming the first African American woman elected to the Oregon legislature

**1985**

Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday becomes a legal state holiday in Oregon

**1985**

Lloyd Stevenson, a young black man, dies when Portland police put in him in a controversial chokehold

**1989**

Ethiopian student Mulugeta Seraw is killed by racist skinheads in Portland

**1993**

The Oregon Northwest black Pioneers, an organization dedicated to researching and promoting the contributions of African Americans to the history of Oregon, is founded in Salem

**2002**

References to are “white” removed from state constitution by overwhelming passage of an elective referendum

**2008**

Democrat Barack Obama, the first African American nominee for president of a major party, carries Oregon with about 56 percent of the vote

**2009**

The Oregon legislature has two African American members, both in the state senate

**2015**

The Oregon Commission on Black Affairs issues report addressing the racially discriminatory, disproportionate discipline problem in Oregon public schools

**2018**

Native Americans host powwows, conferences, and festivals to celebrate their cultural heritage in and around the city of Portland

**NARRATIVE****Native Americans**

Nicknamed the “Beaver State,” Oregon is located in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States. It was admitted to the Union on February 14, 1859. However, prior to its admission, it was home to Native Americans, including the Ahantchuyuk, Alsea, Bannock, Calapooya, Cayuse, Chastacosta, Chetco, Clatsop, Cowlitz, Hanis, Kathlamet, Kuitsh, Miluk, Modoc, Nez Perce, Shasta, Snake, Takelma, Tillamook, Walla Walla, and Yamel. Some were hunters and gatherers, others permanent residential dwellers who maintained small community villages. They were organized tribes with unique and distinct cultural patterns. This all changed with Lewis and Clark’s expedition (1804–1806), in search of the Northwest Passage. The U.S.-funded expedition was part of the western expansion effort, seeking additional land to occupy for white settlers.

Following a pattern of destruction that had taken place in the East and the Midwest, the U.S. government, which had more than doubled its territorial size with the acquisition of the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, forged its way westward. In 1830, the Indian Removal Act forced the removal of eastern Indian tribes to west of the Mississippi River. The horrors associated with the Trail of Tears followed. In 1832, the U.S. government established the Department of Indian Affairs to manage the nation's "Indian problem." The federal government would dictate the day-to-day activities of the Native American, forced to live in Indian Territory on reservations.

In Oregon, Christian missionaries were among the first permanent white settlers in the area. The efforts at Christian conversion were twofold: one, bringing the word of Christ to a perceived "heathen" population; and two, encouraging acceptance of the Anglo culture, thus making the area more desirable for white settlers. In 1839, Methodist missionary Jason Lee established a large "Indian church" at The Dalles, hoping to convert members of the Klickitat tribe. Continuing his desire to develop a white settler community in the nearby Umpqua River region, which was home to the Umpqua tribe, Lee attempted to establish a second settlement in the area.

The white settlers brought many new things to the Natives, including ideas and values, customs, and religions, horses, cattle, and sheep, guns and weapons, and white man's diseases. Conflict was inevitable, the impact devastating. Efforts at assimilation failed and the Indians of Oregon found themselves engaged in an ongoing battle for survival.

By mid-century, a series of wars unfolded, first pitting the Native tribes against one another, second against white settlers, and lastly against the U.S. government. Constant encroachment of white settlers onto Native lands resulted in tribal conflict among groups that had coexisted peacefully prior to European advancement. Those attempting to adopt the ways of the white settlers were ostracized (or killed) by fellow Natives. Attacks by whites on Native villages destroyed traditional living spaces. Lacking sufficient resources and devastated by disease, the Native population continued to dwindle. Even those Natives who chose to adopt the white settlers' ways were forced to send their children to boarding schools, designed to eradicate Native culture and replace it with Anglo culture. However, it was the ongoing wars with the powerful U.S. government that proved devastating.

Accompanied by the influx of white settlers to Oregon, 1848 marked the beginning of the Cayuse War, which was a conflict between the white settlers, the U.S. government, and the Native American people. In 1855, the U.S. Army launched the Winna Expedition against Snake Indians. The Klamath and Salmon River Indian War and the Rogue River War soon followed. In 1859, Oregon entered the Union as the 33rd state but continued to wage war against its Native citizens. In 1864, the U.S. Army continued its war against tribal groups who lived along the Snake River (the Snake Wars), including those in Oregon, Nevada, and California, and Idaho. The campaign against Indians in southern Oregon continued into 1865. A few years later, Captain Jack led the Modoc War of 1872. Angered by the crowded and limited living conditions, the Modoc Indians left the Klamath Indian reservation and fought against government forces for six months. The war ended



when Captain Jack was captured. He was later hanged. Finally, in 1877, the Nez Perce War was fought in Oregon, Montana, and Idaho. Unable to win the war against U.S. forces, Chief Joseph led his tribe 1,700 miles to Canada but was later forced to surrender near the border. It is the last great conflict between the government and the Native tribes of Oregon.

### **Twentieth Century**

By the early part of the twentieth century, Oregon's Native American citizens were dispersed throughout the state. In 1924, Congress passed the Indian Citizenship Act, granting citizenship for all Native people, regardless of tribal affiliation. Reservations continued to exist in Oregon, including the Burns Paiute Indian Colony, the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw reservation, the Coquille reservation, the Grand Ronde Community, Siletz reservation, the Umatilla reservation and the Warm Springs reservation. In an effort to correct past failing government policy, in 1934, Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act, which intended to acknowledge the importance of tribal identity and culture. However, in a little less than two decades, Congress passed the Termination Act of 1953, designed to reduce government responsibility for Native American tribes. A more specific blow occurred to the Oregon Indians when the state passed the Western Oregon Indian Termination Act of 1954. This action terminated recognition of all Native groups west of the Cascade Mountains. Many of those who had previously occupied the land were forced to relocate, further diminishing close connection with their Native cultures.

Economically, socially, and politically disadvantaged, Oregon's Native Americans continued to engage in activities designed to preserve and protect their cultural heritage and unique ways of living. Today, there are nine federally recognized Native groups or tribes that occupy the existing reservations: the Burns Paiute Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian reservation, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, the Coquille Indian Tribe, the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, and the Klamath Tribes. They hold powwows, conferences, and festivals in and throughout the Portland area as a constant reminder of their origins as the first citizens of Oregon.

### **Asian Americans**

The Chinese first made their appearance in Oregon in the mid-nineteenth century. A community of male-dominated miners and merchants made their way to Oregon following the gold rush boom in California. The small population of men were part of the early pioneers of Oregon who were in pursuit of economic opportunities. Itinerant workers, many saw Oregon as a temporary home, some planning to make their fortunes and return to California or home to China.

As opportunities opened up in mining, agriculture, fisheries, railroad, and the construction industries, the Chinese community began to flourish, especially around

the Portland area, which served as the business hub and center of transportation and communication. The Chinese were also employed as service and domestic workers, and a few opened small service businesses. Within a few decades, larger groups of immigrants began to populate the area. Viewing Oregon as more of a permanent home, concentrated residential enclaves (Chinatowns) emerged.

The Chinese faced both internal and external pressures. There was social and cultural conflict between the classes—the economically prosperous and politically situated upper class versus the poorer, laboring class. There were family, religious, gang war, and turf conflicts that sometimes led to violent outbreaks. However, there were struggles with racial conflicts with the white community as well. The expansion of the Chinese population was of concern to Oregonians and to the federal government. In 1882, the United States enacted the Chinese Exclusion Act, prohibiting all immigration of Chinese laborers. The act would be renewed ten years later. This followed an earlier attempt by political leaders that “called for both the expulsion of Chinese residents and the exclusion of future Chinese from Oregon” (Lee 2018, 1). Anti-Chinese sentiments spread rapidly throughout the state. One of the most horrific attacks occurred in 1887 in Hells Canyon, Wallowa County. A small group of white men massacred 34 Chinese miners, the worst recorded violent attack in the state.

During this exclusionary period, Chinese faced an extraordinary amount of discrimination in education, employment housing and public services. Additionally, they were prohibited from voting, holding public office or serving on juries. In the six decades following the passage of the exclusion act, the Chinese American population in and around Portland and in the state of Oregon began a precipitous decline. The act not only stopped the flow of new immigrants from China, it also prohibited Chinese men in America from sending for their wives. The disproportionate male to female ratio left little choice for starting new families. Furthermore, Oregon’s 1862 miscegenation law prohibited interracial marriages between whites and all people of color. It would remain in effect for more than 70 years.

The exclusion of Chinese immigrants opened the door for a new wave of Asian immigrants: the Japanese. Large numbers of Japanese laborers arriving in the Portland, Oregon, area resulted in the creation of a “Japantown” to accommodate the new visitors. Just like the Chinese who arrived before them, this was a population of male-dominated workers. Many intended to earn their fortunes and return home to Japan. As the lure and appeal of America grew, many Japanese workers decided to remain as permanent residents and desired wives and families to complete their lives. While miscegenation laws prohibited interracial marriages, Japanese men wanted Japanese wives. The 1907–1908 Gentlemen’s Agreement between Japan and the United States allowed family members to immigrate. “Picture brides” began arriving in the United States and Oregon as potential marital partners. Additional communities formed, and as families emerged, separate schools for Japanese American children were created. The Japanese established themselves as hard workers and businessmen, willing to invest in the community. Unfortunately, their success in establishing small agricultural businesses led to anti-Japanese sentiment.

Fears of Japanese competition in the agricultural industry led to the creation of the Anti-Asiatic Association, formed in Hood River in 1919. The group pledged not to sell or lease land to Japanese. In 1923, the Oregon legislature passed the Alien Land Law, which prohibited Japanese (the first generation known as *issei*) from owning or leasing land. However, the land could be owned by their second-generation children (the *nisei*), who were American citizens. The Japanese community faced another setback when Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1924. This law prohibited aliens who were ineligible for citizenship from entering the United States, cutting off the flow of new immigrants to the Japanese community in Oregon. By the early 1940s, the second generation of Japanese-born Americans had successfully completed their schooling and acclimated themselves to American culture. However, due to racial discrimination, their economic and job opportunities were limited. Many returned to their family-owned agricultural businesses in order to survive.

Every American of Japanese descent would feel the impact of the 1941 bombing of Pearl Harbor and the passage the following year of Executive Order 9066. In signing the Executive Order, President Roosevelt granted Lieutenant General John DeWitt, commander of the Western Defense Command, the authority to create internment camps for Japanese Americans. Viewed now as a threat to America, particularly those living along the West Coast, military installations were established throughout the western states as temporary holding camps.

Japanese Americans were ordered to report, immediately. They had limited opportunity to bring personal items—only what they could carry. In a relatively short period, the Portland Assembly Center was home to more than 3,500 people. The ill-equipped facility suffered from poor housing, sanitary conditions, and the lack of health and medical services. Privacy was nonexistent, and it was clear that basic human rights had been violated. The loss of homes, businesses, wealth, status, and sense of personal security were incalculable. Within a few months, the Oregon detainees were transferred to the permanent internment camps in Idaho and California. In the new locations, the living conditions were equally unbearable.

This was a disheartening experience for Japanese Americans. However, some continued with a patriotic spirit. There were Japanese Americans who served in the military during World War II; others refused to participate, given the harsh and unequal treatment experienced by their families at the hands of the U.S. government.

The situation began to change following the war. Once released from the concentration camps, the majority attempted to work their way home to Oregon; others were encouraged to relocate to the East Coast. Recovery was a long and difficult process, and full assimilation into the American way of life was now part of the American Dream. With continued educational achievement, employment advancement, and an increase in interracial marriages, the myth of the “model minority” surfaced and began to flourish.

The post-World War II members of Chinese American community were most likely to be American-born, were better educated and could successfully compete in American society. Also, part of the Asian community that is often described as the “model minority,” they followed an assimilation pattern that

conformed to Anglo ways. Increase educational opportunities produced more college graduates, and many entered the professions. They were no longer forced to live in isolated, residential ethnic enclaves (Chinatowns) and families relocated to rural and suburban areas. Furthermore, Chinese American veterans of the war took advantage of the benefits offered under the GI Bill to advance their social and economic standing.

The passage of the 1965 Immigration Act resulted in an increase of the Asian American community throughout the United States, including Oregon. In the second half of the twentieth century, large numbers of Chinese immigrants entered the country, primarily settling in California and New York. Some would eventually migrate to Oregon, settling in the Portland area, but occupying suburban areas as well. Today, the Chinese American community is socially, economically, and politically diverse. It includes the well-assimilated American-born; the highly educated, more-affluent professional immigrant class; and the recently arrived, less-educated working-class, who fulfill many of the service and domestic occupation.

### **African Americans**

The first blacks arrived in the area later known as Oregon as early as 1579. In that year the English explorer, Francis Drake, sailed along the Oregon coast. Among his crew were at least two black men and one black women, acquired during his raids against Spanish colonies in the western hemisphere. The first documentary evidence is recorded in 1788, when American Captain Robert Gray arrived in Tillamook Bay. Following a dispute with the Native Indians, Markus Lopus, a black member of Gray's crew, was killed. In addition, York, an enslaved African, reportedly traveled with the Lewis and Clark expedition (1804–1806). A valuable member of the crew, he contributed in numerous ways to their success.

As mentioned previously, the 1803 acquisition of the Louisiana Territory opened the way for American westward expansion. Fur trapping and trading were popular businesses during the era; black men, both free and enslaved, had long been active in the industry. As the pursuit of furs in the far west continued, black men came to play significant roles in the mountain man culture that flourished. Some helped explore and later settle the Oregon area. Prominent in the 1820s was Peter Ransa, who accompanied Jedediah Smith on his excursions through Oregon, where he was killed along with most of Smith's party in an Indian attack known as the Umpqua Massacre of 1828. Perhaps the most famous and highly regarded of the black American mountain men in Oregon was Moses "black" Harris, a key player in Oregon's fur trading events. In addition, in the 1840s, known black entrepreneur James "black" Douglas, made his mark as a successful fur trader.

With the opening of the Oregon Trail, many whites poured into Oregon, but during this period of enslavement, blacks were unable to willingly partake in this western expansion. Yet, a few did come, and the migrating whites who arrived in Oregon quickly constructed a legal, political, and economic environment that discouraged black immigration, even for those few free blacks in the East who may

have had both the motivation and resources to come west. The legislative issues and political activities targeted at the black population by whites would define Oregon's racial climate before and after the Civil War.

The conflict that dominated the western movement was the question of slavery as an institution in the new territories acquired by the United States. American settlers in Oregon sought to avoid the turmoil the issue of slavery created in other parts of the country with a two-pronged strategy. In 1844, the provisional government declared slavery illegal in Oregon and, simultaneously, passed a law excluding free blacks from residence in the area. By outlawing slavery and banning free blacks, Oregon envisioned a white homeland, free of interracial conflict. Only one race, the Caucasian, would be residents. As Oregon moved through the stages of development from contested territory to statehood, it passed black exclusion laws. For example, an 1844 law mandated that blacks be arrested, and then publicly whipped every six months until they left the territory. In 1848, the second black exclusion law allows African Americans already in the territory to remain, but prohibits any further black settlement in the territory.

Shortly thereafter, Congress passed the Donation Land Act for Oregon (1850) which allowed white immigrants up to 640 acres of free land. Blacks and other nonwhites were excluded. Finally, the statehood constitution, approved by popular vote in 1857, contained an article that prohibited blacks from coming to, residing in or even being within the state. The article went on to forbid blacks from owning any real estate, making any contracts or using the court system to sue in Oregon. It then empowered public officers to remove all blacks who fell under these prohibitions from the state. Another article prohibited blacks from voting. Oregon entered the Union in 1859 under this harshly antiblack constitution that also banned slavery as the rest of the country rushed closer to the Civil War.

### **Oregon's Antiblack Sentiment**

The pro-union, antislavery stance of Oregon during the Civil War did not mean it had repudiated the powerful antiblack sentiments that had prevailed before the war. During the war years (and shortly thereafter), Oregon adopted a package of antiblack legislation that set the course of race relations in the state well into the twentieth century. In 1862, the legislature adopted a special "poll tax" that applied only to blacks, Chinese, and Hawaiians, requiring them to pay an annual tax of \$5.00. If they could not pay the tax, they could work off the obligation—50 cents per day in hard labor on road construction. In 1863, the legislature declared that only adult white males were eligible to serve as jurors in the states' courts. Finally, the racial legislation in this era that had the longest legal shelf life was a miscegenation law prohibiting interracial marriage, adopted in 1862, strengthened in 1867. Under this law, a white person was forbidden to marry any black, Chinese, Hawaiian, or Indian (who was less than half-white). Anyone who violated this law was subject to imprisonment, in the state penitentiary or a county jail, for not less than three months or more than a year. In addition, the person who performed the marriage ceremony would (upon conviction) be imprisoned/jailed for the same amount of time *and* fined not less than one hundred dollars, nor more than one thousand dollars. This law was enforceable in Oregon until 1951.

Following the Union victory in the Civil War, three revolutionary changes were made to the U.S. Constitution: The Thirteenth Amendment, abolishing slavery; the Fourteenth Amendment, granting blacks citizenship with equal protection of the law; and, the Fifteenth Amendment that allowed blacks (men) the right to vote. Oregon would, eventually, ratify all three, but not without controversy. At the same time, efforts were underway which would infringe on black rights. For example, in Portland, the local school board banned attendance by black children in the regular public schools and created a separate “colored school” that operated from 1867 to 1872.

In the years between the end of the Civil War–Reconstruction era and the beginning of the twentieth century, black life in Oregon settled into a period in which the primary role and function of blacks was to provide service and labor to the dominant white society. The majority of blacks, who resided within the Portland area, were employed in domestic service, or worked at manual labor. A few professionals and small business service providers were also part of the community. Similar to the experience of Asian Americans, the arrival of the transcontinental railroad in Portland increased employment opportunities for blacks, and led to a significant increase in the size of the black population. Racially restrictive ordinances placed blacks in segregated areas where they established permanent, functional communities. They created churches, civic and social organizations to promote, protect, and improve the quality of life for blacks in the city and the state.

In general, the era before the turn of the twentieth century was one in which the black population of Oregon remained small and was expected to provide useful service to the white community. In return, the community would not face the overt and violent patterns of racial subjugation that characterized other black populations in the country during this Jim Crow era. The relative small size of the black population in this part of the west made it essentially nonthreatening to the majority population. The exclusion and antiblack policies of the pioneer generation in Oregon had done their work well. What racial violence and turbulence that did exist in Oregon in this period was more likely targeted at the Chinese, a much larger and considered imminently more dangerous and threatening to white prerogatives.

### **Early Twentieth Century**

Following the U.S. Supreme Court case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) that declared discrimination based on race a legally acceptable principle, black Americans faced a wave of repressive legislative and judicial activism by the proponents of white supremacy. The Oregon Supreme Court ruling in the *Taylor v. Cohn* case (1905) imposed the “separate but equal” doctrine articulated in the *Plessy* case onto Oregon race relations. Oliver Taylor had purchased box seat tickets to attend a performance at the Star Theater in Portland owned by Morton Cohn. When Taylor arrived at the theater, he was refused seating and denied admission. Taylor refused to accept the return of his money and sued Cohn for damages. The Oregon Supreme Court ruled that Cohn’s behavior was reasonable, and he was only

required to refund Taylor's ticket purchases price to resolve the case. This legal precedent led the way in Oregon for the open practice of discrimination in public accommodations that was not banned until the passage by the state legislature of a Public Accommodations Act in 1953.

While the judicial and legislative tides were running against blacks, the African Americans in Oregon did not accept second-class status without protest and resistance. Individually and collectively, blacks fought to exercise the same rights and privileges as other Oregonians. In 1913, a chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was formed in Portland, which focused on improvement in racial conditions. It waged a strenuous campaign in 1915 to prevent the screening of D.W. Griffith's racist film *The Birth of a Nation*. The effort was not successful in having the film banned, but the energy and organization displayed in the effort was testament to the determination of the organization's black and white members not to suffer discrimination quietly.

The low point of Oregon's hostile racial history occurred during the 1920s. In 1921, the Ku Klux Klan, the racist terrorist organization born in the South during the Reconstruction era following the Civil War, established a foothold in southern Oregon. Within two years, it had swept like a bonfire through Oregon's social, religious, and political circles, amassing sufficient strength to elect a card-carrying Klan member, Walter Pierce, to the Office of Governor in 1923. The historically small size of the state's black population did not provide the Klan with a sufficiently threatening target to sustain a long term mass movement, so in Oregon, the primary focus of Klan activism became a religious target, the supposedly un-American Catholic church.

At the height of Klan influence in Oregon in the early 1920s, it was routine to witness large Klan parades in full hooded regalia, down the main streets of Oregon towns and cities, including the largest, in Portland. Torchlight rallies, cross burnings, picnic and barbecues, and other widely attended social/political affairs were also common events. A frequent Klan recruiting tactic was an appearance by hooded Klan members before the congregations of white protestant churches where anti-Catholic tirades and sermonizing would be the topic of the day. As became true elsewhere in the country, the Oregon Klan eventually disintegrated as a political and social force, due to internal power struggles and corruption, monetary scandals, and questionable leadership.

The decline of the Klan as an organizational entity, however, did not mean the disappearance from Oregon's racial life of the theories and philosophies that the Klan had ridden to power and prominence at its height. This hostile racial stain lingered long in the state, especially in the more rural areas. In May 1924, for example, the only black family in the southern Oregon town of Grants Pass was run out of town. The local newspaper, the *Southern Oregon Spectator*, editorialized in bold type, "N\*\*\*\*R WE DON'T WANT YOU HERE—AND WE WONT HAVE YOU HERE." As late as the 1970s, many rural Oregon towns informally enforced "sundown laws" that demanded all blacks be out of town by dark. Individuals with Klan backgrounds also continued to occupy influential positions in Oregon life. Walter Pierce, the Klan governor elected in 1923 went

on to serve Oregon as a member of the House of Representatives in the U.S. Congress well into the 1930s.

The racial hostility of Oregon life was evident in daily life as well. The Sunday comics featured black characters in the guises of the mammy, sambo, uncle Tom, and pickaninny, all negative racial stereotypes of blacks created in American popular cultural to help rationalize both slavery and the legal discrimination against blacks. The “n-word” was liberally utilized in newspapers and magazines throughout the state. In Portland in 1931, a restaurant called the “Coon Chicken Inn” opened at a prominent location on a busy street. Coon is a derogatory term directed at black males, suggesting them to be lazy, stupid, and innately inferior. The restaurant was the second of a three-restaurant chain that aspired to nationwide growth. Other units were located in Salt Lake City, Utah, and Seattle, Washington. In the 1930s and 1940s, it was one of the most popular restaurants in Portland, with a reputation for good food and long lines to enter on weekends and holidays. To enter the restaurant, it was necessary to walk through the mouth of a giant black head. The fact that such an establishment could become so routinely a part of the accepted and normal life of the city is a reflection of the degree to which the dominant white perspective on race reigned supreme in Portland and the state.

The black community fought back, particularly with the help of the local black press. One of the most remarkable black women of any American generation, Beatrice Cannady, served as the editor and publisher of the *Advocate* newspaper, a weekly publication that reported local news and connected the local black community to national events of note from 1912 to 1933. She was one of many leaders who organized protests against racist and discriminatory actions.

Oregon’s black population remained small until the advent of World War II. This pattern changed when the Pacific Northwest became a center of shipbuilding activity. The war created tremendous demand for labor to support essential wartime industries. The traditional source of American industrial labor, young white males often of European immigrant stock, was spread around the world on distant combat fronts. Their unavailability created employment opportunities for nontraditional sources of industrial labor. Out of necessity, women and ethnic minorities were needed to fill the labor needs created by the war. In Oregon, this dynamic had greatest impact in the Portland area. It became the center of a large ship building effort by the Kaiser Company. To supply labor for the shipyards, Kaiser recruited throughout the nation, enticing workers to come to Portland. Many of the new migrants were blacks from places like Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, etc., who moved to Portland with their families to take advantage of the new high paying opportunities. By 1944, at the height of Portland’s wartime population expansion, the black population had rocketed to approximately 22,000, a thousandfold increase over the 1940 population size in the area.

The rapid and large influx of new black residents during the war years could not occupy the traditional boundaries of the old black community. To satisfy the housing needs of both the new black and nonblack imported workers, the largest wartime federal housing project in the country, Vanport, was built between Portland, Oregon, and Vancouver, Washington. Eventually, blacks would comprise



approximately 25 percent of Vanport's population, in segregated housing units. However, the institutions of the temporary city, that is, schools, stores, and theaters, operated on an integrated basis.

This nova of new black population created shockwaves for race relations that continued to rattle the area for decades. Prewar race relations in Oregon had been characterized by an unstated accommodation: whites largely ignored the small resident black population if blacks did not transgress the boundaries of their assigned subordinate "place" in Oregon life. The new black immigrants were both too numerous and too uninitiated to fit neatly into that former place. White reaction ranged from severe labor union discrimination in the competition for high paying jobs in the shipyards, an increase in visible evidence of Jim Crow public accommodations practices, to fanciful illusions by whites of a black out-migration after the war.

The racial environment produced several areas of tension. There was hostility between the black community and the local police community. The wartime police chief, H.M. Niles, had declared his belief that blacks were responsible for more crimes and misdemeanors of all types than whites. A study of arrest rates conducted by a downtown Portland civic organization revealed the opposite. A high-profile case in which white police officers, looking for an accused black murderer, without a warrant, in the middle of the night, burst into the wrong home, and shot an innocent black father to death in front of his horrified family drew national attention. However, the coroner's jury declared the killing "justifiable homicide" and exonerated the police; the black community seethed with anger.

There were less lethal forms of discrimination on a daily basis during the war years. When Marian Anderson, a world famous black opera singer, appeared in Portland, she could obtain accommodations at a white hotel in the downtown area, only if she agreed to eat all of her meals in her room and not use the main hotel elevator. Paul Robeson performed in Salem, Oregon. He had to be driven back to Portland that night because no Salem hotel would allow him to stay under any conditions. Blacks were automatically charged a 15 percent surcharge when buying auto insurance. The companies justified the extra cost by claiming that if blacks were involved in court proceedings, all-white juries were likely to side with their opponents, regardless of the case merits. "We serve whites only" signs became a common sight in restaurant windows during the war years. Blacks were routinely restricted in when, or even if, they could use such facilities as swimming pools, bowling alleys and movie houses. The irony of such racially discriminatory behavior while the country was ostensibly fighting a war against Nazi racism overseas was not lost on the nonwhite population. Because of this, Portland acquired a national reputation as the most racially hostile city on the Pacific coast among minority groups.

### **A Sea of Change**

The shipyard workers who had come to Portland during the war faced difficult adjustments in the immediate post war years. Area employment opportunities dried up, permanent housing was difficult to find and expensive, hostility to

wartime migrants lingered among the prewar residents. Blacks in the Portland area faced persistent color prejudice. By the 1950s, the black population was reduced to half the wartime high of 22,000. Many of those who stayed continued to live in temporary wartime housing in Vanport. However, on Memorial Day in 1948, the Columbia River flooded Vanport, washing away that refuge.

The former Vanport residents were absorbed into the larger community just as the nation entered the early years of the civil rights movement. As the nation struggled to change the course of its racial behavior, Oregon began to address its long hostile racial history as well. In 1949, the state adopted a Fair Employment Practices Act, in 1953 a Public Accommodation Act that reversed the 1906 *Taylor v. Cohn* precedent, and in 1957 a Fair Housing Act. The path to racial progress was not smooth or straight. In 1950, the City Council of Portland adopted its own local Public Accommodations Law that was quickly referred to a popular vote by its opponents and suffered a resounding defeat in the next general election.

By the 1960s, the issue of school segregation was the major battleground for interracial conflict. In other areas of the state, the black populations was so small that they escaped any large-scale racial confrontations. However, in Portland, the historic patterns of housing discrimination produced a de facto segregated system of neighborhood schools. School integration was viewed as the pathway to racial progress. Following a series of studies and strategic plans over the 1960s, the Portland school district designed a plan to achieve desegregation that relied on closing schools in the black community and bussing black students to outlying white schools in carefully controlled percentages. The plan satisfied many in the old time social protest organizations, but generated a growing hostility from some in the black community who favored strong neighborhood schools regardless of their racial profile. This was one example of the increasingly wide gap in goals and philosophies of change between the older civil rights groups and an emerging younger generation in the black community that adopted a more militant demand for immediate change and more "Black Power." And the younger generation were willing to consider using different tactics. Reacting to perceived acts of police brutality targeting young blacks, the largest riot in Oregon occurred in August 1967, on Union Ave in inner northeast Portland. A popular gathering spot for young urban blacks, the rioting lasted for several days and caused significant property damage.

### **The Second Black Migration**

The decades between 1970 and 1990 in the Oregon black experience were dominated by the consequences and repercussions of what can be called the second great migration of blacks into Oregon life. The first had been the influx of black workers into the Portland area shipyards of the 1940s. The second migration was much smaller in size but saw blacks rise to a much more powerful role in Oregon life. The second migration actually had two very different and distinct components. The first component can be called a geographic migration in the form of an influx of high-ranking black professionals who arrived in Oregon in response to the affirmative action mandates that had arisen from the civil rights victories of

the 1960s. Starting in the early 1970s and gaining momentum through the 1980s blacks from other parts of the country with traditionally defined high qualifications and credentials found employment in some elite positions of power and visibility in Oregon life. By 1984, for example, Oregon featured two black members of the state legislature, a black Portland School Board member, and a black member of the Portland City Council. There was also a black dean of the University of Oregon Law School, a black conductor of the Oregon Symphony, a black managing editor of the *Oregonian*, the state's largest newspaper, and a black superintendent of the Portland Public Schools, the state's largest school district, among other prominent and well-placed black citizens. This trend represented a dramatic departure from earlier generations of Oregon life when blacks were, essentially, relegated to menial and service positions. The irony was that most of the newly highly visible blacks headed organizations that were still overwhelmingly white in terms of their work force and were often limited in the real power they could exercise.

The second major component was generational in nature. The children of the 1940s workers were growing to adulthood and beginning to shape the nature of black Oregon life in fundamental ways. This wave of generational migrants tended to be less patient, more assertive, with higher expectations of Oregon than their parents' generation. The pressures and demands they placed on Oregon traditions of race behavior created major confrontations in the two areas that would dominate the racial agenda of the state at the close of the twentieth century.

The black community refocused its efforts on school desegregation. In the 1960s, Portland Public schools adopted a plan to achieve integration by closing schools in black neighborhoods and busing black children to outlying white schools. By 1977, the school board proposed to close Jefferson High School, the high school with the largest percentage of black students in the city. Opposition to closing black schools had been growing since the inception of this approach and exploded with this proposal. Whereas integration at all costs had characterized the philosophy of the NAACP and the older generation of black leadership, younger more militant new voices emerged from the community to oppose and ultimately defeat the school closure approach to achieving desegregation. Eventually a new organizational vehicle was created from these new forces called the Black United Front, which organized a series of very public direct action protests and school boycotts that overwhelmed resistance from both old time black and white opposition and imposed a new philosophy on school desegregation efforts.

The white superintendent, hired in 1969 to carry out the school closure strategy, had been forced from office in 1980. A new black superintendent was hired to replace him. A series of election victories brought new faces on to the school board, which in 1980 adopted the Comprehensive Desegregation Plan. The new plan rejected old notions of integration in favor of a new Afrocentric philosophy advocated by the black United Front. Questions about the design and legitimacy of the Afrocentric approach received national scrutiny. The initiative failed, the strength and influence of the Black United Front broken. The school system continued to wrestle with how to raise black student achievement, but from a much lower national profile.

The hostile and sometimes deadly relationship between the black community and the police community continued. Historically, the state's police authority enforced prevailing racial policies of a given generation, both formally and informally. It was an all-white police force with no black officers. Black residents viewed the police as a hostile force. This was evident in the killing of Ricy Johnson and others. In 1975, Johnson, an unarmed young black man, was shot and killed by white police officers as he attempted to flee. He was the fourth young black male killed by police in a matter of a few months, causing a significant outcry of police brutality. A decade later, Lloyd Stevenson, a young black man, had happened upon a fight in the parking lot of a 7-11 store between two white men. When police arrived, instead of confronting the white combatants, they attacked Mr. Stevenson, killing him by applying a controversial chokehold. The officers were exonerated of any wrongdoing by the justice system. Members of the black community were further enraged when following the Stevenson death, police officers were seen wearing T-shirts with the slogan "Don't Choke'm Smoke'm," meaning it is less troublesome to shoot blacks than strangle them. The conflict between the black community and the local police would carry forth into the twenty-first century.

### **A New Dawn**

At the end of the twentieth century, some blacks reached the heights of Oregon fame and celebrity or acquired significant material wealth and comfort. Other blacks in the state struggled to survive unemployment, underemployment, marginalization, and even physical assault. In terms of the collective black experience, the decade saw the eclipse and dispersal of the only true black community in the state, the inner northeast district of Portland. Two very different forces were at work during the decade with potential destructive power relative to that community. One force was an organized effort to intimidate and ultimately eradicate the black presence in the state, finally achieving the racial objectives of the pioneer generation that sought total black exclusion from Oregon. The other force was impersonal and perhaps unintentional in its destructive threat to Oregon's only traditional black community.

The first force was a rise to prominence in Portland and Oregon of an emergent racist skinhead culture that identified Oregon as the long sought white homeland. The 1989 killing of Mulugeta Seraw put the skinhead threat in focus. Seraw was attacked, beaten to death with a baseball bat by a group of skinheads on the streets of southeast Portland. While the assailants were arrested, convicted, and imprisoned, there was an ongoing battle between skinhead organizations and the public. The forces against racial intolerance would emerge victorious.

The second force was the free market dynamics of urban gentrification. However, there was no effective defense against the onslaught of gentrification. The booming housing market of the 1990s, coupled with a growing disillusionment of the younger white generation with the suburban American dream that had transfixed American following World War II, led to a stampede of real estate hungry whites toward the housing stock and urban convenience of the traditional inner

city black community. Older residents of the now hot real estate location found it hard to resist the buy offers at formerly unheard of sums for homes they had lived in for decades. The children of the older black residents could not compete with the economic resources of young white professionals nor at other times afford to pay the increasingly high property taxes that followed the influx of new residents. The borders of the traditional black community, originally constructed by hostile racial policies but subsequently maintained as well by the cohesion of a shared black culture orientation, tumbled down. Many blacks found refuge in the suburbs that now seemed to have less appeal to the white population. A final ingredient assured that the old dynamics of black/white interracial relations that had been such a defining part of Oregon's evolution would never again define the destiny and direction of the state.

By the dawn of the twenty-first century, blacks were no longer the largest minority group in the state. The Hispanic population fueled by the immigration policies and economic dynamics of twenty-first-century circumstances, ascended to the position of the state's largest ethnic minority group. While the notion of a post-racial Oregon or post-racial America is still a fantasy, in 2008, Barack Obama, who would become America's first black president, carried the state in the presidential election with 56 percent of the vote. Oregon's black community remains hopeful.

## NOTABLE FIGURE

### **Cannady, Beatrice Morrow (1889–1974)**

Beatrice Morrow Cannady was born in Littig, Texas, in 1889. She attended the segregated public school system and later graduated from Wiley College in Marshall, Texas, in 1908. After a brief career as an educator, Morrow enrolled in a music program at the University of Chicago. In 1912, she moved to Portland, Oregon, where she met and later married Edward Cannady, a local civil rights activist and hotel worker. Together the couple had two sons.

Edward Cannady was cofounder of Portland's weekly *Advocate*, an influential African American newspaper. Beatrice joined her husband in this important work. She worked as the business manager, associate editor, linotype operator, and editorial and news writer. She would continue her work with the *Advocate* for 24 years before taking on the role as owner and editor in 1930.

Cannady was a social activist. She was cofounder of the Portland chapter of the NAACP and actively participated in the organization's decade-long protest against showing D.W. Griffith's film, *The Birth of a Nation*, in Portland theaters. During World War I, she organized African American women to work for the war effort. She served as president of the Colonel Charles Young War Savings Club, and as head of the knitting unit for the local Red Cross.

Cannady used the *Advocate* as her platform. She attacked racial prejudice and discrimination in weekly columns and editorials. She was frequently called upon to give lectures, speeches, and radio interviews. Acutely aware of the racial tensions that existed in the community, she remained optimistic, always sharing her

hopes for peace and racial harmony. A lifelong educator, Cannady willingly shares her large collection of books on African American culture and history with others in the community.

Cannady pursued multiple interests during her lifetime. In 1922, she graduated from Portland's Northwestern School of Law, becoming the first African American woman to practice law in Oregon. She went on to fight many battles in the legal arena, including lobbying for civil rights legislation, the repeal of the 1857 provision in the 1857 Oregon Constitution that prohibited blacks and mulattoes from living in Oregon, and the constitutional prohibition on blacks, mulattoes, and "Chinamen" from voting. In 1932, Cannady became the first African American to run for elected office in Oregon. She did not win the primary battle, but garnered more votes than expected.

In 1938, Cannady left Oregon and moved to Los Angeles, California to be closer to family. There, she met and married Reuben Taylor. After a nearly 30-year career as a civil rights activist, she remained out of the public eye. She died on August 19, 1974.

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## Pennsylvania

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Robert Clark and Ying Yang

### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **16,000 years ago**

Archaeological evidence indicates Paleo-Indian settlement in Pennsylvania

#### **1612**

French explorer Etienne Brule is believed to be the first European to set foot on contemporary Pennsylvania; he was later killed by the Hurons for an unknown reason

#### **1638**

Peter Minuet and his fellow Swedish settlers establish the New Sweden Colony in Pennsylvania

#### **1681**

William Penn obtains a grant of over 40,000 square miles of land in North America from King Charles II; the grant later constitutes the colony of Pennsylvania

#### **1682**

William Penn arrives at the site of present-day Chester

#### **1683**

William Penn signs a treaty with the Lenni Lenape Indians

#### **1686**

William Penn allegedly purchases land from the Lenape Indians

#### **1688**

German Mennonites propose the first formal antislavery resolution in America during a Quaker meeting in Germantown, Pennsylvania

#### **1700**

William Penn begins advocating for the emancipation of slaves



**1701**

Peace Treaty between William Penn concludes a peace treaty with the Indians

**1712**

The Pennsylvania Assembly bans slave importation to the colony

**1737**

Concluded by William Penn's heirs, the Walking Purchase takes more than 1 million acres of land from the Delaware Indians

**1754**

The French and Indian War begins in North America between the English and the French and their Indian allies

**1755**

Supported by the French, the Lenape Indians attack the Gnadenhutten mission of Pennsylvania; 11 white people are killed

**1756**

The Eastern Delaware leader, Teedyuscung, leads a raid against English settlers; seven men are killed and five are captured

**1775**

Benjamin Franklin and Benjamin Rush found the first American Society for the Abolition of Slavery in Philadelphia

**1776**

Pennsylvania Quakers abolish the practice of slavery among their own membership and then petition the state legislature to abolish slavery throughout Pennsylvania

**1780**

Pennsylvania passes the first state Abolition Act in American history; the act declares newborn children of slaves to be free, but it does not emancipate those already in bondage

**1782**

Capitan David Williamson leads a group of Pennsylvania militiamen that kills 96 Christian Lenape at Gnadenhutten

**1787**

On December 12, Pennsylvania becomes the second state to enter the Union

**1788**

Pennsylvania prohibits the out-of-state slave trade

**1820**

Pennsylvania enacts "An Act to Prevent Kidnapping"; the act provides protection to runaway slaves and to blacks in general, so they are not kidnapped and sent to be enslaved in another state

**1830**

The National Negro Convention convenes in Philadelphia to advocate for the abolition of slavery

## **748 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1851**

A Philadelphia jury acquits 37 men accused of violating the new federal Fugitive Slave Act

### **1855**

In Philadelphia, William Still, a leader of the Pennsylvania Underground Railroad, is acquitted of helping Jane Johnson and her two sons escape from their master, Colonel John H. Wheeler, the U.S. ambassador to Nicaragua

### **1865**

On February 3, Pennsylvania ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

### **1867**

On February 12, Pennsylvania ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing full civil rights to African Americans

### **1869**

On March 25, Pennsylvania ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing voting rights to African Americans

### **1871**

Race riots erupt in Philadelphia and lead to the deaths of four blacks, including the activist teacher Octavius Catto

### **1879**

Carlisle Indian School is established

### **1881**

The Pennsylvania State Supreme Court denounces the practice of segregating school systems

### **Mid-1880s**

Chinatown is established in Philadelphia

### **1906**

Over 3,000 black demonstrators protesting discrimination riot in Philadelphia

### **1911**

Zachariah Walker, a black man, is lynched in Coatesville, Pennsylvania, for killing white mill security guard Edgar Rice; Walker is thrown into a fire and burned to death

### **1918**

A race riot in Chester leaves five dead—three blacks and two whites

### **1923**

The Johnstown riot results in the expulsion of 500 black workers

### **1935**

Pennsylvania enacts an Equal Rights law, which guarantees black residents equal access to a wide range of public accommodations

**1938**

Crystal Bird Fauset becomes the first African American woman elected to the Pennsylvania legislature

**1957**

Pennsylvania state police are required to allow Bill and Daisy Myers, the first black couple to buy a home in Levittown (Now Willingboro), to move into their new house

**1958**

Robert N.C. Nix becomes the first African American elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Pennsylvania

**1959**

A lawsuit filed by Reverend Willie James leads to the desegregation of Willingboro (formerly Levittown)

**1967**

The U.S. Department of Labor adopts the “Philadelphia Plan” to combat racial discrimination in the construction industry

**1968**

Black rioters loot and firebomb the Hill District of Pittsburgh

**1969**

Once whole city block is burned, and two people are killed in a race riot in York

**1970**

A ban on taking in nonwhite youths is lifted at the Milton Hershey School for Orphans, which was founded in Hershey in 1909

**1975**

Refugees from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia begin to settle in Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania

**1978**

A Philadelphia police officer is killed in a police standoff with MOVE, a radical African American groups whose members all adopt “Africa” as a surname

**1983**

Wilson Goode wins election as the first black mayor of Philadelphia

**1985**

Philadelphia police drop a bomb on the headquarters of the radical black group MOVE; the resulting fire kills 11 people, including 5 children, and 250 more are homeless as a result of the bombing

**1987**

In the Philadelphia mayoral election, Wilson Goode wins 98 percent of the black vote to defeat Frank Rizzo, who wins 97 percent of the white vote

**1988**

Under the direction of Dr. Molefi Asante, Temple University establishes the nation’s first PhD in African American Studies

## **750 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1991**

Lucien E. Blackwell, a black Philadelphia city councilman, is elected to the U.S. House of Representatives

### **1996**

A Philadelphia jury awards MOVE survivors of the 1985 police bombing of the group's headquarter \$1.5 million

### **1996**

A all-white jury in Pittsburgh acquits a white police officer in the death of black motorist Jonny Gammage

### **1997**

A gang of whites attacks a black family in the Grays Ferry section of Philadelphia; in 1998, nine men are tried for the assault and six are convicted

### **1999**

Cecilia Moy Yep receives the Philadelphia Award for her work in preserving and protecting Chinatown

### **2000**

News camera records both white and black Philadelphia police officers beating Thomas Jones, a black man accused of stealing a patrol car and shooting an officer; 13 police officers are later suspended

### **2004**

Governor Ed Rendell creates the first Governor's Advisory Commission on Asian American Affairs

### **2015**

Governor Tom Wolf adds Pacific to the name of the Advisory Commission to reflect the diversity of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) population living in Pennsylvania

### **2015**

Pedro A. Rivera, a Hispanic American, is appointed by the governor to serve as Pennsylvania secretary of education

### **2016**

Governor Tom Wolf signs a proclamation making May Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in Pennsylvania

### **2017**

Robert Torres, a Hispanic American, is designated to serve as acting secretary of the commonwealth

## **NARRATIVE**

### **Native Americans**

Although there are no longer any officially recognized Indian tribal nations in Pennsylvania, Native Indians remain a vital group in the state. In 1960, there were

1,122 Native Americans in Pennsylvania. By 2000, their number increased to 18,348. As of 2015, there are 23,641 Native Americans and Alaska Natives living in Pennsylvania (American Community Survey, 2011–2015). The biggest group among them are the descendants of the Cherokee.

The human history of Pennsylvania most likely began between 10,500 and 20,000 years ago, though it is uncertain exactly when people first appeared in the region. The first human inhabitants were Paleo-Indians, nomadic peoples who hunted ancient megafauna, such as mastodon, bison, and cave bear, using spears and atlatls. Meadowcroft Rockshelter, near present-day Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is the oldest archaeological site in state, and perhaps all of North America. It dates to at least 19,400 years ago and shows continuous habitation from the most ancient layers all the way up to recent times. These early inhabitants were hunter-gatherers who moved around frequently in search of prey; thus, they left no permanent human-constructed settlements.

By the late seventeenth century, William Penn had begun the process of chartering his unconventionally tolerant colony, and there were, at minimum, six distinctive tribes living in the area. In the northwest, the Eries were located on the lake of the same name. The Shawnee inhabited the Ohio valley to the west. Bisecting the colony, the Susquehannocks inhabited the areas around the Susquehanna River, which was, most importantly, navigable to canoes as a means of communication and light trade, but not to larger vessels. In the east, the Lenni Lenape or Delaware lived in the region of the Delaware River.

As a Quaker, Penn adopted a paternalistic and relatively benevolent attitude toward the Native Americans. He delineated legal protections for the Indians in trade and created policies which granted equal rights to the local tribes under English law. Due to these policies, the early part of Penn's tenure during the colonization of the areas around Philadelphia in the southeastern part of the colony, were characterized by relatively little Native resentment. This most famous and undocumented treaty was made between William Penn and a group of Native Americans around 1683.

As time marched forward, attitudes and responses to Native Americans among settlers and government alike began to change. In 1737, Penn's heirs were suffering from increasing debt. The rapidly increasing white population also called for more land. As such, Thomas Penn and James Logan (an associate of William Penn) faked a deed—the Walking Purchase—which allowed them to take more than 1 million acres of land from the Delaware. As a result, many Native Indians had to move away from their homelands and find settlements in the Ohio River valley, where the Native Indians developed a trade relationship with the French. Ironically, the result of the fraudulent Walking Purchase agreement pushed the Native Indians into an alliance with the French. Unfortunately, the loss of the French to the English in the mid-century French and Indian War guaranteed English control over Canada and the 13 colonies. The French Colonial Empire had formed a sort of buffer zone in the west of Pennsylvania, in which Indians were extended special protections and privileges. In addition, the French sought to solidify their trading privileges and the opportunity to convert the Native Indians to Roman Catholicism.

The victory of colonial forces and the formation of the United States of America during the War of Independence relieved the restraints on westward colonization, as well as the aggression that the English crown had placed upon its settlers. The peace that once existed between Native Americans and European colonists was gone. Warfare and hostility were constant threats, as the Native Americans wanted to protect their lands from the increasing number of European immigrants pushing westward. One Lenape chief, Teedyuscung, tried to negotiate with Europeans to grant permanent settlement land for his people. However, his effort failed, and his people were pushed out of their homeland in the Wyoming valley. By 1800, most Native Americans were forced to move away from Pennsylvania to find a new home in Ohio or Canada.

By the early nineteenth century, Pennsylvania was chosen as a site for the establishment of the Carlisle Indian School by Colonel Richard Henry Pratt. One main reason was that there were very few Native Americans left in Pennsylvania, and therefore, it was an ideal place for Indian children to stray away from the influence of their original culture and become fully assimilated into white Anglo-Protestant America. Pratt firmly believed both in the idea of assimilation and eradication of Native Indian culture. It was his answer to complicated white-Indian relations. The Carlisle School existed for 40 years and hosted 10,000 Indian children during its time. These children suffered emotionally and psychologically from dislocation and separation from their families. In addition, many children never benefitted from a free public education; they dropped out or were pushed out before high school graduation.

### **Asian Americans**

As of 2016, there were 349,088 Asians that call Pennsylvania home. They are a fast-growing group in Pennsylvania, with a growth rate of about 90 percent from 2000 to 2014. The major sources of such increase are immigrants from China, India, and Vietnam. There is also the internal migration of Asians moving from New York to Pennsylvania in search for affordable housing. As a result, Pennsylvania has the one of the largest Asian populations in the country. A large portion of Asians lives in or around major cities like Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. As a group, on average, Asian Americans perform well economically. However, there is great disparity in socioeconomic status across different Asian ethnic groups as well. For instance, Pacific Island Indians, Chinese, and Koreans are in better financial shape than Southeast Asian Americans.

Chinese Americans, the oldest Asian ethnic group in America, also have a long history in Pennsylvania. Fearing violence and racism, many Chinese workers escaped from the western states, California in particular, seeking more suitable living conditions in the eastern part of the country. In 1869, the first group of 50 Chinese laundrymen arrived from San Francisco to Philadelphia to work in laundries. By 1870, Lee Fong opened his own laundry at 91 Race Street, which marked the beginning of Chinatown in Philadelphia. Over the years, Philadelphia's Chinatown expanded and became a refuge for new arrivals, as the residents stayed segregated from their Irish, German, Greek, Russian, and Italian

neighbors. As a center for Chinese lifestyle, Chinatown provided cultural, economic, and political opportunities to its residents throughout the late nineteenth century and first part of twentieth century. Chinatown was an isolated, self-sustaining community with major businesses in laundry services, gift shops, and food and restaurants.

Following World War II, relaxed immigration policy and the acquirement of citizenship allowed for the transformation of Chinatown from a segregated ethnic ghetto to a viable ethnic community, in which a new generation of Chinese families celebrated their culture and fought for social justice. New immigrants from China, as well as refugees from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, found homes in Chinatown. This created great diversity in culture and socioeconomic status. Despite the increasing population, during the late 1980s and early 1990s, there were only two schools for the children living in Chinatown. One served only middle- and upper-class non-immigrant families. Therefore, many children traveled a long distance to attend public school. Unfortunately, the Philadelphia School District did not provide bus service to residents of Chinatown. While the Chinese community was struggling to find adequate schools and resources for their children, the urban planners in Philadelphia implemented several urban renewal projects that would severely undermine Chinatown's self-determination and future existence. Foremost among them was the planned 1966 Vine Street Expressway.

Proposed by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (Penn DOT), this project involved the removal of the beloved Holy Redeemer Church (HR) and school, and the demolition of most of Chinatown. Redeemer Church held a special meaning to Chinatown residents, serving as cultural and recreational center for generations of Chinese families. To save Chinatown, activists and longtime residents like Cecilia Moy Yep called for action. A grassroots organization, the Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation (PCDC) was established, and Yep served as its director. Collectively, Yep and her fellow Chinatown residents organized protests, engaged in political lobbying, and gathered support from various sectors of the society. Eventually, they won the battle: Penn DOT redesigned the expressway project and HR was saved. Yet, the battle continued as Chinatown residents fought for preservation of their community and the right to self-determination.

In the following year, PCDC continued its efforts in reducing the impacts of major public projects, such as the Philadelphia Convention Center and commuter terminal, on the future development of Chinatown. They also blocked the conversion of a warehouse into a federal prison. In 1999, Yep and PCDC initiated the passage of Bill No. 980895 that would rezone 44 acres of land for future Chinatown expansion. Several affordable housing projects broke ground and allowed many Chinatown residents to stay in the community in the face of a soaring housing market. In 2005, Chinatown welcomed its first community-based school, the Folk Arts and Cultural Treasures Charter School (FACTS). This school serves a diverse population in Chinatown. More significantly, this school symbolizes the victory of a grassroots effort in regaining control over their own community.

After the fall of Saigon in 1975, Congress passed the Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act, which provided funding for resettlement programs for

Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees. Soon after the passage of this Act, about 32,000 Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees arrived at the resettlement camp in Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania. The U.S. government enacted the Dispersal Policy on Refugees. The main purpose of this dispersal policy was to foster economic independence and reduce the impact of the arrival of large numbers of refugees on one giving-receiving market. Additionally, they wanted to prevent the formation of ethnic ghettos. Therefore, the practice was to spread refugees out as widely as possible. Nine nonprofit organizations were responsible for finding sponsors (i.e., individual, church, or organization) for the refugee families. Once matched, the sponsor would aid the refugee families to better assimilate into American society, both culturally and financially, and eventually became economically independent.

While many refugees received a warm welcome from their sponsors and receiving cities, like Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, several challenges were faced by many immigrants as results of this dispersal program. First, many extended families were temporarily separated from each other. Without adequate social networks, these new comers found it difficult to obtain support from their newly relocated communities. The family separation also caused emotional and psychological trauma to refugee families. Second, to quickly become economically independent, many refugees had no choice but to accept low status and low-paying jobs, which usually required no skills and little language proficiency. Third, with the prevailing antiwar sentiments, many Pennsylvanians did not support the Refugee Assistance Act, nor did they welcome these refugees. Furthermore, at the same time, small towns and cities in Pennsylvania were suffering from high unemployment rates. These new arrivals were viewed more as enemies and unfair competitors for the limited jobs. Therefore, many refugees who were placed in smaller and poorer areas of Pennsylvania experienced hostility from the locals. Lastly, once refugee families got settled in their new communities, they started to bring their extended families over to create their own supporting networks. The increasing presence of new immigrants further flared up the hostility from Native residents. Scholars noted the continuing racial tension between these settlers and the local communities for many decades, even in larger urban areas like Southwest Philadelphia.

As discussed earlier, as a young and new immigrant group, Southeast Asian Americans have struggled more in Pennsylvania compared to other Asian groups. For example, as of 2010, Southeast Asian Americans had lower rates of educational achievement, compared to other Asian Americans and the general population in Pennsylvania. Furthermore, only 16.2 percent of Vietnamese had a bachelor's degree, while this figure for Asians overall in Pennsylvania was 25.9 percent. They still face language barriers, with close to 50 percent of them not speaking English very well. Many Southeast Asian Americans live under the poverty line. For instance, the poverty rate for Cambodians was 30.7 percent in 2010 (Southeast Asia Resource Action Center 2012), nearly double the national poverty rate.

### **Hispanic Americans**

Hispanics are not a racial group; they are the nation's largest, diverse ethnic minority group that are often viewed and treated as a racial entity. There are



multiple ethnic groups within the Hispanic community, sometimes described as white, black, brown, and other.

In 2014, there were 834,000 Hispanics living in Pennsylvania, the 13th-largest Hispanic population in the country. Between 2000 and 2014, the population of Hispanics increased by over 110 percent. A large percent of them are concentrated in the metropolitan Philadelphia area. Recently, many have started to move to western Pennsylvania, which has helped replenish the population decline in that area. Economically, this group has lower median annual personal earnings, and experiences higher rate of poverty compared to whites.

Cuban Americans are one of many groups that identify as Hispanic. The history of Cuban Americans in Pennsylvania can be traced all the way back to the era of the Spanish American revolution when many Spanish speakers escaped the Spanish empire, seeking support for liberty and independence. During the twentieth century, in the era of the Cuban missile crises, large numbers of Cuban exiles entered Philadelphia, known as the city of Brotherly Love. In the early 1960s, more Cuban immigrants entered Philadelphia to study; however, many moved to Florida to join their families, which contributed to the overall decline in Cuban population in Pennsylvania.

Mexican immigrants arrived in Pennsylvania during the early part of the twentieth century (1910s–1920s) to take on construction and agricultural jobs. Following World War II, the U.S./Mexican Bracero Program, which was initiated in 1942, permitted Mexicans (primarily farm workers) to enter the country to provide various forms of manual labor. Nearly 1,000 Mexican workers entered the Philadelphia area to work on the railroad. These railroad workers lived in “box car camps,” which kept them isolated from the rest of the society. In addition, these bracero workers had few benefits, and struggled with poor health care and language barriers. In 1945, the International Institute of Philadelphia reached out and founded the Philadelphia Regional Committee of Mexican War Workers to provide support to these workers. Some of the assistance involved weekly English classes and legal consultations.

The United States assumed military control over the island of Puerto Rico in 1898; the residents would become American citizens. In 1910, small numbers of Puerto Ricans began arriving in the city of Philadelphia. Within a decade, these numbers would increase, dramatically. As American citizens, Puerto Ricans were heavily recruited to replenish the declining workforce caused by the 1920 immigration restrictions. In addition, many Puerto Ricans were attracted to Philadelphia because of established Spanish-speaking ethnic enclaves that existed in the area. As a result, the expanding population created a prominent existence in the city of Philadelphia. Many were politically active cigar makers with a strong sense of social and political organization. For instance, they founded several Spanish mutual aid societies, which were the first in this country. They also created a local chapter of the Cigar Makers International Union in Philadelphia.

All three aforementioned groups established their residence in Hispanic enclaves in Philadelphia during the early part of the twentieth century. Two major factors contributed to their residential patterns. First, Hispanic immigrants that entered after the 1920s were usually displaced laborers who had rather limited

skills. Second, starting in the early 1900s, Philadelphia experienced both economic transformation and deindustrialization, which greatly affected job availability to workers who had few industrial skills. Job scarcity led to competition within the Hispanic community and between Hispanics and blacks. One thing to note is that because of their citizenship status, Puerto Ricans refused to work on jobs paying below the minimum wage. As a result, many Puerto Ricans were unemployed. At the same time, Mexican immigrants were willing to take on any jobs due to their desperation for money. The difference in attitudes toward employment and wage created tension within the Hispanic communities.

Overall, Hispanics experienced high level of poverty and economic uncertainty. Enclaves hence were established and evolved as a source of cultural identity, mutual aid, and shelter to fellow Hispanics. Eventually, these enclaves became Hispanic communities, which attracted more recent immigrants like Dominicans and Colombians to join them. With their growing numbers, in 1962, as an effort to address social problems experienced by these communities, the Council of Spanish-Speaking Organizations was formed. This is the oldest Latino (a term popularized in the latter part of the twentieth century) organization in Pennsylvania and remains an active one nowadays. This organization, along with others, provide a strong foundation for the development of Hispanic communities.

After 1990s, more Hispanic immigrants from different countries entered Philadelphia. The increasing disparity in socioeconomic status, legal status, and nationality attributed to growing discrimination and prejudice across various Hispanic groups. Racial/ethnic discrimination and stereotypes then feeds into group-level social isolation.

As of 2014, Hispanics had the highest poverty rate, 29 percent, in Pennsylvania. Residentially, Hispanic Americans, like blacks, experience high level of residential segregation in metropolitan areas. Hispanics also have the highest rate of being uninsured in Pennsylvania, as suggested by the 2014 American Community survey. Without adequate access to health care, their health outcomes tend to be poorer compared to other minority groups. At the same time, as a group, Hispanic Americans are actively contributing to local economies by opening small businesses and working service jobs.

### **African Americans**

According to U.S. Census data, in 2016, there were 1,508,539 blacks residing in Pennsylvania, which makes them the second-largest group, following whites, in the state. As one of the major minority groups, blacks have a particularly complicated history and contemporary experience in Pennsylvania.

Early court records show that enslaved black arrived in Pennsylvania soon after William Penn. Even William Penn himself owned slaves. However, he freed them before the last time he left the colony. The number of slaves in Pennsylvania was never large during the colonial period. Indeed, Pennsylvania had fewer slaves than its neighboring states, such as New York and New Jersey. It is estimated that there were approximately 3,000 slaves in Pennsylvania in 1767. It is interesting to

note that before 1700, the slavery system in Pennsylvania was marginally legal. Black slaves brought over to the colony were defined as servant, which implied a term limitation. After 1700, the colonial assembly realized that they had to design special laws for those who were sold into service for life. Hence, during the first quarter of eighteenth century, a series of antiblack laws were passed by the Pennsylvania legislature. These laws, also known as “Black Codes,” imposed harsher terms on crime and punishment, as well as restrictions on civil rights, movement, and congregation for blacks. For instance, according to a 1725 Act, interracial marriage was banned in Pennsylvania, and free blacks who married whites could be sold into slavery for life. In addition, slaves were not allowed to travel more than 10 miles from home, unless they obtained permission from their masters. The Act for the Better Regulation of Negroes passed between 1725 and 1726 detained free blacks from hiding runaway slaves or accepting property stolen from masters with high penalties. If the committed black could not pay the fines, then he or she could be ordered into servitude by the justices (<http://slavenorth.com/pennrace.htm>).

Between 1700 and 1773, the Pennsylvania Assembly passed laws to impose duties on slave trade and importation. Some of the laws were aimed at raising revenues. Others were passed to prevent slave importation, as people were afraid of possible slave revolts if their number grew too large. Meanwhile, these laws were often vetoed by the Lords of Trade, especially when the duties were high. The underlying reason is that the English government did not want colonial legislation undermining their authority, even over the slave trade.

Two groups in Pennsylvania contributed to the antislavery movement. The first was the Germans. Unlike the English and Scotch Irish settlers who owned most of the slaves, Germans wanted nothing to do with slavery. As they constituted about almost two-fifths of Pennsylvania’s population during the early colonial period, their choices had a tremendous impact on the institution of slavery.

The second force of resistance were the Quakers. For a long time, Quakers in Pennsylvania owned more slaves than other groups. However, over time, their conscience and religious belief started to make them question the ethics of the institution. In 1693, George Keith and his followers signed the first printed anti-slavery protest, the “An Exhortation & Caution to Friends concerning Buying or Keeping of Negroes.” This protest signaled the beginning of sequential abolishment movements. The change was rather slow. It took almost a century of combined effort from famous Quakers, such as Ralph Sandiford, John Woolman, Anthony Benezet and Thomas Paine, to pave the way for the Gradual Abolition Act of 1780. This was the first abolition law in this country, which allowed slave children who were born after 1780 to be free once they turned 28. At the same time, this act also removed all the restrictions on free blacks, except the rights of voting and joining the state militia.

The overall antislavery sentiment carried on, and in 1788, Pennsylvania made an amendment to the 1780 act by prohibiting out of state slave trade. It also closed the loopholes of the 1780 act by banning slave owners from removing pregnant slaves out of Pennsylvania, so their children would be born into slavery. This amendment provided legal protection to slave families so that the members would

not be separated as results of slave trade. Then in 1820, Pennsylvania enacted another act titled “An Act to Prevent Kidnapping,” which basically dismissed the national fugitive slave act. This act provided protection to runaway slaves and blacks in general, so they would not be kidnapped and enslaved out-of-state. Six years later, another act, “An Act to give effect to the provisions of the Constitution of the United States, relative to fugitives from labor, for the protection of free people of colour, and to prevent kidnapping” passed, and made removing any black away from the state more difficult. This act had its historical significance, since it was the statute that led to the case of *Prigg v. Pennsylvania*.

In 1850, the Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act, which demanded the returning of all escaped slaves to their masters upon capture. According to this act, free states’ officials and citizens were obligated to cooperate and assist with slave hunting. Many Northern states, including Pennsylvania, passed the Personal Liberty Law soon after, prohibiting their state officials from providing any assistance to slave apprehension.

With all the acts and effort from both whites and blacks, the overall condition for blacks improved substantially. The number of blacks in Philadelphia more than doubled from 6,880 in 1800 to 15,624 in 1830. During the same time, the number of Irish immigrants surged as well in the city. The increasing diversity in ethnicity, religion, and race foreshadowed the upcoming chaos. Socially, ongoing and intensifying abolitionism contributed to social tensions between blacks and other groups. Economically, quite a few wealthy blacks in urban areas owned real estate properties and businesses. On the other end of the economic spectrum, low-class urban blacks were willing to take on jobs and trades with lower pay, which was viewed as unfair competition in the eyes of Irish laborers. Their overall economic gains gave rise to some fallacious idea that blacks were doing better than immigrant and white males. The combined social and economic contentions flared up racial discrimination in cities like Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Between 1834 and 1849, a series of riots occurred between whites and blacks, causing death and destruction in Philadelphia. Working-class whites also organized collective actions to push blacks out of better paying jobs. In the face of increasing racial discrimination, black workers formed an all-black union in Pittsburgh by the late nineteenth century to defend their own rights.

The outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 marked the beginning of a new era of racial relationship between whites and blacks in this state. In 1862, blacks in Pennsylvania could join the Union Army after the U.S. government removed the race ban on military service. During the Reconstruction era, blacks witnessed advancements in political and educational rights. For instance, the Fourteenth Amendment granted blacks full citizenship rights; the Fifteenth Amendment granted black males full voting rights. In 1881, the Pennsylvania State Supreme Court denounced the practice of segregated school systems. However, the Reconstruction era was short-lived and considered a not-so-successful effort. The 1896 U.S. Supreme Court’s decision on the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* established the doctrine of “separate but equal.” The Pennsylvania State Supreme Court supported this notion. Furthermore, the successes accomplished between 1865 and 1877 were viewed as temporal, as the racial conflict and white hostility never went

away, and indeed became intensified in various tiers of Pennsylvanian society. One piece of evidence for this trend is the 1871 riots in Philadelphia, with four blacks dying as a result.

## **The Twentieth Century**

The eruption of World War I led to an increased demand for labor in the new industrial cities. As a result, women and blacks were recruited in cities like Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. The Great Migration started in 1916, leading to a rapid increase in the black population of northeast states. The influx of blacks resulted in increased hostility from whites. A series of violent events against blacks highlighted the racial relationships in Pennsylvania during the first quarter of the twentieth century. Some of the notable examples are: the 1911 lynching of Walker in Coatesville, Pennsylvania; the 1917 riot in Chester, the 1918 riot in Philadelphia, and the 1923 riot in Johnstown. The 1923 Johnstown riot resulted in the expulsion of 500 black workers, who were forced to leave Johnstown by the authorities. Such action further disadvantaged blacks' status in the labor force.

Blacks in Pennsylvania did not passively suffer such racial discrimination. Throughout 1920s and 1930s, given their increasing population, black institutions blossomed in the state. Churches and activist organizations worked side by side to

### ***The 1871 Philadelphia Riot***

In 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified, which guaranteed voting rights for black males. In 1871, Philadelphia held its municipal election for mayor and city council. This election determined which political party controlled the city. For obvious reasons, blacks were ready to vote for the Republicans—the party of Lincoln. The thought of losing the election agitated white Democrats, especially those of Irish descent. A local Democrat officer, Daniel Fox, used white police officers to deter Republican voters from coming to the polls. Philadelphia police, dominated by white ethnics, were known for being racially prejudiced against blacks.

The Sunday and Monday before the election, Philadelphia streets witnessed racial violence between the two groups. One black man, Jacob Gordon, was shot and died two days later. On Election Day, rioting flared up across the city. Four blacks were shot to death, and around two dozen or so were injured. Among those killed was Octavius Catto, a well-known black activist. In response to the threat of violence and voter intimidation on Election Day, Pennsylvania's governor issued an emergency announcement: Catto was ready to assume his role as Major of the Fifth Brigade of the Pennsylvania State Militia to provide protection to black voters. He was shot by two members of a white mob on his way home.

The Philadelphia riot resulted from deeply rooted racial hostility on the part of whites, especially Irish Catholics, toward blacks in the city. However, the riot was the last of its kind in Pennsylvania. After the riot, Republican candidate Bill Stokley won the election with black votes. His success made it possible for him to fulfill his campaign promise of protecting blacks from violence. For many decades, his Republican successors continued to fulfill that promise.

promote social and political change to improve blacks' status in this country. Among them, the most famous one is the Pennsylvania branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored people (NAACP). In 1932, its president, Homer Brown, won the election to become a state legislator. Brown worked closely with Governor George Earle on the "Little New Deal for Pennsylvania." With his effort, an Equal Rights Law was enacted in 1935. This law guaranteed blacks equal access to a wide range of public accommodations, such as schools, parks, and theaters. The "New Deal" is regarded as a prelude to the upcoming civil rights movement.

Before the 1950s, most blacks were working on labor-intensive and low-skilled jobs, meaning low pay and economic instability. Between 1959 and 1963, one notable figure, Reverend Leon H. Sullivan, led and inspired blacks in Philadelphia to push back racial discrimination in private and governmental sectors. Sullivan and other black ministers organized boycotts to force many private corporations to open job opportunities to black employees. Following the initial success, Sullivan founded the first Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) based on his idea of self-help. This center provided black youths opportunities to acquire necessary skills to find employment in the newly opened job market. By 1970, OIC, as a successful job training model, had spread to 150 cities across the nation and initiated centers in international communities as well. Giving its record of success, in 1967, the U.S. Department of Labor adopted the "Philadelphia Plan" to uproot racial discrimination in the construction industry. In 1969, under President Nixon, a revised "Philadelphia Plan" was enacted to fight back institutional discrimination that prevailed in skilled building trades unions. This is the first time that an affirmative action program was implemented at federal government level.

While blacks were making progress in achieving parity in certain areas, issues like residential segregation and multifaceted institutional racial discrimination remained sources of stress, especially for those living in metropolitan areas. The deindustrialization process in cities like Pittsburgh attributed to increased poverty and unemployment rates among low-income blacks. The growing dissatisfaction among black youths, therefore, led to violent revolts and later contributed to the growing popularity of the Black Power Movement in urban areas in Pennsylvania.

One of the noteworthy revolts occurred in 1968, in Pittsburgh. In the previous decade, the Hill District, not far from downtown Pittsburgh, held the largest black population of the city. In the 1950s, Pittsburgh's urban renewal program forced many black households and businesses out of the area to make space for a sports arena and additional hotels. Such forced removal agitated black communities in the city. However, whites overlooked the signals of a possible riot. For instance, labor activist Charles Owen Rice was certain that a riot was unlikely to happen in Pittsburgh, even though he maintained a close tie to the black community. However, in 1968, after the assassination of Martin Luther King, blacks looted and firebombed the Hill District. The revolt quickly spread to other parts of the city, and lasted for days. The National Guard and state troopers were called to the city. The amount of force that should be exerted was debated at the local government. Some supported maximum force, while others, those who were more liberal,

opposed. The result was one casualty and 1,300 arrests. Quite a few businesses and buildings were damaged. One positive outcome was that the riot helped raise awareness among progressive whites about the black experience in Pittsburgh. Unfortunately, the declining economy, increasing labor competition, and threat of violence continued to flare conflict between blacks and whites in central city areas. White flight occurred. Those who could, moved to the suburbs, contributing further to more serious racial segregation in the city.

This 1968 incident shed light on the overall racial relationship not only in Pittsburgh but in other areas of Pennsylvania as well. From the 1960s to early 1980s, the continuation of political-economic turmoil, disappearing manufacturing jobs, and upwelling urban poverty severely undermined the advancements accomplished by the Black Power and civil rights movements. And the 1985 MOVE bombing in Philadelphia stands out as one of the most vexing events that occurred during the era.

### **A Philadelphia Bombing**

MOVE was founded by John Africa (Vincent Leaphart) in 1972. This group advocated green politics and rejected modern medicine, technology, and government. All group members changed their last name to Africa, as the founder believed that Africa is where all life forms originated. The members lived a communal lifestyle, consuming only raw food. Their children followed the same diet principle as well, and wore minimal amounts of clothing. Quite a few of the members were illiterate. The group first occupied an empty house in Powelton Village, located in close proximity to the University of Pennsylvania. Their lifestyle and behaviors troubled their rather liberal neighbors. For instance, they would pace on the roof, wave their weapons, and use bullhorn with offensive language to broadcast their political message. Upset neighbors called the police, and the result was a 56-day barricade of the MOVE occupied house. By the summer of 1978, MOVE promised that they would leave the house in exchange for the release of their imprisoned members. The city authority did release those members; however, MOVE broke their promise and stayed put.

On August 8, 1978, police utilized water cannons and battering rams to drive MOVE members out of the building. During this chaos, some MOVE members fired at the police, and one officer (James Ramp) was killed. Consequently, two years later, nine MOVE members were sentenced to 30–100 years for their conviction of third-degree murder. Later, the nine members are referred to as the MOVE 9.

In 1981, MOVE relocated to a row house in a middle-class black neighborhood on 62nd and Osage Avenue. They turned the row house into a fortress by boarding up the windows and doors and continuing their loud broadcasting. Tensions once again built up quickly between MOVE and their local neighbors. In 1985, after years of complaints, the tension finally turned into one of the most shocking episodes of violence against human rights in modern history. First African American mayor Wilson Goode and the city commissioner declared that MOVE was a terrorist organization. The police and city manager arrived with arrest warrants for four

of the members and with the intention to evacuate the building. Allegedly, MOVE opened fire; about 500 police officers responded, firing back for 90 minutes. Simultaneously, high-pressure fire hoses and tear gas were also employed as means to drive MOVE members out of the house. After all the attempts failed, without considering other options, the Police Commissioner issued the order to bomb MOVE's base. The mayor did not try to intervene, though he knew there were children in the building. On May 13, 1985, at 5:28 p.m., a state police helicopter dropped a two-pound satchel bomb onto the house. The fire caused by the bomb quickly spread to nearby blocks, and destroyed 61 houses in four hours. Firefighters stood by and let the fire burn, as they were afraid that MOVE members might shoot them. The result: 11 people, including John Africa, 5 adults, and 5 children died in the fire; 250 people became homeless. In 1986, the mayor issued a formal apology. Other than this, those who enabled and allowed such a tragedy to happen, from the mayor to the police commissioner, did not face any criminal charges. On the other hand, the widow of John Africa was sentenced to prison for seven years on charges of riot and conspiracy. Moreover, one of the most troubling aspects of this tragedy raised questions about racial violence when virtually all of the key players in the scenario were members of the same racial group.

In 1996, 11 years after the bombing, a federal jury ordered the city of Philadelphia to pay \$1.5 million to the survivor of John Africa and relatives of two members who died in the bombing. CNN reported the conclusion from the jury:

The jury found that the city, former Police Commissioner Gregore Sambor and former Fire Commissioner William Richmond used excessive force and violated the MOVE members' constitutional protections against unreasonable search and seizure in the May 13, 1985 incident. (CNN 1996)

Again, the former mayor, Wilson Goode, was exempted from charges. Philadelphia received the nickname of "the city that bombed itself."

From 1980s to the beginning of twenty-first century, deindustrialization continued to negatively affect black communities across Pennsylvania. While some increasing number of jobs were created in the service sector, many blacks moved to the Sunbelt cities for better employment opportunities. Those who were left behind suffered high unemployment rates, urban poverty, violence, and drug addiction. The young, chronically poor, sick, unemployed, and single-parent constituted the so-called underclass, coined by sociologist William Wilson. On the other hand, blacks who were highly educated moved upwards in the society. Hence, socioeconomic status gradually replaced skin color to become the dividing factor in the society.

### **The Nation's First**

In 1988, Temple University elevated the reputation of the city of Philadelphia when it established the nation's first PhD program in African American Studies. Following the establishment of the first undergraduate program in 1968 at San Francisco State University, the newly emerged discipline of black/African American studies struggled to define itself and gain acceptance and legitimacy on



campuses across the U.S. Temple University helped to advance the cause of the discipline when it created the opportunity to obtain the highest level of educational achievement in the field. Dr. Molefi Asante was hired as the department chair and, subsequently, led the program to national prominence.

### **Continued Residential Segregation**

As suggested by much research literature, blacks continue to be the most segregated group in Pennsylvania, followed by Hispanics. The persisting residential segregation adversely affects black and Hispanic children's access to quality education. Lower education achievement in turn contributes to prevailing poverty rates. Therefore, it is important to review the patterns of residential segregation in Pennsylvania, which would allow us a better understanding of the minority experience in modern-day society.

After World War II, suburban communities rapidly expanded due to large number of returning veterans. However, black veterans returned home to face racial discrimination in housing. Though the passage of GI bill was intended to provide fair housing to those who fought for the freedom of this country, racial discrimination enabled different interpretations of the law. At the same time, real estate builders refused to sell their houses to nonwhite veterans to maintain "homogenous" communities. The result was that blacks remained segregated after the World War II.

In Pennsylvania, the pattern of residential segregation was well pronounced in both metropolitan areas and small cities, with blacks and Hispanic Americans heavily concentrated near or in the central business districts. The houses they resided in were usually older and deteriorating. Blacks and Hispanics were blocked from buying houses in nicer communities, even for those who had decent incomes. On the other hand, the high concentration of blacks and Hispanics in deteriorating central city areas further attributed to practices like "redlining," which dampened blacks' chance of moving out of depreciated neighborhoods.

One famous case that captured the extent of racial discrimination in the housing market in Pennsylvania was the Myers' experience in the Levittown community in 1957. Levittown was one of those postwar suburban communities built with support from the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) and the GI Bill. As the completion of the construction neared, the builder, William Levitt, made it very clear that this community would be sold to whites only. Various advocate groups, such as the American Friends Services Committee (AFSC) and NAACP, tried different ways to open the community to blacks, but to no avail. However, by the summer of 1957, existing homeowners sold their house to William and Daisy Myers, the first black couple that moved into the Levittown community. Their arrival was not welcomed. Indeed, as soon as the Myers moved in, a group of angry neighbors started to gather in front of their house. Afraid of possible violence, the Myers returned to their old house that night. The harassment continued every night for about two weeks. During this time period, Levittown police did not provide the protection the court ordered. It was not until the appearance of the state police that, finally, these hostile protests subsided.

Other forms of racial harassment continued months after in forms of threatening phone calls, disruption of services, and intimidation from neighbors. Despite all the racial discrimination, the Myers refused to move away. With assistance from civic groups, this family obtained court-ordered protection that prevented them from being further harassed. The Myers stayed in Levittown until June, 1961. Another black family, the Mosbys, also moved into the community in 1958. Because of what happened before to the Myers, residents of Levittown were split in their attitudes toward racial integration. However, the Mosbys experienced a quite peaceful transition into this community.

The Myers' experience was not unique. Indeed, it was a representative case of profound racial discrimination and residential segregation in Pennsylvania and the United States in the 1950s. Between 1946 and 1953, out of the 120,000 new house constructions in Philadelphia, only 347 were sold to blacks. Even today, residential segregation remains a major problem in urban areas in Pennsylvania.

To make things more complicated, current residential segregation trends result from the combined effects of both race and social class. The 2000 census data show that the majority (more than 98%) of residents in Levittown communities are whites. According to the 2012 census data, blacks and Hispanics are much more likely to live in poor areas than whites in Pennsylvania. A panel study comparing residential segregation in Philadelphia in 1990 and 2010 shows that, overall, the city is more racially integrated. However, the north and west sides of Philadelphia remain highly segregated. Similar pattern of persisting segregation can be found in other parts of Pennsylvania as well. In 2015, Goetz, Damiano, and Hicks released a report about white self-segregation in metropolitan areas in the United States. Out of the 15 metro cities they examined, Philadelphia ranked the second highest in numbers of racially concentrated areas of affluence (RCAA), which refers to tracks where more than 90 percent of residents are rich and white. Philadelphia also ranked the fourth in number of racially concentrated areas of poverty (RCAP). RCAP is areas where more than half of the residents are non-whites and live below poverty line. It is noteworthy to point out that in Philadelphia, majority of residents live in RCAP areas are blacks. One main implication of white self-segregation is growing distance between whites and blacks, both economically and socially.

Residential segregation has great impact on one's access to other opportunities in society, such as education. A report, published in 2016, points out that Pennsylvania public schools are among the most segregated in the nation. Some of the key findings by Kotok and Reed (2016) are as follows: (1) Statewide, Latino and black students attended majority minority schools, where the percentage of white students were less than 40 percent. (2) Black students experienced higher level of school segregation than 20 years ago. (3) About 56 percent blacks versus 87 percent whites students statewide were enrolled in schools that offer some advanced courses. Mosenkis (2016) conducted a research about inequality in school funding in Pennsylvania. His research also suggests that white and affluent neighborhoods tend to receive more funds than nonwhite and poor ones. These findings shed light on one alarming fact: decades after the civil

rights movement, de facto segregation in various social institutions continues to exist and keeps minority groups from achieving real parity in the state of Pennsylvania and throughout this country.

## NOTABLE FIGURE

### **Wilson, August (1945–2005)**

August Wilson was born on April 27, 1945, in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, a poor black community. His birth name was Frederick August Kittel. His father was a German baker, who basically abandoned the family; his mother, a black cleaning woman, raised him and his six siblings by herself in a small flat. As such, his mother had an enormous impact on the development of his self-identity. After his parents divorced, Wilson's mother remarried and moved the family to a white-majority community in the Oakland neighborhood of Pittsburgh. This is where August was exposed to racism in school, where most of his classmates were whites. He was bored, and feeling prejudice from his teachers, transferred from one school to another. Eventually, Wilson secretly dropped out of high school at the age of 16. He then self-educated in the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh during regular school hours.

In the library, Wilson read many books by famous African American writers, such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Langston Hughes, and Richard Wright. Their books had a profound influence on his decision to become a writer. Apparently, Wilson's mother was not happy with his career choice, as she wanted him to become a lawyer. During the early part of his life, Wilson paid frequent visits to his old neighborhood in the Hill district. There, Wilson talked to the residents and gained tremendous knowledge about the life experience of poor blacks in Pittsburgh in the 1960s. Indeed, most of his plays were based on the stories he learned from Pittsburgh's Hill District residents.

After his father passed away in 1965, August adopted his mother's last name. During the same year, Wilson fell in love with the blues as sung by Bessie Smith. Apparently, her voice inspired his pursuit of an artistic life, as he went and bought a typewriter and started composing poetry. In the later 1960s, he was actively engaged in the Black Arts Movement, which is viewed as one of the most important and controversial movements in African American literary history. In 1968, August Wilson and Rob Penny founded the Black Horizon Theater in the Hill District, which was funded by the Program Committee of the Black Action Society. The theater was home to a community-based, black nationalist theater company. For approximately 10 years, Wilson worked as director and scriptwriter. Together, Penny and Wilson produced plays based on the works of black artists, which helped promote awareness about the black experience in American society. In 1971, Black Horizon Theater presented its first all-black theater production, *Center Avenue: A Trip*, on the campus of University of Pittsburgh. Unfortunately, by the mid-1970s, the theater dissolved.

In 1976, Wilson produced his first professional play, *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead*, staged at the Pittsburgh Public Theater. He and Penny also founded the Kuhn

Writers' Workshop in Pittsburgh, which provided writers a platform for discussion and assistance for publication. Four decades later, this organization continues to remain active.

In 1978, Wilson moved to St. Paul, Minnesota, to write educational scripts for the Science Museum of Minnesota. In 1979, he was awarded a fellowship from the Minneapolis Playwrights Center for his first famous plays, *Jitney*, which focused on the lives of black cab drivers in Pittsburgh. In 1981, he met Lloyd Richards, who directed Wilson's first six plays on Broadway. In 1987, Wilson won his first Pulitzer Prize with his play *Fences*. Then he earned another one in 1990, for *The Piano Lesson*.

A talented playwright, Wilson was also passionate about challenging and changing the status quo blacks and black artists experienced in American society. Between late 1980s and early 1990s, there was a prevailing effort to promote non-traditional casting in American theater to achieve racial equality. Throughout the 1960s, the Nation of Islam and Malcolm X impacted his beliefs on self-defining, self-sufficiency, self-respect, and self-determination. Hence, Wilson was strongly against the idea of nontraditional or colorblind casting. Indeed, Wilson viewed such practice as a strategy to cover up the deeply embedded problem of racial inequality and cultural imperialism.

The frustration and the urge of calling for self-determination for blacks led to the powerful speech of "The Ground on Which I Stand," which was delivered at Princeton University's McCarter Theater. This speech was widely published and debated. Indeed, it led to the face-to-face debate between Wilson and critic Robert Brustein at the Town Hall in New York City on January 27, 1997. The latter argued that Wilson was calling for self-segregation among black artists. He further commented that funding should go to the best production and be colorblind; Wilson firmly believed that only black artists and theaters could best capture and present the culture of the black community. Following the logic of this argument, he commented that it is also wrong for black actors to take on nonblack roles on stage. This debate did not yield any consensus between the two parties; however, the content made Wilson's ideas more publicly available to a wider artistic community.

As an adult, Wilson experienced challenges in his personal life. In 1969, Wilson married Brenda Burton, who gave birth to their first daughter, Sakina Ansari Wilson. In 1972, the marriage was dissolved. In 1981, he married again. His second wife was Judy Oliver, a social worker. This marriage lasted for nine years. In 1994, Wilson met his third wife, Constanza Romero. They had one daughter. The family moved to Seattle, Washington, where Wilson continued his works. After enduring months of failing health, Wilson died on October 2, 2005, in a hospital due to cancer. His funeral was held in Pittsburgh, and he was buried not far from his mother in Greenwood Cemetery.

Pennsylvania born August Wilson is known as one of the top writers of his time. He is also the only black playwright that had great success on Broadway in recent years. His major contribution to American literature is his 10-play cycle, with each play representing one decade of black life in the twentieth century. Nine of the plays are set in the city of Pittsburgh. Only one, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*,

is set in Chicago. All his plays captured and highlighted the racism and struggles blacks experienced in American society.

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## Rhode Island

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Claudia J. Ford

### CHRONOLOGY

#### 1636–1637

In the Pequot War, the Narragansetts and white settlers defeat and take captive the Pequot

#### 1636

Roger Williams settles in Rhode Island after his banishment from the Massachusetts Bay colony

#### 1652

The Colony of Rhode Island adopts a law abolishing slavery, which goes largely unenforced

#### 1675–1678

King Philip's War, fought in the New England colonies, including Rhode Island, leads to the defeat of the Narragansetts and other Native Americans in the area; the surviving Native Americans are enslaved in Rhode Island and sent to enslavement in the West Indies

#### 1675

Occurring during King Philip's War, the Great Swamp Massacre results in the slaughter of hundreds of Narragansett women and children in what is now South Kingston

#### 1696

The *Sea Flower* is the first documented slave ship to arrive in Newport on route to Boston; during the eighteenth century, many Rhode Island merchants will engage in and profit from the slave trade

## **770 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1703**

The Rhode Island General Assembly enacts a “Negro Code” that recognizes African and Native American slavery and limits the activities of Negro and Indian freemen, servants, and slaves

### **1709**

Narragansett leader, Ninigret II, is pressured to deed all Native land to Rhode Island colony, except 64 square miles in Charlestown

### **1755**

Africans account for about 20 percent of the population of Newport

### **1763**

The first synagogue is built for the for Jewish congregation in Newport

### **1764**

The Brown Family dispatches the slave ship *Sally* to Africa to bring back a cargo of African slaves; when 108 out of 196 of the Africans perish on the return voyage, Moses Brown commits himself more fully to the cause of abolition

### **1774**

Slaves constitute over 6 percent of the population of Rhode Island, almost double the percentage in any other New England colony

### **1778**

The First Rhode Island Regiment of “negroes, mullatoes, and Indians” is established by the Rhode Island Assembly; the regiment includes 132 enslaved and free African and Native men and fights with distinction during the American Revolutionary War

### **1780**

The African Union Society is founded in Newport as the first formal organization for blacks in the United States; the society provides job training and produces public documents for members

### **1784**

The Rhode Island legislature enacts a measure providing for gradual emancipation of African slaves in Rhode Island

### **1824**

Race riots take place in the Hard Scrabble neighborhood of Providence; white mobs rampage through the black neighborhood, looting, burning, and beating inhabitants

### **1831**

Race riots occur in the Snow Town section of Providence; white mobs level this black neighborhood

### **1838**

The first public school for black children is established in Providence



**1840**

The census of this year shows only five enslaved African Americans still resident in Rhode Island

**1841**

The Dorr Rebellion leads to a constitutional crisis and the brief establishment of two rival state governments in Rhode Island; some Irish Catholic laborers are granted the vote under the new Rhode Island Constitution, but blacks are excluded from the vote

**1842**

The Rhode Island General Assembly ratifies a bill that includes enfranchisement of Negro men

**1859**

James Howland, the last known Rhode Island resident to be enslaved, dies

**1865**

On February 2, Rhode Island becomes the second state in the Union to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

**1866**

Segregation is made illegal in Rhode Island public schools

**1867**

On February 7, Rhode Island ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting citizenship to newly freed African American slaves

**1870**

On January 18, Rhode Island ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which grants voting rights to African American men

**1887**

Inman Page and George Washington Milford become the first black graduates of Brown University

**1908**

Reverend William S. Holland establishes the Watchman Industrial School and Camp (often known as the Watchman Institute) in Providence as a school for black children

**1914–1918**

During World War I, Rhode Island women contribute to the war effort by working in the state's factories and mills, although these jobs are largely confined to white women, black women are not hired

**1919**

The Newport branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is established by Reverend James Lucas at the Mount Olive Baptist Church

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### **1921**

The International Institute of Rhode Island is established to assist with the legal, educational, and welfare needs of immigrant Rhode Islanders

### **1924, 1926**

Two suspicious fires at the Watchman Industrial School and Camp in North Scituate are blamed on the Ku Klux Klan, which gained strength in Rhode Island in the 1920s to due opposition to increasing immigration into the state

### **1956**

Josefina and Tony Rosario open Tefa's Market, the first Hispanic food market in Rhode Island

### **1963**

Four hundred Rhode Islanders travel to Washington, D.C., to participate in the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, which seeks to pressure the Kennedy administration into sending a strong civil rights bill to Congress; the march is highlighted by Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech.

### **1967**

Peter J. Coelho, the son of immigrants, becomes the first Cape Verdean to serve in the Rhode Island General Assembly

### **1976**

Masjid Al-Karim, the Islamic Center of Rhode Island, is established in Providence

### **1979**

The Cape Verdean musical group, the Tavares Brothers, wins a Grammy Award for the *Saturday Night Fever* soundtrack album; the five brothers were born and raised in Providence

### **2011**

Angel Taveras is sworn in on January 3 as the first Latino-Dominican mayor of Providence

### **2015**

Jorge Elorza is sworn in on January 5 as the second Latino-Guatemalan mayor of Providence

### **2017**

Hundreds of people rally at a candlelight vigil at the statehouse in Providence to protest the recent racial violence in Charlottesville, Virginia

## **NARRATIVE**

The history of race relations in the state of Rhode Island is often described as "the big history of the smallest state." Rhode Island is the smallest state in the United States, at a size of only 1,045 square miles of land, and an estimated population of 1.6 million people. Race relations in the state included significant colonial encounters with Native Americans, a large role in the initiation and maintenance of the

transatlantic slave trade, and successive waves of immigrants and refugees, all of which created the unique racial and ethnic diversity of contemporary Rhode Island.

The land and islands that were to become the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations (the state's full, and rarely used name) are part of southern New England. This region had pre-contact Native populations estimated at between 120,000 and 140,000 individuals, that is, aboriginal people established in the region before European settlement. When discussing relationships between races in Rhode Island, it is important to remember that contemporary ideas about and classifications of race did not emerge until the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in southern New England. These later ideas largely replaced the previously dominant ideas about established religion as the most important way of "marking and containing social difference" (Plane 2000, 8). It is important to keep in mind that not all groups of immigrants who eventually came to Rhode Island, even from European countries, were immediately accepted as white or American, and immediately afforded the privileges of the dominant culture.

### **Encounters with Native Americans in Rhode Island**

The Algonquian-speaking Narragansett people were the first inhabitants of what was to become Rhode Island, with archaeological evidence showing their estimated continuous inhabitation in the area for 30,000 years. The Narragansett lived primarily in harmony and close association with their immediate neighbors to the east and north—the Wampanoag, Nipmuc, and Pokanoket—and to the west and south—the Pequot, Eastern Niantic, and Mohegan. The Narragansett presence in Rhode Island was robust in the early years of settlement, largely because the Narragansett had avoided some of the devastating waves of epidemic disease arising from early European contact.

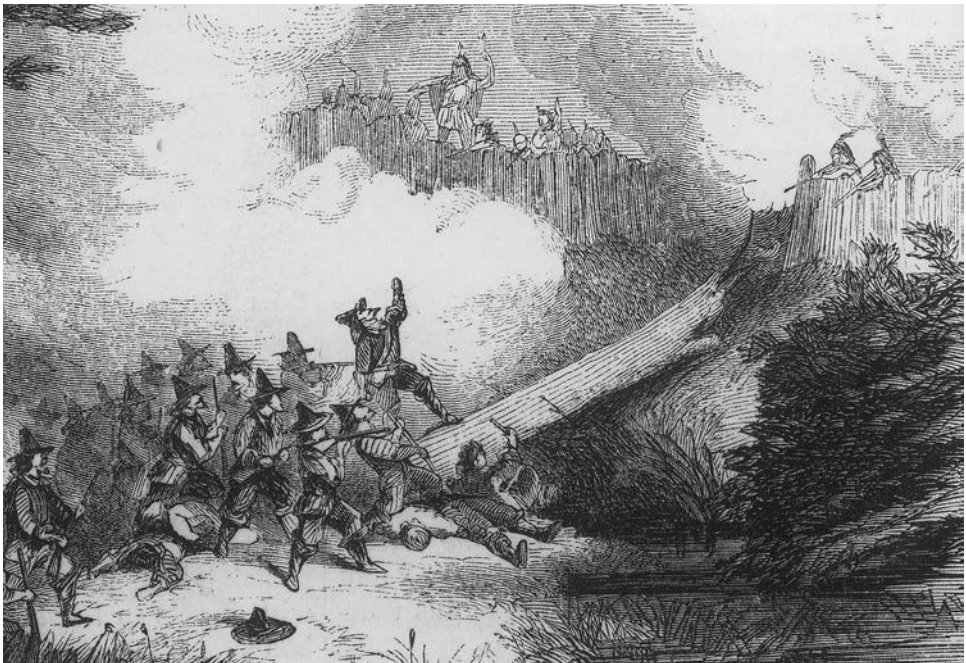
In 1636, Roger Williams, a Puritan and English theologian, born in London, settled in Rhode Island after his banishment from Massachusetts Bay colony for offending the inflexible religious sensibilities of the Puritans. Williams was welcomed and granted land use rights in the Providence area by the Narragansett Sachems Canonicus and Miantonomi. Williams was credited with maintaining a respectful alliance with his Native American neighbors, and he learned to speak the Algonquian language. As a result of Williams's experience of persecution, and his commitment to religious freedom, Rhode Island was the first colony where Quakers, Catholics, and Jews found themselves able to freely worship as neighbors to Protestants and Puritans. Rhode Island became one of the founding colonies of the United States, alongside Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Nantucket, and Martha's Vineyard. Within Rhode Island, settlements were quickly established in the towns of Providence, Warwick, Newport, Narragansett, Charlestown, Westerly, Kingston, and Mount Hope. It is, to a large extent, from the influence of Roger Williams that Rhode Island continued to be seen as an experiment in progressively democratic religious and government principles.

In southern New England, both Indians and Africans were forced into servitude by European settlers. There were constantly shifting categories of racial classification—among colored, Negro, and Indian—as an attempt by European settlers to account for the mixing and liaisons between all races, especially

between Africans and Native Americans. In Rhode Island, conflicts between settlers and Native Americans were marked by two early and important battles. During the Pequot War (1636–1637), the Narragansett aligned against and helped the European settlers defeat the Pequot, their Native neighbors to the southwest of the colony. King Philip’s War (1675–1678) found the Narragansett united against the white settlers in alliance with Metacom, known as King Philip, who was the chief of the Wampanoag and the son of Massasoit, who had saved the Plymouth settlers from starvation during their first winter in the Americas. Both of these Rhode Island battles were devastating defeats for local Native populations and resulted in the enslavement of Native captives—Pequot, Narragansett, and Wampanoag. The Narragansett tribe received federal recognition in 1983, and they and other Native Americans of Rhode Island continue to be vital and integral communities in terms of self-government, Native culture, and the many contributions of Native Rhode Islanders to the cultural and civic life of the state.

### **Rhode Island and the Transatlantic Slave Trade**

Although there is a common misperception that slavery was only a southern American institution, and that it only involved captives from the African



Colonial militia assault a Narragansett stronghold during King Philip’s War in 1675. Using a Native American deserter as their scout, troops from the colonies of Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, and Connecticut marched into southern Rhode Island to take Great Swamp, burning its wigwams and massacring its inhabitants. The tribe had been neutral before the pre-emptive attack; after this atrocity, the survivors joined against the colonists on the side of the Wampanoag. (Library of Congress)

continent, slavery in fact existed in all 13 original states, and, in Rhode Island, the enslaved included Native Americans who were usually traded to the West Indies. According to the Brown University report on slavery, “Slavery endured in Rhode Island for nearly two hundred years” (Brown University 2007, 14–15). In the eighteenth century, Rhode Island had the highest percent per total population of enslaved residents in the United States. In the beginning, Rhode Island participated in exchanging captured Native Americans from the Pequot War and King Philip’s War with black slaves in the Caribbean, especially Bermuda and the Bahamas. However, the presence of slaves in Rhode Island was not the largest part of the state’s involvement in the transatlantic trade. Rhode Island was enmeshed in the slave trade in other ways. Nearly 60 percent of all United States–initiated slave ship voyages during the period 1725–1807 launched from Rhode Island, and these voyages carried over 100,000 slaves from Africa to the New World in that period. Rhode Island also participated in the sugar/molasses/rum trade through the distilleries that produced and traded in rum, an economic engine of the transatlantic slave trade.

Throughout the centuries of slavery, Rhode Island merchants were building, outfitting, and supplying ships, and most importantly, Rhode Islanders were regularly provisioning Caribbean plantations with essential imports of food, household goods, tools, candles, barrels, clothing, and furniture. Ninety-eight percent of Rhode Island’s first textile mills manufactured Negro Cloth—a coarse wool cotton material made from cotton harvested by slaves, then made into cloth that was sold by Rhode Island merchants to Southern plantation masters for the fundamentally inadequate clothing of the enslaved. The Rhode Island economy was heavily invested in the transatlantic slave trade for more than two centuries, and Rhode Islanders amassed small and large fortunes through their participation in slavery. Christy Clark-Pujara writes that the “entire economy of Rhode Island was entrenched in the business of slavery” as a cornerstone of the state’s economy, not as an aside (Clark-Pujara 2016, 1–9).

It is also falsely believed that slavery was quickly abolished in the Northern states, even before national emancipation. In 1703, the Rhode Island General Assembly adopted a “Negro Code” restricting the activities of Negro and Indian freemen, servants, and slaves, and recognizing African and Native slavery under white ownership. By 1730, the Rhode Island census counted the nonwhite population as 15 percent of the colony’s total population, and by 1755, Africans represented approximately 20 percent of the population of Newport. In 1784, the Rhode Island General Assembly granted the gradual emancipation of slaves, a bill that abolished slavery in children born to enslaved mothers. However, the law was not closely enforced, and the last enslaved Rhode Islander died in 1859.

### **Providence Race Riots**

Two significant urban race riots occurred in Providence in the early nineteenth century; these riots erupted in the black neighborhoods of Hard Scrabble in 1824 and Snow Town in 1831. In both of these violent riots, working-class white residents attacked black inhabitants where they resided, resulting in significant loss of

life and property. Across the nation in the nineteenth century, whites commonly employed a strategy of destroying black neighborhoods, property, and infrastructure as a way to intimidate free people of color.

It is generally agreed that the Hard Scrabble riots started on October 28, 1824, when a group of black residents refused to yield a sidewalk in their neighborhood to a group of passing white men. Twenty-one black homes were destroyed by white mobs, pulled down and burned in the days following this incident. The four days of riots that broke out in Snow Town in 1831 started when a white sailor who was throwing stones at the house of a black family and was killed by the homeowner defending his property. Over four days following this incident, white mobs demolished the homes of black residents. In both cases, the general sympathies of white Providence were against the interests of the black victims and for the white working-class mobs. In 1831, shortly after and partially as a result of the Snow Town riots, Providence was incorporated as a city, with an independent government and police force.

### **Immigrants and Racial Diversity in Rhode Island**

Immigrants began to replace Rhode Island's Africans—enslaved and free—and Native Americans in most job categories during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, immigration to Rhode Island began much earlier, with the settlement in the colony of white and black Portuguese sailors involved in

#### ***Dorr Rebellion***

After the American Revolution, Rhode Island did not adopt a state constitution, but returned its 1663 royal charter as the fundamental basis of state government. The Charter limited voting rights to citizens who owned property of a certain value. Thus, by the 1840s, when Rhode Island was rapidly industrializing, the vote, and thus political power, was concentrated in the hands of rural, agricultural interests, who ignored the needs of the growing cities. An estimated 60 percent of the state's white male population in 1840 was disenfranchised, including large numbers of mainly Irish immigrants working in the towns. In 1841, after calls for reform were rejected, suffrage advocates called a convention that drafted a state constitution, known as the People's Constitution, which was approved in a referendum in which all white males 21 or older could vote. The Charter government rejected the People's Constitution, and in April 1842, two state governments were elected, one under the Charter and one, with Thomas Dorr as governor, under the People's Constitution. Dorr had originally supported giving the vote to black men, but white immigrants wanted the vote first and Dorr dropped the African American franchise. The courts supported the Charter government and after a failed attempt to secure power by force, Dorr fled to New York, but returned a month later. However, fewer than 300 men answered Dorr's call to arms and he fled again. Captured in 1843, Dorr was convicted of treason and imprisoned until 1845, when popular opinion demanded his release. In response to the rebellion, Rhode Island adopted a new constitution in November 1842; it abolished the landholding requirement for native-born white citizens, but retained it for immigrants. Many of the Irish immigrants who supported Dorr remained disenfranchised. Rhode Island did not drop the property requirement entirely until 1888.

the whaling industry. White Portuguese sailors were from the Azores, and mixed-race, or African Portuguese were from Cape Verde. The Cape Verdean community became a large and important immigrant community beginning in 1880, and continuing growing steadily after that. At first, Cape Verdeans arrived as sailors and seamen on whaling ships; the Cape Verde islands were an important Atlantic Ocean supply stop for the industry. Eventually, Cape Verdeans had a robust and independent immigration channel to Rhode Island and southern New England through nearby New Bedford, Massachusetts. Cape Verdeans worked in the whaling and textile industries, were domestic workers, and labored in the region's cranberry fields. Cape Verdean communities continue to be vital to Rhode Island's political, religious and cultural vibrancy. In 1967, Honorable Peter J. Coelho, the son of immigrants, was the first Cape Verdean to serve in the Rhode Island General Assembly.

The city of Providence, and to a large part most of the state of Rhode Island, has always had an interesting relationship to immigration, which shaped and changed the ethnic and racial landscape of the state throughout the nineteenth, twentieth, and into the twenty-first centuries. Starting in the early 1900s, residential neighborhoods in the state became ethnically homogenous based on immigration, affiliations of kinship, nationality, religious congregations, and mutual aid and burial societies. Rhode Island also became, and still is, a haven for resettlement, north of the arrivals center of New York City. The International Institute of Rhode Island, which is still operational, began in 1921 to assist new Rhode Islanders with education, legal issues, employment, and welfare needs.

Rhode Island textile mills and the jewelry and silver industries fueled the industrialization and development of the state. Industrialization in Rhode Island drew a steady stream of immigrants. The Irish arrived in Rhode Island to work in the developing industries in the early 1800s. Providence was a major steamship port for Europe, which contributed to especially high rates of immigration from Italy, Portugal, and France in the early 1900s. In successive waves of immigration, Poles, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Armenians, Greek, Syrians, Lebanese, French Canadians, and Christian Arabs arrived in Rhode Island.

Jewish settlers arrived in Newport as early as the seventeenth century and eventually built, in 1763, the first Jewish synagogue for one of the oldest Jewish congregations in the United States. The Touro Synagogue in Newport is now a National Historic Site. When Jews first arrived in Rhode Island, they were not considered racially white, and they were discriminated against because of their religion. They could not vote or hold public office, but they could hold and inherit property and they could establish and conduct business.

In the twentieth century, refugees arrived in Rhode Island from Cuba, Colombia, and Guatemala, and from the conflicts in West Africa, especially from Liberia, and the conflicts in Southeast Asia, especially Cambodian, Hmong, and Laotian evacuees. The majority of early immigrants were of the Catholic faith, and a tolerant Catholic leader, Bishop Matthew Harkins (1887–1921), is credited with creating a certain degree of unity among this extremely ethnically, racially, and nationally diverse religious community. Rhode Island continues today as the state with the highest proportion of Roman Catholic residents (43%) in the country.

The Latino and Hispanic communities of the state have seen successive waves of immigration and refugees, beginning in significant numbers with Cape Verdean immigration and increasing in the 1920s, with Puerto Rican migrants, seeking work on farms on the outskirts of Providence and in the manufacturing sector. Small numbers of Mexicans were brought to Rhode Island through the Bracero (Guest Worker) Program of the 1940s, and were employed in factories and as agricultural workers. The Mexican community currently has strong roots in the state. Josefina Rosario, known affectionately as “Doña Fefa,” was the matriarch of the first Dominican family to settle in Rhode Island in the early 1950s. The Rosario family’s influence was, and still is, widely felt among their community as they established a Hispanic food store, and helped arriving Dominicans find jobs and educational opportunities.

The sanctuary program for Cuban children, which was operated by the Catholic Church between 1960 and 1962, included housing in Rhode Island. The families of some of the children were eventually allowed to join them in the United States. Providence refugee settlement continued with the arrival in the 1970s of Hmong and Lao groups fleeing the wars in Southeast Asia. At the same time, Colombians arrived in the state escaping political turmoil and seeking opportunities in the factories and textile mills around Central Falls. In the 1980s, Guatemalans were sent to Rhode Island under sanctuary programs, largely under the auspices of the Catholic Church, and many of them settled in agricultural and nursery businesses on Aquidneck Island. The second decade of the twenty-first century ushered in the groundbreaking circumstance of two consecutive Latino mayors for Providence. Angel Taveras, the first Latino mayor of Providence, and the son of Dominican immigrants, who was inaugurated on January 3, 2011, and Jorge Elorza, the son of Guatemalan immigrants, who was inaugurated as mayor of Providence on January 5, 2015.

### **Contemporary Challenges of Racial Diversity in Rhode Island**

As a result of its small size and “big history,” contemporary Rhode Island is a diverse state comprising largely segregated majority white rural areas and extremely mixed urban areas, especially the capital city of Providence. Rhode Island has an impressive number of robust ethnic communities that began with relatively sizable influxes of immigrants and refugees into the industrial centers around Providence. In the most recent census tracts (2016), the racial makeup of Rhode Island is listed as 74.5 percent white, 14 percent Latino, 7.7 percent black, 3.5 percent Asian, and 0.3 percent Native and other. Most towns in the state are 90 percent or greater white, with the exception of Providence (40% white), Newport (80% white), and along the corridors of the Blackstone River and the Narragansett Bay. Rhode Island is last in the United States in nonwhite homeownership, and racial inequalities persist in contemporary Rhode Island, especially in the areas of income, health care, and education.

In Rhode Island, segregation in public schools was outlawed in 1866. However, Rhode Island public schools remain among the most segregated in the United States, partly due to discriminatory housing and lending practices that began in



1935. These practices entrenched people in neighborhoods by race and income. Redlining was a federal bank and government sanctioned program of discriminatory neighborhood investment and family lending practices that restricted homeownership and neighborhood development among African Americans and other people of color, and it continues to have widespread negative consequences in Rhode Island today.

In the twenty-first century, Rhode Island has worked to avoid the plague of police violence directed against communities of color that has troubled other major U.S. cities. African American activist and State Representative Ray Rickman is well known in Rhode Island for increasing the visibility of black history in the state, while also working to improve conditions for black communities and relationships between communities and government. Rickman reminds us of the hurdles to good community–police relationships resulting from the fact that the Providence police force remains far less racially diverse than the city; at the last census, the police force was 76 percent white, and the city of Providence was only 40 percent white.

### **Racial Diversity and the Cultural Revival of Rhode Island**

Rhode Island has always been a magnet for immigrants, migrants, and refugees, despite the size of the state. Initially, this was because of the nineteenth-century textile industries for which Rhode Island, especially Central Falls, was an

#### ***George Downing and School Desegregation***

In 1857, George Downing (1819–1903), the successful owner of a hotel in Newport and a catering business in Providence, joined with other black activists to launch a campaign to secure equal access to education for black children in Rhode Island. Downing had discovered that while white society in Rhode Island would patronize his businesses, they would not interact with him socially, nor would they allow his children into their schools. Downing's group issued a public letter entitled "Will the General Assembly Put Down Caste Schools?" and presented a petition demanding school integration to the Rhode Island General Assembly. In 1858, Downing testified before the state legislature, declaring that separate black schools were of inferior quality and, moreover, "set us apart, make us a proscribed class, and thereby cause us to feel . . . as an inferior, a despised class to be looked down upon" (Cottrol 1982, 96). When the legislature took no action, Downing and his associations sent a further series of petitions to the legislature and to the Providence School Committee. The group also distributed a series of handbills calling upon the citizens of Rhode Island to demand school integration. In 1865, as the legislature continued to do nothing, Downing published an "Address to Negro Voters" calling upon them not to vote for the Republican candidate for governor but to instead support a separate Equal Rights ticket with two prominent abolitionists for governor and lieutenant governor. Although this tactic failed, the Newport School Committee, now under an abolitionist chairman, voted to abolish colored schools in the autumn of 1865. Bristol soon did the same, leaving Providence as the only segregated state school system. On March 7, 1866, the Rhode Island General Assembly abolished segregated schools, bringing to fruition George Downing's decade-long campaign.

epicenter. Successive waves of industrialization brought the jewelry, silversmith, and machine industries to Providence and the state. Rhode Island provided a solid opportunity for immigrants seeking work in these industries. These factories declined significantly after World War II and the state, especially the city of Providence, experienced a degeneration that was not turned around until the 1990s.

In the 1990s, spearheaded by then mayor “Buddy” Cianci, Providence underwent an economic, architectural, and cultural revival that sought to make use of its assets as the home of excellent institutions of higher education, including an Ivy League school—Brown University—plus the city’s and state’s long experience with industrialization’s creative and design industries. The successful cultural revitalization centered on arts and culture in the state, and the creation of an Arts Entertainment District in Providence. Rhode Island’s unique history of vibrant ethnic and racially diverse communities is at the heart of this continuing cultural renaissance.

The descendants of African slaves contributed greatly over the centuries to artistic communities in the state. Rhode Island has a significant legacy of famous African American artists, musicians, and actors—from the internationally acclaimed singer Matilda Sisseretta Jones (1869–1933), through award-winning actresses Barbara Meek (1934–2015) and Viola Davis (1965– ), who are counted among prominent Black Rhode Islanders. The Cape Verdean community is rightfully proud of the Rhode Island R&B musical group the Tavares Brothers, established in 1959, who were nominated for and won a 1979 Grammy Award for the *Saturday Night Fever* soundtrack album.

Rhode Island is currently the state with the third highest level of employment in the arts in the United States, and Providence is now called “The Creative Capital.” The state is home to more than 1,000 arts organizations, many of which are organized around cultural, ethnic, or racial communities. Spearheaded by the State Council on the Arts, Latino, Asian, Native American, and black communities in Rhode Island have organized public occasions for celebrations and collaborations statewide. In addition to being the home of the renowned Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), and the RISD Museum, the city and state boast stellar cultural organizations, like the community based AS 220, an open arts forum that has attracted large numbers of urban youth of color to its club, restaurant, galleries, artists’ residences, and community center since 1985.

## **NOTABLE FIGURES**

### **Princess Red Wing (1896–1987)**

Princess Red Wing was born Mary, on March 21, 1896, one of seven children of Walter and Hannah Glasko. Her mother, Hannah was Wampanoag, and her father Walter, Narragansett. Through her mother, Red Wing was related to King Philip, and throughout her life Red Wing carried the sign and title of King Phillip’s house, the Seven Crescents. Red Wing grew up on a farm in Harrisville with her brothers and sisters. She became a legendary, poetic storyteller in the Narragansett community and in Rhode Island’s colleges and schools, keeping alive the oral

traditions of her tribe and earning a reputation of prominent status among the tribes and non-Indian communities.

Red Wing was an historian, folklorist, and museum curator. From 1947 to 1970, she served as a member of the Speaker's Research Committee of the under secretariat of the United Nations, and Red Wing represented the Narragansett in a presentation to the United Nations. In 1934, Narragansett leaders sought Red Wing's help to draft the tribe's bylaws, which were mandated by the Indian Reorganization Act. She designed the tribe's seal, which is still used on official stationery. She was the cofounder and editor of the *Narragansett Dawn* tribal newspaper, which was published from 1935 to 1936. In 1958, Red Wing was the founder and curator of the only Native American museum in Rhode Island, the Tomquag Native Memorial Museum at Arcadia Village in Exeter.

Red Wing became Squaw Sachem of the New England Council of Chiefs in 1945, a position that allowed her to preside at sacred ceremonies, weddings, baptisms, christenings, and festivals of Thanksgiving. In addition to advocating for the indigenous people of New England, she was regarded as an international expert in Native American history and culture. During her remarkable life, Red Wing dined with Eleanor Roosevelt, had tea with Indian Ambassador to the UN Vijaya Pandit, and talked with Nehru and Khrushchev. In 1975, Red Wing was awarded an honorary doctorate of human affairs by the University of Rhode Island, and in 1978, she was inducted into the Rhode Island Heritage Hall of Fame. Red Wing was married twice, to Horace Peek until his death in 1927, and then to Daniel Congdon, of Mohegan descent, from 1936 until his death in 1959. Princess Red Wing died on December 2, 1987, at the age of 91, and was buried in Pascoag, Rhode Island.

### **Rice, Harriet Alleyne (1866–1958)**

Harriet Rice was born to George and Lucinda Rice in 1866 in Newport, Rhode Island. She was a top student at Newport's Rogers High School. After high school graduation, she became the first African American woman to graduate from Wellesley College in 1887. During her last year at Wellesley, Harriet sustained an injury from a fall that interrupted her studies and from which she only partially recovered. Harriet continued her education by earning a medical degree from the University of Michigan Medical School and the Women's Medical College of the New York Infirmary for Women and Children. Dr. Rice was following in the footsteps of an older brother who was also a physician. However, as one of very few female African American physicians, Dr. Rice faced many hurdles practicing medicine, an injustice that she fought against and lamented for the whole of her life.

For many years, Dr. Rice worked in Chicago at Hull House, alongside Jane Addams, the famous social worker and founder of the settlement house. At Hull House, Dr. Rice was able to live among a community of educated single women who were dedicated to providing social services, medical care, employment, and education to immigrants and the poor. However, Dr. Rice desired to start her own private practice as a physician, a goal that was nearly impossible for an African

American woman to successfully accomplish at the time. Eventually, Dr. Rice returned from Chicago to Rhode Island, where she lived with her sister, practiced medicine, and continued to associate with the reform minded women and activists in the state.

When World War I broke out in Europe in 1914, Dr. Rice decided to offer her services as a medical doctor to support the troops. The American Red Cross would not admit her as a doctor because of her race, so Dr. Rice applied to the French government. Dr. Rice was sent to Europe to serve as a doctor in French hospitals treating soldiers for three and a half years. In 1919, the French government awarded Dr. Rice the Médaille de la Reconnaissance Française, or Medal of French Gratitude, for her medical service to French troops. After the war, Rice returned to Newport, Rhode Island. She also worked for a time in New York at Columbia University Medical Center. Rice died in 1958 at the age of 92, and she was buried in Newport's African American burial ground to which she and her family members were restricted.

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# 41

## South Carolina

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Wendell G. Johnson

### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **1526**

Pre-colonial South Carolina is the site of the first slave revolt in North America as enslaved Africans defeat their Spanish owners

#### **1712**

The Territory of Carolina is divided into two parts: North Carolina and South Carolina, each with its own governor

#### **1715**

During the Yemasee Indian Wars, an Indian confederation led by the Yemasee almost exterminates the white settlers in the territory of present-day South Carolina

#### **1730–1739**

Approximately 20,000 enslaved Africans are brought to South Carolina

#### **1739**

The Stono Rebellion erupts in Stono under the leadership of a slave named Jemmy when approximately 50 slaves rebel and launch an unsuccessful attempt to escape to Spanish Florida; 40 blacks and 21 whites perish in the uprising

#### **1740**

South Carolina enacts a slave code

#### **1747**

A treaty with the Choctaw Indians establishes trade with the Native American tribe in return for not attacking French settlers

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### **1760–1761**

The treaty ending the Cherokee Wars opens land for white settlement; the Bounty Act offers a public land tax for 10 years in the Up Country

### **1788**

South Carolina enters the Union as the eighth state on May 23

### **1790**

Charleston's free black population petitions the state legislature for citizenship

### **1792**

All free African Americans, ages 16–50, are required to pay an annual per capita tax of \$2.00

### **1793**

Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin triggers the spread of cotton production and slavery across the South Carolina interior

### **1816**

Father Morris Brown begins the process of establishing the African Church of Charleston, South Carolina's first independent black church

### **1816**

Andrew Jackson attacks a Seminole fort in western Florida harboring nearly 400 escaped African slaves from South Carolina

### **1822**

Free African American Denmark Vesey attempts to organize a slave rebellion in Charleston; Vesey and his followers plan to attack Charleston, kill the white populace, and escape to Africa or the Caribbean; Vesey Conspiracy fails, and Vesey and 33 others are hanged

### **1828**

Vice President John C. Calhoun authors *The South Carolina Exposition*, establishing him as a prominent defender of states' rights and slavery

### **1832**

Under the leadership of John C. Calhoun, South Carolina attempts to set a constitutional precedent by nullifying future antislavery legislation

### **1860**

On December 20, South Carolina becomes the first state to secede from the Union

### **1865**

South Carolina ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery on November 13; slavery is abolished in South Carolina and throughout the Union on December 6 when the amendment takes effect

### **1865**

The South Carolina General Assembly passes the "Black Codes" to limit the social and political rights of former slaves

**1866**

On December 20, South Carolina rejects the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which grants citizenship to former slaves

**1868**

South Carolina ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment on July 9; the same day it is formally readmitted to the Union

**1868**

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) first appears in South Carolina; on October 16, African American state senator B.F. Randolph is murdered by radical whites

**1869**

On March 15, South Carolina ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting black men the right to vote

**1869**

Joseph Rainey becomes the first African American in South Carolina to become a U.S. representative

**1871**

The KKK carries out two raids on the Union County jail

**1890**

White supremacist Benjamin Tillman (1847–1918) is elected governor of South Carolina

**1895**

Ratified on December 4, the new state constitution effectively disenfranchises the entire African American population of South Carolina

**1919**

White sailors attack black citizens in Charleston, setting off a race riot

**1948**

Governor Strom Thurmond runs for president as the nominee of the segregationist “Dixiecrat Party”

**1951**

Governor J. F. Byrnes appoints a School Segregation Committee

**1962**

The Confederate battle flag is raised over the South Carolina statehouse in Columbia

**1963**

Rogers High School becomes the first integrated high school in South Carolina; Clemson and the University of South Carolina admit their first African American students

**1964**

The Civil Rights Act is passed by the U.S. Congress, legally ending segregation in South Carolina

**1968**

The Orangeburg Massacre (at the campus of South Carolina State University) results in three students killed and 27 others wounded; it is the worst example of campus violence in the history of South Carolina

**1970**

Angry whites overturn a school bus of black children en route to Lamar to integrate the public schools

**1998**

South Carolina repeals its anti-miscegenation laws

**2000**

South Carolina removes the last Confederate flag flying over a U.S. statehouse

**2007**

According to the U.S. Census, the Latino population of South Carolina grew over 460 percent between 1990 and 2007 (from roughly 30,000 to 168,000)

**2009**

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) moves three future basketball tournaments out of South Carolina due to concerns expressed by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) concerning state-sponsored displays of the Confederate flag.

**2010**

Nikki Haley is elected governor of South Carolina, becoming only the second Indian American and the first person of Sikh heritage to win a U.S. governorship

**2015**

North Charleston police officer Michael Slager (who is white) pulls Walter Scott (who is African American) over for a broken taillight; Slager then shoots Scott in the back when Scott tries to flee, killing him

**2015**

On June 17, Dylann Roof, a self-proclaimed white supremacist, entered Emanuel Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston and opened fire, killing nine African American worshippers, including South Carolina state senator Clementa C. Pinckney

**2016**

The trial of former North Charleston police officer Michael Slager for the murder of Walter Scott, a black motorist Slager pulled over for a routine traffic stop in 2015, ends in a hung jury

**2017**

Charleston's African American city council members call for the city's police department to be audited for racial bias

**2017**

South Carolina legislators make no attempts to remove Confederate monuments in the state despite increasing calls to do so and the dismantling of such monuments in other Southern states



## NARRATIVE

### Colonial Period

South Carolina was the only one of the original 13 colonies where slavery was present from the initial settlement and where slaves comprised a majority of the population. The state's racially tinged history continues to impact contemporary life. By the 1730s, 70–90 percent of the populace in areas of the Low Country were slaves. Many of the European settlers arrived from the Caribbean and brought their slaves with them. In the view of historians, South Carolina became a colony of a colony, supplying the Caribbean with cattle, agricultural products, and timber (Gallay and Finkelman 2006, 182). After rice was introduced into South Carolina's economy, planters began to import African slaves directly into the state.

Plantation life proved brutal, since many white slave owners believed that Africans would work only if compelled to do so by force. Many slaves voted with their feet and attempted to flee. Spanish Florida issued proclamations promising freedom to slaves, and hundreds of them escaped there in the 1730s. The harsh treatment of slaves served, in part, to incite the Stono Rebellion of 1739, which was perhaps the most significant slave uprising in British colonial America. On September 9, Sunday morning, a party of approximately 20 slaves met at the Stono River and attacked a store near Charleston, looting it of guns and powders, and decapitating the people inside. The party headed south and attracted another 60–100 slaves, looting plantations and killing their inhabitants. In the ensuing months, a militia hunted down and killed many of the rebels.

After the Stono rebellion, masters sought greater control over their slaves, and South Carolina enacted a slave code in 1740 entitled "An Act for the Ordering and Governing Negroes and Other Slaves in the Province." The prologue to the code states "the people commonly called Negroes, Indians, Mulattoes and Mustizoes have been deemed absolute slaves," are the property of individuals and are to be kept "in due subjection and obedience" (Duhaime 2012, 1). Slaves who left the plantation unaccompanied by a white person or without permission of their master would receive a whipping not to exceed 20 lashes. However, if any slave who assaulted or struck a white person, he or she could be lawfully killed. Slaves who committed a felony "shall be executed for example, to deter others" from committing the identical offense (Duhaime 2012, 3).

European settlers who arrived in the low country region of South Carolina in the seventeenth century attempted to replicate the West Indian system of plantation agriculture that was dependent on slave labor and so enslaved a significant number of American Indians. By the 1720s, 1,500 of the 17,000 American Indians in South Carolina were enslaved. Angered by commercial disputes, white encroachment on Native lands, and the slave trade, a party of Yamassee Indians attacked plantations near Port Royal on April 15, 1715, killing approximately 100 settlers. By June 1715, nearly 90 percent of white traders had been killed. White settlers abandoned their homesteads in force and sought safety near Charleston. White militias eventually subdued the Yamassee, but not before the Carolina colony was nearly destroyed. One-half of the arable land was deserted; 6 percent of the white population had been killed. White settlers also battled the Cherokee

Indians. As a result of this conflict, the Cherokees lost much of their hunting grounds and saw the number of their warriors dwindle from 6,000 to 2,300.

### **The American Revolution and Early Nineteenth Century**

The American Revolution restricted the growth of slavery in South Carolina. On the eve of the American Revolution, the slave population in South Carolina numbered over 81,000 (Klein 1990, 20). To many slaveholders in South Carolina, the national interest lay in preventing another slave revolt. Faced with the choice of arming their slaves to fight the British or letting Charleston be sacked, slave owners opted for defeat at the hands of the British rather than risk a slave uprising. Thousands of slaves ran away during the war, and many others were impressed by the British Army, who returned many of them into slavery in the West Indies or South America. After the war, John Rutledge, a delegate to the Constitutional Convention (1787), declared that regulation of the slave trade must be left to the state or the Southern states would not vote for ratification. Two other delegates from the state, Charles Pinckney and Pierce Butler, were instrumental in placing the fugitive slave clause into the U.S. Constitution. Although many of the framers of the Constitution were opposed to slavery, they recognized that concession on the issue was necessary to gain support for ratification.

After the Revolution, South Carolina planters began to experiment with various strains of cotton. The increase in cotton production led to a labor shortage in South Carolina, which was solved by increasing the slave population. The number of slaves in the state grew from 107,000 in 1790, to 196,000 in 1810, to a quarter of a million by 1820, and 300,000 in 1830 (Gallay and Finkelman 2006, 188). A standard measure of a person's wealth was the number of slaves owned.

#### ***Slave Badges in Charleston, South Carolina***

In Charleston, South Carolina, slave owners were permitted to hire out their slaves. The slave was to pay the owner a percentage of his or her earnings and was permitted to keep the rest. The slave, however, was required to wear a badge at all times, under threat of jail time and a fine. A city ordinance of 1830 stated:

All negroes or slaves required by law to have badges, shall wear them about their persons and be ready to produce them when commanded thereto. And it shall be lawful for any person or persons to command any negro or other slave, applying for hire or working out . . . to produce his or her badge, and immediately to carry to the Work-House any one either having no badge or refusing to produce it. (Greene, Hutchins, and Hutchins 2004, 46)

The slave was to be confined in the Work-House until such time as the owner paid a \$2.00 fine. If the owner did not pay the fine within three days, the slave received five lashes and was discharged.

The prices charged for the badges varied according to the labor provided by the slave. Tradesmen were charged \$5, porters \$4, and fishermen \$2. Badges for house servants and washerwomen over the age of 14 were \$2. The cost for those under the age of 14 was \$1. The city of Charleston periodically revisited these charges and raised them accordingly to augment the civic treasury.

Denmark Vesey, a former slave who won and purchased his freedom with his lottery winnings, hatched what would have been the largest slave revolt in American history. In 1822, Vesey and his followers intended to kill slaveholders in Charleston, free the slaves, and flee to the black republic of Haiti to seek refuge. An informer revealed the plot at the last minute, and the revolt was averted. Vesey and over 30 of his co-conspirators were tried, convicted, and hanged. In the aftermath of the trial, local officials decided that the African Methodist Episcopal church in Charleston was complicit in the plot and ordered that the congregation be disbanded. No independent black church was established in Charleston until after the Civil War. Further, the state legislature passed the Seaman's Act of 1822, which required that free black sailors docking in Charleston be imprisoned while their ships remained in port. The Seaman's Act was declared unconstitutional in federal court, further exacerbating the debate over states' rights.

Shortly after the Vesey conspiracy, Vice President John C. Calhoun authored *The South Carolina Exposition*, setting off the nullification controversy. The immediate cause of the nullification controversy was a federal tariff on imported goods, strongly opposed by Southern states who feared retaliatory tariffs on their cotton and other agricultural products. Calhoun invoked the power and authority of the state government to nullify actions of the federal government to oppose the tariff and protect the rights of slaveholders in the South against abolitionist sentiment in the North. He supported the annexation of Texas as a means of spreading slavery westward. He opposed the Wilmot Proviso, which banned slavery in territory obtained by the United States in its war with Mexico (1846–1848) and the admission of California to the Union as a free state.

### **The Civil War and Reconstruction**

South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union in 1860. In its declaration of secession, dated December 24, 1860, South Carolina used the language of states' rights to defend slavery. It contended that the various states recognized the institution of slavery when they ratified the U.S. Constitution. The non-slave states subverted the Constitution by granting citizenship to slaves, and these states “have denounced as sinful the institution of Slavery” (Commager and Cantor 1988, 374) and fostered the establishment of abolitionist societies. The non-slave states also encouraged and assisted thousands of slaves to escape the conditions of lawful servitude. The declaration of secession also pointed out that the newly elected president of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, was hostile to slavery and would seek its eradication. The non-slave states deliberately violated the constitutional compact regarding slavery, and hence, South Carolina declared that “the Union heretofore existing between this State and the other States of North America is dissolved” (Commager and Cantor 1988, 374). Able-bodied slaves were conscripted by the Confederate States of America (CSA) and the government paid the slave owner \$11 per month for the use of the slave's owner—the same amount paid to a private in the army.

The state constitution of 1865 abolished slavery, but not the prevailing attitudes of white citizens toward former slaves. The constitution included “Black Codes” (see sidebar), which delineated South Carolina's plan for reconstruction. General

Daniel E. Sickles, the federal commander of the Department of South Carolina, declared the Black Codes invalid. The next year (1866), Congress passed the Fourteenth Amendment, guaranteeing all Americans, including freed slaves, equal protection under the law. In 1867, Congress passed the first and second Reconstruction Acts, which was met with shock and incredulity by the white citizens of the state. White citizens of South Carolina reacted as if were 1856 and not 1866 (Edgar 1999, 385).

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) first appeared in South Carolina in 1868 in an effort to intimidate the newly enfranchised black majority (Simkins 1927, 608). The organization aims for the destruction of the Radical Republican party and to protect white people from African Americans. The Klan originally took root in the hill counties of the state among poor, uneducated white people. In the view of many, the Klan represented the desire of economically depressed white people to remove black people as voters and economic competition.

Violent activities were carried out by the Klan in Spartanburg County, where masked men terrorized the African American population—many of whom slept in the woods for several months during the winter of 1870–1871 to escape abuse. Elsewhere, the Klan carried out two raids on the Union County Jail on January 4 and 21, 1871, executing eight black inmates in the process. Klan activities increased in the period leading up to the 1870 election and a federal officer was sent to the state to investigate its activities. In York County, with a white voting population of 2,300, the officer estimated KKK membership at 1,800 (Simkins 1927, 626).

The fundamental purpose of Klan activities in South Carolina was to force emancipated African Americans into the political impotence and social subordination they experienced prior to Reconstruction. Klan activities were especially violent in the rural upper counties where the white population was dependent

### ***Black Codes in South Carolina***

The loss of the Civil War upset the pillars of Southern society. Emancipation destroyed the previous economic relationship between black slaves and white owners and deprived planters of a source of labor. In response, many Southern states enacted legislation known as the “Black Codes.” The intent of these codes was to prevent emancipated slaves from exercising their full rights as citizens and to reimpose the social codes of bondage. South Carolina’s Black Codes stated, in part, that “persons of color . . . are not entitled to social and political equality with white persons” (Edgar 1999, 383). African Americans were prohibited from working in nonagricultural jobs unless they paid a special tax (ranging from \$10 to \$1,000). The state’s Black Codes also included harsh penalties for criminal acts, for example, stealing a hog could entail a fine of \$1,000 and lead to 10 years in prison. Benjamin Franklin Perry (1805–1886), who was appointed provisional governor of South Carolina in 1865 by President Andrew Johnson, defended the Black Codes: “The African, has been in all ages, a savage or a slave. God created him inferior to the white man in form, color, and intellect, and no legislation or culture can make him his equal. . . . His hair, his form and features will not compete with the caucasian race, and it is in vain to think of elevating him to the dignity of the white man. God created differences between the two races, and nothing can make him equal” (*Charleston Daily Courier*, October 1, 1866).

upon manual labor, bringing them into economic competition with African Americans. As a result of this violence, the federal government cracked down on Klan activities and began arresting Klansmen. The first Klan trials were held November–December 1871. Five Klan members were convicted and 50 other pleaded guilty. The sentences ranged from three months to five years and included nominal fines.

### **Tillmanism**

The period after Reconstruction can be referred to as the Tillman era of South Carolina's history. Benjamin Ryan Tillman's (1847–1918) family owned around one hundred slaves. By 1881, Tillman owned 2,200 acres of farmland and employed 30 men in agricultural work. At this time, South Carolina was a majority black state: its 782,000 black citizens constituted over 58 percent of the state's citizenry (Newby 1973, 27). Tillman entered the race for governor in 1890 and ran a populist campaign seeking to unite a fractured white minority that felt threatened by the black majority in the state. He won the election handily, carrying 32 of the state's 34 counties (losing only Beaufort and Berkeley counties, which had large numbers of black voters), and announced, "The whites have absolute control of the state government and intend to preserve it at all costs" (Edgar 1999, 438). He interpreted his victory as a "triumph of democracy and white supremacy over mongrelism and anarchy, of civilization over barbarism" (Edgar 1999 438).

Tillman called a constitutional convention in 1894, the primary goal of which was the disenfranchisement of black voters. The constitution of 1895 laid the groundwork for Jim Crow in the state. A black person in South Carolina was defined as anyone having one-eighth or more black blood. The constitution mandated separate schools for black and white children (Article XI, Sec. 7), and the state's school superintendents made no effort to provide equal funding for the segregated schools. Representative Thomas E. Miller introduced a bill in the legislature to establish a separate, state-supported black school in Orangeburg: the Colored Normal, Industrial, Agricultural and Mechanical College, known today as South Carolina State University. After *Plessy v. Ferguson* announced the doctrine of "separate but equal," white South Carolinians extended the concept to railroad coaches (1898), trolleys (1909), and textile mills (1915). Soon "White Only" and "Colored Only" signs sprouted up across the state, appearing in stairways, waiting rooms, and in stairways.

### **The Twentieth Century**

The attitudes expressed by Benjamin Tillman permeated early twentieth-century South Carolina. Black residents of the state were of little significance politically and were recognized as members of society only insofar as they were willing to accept a subordinate role. Governor Cole Blaise went so far as to condone lynching, calling it "necessary and good" (Edgar 1999, 428). After World War I, black veterans returned to a segregated state where their vote was suppressed.

In May 1919, white sailors attacked black citizens in Charleston, resulting in a race riot that left three blacks dead. In response, a group of white citizens founded the South Carolina Constructive League to promote harmonious relations between races but was predicated upon the dictum that the “state shall be dominated by its white citizens” (Edgar 1999, 481).

James Strom Thurmond, a devotee of white supremacy and racial segregation, was elected governor of South Carolina in 1946. He viewed civil rights legislation as an infringement on states’ rights and opposed integration in general. Thurmond was a lifelong Democrat. However, he split with President Truman over the issue of civil rights and mounted a third-party campaign for the presidency in 1948. Thurmond’s party, the “Dixiecrats,” wanted to preserve the rights of states to maintain segregated societies. Thurmond carried four states, including South Carolina. He was appointed to the U.S. Senate in 1951, where he remained until 2002.

The initial response to *Brown v. Board of Education* in South Carolina was to ignore the decision, which state officials deemed the product of an unholy alliance between the Supreme Court and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). In their view, the segregated schools in the state were equal and they contended that black leaders were satisfied with “their” schools. Three years previously, Governor J. F. Byrnes had appointed a School Segregation Committee, which was tasked with investigating avenues for maintaining segregated schools. After the *Brown* decision, the committee responded that they would rather close the schools than integrate them. Public higher education in the state became integrated in 1963, when Harvey Gantt enrolled at Clemson College and Henrie Monteith Treadwell, Robert Anderson, and James Solomon were admitted to the University of South Carolina.

After the passage of the Voting Rights Act (1965), federal marshals descended upon South Carolina to oversee voter registration. The number of black voters in the state increased from 58,000 in 1958 to 220,000 by 1970. That year, Herbert Fielding, James L. Felder, and I.S. Leevy Johnson became the first black citizens of South Carolina to serve in the General Assembly since the 1890s (Edgar 1999, 541). Dismantling South Carolina’s dual school system, one for white students and the other for black students, did not proceed so seamlessly. In 1969–1970, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals ordered the school districts of Greenville and Darlington counties to integrate their respective student bodies. The Greenville district complied with the court order. In Darlington, however, 3,000 white students boycotted the integrated schools, and in March, a mob overturned a school bus. Several communities experienced violence and school closings.

Orangeburg, South Carolina was a racially polarized city. It was the home of South Carolina State University and Claflin College, historically black institutions of higher education, and the hotbed of several conservative white organizations, including the White Citizens Council, KKK, and John Birch Society. Orangeburg’s only bowling alley, the All-Star Bowling Lanes, was located two blocks from the campus of South Carolina state. In defiance of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the bowling alley remained a whites-only establishment. Black citizens who wanted to bowl had to travel to 30 miles to Columbia. They requested that the bowling alley be opened to them one or two evenings per week. The owner,

Harry L. Fords, refused to desegregate his business, and it became a hated symbol of discrimination in the town. In February 1968, All-Star Bowling Lanes became the scene of repeated demonstrations by college students who demanded that the business open its doors to black patrons.

On the evening of February 8, students started a bonfire on the campus of South Carolina State University. Highway patrolmen from six districts around the state had been brought to Orangeburg to assist local authorities with crowd control. During the course of the evening, according to reports, some students threw rocks, sticks, and bricks into the street. The police, who later claimed that they felt threatened, fired into the crowd of 200 protestors, killing Samuel Hammond, Henry Smith, and Delano Middleton. The federal government brought charges against nine law enforcement officers, all of whom were acquitted.

### **South Carolina Today**

Many Southern states became embroiled in controversies regarding the display of the Confederate flag in their state capitols. The Confederate battle flag was first raised over the statehouse in Columbia, South Carolina, in 1962 as part of the centennial celebration of the Civil War. At the time, it was widely assumed that the flag would come down at the close of the commemoration in 1965. Such was not the case, and within a decade, the Confederate battle flag became a political issue. The NAACP Southwest Regional Conference passed a resolution opposing the official use of the flag in 1987. In the eyes of the NAACP, the flag was a symbol of white supremacy. The South Carolina Senate responded with a statement contending that the flag was not a racist symbol, but rather was a testimony to the state's heritage and demonstrated the courage and valor of times past. The NAACP continued to protest and threatened a boycott of the state's tourism industry (for a period of time, the NCAA refused to hold tournament games in the state). As far as they were concerned, the presence of the Confederate battle flag over the capitol represented official approval of the state's Confederate past. After a series of protests on both sides (those defending the presence of the flag and those insisting on its removal), a compromise was reached in the year 2000: the flag was removed from the capitol and transferred to a flagpole near the statehouse.

One of the most tragic incidents in the state's history occurred on the evening of June 17, 2015. Dylann Roof (born 1994) entered the evening prayer service at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church and opened fire, killing nine African American worshippers, including State Senator Clementa C. Pinckney. Roof was arrested the next day and confessed to the shooting, claiming he hoped to ignite a race war. Roof pleaded guilty to nine state charges of murder. He was convicted of 33 federal hate crime and murder charges and was sentenced to death. Prior to the shooting, Roof had posed with emblems of white supremacy and the Confederate battle flag. Following the deadly episode, the American and South Carolina flags were lowered to half-mast. The Confederate flag, however, remained atop its flagpole outside the statehouse. The continued presence of the flag ignited a furor in the state, and the South Carolina General Assembly voted to remove the

flag from the grounds of the state capitol. Roof is presently on death row at Terre Haute Federal Prison in Indiana.

Earlier that year, Michael Slager, a white officer on the North Charleston police force, stopped Walter Scott, an African American, for a broken taillight on April 4, 2015. Scot attempted to flee, and Slager gave chase. A bystander recorded the incident on his cell phone. Slager fired eight times, striking Scott five times in the back. Slager was indicted on a state charge of murder and on federal charges of violating Scott's civil rights and obstruction of justice. His murder trial resulted in a hung jury. Slager pleaded guilty to a federal charge of deprivation of rights under the color of law. His plea agreement contained the stipulation that the court apply the sentencing guidelines for second degree murder, which carried a maximum prison term of 25 years. In return for his guilty plea to the federal charge, South Carolina dropped the state murder charges against him.

### **Future Challenges**

Many South Carolinians believed that race relations in the state would improve once segregation had ended. Such was not the case, however, and South Carolina remains a racially polarized state. According to a recent Winthrop University poll, a majority of blacks (82%) and whites (61%) say that race relations in the state are poor (Self 2016). In the words of Charles Joyner, the eminent scholar on American slavery, "some say there has been no progress, but they have forgotten where we started. Some would stop here, for they cannot see how far we still have to go" (quoted in Edgar 1998, 585). The people of South Carolina face many challenges as they move forward in creating a more racially just society.

## **NOTABLE FIGURES**

### **Calhoun, John C. (1782–1850)**

John Caldwell Calhoun of South Carolina was one of the South's most ardent defenders of slavery and states' rights. He developed a position that the Southern states relied upon for a quarter of a century in their defense of slavery. Calhoun was born in the Abbeville District of South Carolina in 1782. He attended Yale University and studied law under Tapping Reeve in Litchfield, Connecticut, and Henry DeSaussure in Charleston, South Carolina. He married Florid Bouneau in 1811, and the couple had 11 children (three of whom died in infancy).

Calhoun was elected to the South Carolina legislature in 1808. While in office, he helped revise the representation of the legislature so that control of the lower house (General Assembly) passed to the upland districts of the state, while the Senate took control of the lowlands. In 1810, he was elected to the U.S. Congress, where he served as acting chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. President James Monroe appointed Calhoun secretary of war in 1817. As secretary, he established the offices of surgeon general and quartermaster general. Calhoun served two terms as vice president of the United States, first under John Quincy Adams (1825–1829) and then under Andrew Jackson (1829–1832).



During his time as vice president under Jackson, Calhoun became embroiled in the nullification controversy. The theory of nullification holds that an individual state can suspend (or nullify) a federal law within its territory. The nullification controversy arose in 1828, when Congress, under the general welfare clause of the Constitution, levied a high tariff on imported goods. Southerners feared that European nations would respond with a tariff on cotton and other agricultural exports. If Congress could use the general welfare clause to levy a tariff, the reasoning went, it could use the same stratagem to outlaw slavery. In response, Calhoun issued his “South Carolina Exposition and Protest,” declaring that when Congress passed a law against the will of the people of any state that exceeds the power granted it by the Constitution, the people of the state could hold a convention and declare that act of Congress null. Spurred on by Calhoun’s rhetoric, the South Carolina legislature did exactly that in November 1832, nullifying the tariff effective on February 1, 1833. South Carolina’s Ordinance of Nullification warned that the state would proceed to form a separate government if the administration persisted in collecting the tariff. The federal government threatened military intervention, and the ordinance was subsequently rescinded the next month. It was after the nullification controversy that Calhoun became a vociferous advocate for the rights of the Southern states. To defuse the tense situation surrounding the nullification controversy, Calhoun resigned the office of vice president on December 28, 1832, and was subsequently elected to the U.S. Senate. He resigned his Senate seat in 1843 to serve briefly as President John Tyler’s secretary of state. In 1845, he returned to the Senate, where he remained the rest of his life.

Calhoun worked assiduously to preserve the prerogatives of slave states during his time in public service. He strongly supported the annexation of Texas and negotiated an annexation treaty in 1844. However, his endorsement of annexation as a means of spreading slavery westward led to its rejection in the Senate. He opposed the Wilmot Proviso, which proposed banning slavery in the territory obtained by the United States in its war with Mexico (1846–1848). Calhoun also resisted the admission of California to the Union as a free state in 1849, fearing that it would upset the delicate balance between free and slave states. The Oregon territorial bill of 1848 drew Calhoun’s ire because it contained an amendment prohibiting slavery. He felt that this was wrong because it rested on the “false and dangerous assumption” that “all men are born free and equal” (Bartlett 1993, 360).

Calhoun always believed that racial differences justified slavery, and he assumed that the concepts of liberty and equality applied only to white people (Bartlett 1993). He took issue with the dissemination of abolitionist literature and sought to prohibit the post office from delivering it through the mail, including publications such as the *Liberator*, *Antislavery Record*, and *Emancipation*. Calhoun kept 70 or 80 slaves on his plantation in Fort Hill, South Carolina. The slave quarters were built of stone and joined together like barracks, with gardens attached. He claimed that slaves in the United States were better off than free blacks. In support of this argument, he cited statistics from the 1840 census, which demonstrated that 1 out of every 96 black people in the free states was blind, deaf, mute, or insane, while the ratio in slave states was 1 out of 672 (Bartlett 1993, 311).

Calhoun referred to slavery as a “Positive Good” in remarks made to the U.S. Senate on February 6, 1837. Slavery is not evil, he said, but rather served to exempt Southern society from the dangers resulting from the conflict between labor and capital. He considered the lot of African American slaves to be superior to the condition of European workers: “I may say with truth that in few countries has so much been left to the laborer’s share and so little expected from him, or where more kind attention is paid him when he is sick or old.” In Calhoun’s view, slavery provided the foundation for free and stable political institutions. He died of tuberculosis in Washington, D.C., on March 31, 1850.

### **Thurmond, James Strom (1902–2003)**

Strom Thurmond, former governor of South Carolina and U.S. senator, was a vocal critic of school desegregation and civil rights legislation. As a U.S. senator, Thurmond led the fight against school desegregation after the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. Thurmond attended Clemson University, subsequently read law with his father, and was admitted to the South Carolina bar in 1930. Prior to World War II, he was elected to the South Carolina State Senate and as a judge in the Eleventh Circuit Court. He served in the 82nd Airborne Division during World War II.

In 1946, Thurmond was elected as the Democratic governor of South Carolina. As governor, he favored a bill to exempt property owned by the KKK from taxation. He wanted to ensure that state funds benefitted unemployed white people, so he sponsored a continuing resolution that only white people could be hired as attaches and porters in state buildings. On February 17, 1947, 35 white men kidnapped a black prisoner named Willie Earle, whom they lynched. Unlike one of his predecessors, Governor Coleman Blease, who was in office from 1911 to 1915, Governor Thurmond denounced lynching and vigorously pursued prosecution. However, a jury of 12 white men acquitted the defendants.

Race was an increasingly contentious issue between white Southerners and the leaders of the Democratic Party in the 1940s. In 1948, President Harry Truman urged congress to implement a wide range of civil rights issues. Governor Thurmond considered this an assault on states’ rights and a betrayal of white Southerners. He denounced Truman’s proposals, claiming that segregation was necessary to maintain peace and order and protect racial purity. In response, Southern politicians formed a states’ rights alternative, dubbed the Dixiecrats, to Truman, the establishment Democrat candidate for president. The Dixiecrats nominated Thurmond in Houston on August 11, 1948.

In his acceptance speech, delivered in Birmingham, Alabama, Thurmond portrayed his campaign as a fight for states’ rights. He claimed that whatever economic and social progress African Americans had achieved was due to the kindness of Southern white people. He announced that there were not enough troops in the U.S. Army to break down segregation and admit black people to theaters, swimming pools, and churches. The *Charleston News and Courier* defended Thurmond’s candidacy, calling it “the white man’s party” (Crespino 2012, 73).

The realistic goal of Thurmond and the Dixiecrats was to win enough votes to swing the Electoral College and move the election into the House of Representatives,

where they sought to trade their support for an elimination of civil rights legislation. Thurmond won a scant 2.4 percent of the popular vote, but he carried the states of South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana.

Thurmond was appointed to the U.S. Senate in 1954 to fill the unexpired term of Charles E. Daniel, who had resigned. One of the first bills Thurmond introduced as a senator was legislation prohibiting federal courts from having jurisdiction over cases relating to public schools (Crespino 2012, 102–26). Thurmond was a harsh critic of the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), which struck down school segregation. In response to the *Brown* decision, Thurmond and other opponents of school desegregation issued a "Declaration of Constitutional Principles," also known as "the Southern Manifesto." The authors viewed the *Brown* decision as a naked power grab by the Supreme Court, and they recited legal precedents in favor of school segregation. They contended that integrating Southern schools would destroy the amicable relations between black and white people in the South.

Thurmond won a Senate seat in 1954 on the basis of a write-in campaign and was reelected in 1960, 1966, 1972, 1978, 1984, 1990, and 1996. In 1957, he mounted a one-man filibuster against the voting rights act, managing to hold the floor for over 24 hours (the longest filibuster ever conducted by a single senator). Thurmond participated in another filibuster in 1964, joining many other Southern senators in a 57-day campaign against the Civil Rights Act. That same year, he switched his party affiliation to the Republican Party and supported the presidential campaign of Barry Goldwater against Lyndon Johnson, the Democratic incumbent.

During his time in the Senate, Thurmond served as president pro tempore, was the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee during the hearings of Clarence Thomas's nomination to the Supreme Court in 1991, and was also a member of the Committee on Armed Forces. In the eyes of many, Thurmond moderated his views on race during the course of his time in the Senate. Eventually, he supported extensions of voting rights legislation and the designation of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday as a national holiday.

When Thurmond died on June 26, 2003, he was the only sitting member of either house of Congress to reach the age of 100. Six months after Thurmond's death, Essie Mae Washington-Williams (1925–2013) revealed that Thurmond was her father. Her mother was Carrie Butler, a 16-year-old African American woman who worked in the Thurmond household when Washington-Williams was born. Thurmond never publicly acknowledged his paternity, but paid his daughter's tuition to South Carolina State College. Strom Thurmond is interred in the Willowbrook Cemetery in Edgefield.

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## South Dakota

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Frances Kay Holmes

### CHRONOLOGY

#### 11000 BCE

The first Lakota ancestors are estimated to have come to the territory of present-day South Dakota

#### 1600

*Oceti Sakowin*, a confederacy of seven nations associated through tribal lineage and language (Lakota, Dakota, Nakota) exists

#### 1789

Indian Affairs are placed within the U.S. War Department

#### 1803

United States purchases the Louisiana Territory from France; the purchase includes present-day South Dakota

#### 1804

The Lewis and Clark expedition begins exploration of the Louisiana Purchase; the expedition includes an African American, William Clark's slave York, who becomes the first documented African American to set foot on the soil of South Dakota

#### 1812

The South Dakota region becomes part of the Missouri Territory

#### 1823

Arikara Indians attack a fur-trading party led by General Ashley, resulting in the death and wounding of 23 members of the party; the incident leads to the first American military campaign against Indians in South Dakota

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### **1825**

The United States and the Lakota sign treaties; in the agreements, the United States claims the right to govern trade, to establish reservation boundaries, and to protect the Lakota from white encroachment

### **1842**

The Overland Trail is created cutting through Lakota land; travel on the Trail increases with the purchase of Oregon in 1846 and the discovery of gold in California in 1848

### **1851**

The Fort Laramie Treaty is signed; the agreement defines boundaries of the tribes, allows negotiation for roads, compensates Native nations for anticipated loss of game, and recognizes Sioux ownership of 60 million acres

### **1854**

The Battle of Ten Dollar Cow, which erupted when the Sioux waiting outside Fort Laramie for their annuities butchered a cow owned by Mormon settlers, ends in the deaths of 27 people

### **1855**

General Harney destroys a Lakota camp at Ash Hollow in retaliation for the Battle of Ten Dollar Cow

### **1858**

The Yankton Sioux sign a treaty that cedes much of eastern South Dakota to the United States and accelerates white settlement of the region

### **1860**

Relying on the 1857 Dred Scott decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, white settlers in the Dakota Territory confiscate gold from black miners

### **1861**

The territorial legislature bars African Americans from voting

### **1862**

William Jayne, governor of the Dakota Territory, recommends in his first message to the legislature that slavery be prohibited in the territory

### **1866**

John Bozeman establishes the Bozeman Trail through Sioux, Arapaho, and Cheyenne lands to the goldfields in Montana; as use of the trail increases, new forts are constructed, and the Bozeman Trail War erupts between the Natives and the United States

### **1868**

The Treaty of Fort Laramie ends the Bozeman Trail War; the agreement establishes the Sioux reservation and the requirement for three-quarters of Lakota adult males to approve treaty changes and leads to the abandonment of forts and the removal of whites from reservation lands

**1868**

The territorial legislature repeals its 1861 ban on voting by African Americans

**1870**

The U.S. Census counts 94 African Americans in the Dakota Territory out of a total population of under 13,000; most arrived during the gold rush or as soldiers

**1872**

The Northern Pacific Railroad lays track across Sioux reservations, thus violating the Treaty of Fort Laramie

**1874**

General George Custer surveys the sacred Black Hills for gold, thus violating the Treaty of Fort Laramie

**1875**

Lakota leaders refuse to sign away the sacred Black Hills for prospecting and settlement

**1876**

The Battle of Little Bighorn is fought in southeastern Montana, resulting in the destruction of part of General Custer's forces by several groups of Indians including the Sioux and Cheyenne

**1876**

The government terminates subsistence payments to the Indian, leaving the Lakota starving

**1877**

Congress passes the Black Hills Act, which allows the United States to take over 20 million acres from the Indians, including the Black Hills; Crazy Horse, who had been a leader of the Indian forces at the Battle of Little Bighorn, is killed

**1878**

Congress authorizes Indian police forces to be manned by Native peoples

**1881**

Black soldiers of the 25th Infantry stationed at Fort Randall guard Sitting Bull and the 160 Hunkpapas who were led back from Saskatchewan to face imprisonment

**1883**

The federal government outlaws the Native American Sun Dance

**1885**

The Allen African Methodist Episcopal Church is built in Yankton

**1885**

The Major Crimes Act gives the federal government jurisdiction over reservations for specific major crimes

**1889**

The Sioux version of the Dawes Act results in six separate reservations and reduces Sioux land by 11 million acres

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**1889**

South Dakota enters the Union as the 40th state on November 2

**1890**

Lakota children are sent to boarding schools; Sitting Bull is killed by Indian police

**1890**

On December 29, the Wounded Knee Massacre occurs near Wounded Knee Creek when troops of the 7th Cavalry open fire on a group of captive Natives after a scuffle breaks out during an attempt by the troops to disarm the Natives; 300 old men, women, and children are killed

**1903**

In *Lonewolf v. Hitchcock*, the U.S. Supreme Court finds that the United States has unilateral power across Native reservations with the authority to break treaties

**1904**

The Gregory County Act reduces the Rosebud reservation by 385,920 acres

**1904**

Pioneering black novelist and filmmaker Oscar Micheaux moves from Chicago to homestead land in South Dakota

**1907**

The Tripp County Act reduces Rosebud reservation by another 640,000 acres

**1917**

Oscar Micheaux publishes his novel *The Homesteader*, which fictionalizes his experience as a black homesteader in South Dakota and later becomes the first all-black film

**1920**

The Lakota file the Black Hills Claims case, seeking to establish their ownership of the Black Hills

**1920**

The South Dakota chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is organized in Yankton and Sioux Falls

**1920**

According to the U.S. Census, South Dakota has 832 black residents out of a total population of more than 636,000 people; Yankton has the largest black community with 102 people

**1927**

Construction of Mount Rushmore in the sacred Black Hills begins

**1930**

According to the U.S. Census, South Dakota has 646 black residents, though only 308 are employed in this Depression year, with 118 working as domestics



**1934**

The Indian Reorganization Act requires Natives to establish governments modeled after the U.S. government

**1942**

The Black Hills Claim is dismissed; the court rules it a moral claim, not a monetary one

**1942**

The first 200 African Americans assigned to the Sioux Falls Army Air Corp Technical Training Command arrive

**1944**

The Flood Control Act of 1944 creates the Pick-Sloan Missouri River Basin Project to help the Standing Rock and Cheyenne River reservations, which had lost hundreds of thousands of acres to flooding, along with timber, wildlife, and traditional homelands

**1946**

Under the Indian Claims Commission (ICC) Act, the U.S. government can be sued on both moral and financial grounds

**1950**

The Rapid City Air Base opens its African American Squadron C to persons of all races two years after President Harry Truman issues Executive Order 9981 integrating the armed services

**1950**

The Lakota Black Hills ownership claim is refiled in court

**1953**

The passage of Public Law (PL) 280 gives states civil/criminal jurisdiction on reservations

**1964**

On January 23, the South Dakota legislature ratifies the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing the poll tax

**1968**

Cleveland Abbott, a four-sport letter winner at South Dakota State University, becomes the first African American inducted into the university's Athletic Hall of Fame

**1972**

Ted Blakey, an African American business owner in Yankton, serves as a delegate to the 1972 Republican National Convention

**1973**

In what is known as Wounded Knee II, the American Indian Movement (AIM) takes over a church at Wounded Knee, beginning a 67-day standoff with the government

## **804 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

**1974**

The Black Hills Claim is resubmitted

**1975**

Congress passes the Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act; Anna Mae Pictou of AIM is shot dead

**1977**

After a shootout at Jumping Bull compound at Pine Ridge, AIM activist Leonard Peltier is convicted of killing two Federal Bureau of Investigation agents

**1978**

The U.S. Supreme Court decides in *Oliphant v. Suquamish* that tribes do not have criminal jurisdiction over non-Indians on reservations

**1978**

Congress passes the Indian Child Welfare Act

**1980**

In an effort to settle the Lakota's Black Hills claim, the court awards the Lakota \$122.5 million, but the tribe rejects the offer, stating that the Black Hills "are not for sale" and demanding that the Black Hills be returned to the Lakota; this award has now grown to over \$1.3 billion, and efforts are still under way to reach a settlement that includes return of the land

**1981**

President Reagan proposes huge funding cutbacks in Indian social programs

**1990**

South Dakota establishes Martin Luther King Day as an official state holiday

**1990**

The U.S. Census counts 3,258 African American residents of the state, with a quarter of that number residing at Ellsworth Air Force Base near Rapid City

**1996**

Governor William Janklow opens his first boot camp, Custer Youth Correctional Center for boys; Native youth are often sent to this facility

**1997**

Congress passes the South Dakota Terrestrial Wildlife Mitigation (Title VI) Act; the act transfers 200,000 acres of tribal lands along Missouri River held by the Army Corp of Engineers to the state

**1998**

Kenny Anderson, a Sioux Falls businessman is elected to the Sioux Falls city council, becoming the first African American to hold such an office in the state

**2002**

Governor William Janklow elected to Congress; schools in Winner railroad students into signing affidavits of misconduct to fill William Janklow's boot camps

**2003**

Janklow drives through a stop sign, kills a motorcyclist, and resigns from Congress

**2004**

In *Boneshirt v. Hazeltine*, federal district court rules that South Dakota violated the 1965 Federal Voting Rights Act when it approved redistricting plan diluting Native votes over a 30-year period

**2005**

The reauthorization of the Violence against Women Act is passed; the act provides additional funding to Native law enforcement agencies

**2006**

The U.S. Census counts 5,262 African American residents of South Dakota

**2006**

Congress passes the Native American Languages Preservation Act; Cecilia Fire Thunder, the Oglala president, is impeached

**2009**

President Barack Obama hosts the Tribal Nations Conference at the Department of the Interior in Washington, D.C.

**2010**

Congress passes the Tribal Law and Order Act, which provides more jurisdiction for tribal police to arrest and prosecute non-Natives on reservation land

**2010**

The United States endorses the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

**2011**

The South Dakota legislature considers a bill making it a state crime to hire undocumented immigrants in the state; the measure is not passed

**2012**

The Oglala Nation sues beer companies for knowingly contributing to alcohol problems on Pine Ridge reservation

**2016**

South Dakota cuts Native American topics from social studies in public schools

**2017**

Before ended by President Donald Trump, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program processed more than 150 work visa applications from undocumented immigrants in South Dakota 95 of those applicants received two-year work visas

**NARRATIVE**

South Dakota is a state whose history is inextricably intertwined with the fervor of Manifest Destiny and racism aimed at indigenous peoples so blatant that its contemporary existence is palpable. Indeed, many people refer to South Dakota as the “Mississippi of the North” (Biolsi 2001, xvi). However, the implication here is not the relationship between African Americans and whites, but of Native

Americans and whites. Racism in South Dakota is predominantly associated with Natives, which this chapter illustrates. That is not to say that there were no other nondominant peoples there who experienced racism, such as the buffalo soldiers or the Chinese during the gold rush and railroad construction, but the number of people and the magnitude of the circumstances were infinitely smaller and more transitory than the racism experienced by Native peoples.

Racism can be thought of as socially constructed hierarchies based on arbitrary differences in the physical appearance of people and their cultures. This concept provides the foundation for a myriad of actions, circumstances, and rationalizations. In particular, racism is used to justify colonization, which is the domination of nations or communities, their land, and resources by a foreign, invading people. Moreover, the actions associated with colonization birthed a United States built on the bloodshed of indigenous peoples, while its populace claimed it was their Manifest Destiny, or God-given right to do so. Indigenous peoples stood in the way of that vision. This “Indian problem” can be thought of as “what should be done with the American Indians” (Weeks 1990, 5). Weeks argues that the United States has approached the “Indian problem” through three different methods: separate Natives from white society, contain them on reservations, or Americanize/assimilate them. Ultimately, Americans were willing to



“We desire white people!” John Gast’s 1872 painting *American Progress* depicts an allegorical female figure of America leading settlers, telegraph lines, and railroads into the untamed West. The concept of Manifest Destiny represented in the painting related to the belief that the United States had a moral and divine mandate to colonize the lands west of the Mississippi River with a European population. (Library of Congress)

kill or force Natives to assimilate so as to fulfill their destiny. Therefore, the focus of this chapter is South Dakota's history of that racism justified by Manifest Destiny, which is the foundation of Native–white relations today.

### **Early Dakota Territory**

Mainstream research locates the earliest existence of South Dakota's Native peoples around 11,000 BCE; however, the Oceti Sakowin trace their existence to the stars. The Teton Sioux are the largest of the northern plains tribes that comprised the Oceti Sakowin, or those who are known as the Seven Council Fires. The Teton were divided into seven bands: the Oglala, Brule (Lakota), Hunkpapa, Miniconjou, Sans Arc, Two Kettle, and Blackfoot. The northern plains are home to the Teton Sioux where their sacred mountains, the Paha Sapa, exist. There the Tetons hunted the buffalo and ruled the plains.

In 1803, the United States negotiated the Louisiana Purchase, acquiring what became 13 different states. South Dakota was part of this enormous expanse of land known as the Dakota Territory. Like many of the other U.S. land purchases, no consideration was given to the indigenous peoples. The Lewis and Clark expedition set out to explore that expanse and made several stops in Dakota Territory informing the Lakota that the Great White Father now owned the land. Lewis perceived the Tetons to be the “vilest miscreants of the human race” (Lazarus 1991, 9).

The Lewis and Clark expedition encouraged the fur trade, an era that persisted for the next 50 years. Boundaries between Natives and non-Natives occurred as a result of avoidance. However, increased numbers of whites disrupted the Sioux way of life. Angered by the influx of travelers, the Teton Sioux requested that the U.S. government compensate them for the use of their trails. A response never came, so the Sioux demanded payment from those on the trail. The government responded to the Sioux's actions with intimidation: sending militia and constructing forts along the trails. The Sioux continued to defend their homelands, attacking militia as well as the invading travelers.

### **Battling for Their Homelands: Separation and Containment**

#### *Laramie Treaty (1851)*

In 1851, the U.S. government looked to resolve conflicts by negotiating a treaty with the Sioux Nation and their adversaries. Over 10,000 Natives attended the Fort Laramie negotiations; those present agreed to peace (Weeks 2001, 78). The Native nations agreed that they would not endanger the settlers through intertribal fighting and the United States promised to protect Native peoples from any wrongdoing by the settlers. Several roads were established, and reservation boundaries for the Sioux, Gros ventre, Assiniboin, Blackfoot, Crow, Cheyenne, and Arapaho were agreed upon; however, there was no loss of Native land. Annuities for land use included merchandise, domestic animals, and agricultural

implements valued at \$50,000 for 50 years. Treaty violations would result in the suspension of goods. The U.S. government assumed that the Natives would come close to extinction, and those who survived would eventually assimilate. Congress did not ratify the treaty as it was deemed too generous so the timeframe was reduced to 15 years.

### *Overland Trail or Platte River War*

In 1854, fighting broke out again and the associated battles are referred to as the Overland Trail War. In August, approximately 3,000 Sioux waited outside Fort Laramie to receive their 1853 and 1854 annuities. As the Sioux waited, a group of Mormons arrived and their cow/oxen broke loose, bolting into the Lakota camp. The cow, valued at \$10, was left in the camp and butchered by the Lakota. They offered to pay for the cow, but Lieutenant Grattan felt that the Natives should be punished. A battle broke out, and 27 soldiers died. While the 1851 treaty had been violated when the Sioux had not received its annuities two years in a row, the U.S. military response for stealing the \$10 cow was to punish the “barbarians.”

The Massacre at Ash Hollow (1855) occurred between the Lakota and a very short-tempered General Harney, whose plan was to overtake any group of Natives—men, women, and children, and burn entire villages. Harney argued that “‘savages’ . . . must be crushed before they can be completely conquered” (Bristow 2006, 21). Harney surrounded Chief Little Thunder’s camp faking a peaceful meeting, attacking them instead. Four soldiers died, and 86 Lakota were murdered.

### **L. Frank Baum’s *Sitting Bull* Editorial**

What follows is an excerpt of an editorial written by L. Frank Baum, the author of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and its sequels, for the *Saturday Pioneer*, a South Dakota local newspaper on December 20, 1890. Sitting Bull had just been murdered, or shot, by his own people employed as Bureau of Indian Affairs police. South Dakota was in a state of hysteria regarding anticipated violence that many residents believed would emerge from the Ghost Dance ceremony. This editorial was written on the eve of the Wounded Knee Massacre, and many people felt that it contributed to the fervor that led to their murder.

What wonder that a fiery rage still burned within his breast and that he should seek every opportunity of obtaining vengeance upon his natural enemies.

The proud spirit of the original owners of these vast prairies inherited through centuries of fierce and bloody wars for their possession, lingered last in the bosom of Sitting Bull. With his fall the nobility of the Redskin is extinguished, and what few are left are a pack of whining curs who lick the hand that smites them. The Whites, by law of conquest, by justice of civilization, are masters of the American continent, and the best safety of the frontier settlements will be secured by the total annihilation of the few remaining Indians. Why not annihilation? Their glory has fled, their spirit broken, their manhood effaced; better that they die than live the miserable wretches that they are. . . . We cannot honestly regret their extermination, but we at least do justice to the many characteristics possessed, according to their lights and education, by the early Redskins of America. (Baum 1890)

### *Bozeman Trail Wars*

John Bozeman established a trail through Sioux, Arapaho and Cheyenne land to reach the Montana gold mines. The road left the Oregon Trail at Fort Laramie and cut through Sioux sacred lands, as well as prime hunting land. Three forts were built in direct violation of the Laramie Treaty (1851), and subsequently eight major battles occurred.

One engagement was the Battle of Hundred Slain or Fetterman's Fight. In late 1866, Fetterman was sent out to defend a wood supply train. Determined to act aggressively toward the Sioux, he pursued Sioux warriors who were acting as decoys into a valley. The warriors blocked Fetterman's retreat and surrounded him, killing Fetterman's entire command of 80 soldiers.

However, the Wagon Box Fight did not end as well for the Teton Sioux. Led by Red Cloud, warriors attacked soldiers cutting wood near Fort Kearney. Using a wedge formation, Natives provoked an attack and then backed off. Their intent was to coax the soldiers into firing their weapons so that they would need to reload. During that effort, the Sioux would attack again and then be victorious. However, the soldiers did not need to reload their new breechloaders. Over and over, the Sioux attacked, but the soldiers were able to push them back. The Natives sustained significant losses, while the soldiers succeeded with their new weapons.

### *Laramie Treaty (1868)*

After the Fetterman Fight, the government sought peace with the Sioux. However, Red Cloud refused to participate until the Bozeman Trail was closed and the forts shut down. Once the commissioners did so, an agreement was made that included setting the land west of the Missouri River as the Great Sioux reservation. According to the treaty, Native peoples could continue to hunt on specified lands beyond the reservation. Any land cessions or transfers by Sioux tribes to the United States had to be done with an approval of three-fourths of the adult males. Offenders of the treaty would be arrested. Children were to attend school, which the government would fund. Appropriations would continue for 30 years. While closing one trail, an agreement was made to open others, including railroads, roads, and mail stations, none of which could be damaged. Later, in a meeting with the secretary of the interior, Red Cloud told him, "when the white man comes in my country he leaves a trail of blood behind him" (Calloway 2012, 345).

### *Black Hills War*

The Black Hills War occurred from 1876–1877 with approximately 27 military engagements (Douville 2007, 52). Relegated to the reservation in 1869 through an agreement of contradictions, Natives not abiding by those boundaries were considered hostile. At that time, the reservation included the Black Hills, which was a place of medicinal plants, and lodgepole pines, a place for vision quests, and home to the Great Spirit. The hills "were the heart of the earth" (Lazarus 1991, 8) reflecting the Lakota way of life—their worldview. In 1874, a military

expedition violated the Fort Laramie Treaty (1868) by invading the Black Hills to verify the existence of gold. Waves of opportunists followed and conflict arose once again. President Grant demanded that the Lakota sell the Black Hills. The administration had argued that, “upholding the 1868 treaty was not a matter of rigid principle. When the project in question involved a national priority” (Lazarus 1991, 68). However, the Lakota refused. Treaty annuities were withheld in an attempt to starve the Sioux, and plans to “whip them into submission” evolved (Lazarus 1991, 84). The U.S. government and the military were embarrassed that they could not coerce the Lakota into selling their beloved lands. Provoked, the Great Sioux Nation and their allies responded by protecting their homelands. The military planned three columns of attack, out of which three significant battles occurred: the Reynolds Fight, the Battle of the Rosebud, and the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

These battles were initiated with the Reynolds Fight, or Battle of the Powder River. Colonel Reynolds was sent by General Crook to attack a village of Cheyenne and Oglala Lakota. Reynolds destroyed the entire camp, setting it on fire after the fighting. The endeavor was a disaster though as several soldiers’ bodies were left behind. Crook relieved Reynolds of command and had him court-martialed. While the battle was won, outrage propelled many “friendly” Natives to join forces with Crazy Horse and his war campaign.

The Battle of the Rosebud occurred in 1876 along the banks of the Rosebud River. There, Crook had hoped to push the Natives north, but the Lakota and Cheyenne launched a surprise attack on him and his troops. Crazy Horse tried to draw out the center of Crook’s company formation and then attack the sides of the military lineup repeatedly. It was a long, intense battle that lasted for six hours (Lazarus 1991, 87). Casualties were similar on both sides, but the loss of soldiers required Crook to withdraw from fighting until he received reinforcements.

Soon thereafter the Battle of the Little Big Horn occurred, and consisted of the largest gathering of a Native nation. There were over 12,000 Native peoples present (Douville 2007, 59). Using their own three-pronged attack that enveloped the military campaign, the allied tribes won the battle with enormous success. However, the United States later avenged themselves by “chasing scattered Indian bands over the northern Plain, attacking winter encampments, and killing women, children and ponies in the snow. Crazy Horse surrendered and was killed” (Calloway 2012, 373). The Black Hills Act of 1877 provided the legislation to steal 22.8 million acres of Sioux land, which included the Black Hills (Matthiessen 1991, 13). The Sioux Act in 1889 justified the theft of another 9 million acres, and rations were cut yet again (Calloway 2012, 374).

### *Massacre at Wounded Knee*

After the Battle of the Little Bighorn, the Ghost Dance ritual evolved from a vision received by Paiute holy man Wovoka. The ceremony was thought to bring back the buffalo and vanish the white man. Natives would often dance so long and hard that they would faint. The ritual resulted in hysteria among U.S. citizens who were afraid that the practice would begin another war.



During this timeframe, the Sioux leader Sitting Bull was murdered. A number of his people joined Spotted Elk's (Big Foot) Hohwoju camp. In 1890, the U.S. government forced Spotted Elk, sick with pneumonia, and his followers to flee the Red Shirt table area, which was the stronghold of the Ghost Dance movement. While evading the army, Spotted Elk's people were intercepted in the Badlands by the 7th Cavalry and taken as prisoners to a settlement near Wounded Knee Creek. The next morning, December 29, 1890, the cavalry demanded all Native weapons. Under a white flag of truce, a scuffle ensued, and soldiers opened fire. After the hail of bullets from rifles and Gatling-type, Hotchkiss machine guns ceased, 300 old men, women, and children lay murdered. After being left for two days on the plains during a blizzard, a military detail returned to dump the frozen corpses into a mass grave. The 7th Cavalry received 20 Congressional Medals of Honor (Matthiessen 1991, 20).

### ***Summary of the First Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851***

Below is a listing of the articles of treaty concluded at Fort Laramie between D. D. Mitchell, superintendent of Indian affairs, and Thomas Fitzpatrick, Indian agent, on the September 17, 1851.

#### **Article 1**

Treaty was for the purpose of establishing and confirming peace.

#### **Article 2**

United States Government will establish roads, military and other posts, within the respective territories.

#### **Article 3**

U.S. will protect the Indian nations against depredations by the people of the U.S.

#### **Article 4**

Indian nations will make restitution for any wrongs committed on the people of the U.S., while the people reside in or pass through their respective territories.

#### **Article 5**

The Indian nations acknowledge the following tracts of country as their respective territories:

Sioux or Dahcotah Nation (as well as land agreements with Gros Ventre, Mandans, and Arrickaras Nations, Blackfoot Nation, Crow Nation, Cheyennes and Arrapahoes)

#### **Article 6**

There would be selected principals or head-chiefs for their respective nations, through whom all national business will hereafter be conducted.

**Article 7**

U.S. will deliver the sum of \$50,000 per annum for the term of 50 years, with the right to continue the same at the discretion of the President for a period not exceeding five years thereafter, in provisions, merchandise, domestic animals, and agricultural implements.

**Article 8**

Should any of the Indian nations, parties to this treaty, violate any of the provisions thereof, the United States may withhold the whole or a portion of the annuities mentioned.

**Assimilation through Legislation**

Following several hundred years of war with Native nations, the United States determined that assimilation would be cheaper than attempts at extermination. Efforts aimed at doing so occurred through both education and legislation.

*American Indian Boarding Schools*

Beginning with the 1880s, educating Natives to “kill the Indian, save the man” became the goal. Native children were required to attend school; many were removed from their families to attend off-reservation boarding schools far from Native cultural influences. Lakota Chief Spotted Tail’s own children attended Pratt’s boarding school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Upon arrival a student’s hair was cut, traditional clothing was burned, spiritual practices were forbidden, and speaking their Native language was punished through beatings, stockade confinement, or isolation for weeks at a time. Native students were forced to become Christian, wear uniforms, and eat westernized food, as well as to speak, read, and write only in English.

While at the boarding schools, children were also being slowly starved to death. Schools spent 11 cents for food for each child, per day. However, expenditures of 33 cents per student would have been needed to thrive (Szasz 1997, 19). Overcrowding resulted in rampant illness; hundreds of students were buried in unmarked graves. From the 1880s through the 1930s, tens of thousands of Native children were sent to these schools unable to return home until their twenties. Once home, their skills were of little use, and they were no longer able to communicate with their families.

*Indian Reorganization Act (IRA)*

In 1928, the Hoover commission published the Meriam Report, which detailed the failures of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Newly elected BIA Commissioner John Collier addressed the BIA inadequacies through the IRA in 1934. Informed by Collier’s pro-Native beliefs, IRA legislation “provided for home rule government, an economic package [credit institutions for corporate ventures], upgraded education and generally improved the conditions on the reservation”

(Douville 2004, 15). However, tribes had to emulate the federal government structure for tribal governance and adopt federally approved constitutions to receive low-rate loans and new social services. The tribes had one year to decide if they wanted to participate in the IRA. Many nations were concerned that their governance would merely exist as a puppet government. While there were benefits, adopting a mainstream government framework eliminated the Teton Sioux way of leading their people.

#### *Indian Claims Commission (ICC) Act*

In 1946, the ICC Act was passed and Natives, previously barred from court, could sue the federal government. Wrongs that could be addressed included Constitution, laws, treaties, and executive orders, resolved by monetary compensation. It was intended that the commission would exist for 10 years, but it lasted into the 1970s (Douville 2004, 15). At first glance, it would seem that the government was trying to right past wrongs; however, the ICC Act merely provided the United States with the opportunity to relieve itself of previous wrongdoings or future liabilities with little accountability for what could not be bought: the lives of ancestors and land return.

#### *Termination Legislation*

After World War II, a heightened sense of individualism and capitalism emerged in the United States. The existence of Native nations, whose worldview is built on community and relationship, was antithetical to that ideology. In 1953, the House Concurrent Resolution (HCR-108) or termination bill was passed. It cut off federal funding and services to tribes that were deemed self-sufficient. Termination would provide a reduction in the federal budget. The underlying impetus of the bill was not just a social mood, but “Indian hating,”—in other words, racism. Within a few weeks PL 280 transferred criminal jurisdiction to state control for terminated tribes or other states wanting to take that on. However, the required public vote was not incorporated in the original bill, but proceeded to be carried out as if it were. In 1954, the Rosebud Sioux launched a major publicity campaign in South Dakota and prevented this law from being incorporated there without it being voted for by the public.

#### *The American Indian Movement (AIM)*

During the 1960s and 1970s, civil rights movements occupied the U.S. consciousness. AIM emerged as a group in the St. Paul, Minnesota area concerned about the incarceration rate of local Natives. Evolving into national chapters, AIM addressed issues regarding health care, legal representation, and schooling. AIM protested at Thanksgiving commemorations, Mount Rushmore, Washington, D.C., and supported the Occupation of Alcatraz Island. They demanded justice for the 1972 murder of Raymond Yellow Thunder, who was found inside a truck at a

used car lot in Gordon Nebraska, and questioned authorities regarding the lenient sentence of Bad Heart Bull's murderer in Custer, South Dakota the next year.

Months after Bad Heart Bull's murder, elders at the Pine Ridge reservation called on AIM to dismantle the corruptive forces of Oglala Sioux Chairman Dick Wilson and his federally funded Goon Squad. AIM took over the small Wounded Knee community church, museum, and store at the historic site. The 200 "AIMsters," armed with sawed off shotguns and Molotov cocktails, were surrounded by U.S. Marshals, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and BIA police fortified by 16 armored personnel carriers, military jets, helicopters, and 400,000 rounds of ammunition during the 71-day siege (Hendricks 2006, 132). None of the AIMsters complaints was ever addressed. Interestingly, "of the 562 arrests and 185 federal indictments . . . the government won just fifteen" (Hendricks 2006, 141).

### **The Past Lives on in the Present: Racism in Contemporary South Dakota**

Contemporary displays of racism play out in a variety of ways from the individual to the institutional. For example, in 2015, middle school students from the Pine Ridge reservation were rewarded with a trip to a Rapid City hockey game for their school success. During the game, a white man in a viewing box threw beer on them and yelled racially charged statements. What follows are a few of the many issues that plague South Dakota Natives as a result of both historical and contemporary racism.

#### *Environmental Issues*

***The Black Hills Claim.*** In 1923, the Sioux Nation filed a lawsuit against the United States for the 1877 theft of the Black Hills. In 1942 the lawsuit was rejected (Douville 2007, 15). As a result of the 1946 ICC Act, the Lakota refiled their claim in 1950. The ICC ruled that the Lakota should receive \$17.5 million, but repealed the decision as the courts had already made a ruling in 1942. The case was refiled four more times and, in 1980, the court awarded the tribe \$122.5 million. But the Lakota rejected that offer, stating that "the Black Hills are not for sale" (Calloway 2012, 374) and they demanded that the Black Hills be returned. The award has grown to over \$1.3 billion (Streshinsky 2011). Tribes continue to work toward a solution that includes land return.

***Pick-Sloan Plan.*** This plan, to construct five dams, was initiated in 1944 to prevent the flooding of the Missouri River and provide irrigation. The Army Corp of Engineers met "with governors, senators and business leaders" (Schneiders 2016), but not tribes. Hundreds of thousands of acres were flooded. Native communities were submerged, at least 900 families had to be removed from their homelands and gravesites were looted. Tribal members were paid a minimal amount for each acre; many individuals were unable to replace their lands. South Dakota reservations affected included Cheyenne River, Standing Rock, Lower Brule, and Crow Creek (Impact 2007).

***Mining.*** The extraction industries on stolen South Dakota land generate both income and hazardous waste. Productions include gold, silver, uranium, natural

stone, oil and natural gas. The Homestake Mine was founded in 1876 during the Black Hills gold rush. It was “the largest, deepest and most productive gold mine in North America” (Yarrow 1987) and generated in excess of \$1 billion prior to closing in 2002. In 1962 a uranium mill spill dumped 200 tons of tailings into the Cheyenne River, affecting the Pine Ridge reservation’s water supply. These tailings are a small “part of an estimated seven and a half million tons of radioactive material abandoned from the uranium mill and the Edgemont mine” (LaDuke 2012, 378). In 1979 birth defects on the reservation skyrocketed and 38 percent of pregnant woman on Pine Ridge miscarried (LaDuke 2012, 379).

### *Health and Wellness*

**Health.** All of the previous circumstances are reflected in the poor health of the Sioux Nation. The Pine Ridge reservation’s impoverished circumstances are worse than Haiti. The average life expectancy of a man who does not leave the reservation is 48 years old. The average yearly income on Pine Ridge or Rosebud reservations is approximately \$3,000. A U.S. Commission on Civil Rights 2004 draft indicated that: 770 percent more likely to die from alcoholism, 650 percent more likely to die from tuberculosis, 420 percent more likely to die from diabetes, 280 percent more likely to die from accidents, and 52 percent more likely to die from pneumonia or influenza. Reservations in South Dakota are larger than some states, and therefore doctors and dentists are hours away. The Indian Health Service (IHS) is horribly underfunded. Moreover, South Dakota lawmakers have not expanded Medicaid coverage to low-income adults, affecting thousands of Natives.

**Violence against Native Women.** LaDuke states, “in their lifetime 34% of American Indian and Alaska Native women will be raped, and 39% will be subjected to domestic violence. 67% report their assailants as non-Native individuals and on some reservations, Native women are murdered at more than ten times the national average. This set of facts is paired with high declination rates: U.S. attorneys declined to prosecute nearly 52% of violent crimes that occur in Indian country; and 67% of cases declined were sexual abuse cases” (2013). Prosecuting criminals is especially difficult given the many inconsistencies that exist in Federal Indian law. This includes who the perpetrator is and whether the crime took place on reservation land. Prosecution of cases on reservations often does not occur. In 2005, the Violence against Women Act was passed and provided additional funding to Native law enforcement agencies. In 2010, the Tribal Law and Order Act provided more jurisdiction for tribal police to arrest and prosecute non-Natives on reservation land. However, there continues to be a myriad of social and legal constraints that limit prosecution.

**Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).** ICWA was passed in 1978, with the intent of keeping Native children in their community before resorting to placement in non-Native households. An NPR investigation determined that in South Dakota close to 700 Native children were being removed from their homes yearly and placed in non-Native environments (Sullivan 2011). The state receives thousands of federal dollars for each child that is placed in foster care, and often more for Native children. Children are frequently picked up by child welfare workers even though a

formal complaint had not been filed nor an investigation conducted. Many people feel that the origins of this problem can be traced to Janklow's policies for filling his youth correctional centers (see the biography of William Janklow).

***Suicide.*** Suicide on South Dakota reservations has become rampant and is thought of as an epidemic. The historical causes loom large: massacres, land theft, reservations, confinement, and the deaths of loved ones and friends. Today the homelands of the Sioux nation are the poorest and unhealthiest, amid extreme racism, leaving few choices for the future. For these young people, suicide seems to be the only way out. Literally hundreds of Native youth in 2015 tried to commit suicide (Fenton 2015). Because of recurring suicide rates, both Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations frequently declare a state of emergency.

***Historical Trauma.*** For centuries Native peoples have experienced land theft, war, and the loss of loved ones, resulting in generations of unresolved grief. The generational losses continue to play out in circumstances related to legislation, environment, poverty, and health as detailed in the previous sections. These circumstances, combined with continued racism, and internalized oppression (believing messages of discrimination), results in what Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart defines as historical trauma. Specifically, historical trauma “is cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences” (Brave Heart 2003, 7). Most recently DNA scientists have come to understand that “our genes can carry memories of trauma experienced by our ancestors and can influence how we react to trauma and stress” (Pember 2015). Research is bringing to light how these circumstances continue to impact the health and well-being of indigenous peoples and their future generations broadly, and the Natives of South Dakota more specifically.

## **Conclusion**

Most people have heard the history of how Europeans came to this continent, fought with Natives, and then stole their land. Often those specific events are seen merely as history, something that happened long ago. However, this chapter shows how these pivotal events in South Dakota history were motivated by racism and affect Native peoples today. The culmination of those events combined with contemporary expressions of racism continues the “legacy of racism that has made South Dakota synonymous with intolerance” (Governor's 1975 address cited in Biolsi 2001, 199).

## **NOTABLE FIGURE**

### **Janklow, William (1939–2012)**

While many South Dakotans look upon William Janklow with favor, others are aware of the horrific influence that he had on the racist atmosphere of the state. Janklow felt he was above the law, and beyond reproach, so much so that many

people refer to the various contexts of his political career as South Dakota's Reign of Terror. Janklow served several political offices during which he was "the George Wallace of Indian Country" (Hendricks 2006, 282).

William Janklow was born in 1939 in Chicago. After his father's death, the family returned to his mother's hometown of Flandreau, South Dakota. When Janklow was 16, he was convicted of sexually assaulting a 17-year-old girl. Janklow became a Marine when he was told he could join the military or go to jail. After his discharge, Janklow married his high school sweetheart and then earned his bachelor's degree and a law degree from the University of South Dakota. As tribal attorney for the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Janklow worked relentlessly to defend his Lakota clients against murder, rape, assault, or theft charges. He also filed discrimination suits on their behalf. Janklow distributed gifts and left money on his doorstep for those who needed bail in the middle of the night (Hendricks 2006, 143). At 27, Janklow was accused of raping, at gunpoint, his family's 15-year-old babysitter, Jancita Eagle Deer, for whom he was legal guardian. When Eagle Deer informed her dormitory matron, Janklow provided a contradictory alibi to the school administration. A doctor did not examine Eagle Deer until 36 hours after the assault (Hendricks 2006, 143). A month later, the U.S. attorney stated that there was insufficient evidence to make a claim of rape. Avoiding further scrutiny, Janklow resigned from his position in legal aid.

By 1973, Janklow, now the state's deputy attorney general, gained national attention while prosecuting the AIM leaders at Wounded Knee for their role in a riot in Custer, South Dakota. At the time, Janklow stated, "the way to deal with the American Indian Movement is to put a bullet in the AIM leader's head" (Weyler 1982, 125). Later, during a television interview, Janklow confirmed his remark and added, "I never met anybody with a bullet in their head that bothered anybody" (Weyler 1982, 125).

In 1974, Janklow ran for attorney general on an anti-Indian platform. The past accusations of rape resurfaced and were supported by statements from Eagle Deer. The Rosebud Sioux Tribal Court convened a hearing. After reviewing the testimony of those involved and the hospital records, the presiding judge found that "the evidence indicates that an obstruction of justice followed the rape" (Hendricks 2006, 157). However, Janklow still won an overwhelming victory. The focus of his tenure was dismantling AIM, specifically targeting Dennis Banks who was responsible for re-publicizing the rape charges. Horribly, Eagle Deer was found dead in a roadside ditch in 1975.

Janklow did not support issues of sovereignty for Native peoples. In 1975, Natives took over a pork plant on the Yankton reservation to protest working conditions. Disregarding federal law, Janklow dispatched officers to quell the takeover. However, it is unlawful for states to police reservations except for in the case of a major crime or an established agreement that exists between the state and the tribe (see Termination section this entry). In 1997, Janklow "used \$30,000 of taxpayer money from the South Dakota treasury to support a case that bar[red] Indian nations from criminally prosecuting non-Indians on their reserved homelands" (Cook-Lynn 2011). While serving four 4-year terms as governor, he refused to

acknowledge that the number of Native youth being incarcerated in his state was disproportionate to the overall population (Bonner 2012).

In 1983, Peter Mathiessen published *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*, which details the history and contemporary issues regarding AIM. Mathiessen elaborates on Janklow's sexual assault charges, disdain for AIM leaders, and the viciousness with which he pursued their conviction for any possible charges. Janklow proceeded to sue both Mathiessen and the publisher, Viking, for libel. The lawsuit prevented the book from being released until the case was resolved; it took seven years.

In 1996, Janklow opened Custer Youth Correctional Center for boys. Two years later, he opened a center for girls in Plankinton. Native youth were often sent to detention homes for minor infractions. First day inductions into the facilities for the youth, who Janklow referred to as scum, were deemed barbaric (Rose 2015). In 1999, one girl died from heat stroke within a week after her induction. Boys were molested, some pepper sprayed, they were shackled—ankles and wrists—to beds on concrete floors, while others were required to sleep on cement for up to two weeks (Rose 2015). In 2000, Janklow emulated social service screening processes established in Texas by George W. Bush, whereby children in the foster care system were administered a psychological test. Based on the outcomes, children were then prescribed psycho-pharmaceutical drugs. As a result, the state received \$9,000 in federal funds, per child, per year. Later Janklow often rationalized the situation by stating that South Dakota was such a poor state. Many feel that these circumstances paved the way for South Dakota's foster care issues of today (refer to Narrative).

In 2002, Janklow was elected to Congress. His term was cut short in 2003 when he ran a stop sign and hit a motorcycle while traveling at 75 mph in a 55 mph zone. After conviction of the charges—running a stop sign, reckless driving, speeding and second-degree manslaughter, Janklow's sentencing consisted of 100 days in prison. Typically, these charges would have yielded a 10-year sentence. Janklow had been charged with 13 traffic citations in the previous 10 years. The first line of defense was that as a public figure Janklow needed to drive fast. Exhausting that rationale, Janklow's lawyer argued that failing health, low blood sugar and diabetes, was to blame for the accident. However, after the previous week's physical, Janklow had announced, "I'm in darn good health" (Rau 2004). Janklow died of a brain tumor in 2012.

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# 43

## Tennessee

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Matthew Gritter

### **CHRONOLOGY**

**1540**

Hernando de Soto becomes the first European to explore the area now known as Tennessee

**1769**

The first permanent European settlement in the area is established by William Bean in northeast Tennessee

**1796**

Tennessee is admitted to the Union as the 16th state on June 1

**1825**

A colony of free blacks is set up at Nashoba in western Tennessee by Frances “Fanny” Wright

**1828**

Andrew Jackson of Tennessee is elected president of the United States

**1834**

The Tennessee State Constitution is amended to end voting rights for free blacks

**1838**

The forced emigration of the Cherokees from Tennessee to present-day Oklahoma begins

**1844**

James K. Polk of Tennessee is elected president of the United States

**1861**

On June 8, Tennessee becomes the last state to secede from the Union and join the Confederacy

## **822 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1862**

On April 6–7, the Battle of Shiloh is fought in southwestern Tennessee; large-scale fighting occurs in Tennessee as the Civil War escalates

### **1864**

The Republicans select Andrew Johnson, the military governor of Tennessee as Abraham Lincoln's running mate on a Unionist ticket with pro-war Democrats

### **1865**

Andrew Johnson becomes president of the United States after the assassination of President Lincoln

### **1865**

On April 7, Tennessee ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

### **1866**

On July 18, Tennessee ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which secures citizenship for the newly freed slaves

### **1866**

On July 26, Tennessee becomes the first former Confederate state to be formally readmitted to the Union

### **1866**

Fisk University, a prominent historically black college, is founded in Nashville

### **1866**

The state mandates segregated schools; the measure creating such schools is the first of almost a century of Jim Crow legislation in Tennessee

### **1869**

Tennessee rejects the proposed Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which secures voting rights for black men

### **1870**

Tennessee enacts miscegenation legislation that makes marriage between blacks and whites a felony

### **1875**

The Tennessee legislature passes a law allowing hotel keepers, carriers of passengers, and keepers of places of amusement to control access to and exclude persons from their services just as any private person had such control "over his private house"

### **1876**

Meharry Medical Department is founded at Central Tennessee College in Nashville to provide medical training for African Americans

### **1881**

A state law mandates separate cars for whites and blacks on Tennessee railroads

### **1910**

Edward H. Crump is elected mayor of Memphis, beginning a four-decade dominance of Memphis politics; he establishes an alliance with black voters

**1915**

Meharry Medical College becomes an independent institution

**1932**

The state Black Code classifies as “Negro” a person with any Negro blood

**1933**

The federal creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) brings electricity and development to rural parts of the state, including many black communities

**1943**

The first attempt to abolish the state’s poll tax passes after pressure from reformers

**1954**

In its *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the U.S. Supreme Court declares the end of segregation in public schools

**1955**

State laws are passed to reaffirm segregation and discrimination

**1956**

The Tennessee senators, including Albert Gore Sr., refuse to sign the “Southern Manifesto,” which was crafted as a segregationist reaction to the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision

**1957**

The Civil Rights Act of 1957, the first civil rights legislation in more than a century, is passed by Congress

**1964**

Congress passes the Civil Rights Act of 1964, outlawing discrimination in areas such as employment and public accommodations

**1965**

Congress passes the Voting Rights Act of 1965

**1965**

African American civil rights leader Benjamin Hooks becomes a Tennessee criminal court judge

**1968**

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. arrives in Memphis to support striking sanitation workers; he is assassinated there by James Earl Ray on April 4

**1970**

Albert Gore Sr. is defeated for reelection to the Senate by Republican William E. Brock

**1974**

Harold Ford Sr. becomes the first African American elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Tennessee

## **824 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

**1977**

James Earl Ray, the man convicted of murdering Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., escapes from prison and is later recaptured

**1978**

Albert Gore Jr., Democrat, is elected to the U.S. Senate from Tennessee

**1991**

The National Civil Rights Museum opens at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was murdered

**1992**

Albert Gore Jr. is elected vice president of the United States on the Democratic ticket with Bill Clinton, governor of Arkansas

**1995**

A statue of President Andrew Johnson is completed on the state capitol grounds in Nashville

**1996**

Harold Ford Jr. is elected to replace his father in the U.S. House of Representatives

**1997**

On April 8, Tennessee finally ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment granting voting rights to former slaves; Tennessee rejected the amendment in 1869, but it took effect on March 30, 1870

**2000**

Vice President Albert Gore Jr., a former Tennessee senator, loses a bid for the presidency and fails to carry his home state, winning only 47 percent of the vote in Tennessee

**2002**

The National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis reopens after major renovation and expansion

**2006**

Steve Cohen is elected to replace Harold Ford Jr., defeating Ford's brother, Jake Ford, and becoming the first Jewish member of Congress from Tennessee

**2007**

The Tennessee legislature enacts immigration restriction legislation regarding driver's licenses

**2010**

Neo-Nazis hold anti-immigrant rally in Knoxville

**2010**

Tennessee enacts a law requiring local law enforcement agencies to contact federal immigration officials if the citizenship of a person in custody cannot be confirmed within three days

**2010**

Republican Bill Haslam is elected governor, helping to solidify Republican control of Tennessee

**2011**

Governor Bill Haslam signs a voter ID law

**2013**

Foreign-born individuals constitute 4.7 percent of Tennessee's total population

**2017**

The Tennessee Pastors Network pays for billboards supporting President Donald Trump's travel ban

**2017**

Debates occur regarding the existence of Confederate statues located in Tennessee

**NARRATIVE**

Tennessee, a former Confederate state, has a long and complex racial history. It is a place where slavery occurred, a key part of the Jim Crow South, and the location of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., America's most noted twentieth-century civil rights leader. Yet, Tennessee is also a place where many people of color have achieved success, especially with regard to educational achievement and the election to political office. The state offers a rich history that represents many different aspects of race and racism.

Originally home to members of the Cherokee tribe, Tennessee was settled by Europeans who purchased land and later displaced the Native peoples. As European expansion continued, the state played an integral role in the slave-owning economy. Tennessee, traditionally the home of many moderate politicians, was the last state to leave the Union; however, following its readmission, it was an active participant in the system of segregation that dominated the South.

Tennessee also has a unique political history: It is the home of three former presidents, Andrew Jackson, James J. Polk and Andrew Johnson; Vice President Albert Gore, son of Senator Albert Gore Sr.; and African American Congressmen Harold Ford Sr. and Harold Ford Jr. As members of both the dominant and subordinate groups, their political view differed, exposing both the perils and promises of American freedom and democracy in the South.

**European Contact**

Prior to European contact, Tennessee was initially the home of many Native peoples, most prominently members of the Cherokee, but also home to the Creek. While explored by Europeans on several occasions as early as the sixteenth century, the first permanent European settlement occurred in 1769 in the northeastern section of the state. In 1776, as the nation was beginning to declare its independence, the Cherokee attacked several settlements in East Tennessee. As more

settlers migrated to the area from the newly founded United States, conflicts with the Cherokee and Creek continued. By 1796, Tennessee became a state, but relations with the Natives rapidly declined. The Cherokee, in particular, continued to resist domination and control by the European settlers. (Interestingly enough, many of the Cherokee were slave owners, highlighting the paradoxes of American history that are not always studied and explored.) From 1838 to 1839, there was a forced migration of Cherokees, and the slaves that they owned, away from Tennessee. The displacement of the Native peoples from their land characterized much of the settlement experience that was an integral part in the making of Tennessee.

Just as Tennessee contributed to the displacement of Native peoples, it also participated in the institution of slavery. By 1810, over 20 percent of the population of Tennessee consisted of slaves, and the development of the state's economy would be dependent, to a large degree, on slave labor. Conditions were harsh but differed from those of neighboring states to the south, specifically, Alabama and Mississippi, where the enslaved African population at times equaled or superseded the number of whites. For example, Memphis grew into a city largely dependent on the cotton trade, and, indeed, it was considered the center of what some characterized as the Cotton Kingdom. Much of the cotton picked in the Mississippi delta made its way to Memphis. As a result, Memphis was an important center of the antebellum Southern economy. However, Tennessee had a smaller slave population than Mississippi, a unique characteristic that would impact its participation in the Civil War.

Prior to the Civil War, Tennessee was home to several free black communities. Initially, free blacks experienced comparatively good conditions, but as slaves became a larger proportion of the population, the social dynamics began to change.

In 1825, a "utopian" colony designed for free blacks, Nashoba was founded by Frances "Fanny" Wright, a white woman who wanted to prepare African American slaves for freedom. Nashoba was located on the outskirts of Memphis, Tennessee's economic power center. Nashoba included a working farm and was designed to provide skills that former slaves would need to live a life of independence and freedom. The concept of building utopian communities to advance human civilization had spread throughout the United States. Like many of the utopian settlements of the early to mid-nineteenth century, Nashoba failed after a few years, due largely to problems related to insect infestation and the spread of disease. The residents of what was once referred to as the Nashoba commune were taken by ship to Haiti in 1830. While the concept was not a success, it does provide some insight into the variety of ideas and methods for working with African Americans during this particular era. However, as the nation began to debate the question of slavery, the development of Tennessee would mirror the ideals and mimic the social conditions of neighboring Southern states.

In 1834, one of the early acts of racial discrimination in Tennessee was a vote by the state legislature that stripped free blacks of their right to vote, rescinding rights that had been granted in the early 1790s. While Tennessee never had the same set of harsh working and social conditions as their neighbors to the south, free blacks were victims of discrimination.



As the state progressed and struggled with the racial politics of the era, it is important to note that Tennessee contributed two prominent political figures who would serve as president of the United States during the antebellum era. While neither were born in Tennessee, each spent a great deal of their political career based in the state. The first, Andrew Jackson, who served from 1829 to 1837, and second, James K. Polk, who served from 1843 to 1847. Both worked to build the American nation in a way that expanded the geographic scope of the nation, while restricting the rights and opportunities of many of those in the newly conquered areas—Native Americans, Africans, and Mexicans. Jackson, a slave owner who as president signed the Indian Removal Act, was noted for his cruel tactics toward Native Americans as he sought to expand the land available to white male landowners. Polk was proslavery as well and remained so until his death. Polk went to war with Mexico and, in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1846), created a land where people of Mexican origin often became second-class citizens. A vision of the United States as a land of opportunity for white males was derived, to a large degree, from the leadership of these two men. They expanded the geographic scope of the nation in ways that did not respect the land and civil rights of many.

### **The Civil War**

The year 1861 marked the beginning of the Civil War, and Tennessee found itself in a very unique position. The 1860 election of Abraham Lincoln as the first Republican president, along with continued regional conflicts over slavery, led to the formation of the Confederate States of America. The Confederacy fought to maintain their Southern lifestyle, which included the institution of slavery. As talk of secession spread, there was ambivalence among many of Tennessee's residents, particularly those from East Tennessee, but from other parts of the state as well. Despite mounting opposition, Tennessee ultimately decided to join with the Southern states. In June 1861, the state finally seceded, making Tennessee the last state to secede from the Union and join the Confederacy.

The state quickly became a center of conflict during the early stages of the Civil War. A pivotal event, the Battle of Shiloh, occurred in the state. The Battle of Shiloh is viewed as one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War, with more than 23,000 casualties. This critical battle between Union and Confederate forces occurred in a region where there were sharp divisions about the war. After a four-day battle, the Union forces emerged victorious and gradually gained control over most of Tennessee, including the capital of Nashville. Andrew Johnson, who later served as president of the United States during the period of Reconstruction, was appointed military governor of Tennessee by President Abraham Lincoln in March 1862. Tennessee was not included in the Emancipation Proclamation, but Johnson, who had personally freed his slaves, worked to recruit African Americans into the Union Army. In 1865, Tennessee ratified the Thirteenth Amendment and, in 1866, became the first former Confederate state to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, promising equal protection under the law. Subsequently, the state was readmitted to the Union.

### **Politics and Freedom**

President Andrew Johnson represented some of the contradictions often present in Tennessee. While he served as the Union military governor during the Civil War and was, at times, viewed as an antislavery advocate, Johnson resisted a great deal of the civil rights legislation during his administration. An unpopular president, he was subject to an impeachment process that very nearly resulted in his removal from office. A tailor by trade from an extremely poor background, Andrew Johnson identified with the poor whites, who were often stereotyped as the illiterate, poverty-stricken, “hillbilly” class whose voices were omitted from the national narrative, including their views on the Civil War.

Johnson assumed the presidency at the end of the Civil War and at the beginning of the Reconstruction era. The period of Reconstruction represented a unique opportunity for Tennessee. As a state that had fallen to Union control early in the conflict and was quick to ratify the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments, Tennessee gave the appearance of being socially progressive. The state extended political rights to African Americans. African Americans gained the right to vote in 1867 and began to be elected to local offices, including the Tennessee House of Representatives in 1872. However, there was also conflict. Gaining political rights did not necessarily mean an end to discrimination. In 1865, the Ku Klux Klan was founded by six veterans of the Confederate Army. Race riots occurred in Memphis in 1866. And conflicts over a poll tax, which disenfranchised blacks and poor whites, erupted in the early 1870s.

Following the end of Reconstruction, Tennessee adopted laws similar to those elsewhere in the South, reducing opportunities for African Americans to participate politically, socially, and economically. The Jim Crow system took hold in Tennessee through a series of laws dating back to the early days of Reconstruction when African Americans were promised freedom and equality. In 1866, a law requiring segregated schools passed. In the following decades, the state passed anti-miscegenation, transportation, and public accommodation laws that curtailed the civil rights and liberties of its black citizens. These laws, constantly reaffirmed, continued a legislative commitment to an entrenched system of segregation. While Tennessee was in many ways a typical state of the Jim Crow era, there were some opportunities available for African Americans, particularly in the city of Memphis.

Tennessee had become part of the solid Democratic South after the Civil War, but with some key differences. Counties in eastern Tennessee that supported the Union generally voted Republican, while central and eastern Tennessee tended to be Democratic and stayed so until the middle of the twentieth century.

Within the limits of a powerful political machine, Memphis offered opportunities for blacks not possible in many other Southern cities. Memphis political boss, E.H. Crump, had a profound impact on Tennessee politics. Crump served as the mayor of Memphis from 1910 to 1915 and later served as a member of Congress. He continued to play a key role in Memphis politics into the 1950s. While Crump was instrumental in getting the initial poll tax repeal overturned by the Tennessee Supreme Court during the 1940s, he was not opposed to allowing some blacks to

vote. He ran a multiracial political machine that included black voters. Predominantly black areas did sometimes receive benefits from the Crump machine in order to maintain them as loyal voters and part of the political organization. This relative moderation has long been a feature in Tennessee politics. However, despite allowing political participation, the Jim Crow system remained firmly in place.

The New Deal would help to begin the vast changes in politics that would end the era of Jim Crow. While President Franklin Roosevelt (Democratic) had by no means exemplary civil rights record and often allowed racialized practices in New Deal programs, the initiative provided new opportunities for many African Americans who were assisted by these programs. For example, before its revision, the social security program initially excluded domestic and agricultural staff, keeping many African Americans from being eligible for benefits. And the Tennessee Valley Authority provided electricity to many of the small farmers, black and white, that were devastated by the Great Depression.

During the 1940s, Tennessee moved toward racial liberalism. Like many states, Tennessee had a poll tax. But, in 1943, the Tennessee legislature voted to overturn. While the initial repeal was overturned by the state Supreme Court, future reforms continued, and in 1953, the poll tax was constitutionally abolished. As a result, Tennessee was less rigid in imposing white supremacy than its southern neighbor of Mississippi and was a part of the moderation evident in the South during the 1940s. However, as late as 1955, Jim Crow laws continued to be passed in Tennessee, demonstrating the slow, uneven progress toward racial justice.

### **Fighting for Civil Rights**

Blacks played an active role in the fight for civil rights. Historically black colleges and universities were essential in the training of African American professionals and promoting intellectual life. Fisk University was founded in 1866 in Nashville as the Fisk Free Colored School. It was named after Clinton Fisk of the Freedmen's Bureau. Fisk quickly became a center for educating and training teachers and developed a vibrant intellectual and cultural life that continues to this day. In the early 1870s, Fisk gained national and international attention for the exceptionally gifted and moving voices of the Fisk Jubilee Singers. Other historically black colleges and universities in Tennessee include institutions such as Central Tennessee College, which founded Meharry Medical School in Nashville, LeMoyné-Owen College in Memphis, and Lane College in Jackson. Many are religiously affiliated and continue to offer a distinctive education to this day.

As indicated earlier, throughout the first half of the twentieth century, blacks used every opportunity available to them to participate in the political process and work toward social change. The organized civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s offered new opportunities. This nationwide movement worked against the Southern system of Jim Crow. Civil rights leaders, in particular, made use of the federal court system in their fight for equality. While many blacks in Tennessee, especially in Memphis, were able to vote, the Jim Crow system remained clearly entrenched; segregation was part of daily life. Even in a state that was capable of

### *Fisk Jubilee Singers*

The Fisk Jubilee Singers (a reference to the Jewish Year of Jubilee) were originally formed as a student acapella fund-raising group at the newly created Fisk Free Colored School in 1871. The group—consisting of four men, five women, two quartets, and a pianist—set off on tour to many of the Northern states that had been stops on the Underground Railroad. Both celebrating and elevating many aspects of their cultural heritage, the group was known for its outstanding delivery of Negro spirituals, but also offered some traditional American folk songs as well. They performed with great dignity and elegance in the United States and Europe, which was contrary to the comedic, black minstrel performances of the era. After encountering many hardships, including the discriminatory treatment they received on the tour from public accommodation and transportation facilities, the group found success. In addition to their ability to raise tens of thousands of dollars in support of Fisk University, they are credited with educating the American public, black and white, about the unique qualities of Negro spirituals, and being at the forefront in their efforts to preserve this creative form of musical expression.

poll tax reform, progress was difficult. As a result, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) turned to the court system, fighting segregation and discrimination on the local, state, and federal levels. Like other Jim Crow states in the South, Tennessee would be greatly impacted by the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision (*Brown*), which ruled that the system of “separate but equal” that defined the South was no longer permitted. In the aftermath of *Brown*, most Southern senators signed the Southern Manifesto. Neither of the Tennessee senators, Albert Gore Sr. nor Estes Kefauver, signed the manifesto, joining the two Texas senators as the only Southern senators in opposition.

In 1955, the Tennessee legislature passed an anti-miscegenation law that prohibited marriage or cohabitation, imposing a fine or as much as five years of imprisonment for violators. Indeed, in 1955, Tennessee doubled down on discriminatory legislation in a way similar to other Southern states, where the white power structure was threatened by the federal actions of the U.S. Supreme Court. Once again, Tennessee remained a state of paradoxes where steps forward in racial equality tended to be joined by clear reminders that racialized institutions and attitudes remained strong.

Attempts to desegregate various educational institutions also continued. While there were respected historically black institutions of higher education in Tennessee, they were a relatively small proportion of the colleges and universities operating in the state. A demand to integrate these crucial institutions of social mobility occurred. For example, in 1957, two African American women unsuccessfully attempted to gain entrance to the then all-white Memphis State University. Ironically, one of the applicants, Laurie Sugarmon, would become the first African American faculty member at Memphis State University during the 1960s. In 1960, compelled by a lawsuit, the Memphis City School began to be desegregated. However, over a half of a century following the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the Tennessee public school system still experiences a great deal of racial inequality.

While the Crump machine of Memphis had allowed limited political participation by African Americans, segregation remained in place up through the 1950s. The 1960s saw the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which helped to prevent discrimination in public accommodations. Public places, such as restaurants and theaters, successfully integrated. The NAACP was active in Tennessee, particularly in the city of Memphis, and continuously worked to achieve civil, social, and political rights for African Americans. In Memphis and Nashville, difficult battles were fought to end segregation aided, in part, by politicians such as Nashville mayor Ben West, who depended on the increasingly engaged voters in the black community.

Tennessee contributed several leaders to the national civil rights movement and was the location for several milestone events. One prominent national figure was Benjamin Hooks. Hooks, a minister and lawyer, was a criminal court judge in Tennessee and later served as executive director of the NAACP for more than a decade. Tennessee is also the location for one of the most tragic events in the history of civil rights in the United States.

The Memphis Sanitation Strike and the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. both occurred in 1968 in Tennessee. In February 1968, two sanitation workers were killed by a malfunctioning truck. That incident led to a strike by 1,300 African American men who were employed by the Memphis Department of Public Works. Civil rights leaders from around the country came to provide assistance, including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who had begun a “Poor People’s Campaign” that emphasized increased access to economic security. On April 4, 1968, King was assassinated in Memphis, at the Lorraine Motel, the day after giving a stirring address to many of those involved in the strike. These two events further highlighted that the gains of the civil rights movement had not eradicated racism or discrimination. It also showed a move toward ensuring economic security for African Americans and for working and lower-income people regardless of their race or ethnicity.

### ***1968 Memphis Sanitation Strike***

In 1968, the city of Memphis experienced a strike by sanitation workers. The strike showed how the civil rights movement had moved beyond attempts to secure the franchise and legal protections against discrimination to focus on the continued problems in the labor market. Class and race concerns began to meld together.

In November 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King announced the Poor People’s Campaign, seeking to bring all races together to promote economic security. On February 1, 1968, two black sanitation workers were killed on the job. Mayor Henry Loeb was not sympathetic to their working conditions or their lack of a living wage. By the end of the month, approximately 1,300 African American men went on strike. Many black civil rights leaders participated and assisted with the sanitation strike. The strikers had the support of the local NAACP. In addition to King, prominent civil rights leaders Roy Wilkins and Bayard Rustin also traveled to Memphis.

In March 1968, King traveled to Memphis and rallied with the strikers. In supporting the strike, he unknowingly set the stage for his assassination. King returned to Memphis and delivered his last major speech on April 3, famously stating: "Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. . . . But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the Promised Land!" (<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkivebeentothemountaintop.htm>). On April 4, while standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel, King was shot to death by James Earl Ray.

While African Americans had been cultivated by E.H. Crump in his Memphis political machine during the first half of the twentieth century, the civil rights movement provided opportunities for African Americans to achieve public office. During the 1950s and 1960s, local and state offices began to be contested, and eventually, won by African Americans, just as they had been during the Reconstruction era. In 1951, two African Americans were elected to the Nashville City Council. Ben West was elected as mayor, who would contribute to the increase of political power among African Americans during the tumultuous 1950s and 1960s. Beginning in 1954, African Americans began to seek office in Memphis, engaging large numbers of African Americans in the political process. In 1964, an African American was elected to the Tennessee House of Representatives for the first time in the twentieth century. In addition, the criminal justice system began to integrate its workforce, with Benjamin Hooks becoming a criminal court judge in 1965. While integration and an increase in political participation were by no means without controversy, many white political leaders had moderated their views toward the black community, as more black voters in Memphis and Nashville began to exercise their electoral power.

The 1970 redistricting process created a district in western Tennessee in the Memphis area with many African American voters. After a failed attempt to defeat a white Republican congressman in the 1972 election that saw Richard Nixon win reelection in a landslide, in 1974, Harold Ford Sr. was elected as the first African American to represent Tennessee in the U.S. Congress. Ford was to represent Tennessee for two decades before being replaced by his son in 1996. However, despite an increase in descriptive representation, racial inequality remained.

Tennessee was one of the first Southern states to have an actively engaged Republican Party; the South had been dominated by Democrats. The defeat of Democrat Albert Gore Sr. in the 1970 Senate election by Republican William Brock represented an important turning point. As Republicans expanded into the former Confederacy, Tennessee elected Republican officeholders and began to be dominated by the Republican Party. For example, Howard Baker, the Senate Republican leader from 1977 to 1985, was a Republican senator from Tennessee. Despite the lack of open racism from Republican office holders, the political framework in Tennessee was one in which whites were largely Republican and blacks were largely members of the Democratic Party. The political makeup mirrors that of other Southern states, with a dwindling number of whites supporting

the Democratic Party. While the civil rights movement and legislation such the Voting Rights Act of 1965 helped black voters gain greater opportunities to participate in the political process, a backlash led many white voters to join the Republican Party.

For more than three decades, much of the Memphis area was represented by African American politicians Harold Ford Sr. and Harold Ford Jr. While Ford Sr. was a noted civil rights activist, Harold Ford Jr. was not. The younger Ford was involved with the centrist Democratic Leadership Council and, in general, was more conservative than many national Democrats. In 2006, Harold Ford Jr. was replaced by Democrat Steve Cohen, who marked a milestone of his own by becoming the first Jewish person to represent Tennessee in the U.S. Congress. Jake Ford, the son of Harold Ford Sr. and brother of Harold Ford Jr. contested the race with an independent candidacy that attracted support from many African Americans. Cohen's social liberalism concerned some African American religious leaders, and he has received primary challenges in nearly every cycle from an African American opponent, but he continues to represent the area and win one of the only Democratic-leaning congressional districts left in Tennessee. As the politics of the civil rights movement fade, support for descriptive representation has sometimes been replaced by an emphasis on issue stances.

### **Latinos and Immigration**

Like many states, Tennessee has experienced a large increase in its Latino population particularly in the well-performing Nashville metropolitan area. As a result, conflicts over immigration have also begun to emerge. Often described as "people of color," there were complaints about racial profiling, debates over English-only laws, and some support for strict immigration enforcement and immigration restriction legislation. The fast-growing Latino community is joined by migrants from Asia and other parts of the world. Tennessee includes a Muslim population as well, racialized to be different from that of the white population. The Tennessee state legislature took some moves to incorporate new immigrant communities but also passed immigration restriction legislation in several areas.

The increase in diversity in Tennessee has continued to create a backlash at times in the political system. In 2010, Republican Bill Haslam was elected governor and replaced the Democratic governor Phil Bredesen who previously had served as the mayor of Nashville. In June 2011, Haslam signed a voter ID law requiring voters to present identification in order to vote following a trend decried by some civil rights groups as voter suppression efforts.

### **The Post-Racial Dream**

Tennessee has experienced many issues typical of Southern states, but has also stood out in important ways throughout its history. The legacies of Jim Crow and slavery remain; there are high rates of inequality and poor conditions for the black urban poor, particularly in Memphis. Tennessee has never completely fit the stereotype many people have of Southern states. The blacks of Memphis could vote

decades before that was possible in other parts of the South. East Tennessee strongly resisted entering the Civil War. Tennessee congressional representatives, especially those who served in the U.S. Senate, took racially moderate stances. Despite these unique features, Tennessee also faced discriminatory practices reminiscent of other parts of the South. As Tennessee moves forward into the twenty-first century, it does so as an increasingly diverse state, moved beyond many aspects of its past, but with lingering issues resulting from discrimination and inequality.

After the election of President Barack Obama in 2008, many argued that a post-racial society would be created, where traditional divisions on the basis of race would lose resonance and importance. However, racial and ethnic tensions have, instead, gained greater attention as issues such as the continued existence of statues dedicated to the Confederacy and its leaders emerge as one of the latest controversies. While the three presidents identified most closely with Tennessee, Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk, and Andrew Johnson, also have qualities that could lead to calls to remove them from public areas, they committed themselves to serve the nation.

Tennessee has been the home of many of the most important events in the complex history of race and racism in the United States. Wars that displaced the Native Americans from their lands, battles over slavery and civil rights, and the murder of Martin Luther King Jr. all occurred in the state of Tennessee. How these events are remembered and how Tennessee manages an increasingly diverse population will continue to represent the many challenges and possibilities resulting from the impact of race and racism.

## **NOTABLE FIGURES**

Tennessee has a rich history of political families, none more famous than the Fords and the Gores. Both families played an important role in Tennessee and national politics. They represent the old and the new; the rise of racial liberalism and representation for African Americans in American politics; and the backlash created by an increasing conservatism and the desire by mainstream white America to maintain social and political dominance.

### **Ford, Harold, Sr. (1945– ) and Ford, Harold, Jr. (1970– )**

Harold Ford Sr., the son of an African American funeral director who lived on the outskirts of Memphis, was born in 1945. He was the eighth of 15 children born to Newton and Vera Ford. He was a member of a socially and politically active family who had many connections in the Memphis area. These connections proved invaluable as he began to express an interest in politics.

Ford graduated from historically black Tennessee State University in 1967. He received graduate training in mortuary sciences and joined the family business. However, within a few short years, his interest in politics blossomed, and he entered the race for state legislature.

Following a very well-organized and enthusiastic campaign, in 1970, Ford was elected to the Tennessee state legislature by defeating an incumbent state



legislator in the primary and once again in the general election. In his first term, he was appointed as House majority whip. Ford worked with other African American legislators to ensure their sponsored measures received appropriate consideration. Using his brief tenure as a state legislator and extensive family connections as a basis, Ford built up an impressive political organization that assisted in his run for Congress.

As African Americans entered elected office, particularly in the aftermath of the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the possibility of entering Congress representing a district in the South became plausible. In his campaign for Congress, Ford emphasized the failing economy, problems of inflation, and the lack of adequate housing. Ford had the support of the black churches and many members of the black community but made a special effort to reach out to white voters, noting common problems shared by people living in the district. He won 63 percent of the vote in the Democratic primary and went on to narrowly defeat the Republican incumbent.

In 1974, Harold Ford Sr. was elected to represent Tennessee from a district in the Memphis area. A Democrat, he became the first African American to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Tennessee. As a member of Congress, Ford served on the influential House Ways and Means Committee and worked to secure safety net policies that benefited low-income and people of color of Memphis, his key constituency. Like other African Americans who entered Congress during the 1970s and served through the 1980s, he was in office during a period when the social programs crucial to his constituents and supporters were under attack. Ford also experienced ethical problems during his tenure in Congress, tarnishing his legacy as a role model for aspiring African American politicians in the eyes of many.

Harold Ford Sr. rose from a political family that build a veritable political machine. He hoped to continue the tradition and keep his congressional post within the family by passing the torch on to his son. After more than two decades in Congress, Ford retired in 1996 and was replaced by his son Harold Ford Jr.

Harold Ford Jr., the eldest of three children, was born in 1970 to Harold and Dorothy Ford. Familiar with both the family business and his father's political career, following his graduation from the University of Pennsylvania, Ford Jr. began his career in government. He later returned to school pursue his JD from the University of Michigan Law School when he entered the race to replace his father in Congress. Ford moved from New York to take his father's seat. Ford's activism in Tennessee was negligible; however, his father's name was legendary. It was an easy victory; at 26, Ford Jr. became one of the youngest member ever to be elected to Congress and was reelected for four consecutive terms, serving from 1997 to 2007.

Representative of a new wave of African American politicians, Ford Jr. presented a different image than that of his father. He has often been described as a centrist, voting to support the war in Iraq, voting against same-sex marriage, and favoring the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, which some argued led to the financial crisis of 2007. He has been described as a conservative business man, not interested in challenging the establishment.

In 2006, Ford ran for the U.S. Senate seat against Republican Robert Corker. Many felt that the campaign was filled with racial overtones, linking Ford to his “jungle” African heritage and his desire for white women. Following his loss to Corker, Ford returned to New York to pursue a career in finance and media, expressing little further interest in Tennessee politics.

### **Gore, Albert, Sr. (1907–1998) and Gore, Albert, Jr. (1948–)**

Albert Gore Sr. was born in 1907 and died in 1998. While best known as the father of former vice president Al Gore, he had a distinguished career that demonstrated a moderation toward racial issues rare in Southern politicians of his era. Gore was a Democrat who served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1939 to 1953 and in the U.S. Senate from 1953 to 1971. Gore’s relative liberalism made him increasingly unique among the conservative Southern Democrats who played such a powerful role in the politics of the United States for much of the twentieth century.

Gore was one of four Southern senators who refused to sign the Southern Manifesto in 1956 that protested the Supreme Court decision desegregating the nation’s public schools. Other senators who refused to sign included then Tennessee senator Estes Kefauver and then Senate majority leader Lyndon Johnson of Texas.

Despite taking some bold stands, Gore’s record on civil rights was mixed. He voted for the relatively weak Civil Rights Act of 1957. He did not support the Civil Rights Act of 1964 but did vote for the Voting Rights Act of 1965. He did support busing to achieve racial equality. He also took liberal stands on issues such as the Vietnam War and opposed Southern judges Clement F. Haynesworth and G. Harold Carswell nominated by President Richard Nixon to the Supreme Court. Those nominees were designed to appeal to Southern voters. Another way in which Republicans sought to gain power in the South was through challenging more liberal Southern Democratic senators, and Gore, who was viewed as a liberal Democrat with a personal working relationship with the Kennedys, was targeted for defeat. After a bitter campaign, Republican William E. Brock was elected senator in the 1970 election, defeating three-term incumbent Al Gore Sr.

Albert Gore Sr. is far less well known than his son Albert Gore Jr.; however, they have several similarities with each other. Albert Gore Jr. was born in 1948 (in Washington, D.C.) to Albert and Pauline Gore. He was the second of two children. Due to his father’s active political career as a senator, Gore Jr. spent part of his early childhood in the nation’s capital and would return to the homestead in Tennessee during the summer months. Gore Jr. was a graduate of Harvard University. His military service in the army included a tour of Vietnam. Gore considered a career in both journalism and law before deciding to enter politics.

In 1976, Gore ran for the U.S. congressional seat that was formerly held by his father. He would successfully be reelected for three terms. Gore was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1984, again fulfilling a seat that once had been held by his father. Gore was initially viewed as a conservative Democrat; however, like his father, he became associated with the National Democratic Party and a more liberal form of politics. And his fate was sealed as a liberal Southerner when he accepted Clinton’s invitation to be his running mate in the 1992 presidential election.

Gore stayed clear of racial politics and was not known for civil rights activism. On several occasions, he found himself in the position of trying to defend the civil rights record of his father. Gore's 2000 run for the presidency would be recorded as one of the closest battles in election history. Of particular note was Gore's loss of his home state of Tennessee in the Electoral College. Al Gore's failure to carry his home state represented a trajectory similar to that of his father, as his perceived liberalism wounded his political career. As Tennessee and the rest of the South became more Republican, and some would argue more racially divided, conservative Democrats and progressive elected officials largely disappeared from public office.

### **Hooks, Benjamin (1925–2010)**

Benjamin Hooks was one of the most prominent leaders of the civil rights era. A Baptist minister and an attorney, Hooks was born in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1925, the fifth son of Robert and Bessie Hooks. He often reflected on the segregation he encountered in the segregated South and early in his professional career, noting that, "I wish I could tell you every time I was on the highway and couldn't use a restroom." He said, "My bladder is messed up because of that. Stomach is messed up from eating cold sandwiches. So I can't tell you how I feel about the question, 'Has integration worked?' All these intellectual super egoists sit around trying to pinpoint where it hasn't. But I have to begin at the fundamental issue that I can drive from Houston to my home in Memphis and stop for a hamburger" ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)). Hooks provided a bridge between the struggle for civil rights and the right to use previously segregated facilities (historical black institutions). In addition to his career as a preacher and a lawyer, Hooks served as the longtime executive director of the NAACP (1976–1992) and as an entrepreneur who served as president of the short-lived fast food chain Mahalia Jackson Chicken Systems.

Hooks attended historically black college of Lemoyne-Owen (located in Memphis) and Howard University. He was forced to travel to the north for law school but returned to Memphis to practice law. Hooks became involved in civil rights policy. He was a member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and joined the NAACP. He played an active role in efforts to integrate public places. In 1965, he was appointed as a criminal court judge and later won election to continue in his position.

Unlike many civil rights leaders, Hooks had many connections with the Republican Party. Hooks often used the language of personal responsibility, often associated with the Republican Party. Richard Nixon, whose civil rights efforts sometimes contradicted his Southern strategy rhetoric, appointed Hooks to the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) in 1972. As FCC commissioner, Hooks worked on a variety of issues regarding African Americans and the media.

In 1976, Hooks was selected as executive director of the NAACP. The organization experienced decline from the heady days of the civil rights movement. It was hoped that Hooks would help to revitalize the organization. After many contentious battles, Hooks departed in 1992. He returned to Memphis for his final

years where he taught and preached. The Benjamin L. Hooks Institute for Social Change was established in 1996 at the University of Memphis, and Hooks was honored with the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President George W. Bush in 2007. He died in 2010 at the age of 85 in Memphis.

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## Texas

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### CHRONOLOGY

#### 1520

The Spaniard Alonso Alvarez de Pineda leads an expedition to find a path between the Gulf of Mexico and Asia; during this process, he becomes the first European to travel the territory of present-day Texas

#### 1690

The first permanent European settlement is established in the area today known as East Texas by Alonso De Leon; the mission there is called San Francisco de los Tejas

#### 1719

As a result of the Franco-Spanish War of the Quadruple Alliance, Spain is able to take over several settlements around the San Antonio River and develop more missions in Texas to protect New Spain from potential invaders

#### 1803

France sells the territory comprising the Louisiana Purchase to the United States; the transaction creates controversy because President Thomas Jefferson believes the agreement includes the Texas Territory, while Spain believes Texas should serve as buffer between New Spain and the United States

#### 1824

The Texas Territory becomes a part of the independent Republic of Mexico; it was written into the Constitution of Mexico as part of a territory called *Coahuila y Tejas*

#### 1832

Mexican and Anglo-American citizens revolt against the policies of Mexican president Anastasio Bustamante; they were unhappy with his policies regarding immigration and slavery

## **840 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1836**

The Texas Revolution occurs and leads to the independence of Texas from Mexico; the first act of the new Texas Republic is the lifting of the prohibition on slavery, which allows an influx of African American slaves into Texas

### **1845**

Texas enters the Union as the 28th state on December 29

### **1857**

Racial tensions grow in Texas and result in the Cart War; Anglo-Americans attack Mexican carters and slave sympathizers over the course of several months until Governor Elisha Pease ends the fighting

### **1860**

When a series of heat-related fires spread throughout Dallas during July, Charles Pryor starts rumors in the *Dallas Herald* that the fires were actually started by abolitionists trying to provoke a slave rebellion—the incident creates pro-secessionist sentiments in the state

### **1861**

Texas secedes from the Union on February 1

### **1870**

Texas ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery, the Fourteenth Amendment granting citizenship to African Americans, and the Fifteenth Amendment granting voting rights to black men, on February 18, after the first two amendments had already taken effect

### **1870**

Texas is formally readmitted to the Union on March 30

### **1888**

The Jaybird-Woodpecker War begins as a battle for political control of the Democratic Party in Fort Bend County; the war is a forceful takeover of the Democratic Party by whites, who want African Americans out of Texas politics

### **1889**

The White Man's Unions and the Lily White Movement are formed to further disenfranchise African Americans and other minorities from politics; these movements create an all-white primary system, which denies minorities the right to vote for the next 50 years

### **1906**

The Brownsville Raid occurs after an incident between a white woman in Brownsville and a black soldier; the next night, men from the 25th Infantry are blamed for an attack on local officers, and the incident results in the dishonorable discharge of 167 black soldiers

### **1910**

The Texas legislature enacts formal legal codes requiring segregation in public spaces throughout the state; this act eventually leads to residential segregation

**1915**

The first National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) chapter is formed in Texas amidst increasing racial tension; within a few years, Texas has more branches of the NAACP than any other state

**1919**

During the summer of 1919, a major race riot occurs in Longview; the riot starts after a report in the *Chicago Defender* describes how a black man from Longview is killed by a white mob

**1929**

The oldest Latino civil rights organization, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), is established in Corpus Christi

**1942**

The United States signs the Mexican Farm Labor Agreement with Mexico; the program brings thousands of Mexican workers as farm laborers into Texas and other states

**1944**

The landmark Texas case *Smith v. Allwright* effectively ends the practice of allowing only whites to participate in primary elections; the case started when Lonnie E. Smith hired Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP to file a lawsuit because Smith believed that white primaries were discriminatory and violated the equal protection clause of the Constitution

**1950**

*Sweatt v. Painter*, another landmark court case in Texas, forces the University of Texas to admit qualified black applicants to the law school under the principle of equal access to education; the ruling also shapes later cases, such as *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954).

**1956**

Mansfield becomes the first district in the state to receive a federal mandate to desegregate; the mandate results in protests and violence on August 30 and 31

**1958**

Hattie Mae White becomes the first African American to be elected to an office in Texas since Reconstruction when she wins election to the Houston Independent School District Board

**1972**

The La Raza Unida party runs candidates in almost every election throughout Texas, including the gubernatorial race; all the party's candidates are Latino and all run on a racially based platform

**1998**

James Byrd Jr., a black man, is a victim of a vicious hate crime committed by several known white supremacists in Jasper; the attack leads to a nationwide debate over race relations in the United States

**2013**

In the U.S. Supreme Court case *Fisher v. University of Texas I*, Abigail Fisher sues the University of Texas at Austin over its affirmative action policy; the court rules that strict scrutiny should be applied to determine the constitutionality of a race-sensitive admissions policy

**2016**

Called *Fisher v. University of Texas II*, Fisher's 2013 case makes it to the U.S. Supreme Court again; the Court rules that the University of Texas at Austin's use of race in their admissions policy is constitutional

**NARRATIVE**

Written by June Hersey in 1941, the song "Deep in the Heart of Texas" clearly alludes to the fact that many people recognize Texas mainly for its sheer size. Based on both population and landmass, the state is the second-largest in the Union (behind California and Alaska, respectively). Its borders span over 800 miles. The state's proximity to Mexico is another defining attribute. Both geographically and historically, Texas has been shaped politically and economically by its southern border. These two observations provide the necessary background for key principles about the racial history of Texas. One is that issues of race and racism that happen in Texas often have broader implications for the nation as a whole. This is evident by major landmark decisions and legislation such as *Sweatt v. Painter* and the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crime Prevention Act. Another major principle about racism in Texas is that it has always been a multiracial and multiethnic struggle. At various times throughout history, it has involved African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, Mexicans, and white Americans. Both the size and racial diversity have created a unique experience of the history of race relations in the state of Texas.

**Early Settlement and the Colonial Period (1520–1800s)**

Although Texas did not become a state until nearly midway through the nineteenth century, the earliest maps of the area were made around the 1500s. In 1520, Alonso Álvarez de Pineda (1494–1520) led an expedition to find a passageway between the Gulf of Mexico and Asia. During the process, he became the first European to discover the land mass that would later be known as Texas. However, none of his settlements in the area lasted. Eventually, the French owned the only lasting settlements. For close to 100 years, they went unchallenged in the region by other Europeans. However, by 1690, Spain began to covet the French territory. After hearing about the destruction of one of the French forts, Spain sent Alonso De Leon (1639–1691) to lead the expedition in East Texas. He established a Catholic mission called Mission San Francisco de los Tejas. This mission did not last long because within 20 years all of the missionary colonies that Spain had created in Texas were abandoned. In 1716, Spain reestablished settlements in Texas to prevent France's expansion into the northern border of New Spain. That year,



Martin de Alarcon was appointed governor of the New Spanish colony in Texas. Two years later, he led 10 families deeper into Texas, where they settled around the San Antonio River. One year later, Spain fought against France in the War of the Quadruple Alliance. During this period, Spain established several more missions in Texas to protect New Spain.

Besides serving as military headquarters for the Spanish army, these missions also aimed to convert the Native American tribes in the area. They were not very successful in converting many of the Native tribes, but they were able to build strategic alliances with groups such as the Apache. By 1762, Spain had acquired all of France's territory in Texas as part of the peace treaty during the Seven Years War. However, nearly 30 years later, Spain sold Texas back to France as part of a resolution to obtain the throne in central Italy. In 1802, Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821) sold Louisiana to President Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) as part of the Louisiana Purchase. This agreement was controversial because the boundaries of Louisiana were uncertain. While Jefferson believed that Texas was included in the agreement, Spain believed it was not included. They believed that Texas should serve as a place to separate the boundaries between the United States and New Spain. In 1819, this conflict was finally resolved with the Adams-Onís Treaty, which gave Florida to the United States in return for the full control of Texas. Peace in the region, however, did not last for very long. Spain found itself in the middle of a new crisis, namely, Mexico's drive for independence. In 1821, Augustin de Iturbide (1783–1824) led a revolution for Mexico's independence and made Texas part of Mexico. This ended the era of Spanish control of Mexico and led to the Mexican control of Texas that lasted through the antebellum period.

### **Texas during the Antebellum Period (1821–1865)**

By 1824, Texas had become fully integrated as a state in Mexico through the newly written Constitution of Mexico. The constitution officially joined Texas with Coahuila to create the territory known as *Coahuila y Tejas*. Mexico also passed the General Colonization Law, which allowed all people, no matter their status, to claim land in Mexico. They believed by doing this they could create more sustainable settlements and prevent raids by Native American tribes. Mexico's open immigration policy led to many settlers from the United States immigrating to *Coahuila y Tejas*. One of the first American settlers in the area was Moses Austin (1761–1821). His land grant was eventually passed on to his son Stephen F. Austin (1793–1836). Austin and his group of 300 men, women, and children created their settlement along the Brazos River. Stephen F. Austin helped to create a major influx of white settlers from the United States into the Mexican Territory of Texas. Many of the American settlers who came to Texas brought slaves with them. This helped to create one of the distinctive features of Texas: a multiracial social, political, and economic system in Texas that was composed of Anglo-Americans, Mexicans, and African Americans. However, the multiracial sociopolitical system also created a hierarchy with Anglo-Americans at the top. African Americans and Mexicans were at the bottom and had varying degrees of mobility.

Eventually, Texas was given an exemption to the law that banned slavery in Mexican Territory in 1829. However, a year later, President Anastasio Bustamante (1780–1853) signed a law banning slavery in all Mexican Territory, including Texas. This did not mean that slavery did not exist in Mexico. Many American slave owners classified their slaves as “indentured servants for life” (Manchaca 2001, 37). Bustamante was also against further immigration by American settlers into Mexican Territory. He banned U.S. immigration into Mexico a year after he outlawed slavery. He created more jails in certain territories to curb immigration. He also enforced new laws and customs that angered the native Mexican citizens in Texas, who were also called Tejanos. Bustamante’s policies also upset the Anglo-Americans living in Texas. By 1832, the tension between many of the citizens and President Bustamante had grown to the extent that war seemed inevitable. Several men led a revolt against the customs enforcement in Texas. Simultaneously, Mexican citizens also began to revolt against Bustamante’s administration. Many of the Texans supported the revolt in Mexico, which led to them driving out all of the Mexican soldiers from East Texas. After the successful revolt, Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna (1794–1876) became the president of Mexico. Santa Anna’s policies did not satisfy many of the Tejanos and Anglo-Americans; they wanted more political freedom and ultimately independence. This would lead to the Texas Revolution in 1836, where Texas officially gained its independence from Mexico. Directly after the First Congress of the Republic of Texas convened, the ban on slavery prohibition was lifted. This created another influx of African Americans into the state.

By the year 1846, there were approximately 100,000 white Americans living in the state. Many of them were natives of other Southern states and sought to build a similar lifestyle in the South Central plains region. Much of their economy depended on agriculture, subsistence farming, herding, and cash crops. Texas, like many states in the South, became dependent on the use of the slave labor force (30,000 slaves at that point). As slavery became a more prominent issue, the state began to strategically align itself with other Southern states. They sent eight delegates that year to the national convention in Nashville to discuss the consultation and mutual action on the subject of slavery and Southern rights.

Some scholars believe that Texas’s actions in 1850 revealed that even though the state was new to the Union, it would not hesitate to secede from the Union if a crisis occurred. During the census of 1850, the diverse makeup of Texas became clear. The state had far greater ethnic diversity than any other state. It consisted of Germans from South Central counties, Mexican Americans from San Antonio and lower, foreign-born immigrants from Czechoslovakia and Poland, and a large group of Americans born in other Southern states. African slaves made up almost another 30 percent of the population (De Leon 1983). The increasing diversity in Texas did not go unchallenged by Anglo-Americans. Many Mexican Americans faced expulsion when they were accused of helping slaves flee to Mexico. The tension came to a tipping point in 1857 with the Cart War. Many Anglo-Americans were angry with both Tejanos and Mexicans because they sympathized with the slaves. They were also angry because of the successful cart hauling businesses established by both groups. Anglo-Americans began to destroy oxcarts, steal

freights, and kill Mexican carters. In many areas such as Seguin, local authorities did nothing to stop the violence. A Mexican minister, Manuel Robles y Pezuela (1817–1862), eventually relayed news of the violence to Secretary of State Lewis Cass (1782–1866). Cass urged Texas governor Elisha Pease (1812–1883) to end the conflict, and by December 1857 the conflict had stopped.

One of the defining incidents that shaped race relations near the end of the antebellum era in Texas was the slave panic of 1860. It has also been referred to as Texas Troubles. The event has been viewed by many scholars as one of most significant events involving slaves since Nat Turner's rebellion in 1831. Many believe that this event would prove to be significant in creating Texas's resolve to join other Southern states when they left the Union. Texas Troubles occurred after a series of fires in North Texas in July. The fires blazed through Dallas, and initially they were blamed on the scorching Texas heat. However, several days after the fires, rumors spread that they were actually started by abolitionists to demoralize the people and prepare for a slave uprising. Stories of slaves starting insurrections, poisoning slave owners, and abolitionist-led uprisings spread through several prominent Texas newspapers. Charles Pryor (1832–1882), editor of the *Dallas Herald*, printed stories about abolitionist preachers' plan to devastate North Texas through starting fires and assassinations. Fear of slave revolts and the influence of abolitionists led to the formation of vigilance committees. These committees went through various Texas communities to punish anyone that they believed participated in conspiracy to end slavery. Law enforcement agencies remained idle, while the vigilance committees conducted their investigations. Although oftentimes there was little evidence to support most of the alleged claims, an estimated 100 black arsonists and white abolitionists were killed as a result of these investigations. Texas Troubles ended in September 1860, but its impact had ramifications on the presidential election of that year. Politicians and news media in favor of secession would use Texas Troubles as a way to create pro-secession sentiments throughout the state. In 1861, Texas officially voted to leave the Union by a vote of 3–1.

### **Race Relations and Reconstruction (1865–1900)**

The decision to leave the Union and join the Confederacy would have consequences for every state in the Confederacy, including Texas. After the Union won the war, military forces began a period of occupation in the former Confederate states, known as Reconstruction. This period lasted the next nine years. It was characterized by acts of racialized violence by whites who resisted the new regime. Hundreds of murderous acts were perpetrated to maintain white dominance. Civil War veterans who were still upset with the outcome of war seized state property in Texas and committed acts of violence. Many of these outlaws lived in Indian territories and murdered both Democrats and Republicans to instill fear and docility into the freedmen.

One of the key strategies to ensure white supremacy in Texas was the establishment of the Black Codes. The laws were passed by Southern state legislatures as a way to define the legal state of blacks in society after the war. They were first created in 1866. The codes regulated black labor and ensured the inferior status of

black Americans. Under Texas state legislature, any person with at least one-eighth African blood was subject to special, discriminatory treatment under the law. The Black Codes allowed African Americans to own property, enforce contracts, sue and be sued, make wills, and lease/dispose of property, the right to personal security, and prohibited discrimination in criminal law. However, blacks were not allowed to vote or hold office, serve on juries, testify in cases involving whites, or marry whites. The codes also created provisions where blacks had to have separate accommodations in public facilities and a separate school fund and were restricted from being given public land. The apprentice laws were used to control black labor by giving master craftsmen the ability to inflict punishment on workers, pursue runaway labor workers, and charge heavy fines against people who interfered with apprenticeship obligations. Vagrancy laws were also used to control the black labor force. These laws gave the court permission to arrest people who did not have their work papers, fine them, and contract their labor if they could not pay the fine. The Freedmen's Bureau declared the laws unconstitutional in 1867. Years later, the Black Codes would be reincarnated as Jim Crow laws that reigned supreme in the South for over half a century.

When the Freedmen's Bureau (1865–1872) began to enact reforms, tenant farming took the place of slavery for most of the black population of Texas. As tenant farming grew in popularity, it developed its own hierarchy. Black tenant farmers were usually at the bottom of the hierarchy. They did not control the land, farm equipment, seed, feed, or other supplies necessary to sustain their farms. They also paid large portions of their earning to the landowners in exchange for rental of all supplies. The tenant farming system greatly limited the mobility of African Americans in the state. Many lived close together near the farms that they worked on. African Americans were also limited in where they could live by the practice of segregation. Segregation developed as a social custom to exert control over both the African American population and Mexicans/Tejanos in the state. Blacks and Mexicans/Tejanos were separated from whites in schools, churches, residential districts, restaurants, theaters, and most public spaces. During the period of Reconstruction, segregation was instituted through legal codes and was enforced through vigilance committees and violence against those who opposed segregation. Groups such as the Ku Klux Klan would periodically target African Americans or Mexicans/Tejanos for lynching to send a message. They feared that the Freedmen's Bureau would eliminate the racial order and incite minorities to act violently against the white population.

Union forces ended their occupation of Texas during the 1870s, which put an official end to Reconstruction. After this point, segregation and racial discrimination became institutionalized through legal codes. These laws were explicitly written to segregate and discriminate against African Americans, but they were also informally applied to Mexicans and Tejanos. Most Texas cities were split into three separate areas: white, Negro, and Mexican quarters. Some scholars believe that a key turning point for policy changes came in the form of an event known as the Jaybird-Woodpecker War.

The Jaybird-Woodpecker War was a conflict over political control of the state legislature in Texas. The Jaybirds were a political faction composed primarily

of wealthy white Texas Democrats. Their goal was to completely get rid of the Republican influence on state politics. The Woodpeckers were another faction of the Democratic Party. They were primarily composed of the officials who were elected by black voters during Reconstruction. Both parties wanted complete control of the Democratic Party. The conflict pitted friends, neighbors, and family members against one another. The election of 1888 led to some of the most brutal moments of this conflict. In August and September, Jaybird leaders were killed. This led to armed conflict between the groups. Although the Woodpeckers won the elections, the conflict did not stop. Several months later, two Woodpeckers killed several Jaybirds. In August 1889, the Battle of Richmond occurred. Shots by J.W. Parker and W.T. Wade (Woodpeckers) aimed at Guilf and Volney Gibson (Jaybirds) escalated the conflict even further. The heavy exchange of gunfire lasted for more than 20 minutes and created great casualties for both sides. After this battle, Governor Lawrence Ross (1838–1898) came to Richmond to establish martial law and end the conflict. To establish order, Governor Ross removed all Woodpeckers from their posts, and Jaybirds (or candidates that Jaybirds approved of) took all of the offices. This allowed the Jaybirds to finally take control of the government and implement their policies to formally instill racial superiority. In October, Democrats from both factions gathered in Richmond to strategize ways to ensure permanent white control of politics. This strategy was emulated by many counties throughout the state of Texas.

The Jaybird-Woodpecker War was important for several different reasons. First, it was the beginning of a political system that perpetuated white domination. By eliminating the factions in the Democratic Party, Texas effectively became a one-party system ruled by the Jaybird Democrats. This party would effectively disenfranchise African American and Mexican/Tejano voters over the next 70 years. Moreover, the one-party rule led to the enactment of policies that would effectively solidify Jim Crow and segregation. These policies affected blacks and Latinos (the word *Latino* became more prominent at this time to describe anyone of Latin, Spanish, or Mexican descent). By the 1890s, both groups faced significant problems in the educational system. Their schools suffered from inadequate finances, poor educational facilities, and racist curriculums. Neither blacks nor Latinos were able to acquire money from the public education fund because the money was designated for the public education of white students. The laws that explicitly discriminated and segregated African Americans required that they have their own fund for education. Latinos were placed at an even greater disadvantage because they were not explicitly written into the segregation policies, which meant that they were not eligible to receive specific funding from the government for education. Although they were classified as “white,” they were still segregated informally because they were labeled as “dirty” by many whites. In many cases, the classification of Latinos into a specific racial group was solely at the discretion of whites. They were at times classified as white to prevent perception of certain policies as discriminatory. For example, to counter claims of unequal education facilities for African Americans and whites, Latinos were classified as whites and sometimes attended the same schools as African Americans.

Even though Latinos were classified as part of the dominant racial group, they were still victims of racial prejudices and practices.

### **Jim Crow and Texas (1900–1944)**

By the beginning of the twentieth century, Jim Crow was fully in place throughout the South in the United States. The extent to which it existed differed depending on the state. Its decline and elimination also varied based on location. In Texas, Jim Crow had an impact politically, socially, and economically. Before Jim Crow, African Americans played a significant role in Texas politics, especially during the Reconstruction period. From 1860 to 1890, there were at least 10 black state conventions. These conventions focused on developing plans to advocate for economic, political, and civil rights. They opposed lynching and argued for equal sentencing for black and white criminals. They also focused on the educational needs of the community and advocated for the creation of black industrial colleges. They were, in many ways, predecessors to civil rights organizations that would exist in the next century.

The political activism of any minority group was opposed during both Reconstruction and later Jim Crow. The White Man's Union Associations developed after Reconstruction to help maintain white control over county elections in areas that had large black and Latino populations. The first one developed in Wharton County, Texas, on November 25, 1889. These unions originally formed to create candidates who could defeat black elected officials. As the organizations grew in popularity, most white voters who were eligible automatically became registered members of the unions. The White Man's Union Associations were not technically classified as political parties; however, they nominated all county officials for Democratic primary elections. This allowed them to prevent blacks and Latinos from having a voice in local politics. Although minorities could vote in general elections, their votes were meaningless because they had no control over the candidates.

A movement with similar goals and aims as the White Man's Union Associations was the Lily White Movement. This movement originated in 1865, directly following the national expansion of the Republican Party. Members wanted whites to control the Republican Party in Texas. Southern voters believed that black and Latino involvement in the party would prevent its expansion, so the Lily White Movement was organized to drive African Americans out of positions of leadership within the party. The movement saw a major boost in popularity in 1888 at the Republican state convention in Fort Worth, Texas. An African American politician, Norris Wright Cuney (1846–1898), used the term “lily white” to describe the white delegates to the convention who forcibly expelled blacks and Latinos from the event. During the 1892 Republican convention, there were two separate nomination events. Cuney's faction (composed of blacks and Latinos) nominated George Clark (1841–1918) for governor. The “lily white” faction of the Republican Party nominated Andrew Jackson Houston (1854–1941). The division over race in the party allowed the Democratic Party candidate James Stephen Hogg to win the gubernatorial election. The Democrat Grover Cleveland

(1837–1908) won the presidential election that year, which meant the Cuney faction lost all federal funding. By 1902, the Lily White Movement had completely taken over the Republican Party in Texas. This meant that both blacks and Latinos were disenfranchised from political participation in both the Republican and Democratic Parties.

Early in the twentieth century, to completely close black and Latinos out of politics, local legislatures introduced the poll tax as a requirement for voting. The poll tax effectively disenfranchised over one-third of the state's population from voting. The invention of the "white primary" was another tactic used to disenfranchise voters. The Democratic Party in Texas restricted the primary election to white voters only. During this period, Texas had a one-party system; whomever won the primary won the election. This restriction discouraged many blacks from participating in the electoral process. By 1906, the number of black voters had dropped from 100,000 ten years before to approximately 5,000 voters (Barr 1973).

Although Jim Crow impacted Texas politics, it affected other areas as well. One of those areas was the military. Blacks and Latinos were segregated from whites and could only work in certain positions. They also faced discrimination from many of the businesses on military bases. Black soldiers faced particular challenges whenever they went into predominantly white towns. They were subject to hostility, violence, and poor treatment at every turn. One example of this is the Brownsville Raid of 1906, which occurred from August 13 to 14. The black soldiers were required to follow all of the legal customs in Brownsville, which included separate accommodations and showing respect for all whites and the local laws. On August 12, there was an alleged attack on a white woman by black soldiers. The next night, gunshots were fired at a local officer and a bartender; both were blamed on black soldiers from the 25th Infantry. Although the white commanding officers confirmed that the black soldiers were in their barracks, the citizens of the towns still blamed the soldiers. Residents from Brownsville planted fake evidence to frame the men from the 25th Infantry. In sum, 167 soldiers were dishonorably discharged because of the incident (Barr 1971).

Other areas where African Americans, Tejanos, and Mexicans experienced the impact of Jim Crow were residential and public areas. In 1891, Texas enacted legal codes that created railroad car segregation, and in 1910, the railroad companies were required to provide separate waiting rooms in railroad stations. Water fountains and restrooms were also public spaces that became segregated. This eventually led to residential segregation laws that sprung up throughout the 1910s and 1920s. By the 1930s, black Americans were not allowed to attend sporting or cultural events, stay in hotels, and eat at restaurants unless separate accommodations were provided. Latinos were also excluded from associating with whites through social customs in most public spaces such as barbershops, restaurants, funeral homes, juries, movie theaters, and churches.

Jim Crow laws also limited the occupational mobility for both African Americans and Latinos. Most labor unions denied nonwhites admittance. This led to many blacks and Latinos forming their own labor unions. In most instances, black and Latinos received less money for the same jobs as their white

counterparts. Many blacks were forced into jobs as gardeners, cooks, bootblacks, and maids, while Latinos were forced into jobs in fieldwork or unskilled labor jobs in construction. When the Great Depression hit in 1929, African Americans and Mexican Americans were hit the hardest. They were the first to lose their jobs and faced added hostility because of the frustration that many whites had over economic hardships. During the Great Depression, unemployed Mexican Americans faced an additional concern beyond poverty. Many feared that they would be deported. Evidence suggests that this fear was validated because thousands of unemployed Mexican citizens were given one-way bus tickets to Mexico. By the 1930s, civil rights organizations had developed in Texas to fight discrimination against African Americans and Latinos. The NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) and the LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens) were two of the most prominent organizations of that time.

The economic impact of the Great Depression was eventually offset by United States' involvement in World War II. During the wartime efforts, federal money went into building military factories, bases, detention centers, and hospitals. Building these government-sponsored institutions provided great jobs and opportunities for many citizens. Over 700,000 men joined the service, which created an explosion of industries throughout Texas. Poor farmers left the world of agriculture to obtain war jobs. African Americans took advantage of the influx of work and the fact that white Americans joined the military to help with the war efforts. They took jobs in areas that had previously been off-limits to them. They also gained an unprecedented amount of freedom that they would not want to relinquish at the end of the war. When farmers left their jobs during the wartime efforts, the United States created the Bracero program (1942–1951). This program brought in over 100,000 Mexican workers as farm labor throughout states that depended on farm labor such as Texas.

### **Texas Civil Rights and Beyond (1944–Present)**

The aftermath of the wartime period opened a broad range of employment opportunities to both African Americans and Latinos. These new employment opportunities allowed for thousands of new migrants into rural areas, which caused more densely populated housing areas, transit systems, and educational facilities. The addition of Latinos and African Americans into traditionally white spaces is what many scholars believe helped to facilitate the movement toward civil rights advocacy in Texas.

One of the first significant challenges in the quest for civil rights was in politics. Since the end of Reconstruction, Texas, like many Southern states, had successfully discovered how to disenfranchise minority voters. One of the most effective tactics was the use of primaries in which only white Americans were allowed to participate. In single-party states such as Texas, the winner of the primary election virtually sealed the general election. However, an African American named Lonnie Smith challenged the legality of the all-white primaries in his home district of Harris County, Texas. He sued the county election official (S.S. Allwright) for the right to participate in the primary elections. Smith was able to get Thurgood Marshall (1908–1993) and the NAACP to take





Students carry signs protesting “separate but equal” education near the Texas State Capitol in Austin in 1949. The city of Austin was originally built largely with slave labor. After the Civil War, Jim Crow laws kept the city segregated, the effects of which are seen in Austin even today. (Library of Congress)

### Mansfield School Segregation Incident

Although *Brown v. Board of Education* was a landmark decision that opened a path for integration of public schools for every state, many more court battles and challenges to segregation were required for educational equality to become a realistic goal. In Texas, one such turning point was the Mansfield School Desegregation Incident. The Mansfield school district is located about 20 miles south of Fort Worth, Texas. By 1956, the school district comprised around 700 white students and 60 black students (Green 1979). Segregation in the public education system required black school-aged children to travel over 20 blocks to attend underfunded and substandard schools. The National Association of the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) filed a lawsuit and received a court-ordered mandate to integrate the school system, making Mansfield the first district in Texas to receive such a mandate.

Even though the school district voted to accommodate the federal mandate, several parents were firmly opposed to the integration of the school system. Over 300 whites protested outside Mansfield High School during August 30 and 31. During the gruesome protests, they hanged three blacks in effigy. The protesters impacted local businesses, which shut down to show their support. The protesters even gained the support of Governor Allen Shiver, who believed that the protests were completely justified. He even went as far as to utilize the Texas Rangers to forcibly maintain the policies of segregation. Although word of the incidents in Mansfield reached President Dwight Eisenhower, he decided not to act because he feared it would damage his reelection campaign. Eventually, order was restored in Mansfield, but the incident showed the world how difficult it would be to integrate schools in the United States, even with a federal mandate.

up his case. Allwright and the Texas Democratic Party claimed that they were a private organization, so they could create their own guidelines for members. However, Smith and the NAACP countered this by claiming that the state had given power to local party affiliates to regulate elections, meaning that the local branch should be open to everyone. The case made its way all the way up to the U.S. Supreme Court. In the landmark decision, *Smith v. Allwright* (1944), the Court ruled that Smith had been denied equal protection under the law according to the Fourteenth Amendment. The ruling effectively opened primary elections to all voters regardless of race.

Another major milestone toward civil rights in Texas happened in the public education system. The U.S. Supreme Court case *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950) set a precedent that scholars argue was pivotal in the ruling several years later related to *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954). Before this decision, African Americans and Latinos were segregated from whites by both custom and force of law in the state, including in the area of education. The case began with Heman Marion Sweatt (1912–1982), an African American male who was applying for admission into the University of Texas School of Law. Although the president of the University of Texas said that Sweatt met every requirement for entry into the law school, he was denied access because of his race. Sweatt filed a lawsuit with the state court system, who ruled that Texas had to build an equal law school that blacks could attend within six months. However, with the help of the NAACP, he filed an appeal that made it to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court ruled in 1950 that Sweatt did not have equal access to a legal education in the state of Texas; as a result, the University of Texas at Austin had to admit qualified black applicants into their law school.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, both African Americans and Latinos continued to use a combination of direct action and legal challenges to achieve equality in public accommodations and services. By 1958, African Americans had gained more political power. This was evident with the election of Hattie Mae White, who became the first African American to be elected to an office in the state since the end of Reconstruction. Overall political participation improved because of organizations such as the Democratic Progressive Voter League. During the 1960s, African Americans participated in key events such as the National March on Washington in 1963. That year, a coalition of African Americans, Latinos, and whites marched on the Texas state capitol for similar reasons as the National March. During the latter part of the decade, and into the 1970s, black communities and Mexican/Tejano communities organized into nationalist movements. Two of the most famous ones were the Black Power Movement and the Chicano Movement. Both groups worked to increase the political power of their respective groups in local politics. For example, La Raza Unida Party was created in 1970 (by Jose Angel Gutierrez and Mario Compean) as a grassroots organization to fight for Chicano rights. The next two decades were filled with a multiracial struggle for integration. Many public schools went through several transitions, from being predominantly white, to predominantly African American, and later predominantly Latino. On the university level, whites fought back, challenging affirmative action initiatives that sought to address past acts of racial discrimination.

***Fisher v. University of Texas***

A recent Supreme Court case that has had an impact on race relations, not only in Texas but also throughout the United States, is *Fisher v. University of Texas*. In 2008, the University of Texas at Austin rejected the admission applications of two Caucasian females, Abigail Fisher and Rachel Multer Michalewicz. The girls filed a lawsuit against the school because they believed their rejection violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Fisher did not meet the requirements to receive automatic admittance into the university; however, she received consideration for admittance for an at-large admission into the school based on GPA (3.59), class rank (top 10%), and SAT scores (1,180 out of 1,600). The university also considered other factors such as leadership qualities, family circumstances, and race.

Fisher contended that race should not be a factor for admission because it could provide preferential treatment for minority students. The United States District Court upheld the admission policy of the University of Texas because it met the standards set by *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003). This decision was upheld by the fifth circuit court. In 2011, Fisher's lawyers requested that the case be heard by the U.S. Supreme Court. In 2012, in a 7-1 decision, the Supreme Court vacated the decision of the fifth circuit court because that court did not apply strict scrutiny in its decision regarding the University of Texas's admission policy. The case was sent back to the fifth circuit court. After review, the fifth circuit again ruled in favor of the university. The case returned to the U.S. Supreme Court in 2015. This time, the Court affirmed the decision of the fifth district court, which in effect upheld the university's policy for affirmative action in admission requirements.

Like every state, racial tension continues to exist in Texas. One of the most famous incidents of race-based violence is the story of James Byrd Jr, from Jasper, Texas. On June 7, 1998, Byrd rode home with a known acquaintance, Shawn Berry, and two of his friends. The three men took Byrd to a remote location out of town, where they beat him and chained him by his ankles to their pickup truck. They proceeded to drag him from the pickup truck over a mile on the open road. He died after his right arm and head were severed when his body hit a culvert. His remains were then placed in front of an African American church. Berry's friends were known white supremacists, which led to the case being tried as a hate crime. This vicious attack led to a nationwide debate over the influence of white supremacist ideologies. A little more than 10 years later, President Barack Obama passed the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act. The act was intended to take giant steps in both prosecuting and deterring hate crimes. It extended the 1969 federal hate crime law by including gender/sexual orientation as motivations for hate crimes, removing the clause necessitating involvement in protected activities, gave the federal government more power for investigations, and required the Federal Bureau of Investigation to record statistics. The act was a sign of the amount of racial progress that has occurred over the last several decades. Acts that in another time possibly could have been condoned in certain areas of Texas are now being prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. At the same time, the act serves as a reminder how much farther there is to go to make racial progress.

**NOTABLE FIGURE****Johnson, Lyndon Baines (1908–1972)**

Lyndon Baines Johnson, 36th president of the United States and arguably one of the most influential figures in Texas politics during the twentieth century, was born in Stonewall, Texas, on August 27, 1908. Johnson, like many of his peers, was a product of his time and place. This meant that he embodied the worst aspects of the racial climate in places such as Texas. At the same time, throughout his political career, he had to balance his personal views on race with both progressive views and his political aims. This resulted in a figure that was simultaneously known for both racist remarks as well as passing the strongest civil rights legislation in U.S. history.

When Johnson finished college in 1930, he began his career as a high school teacher. He taught Mexican American children at a segregated school outside San Antonio, Texas. This was his first exposure to directly working in an environment with a different ethnic group. During this period, Johnson was also involved in local political campaigns. He gained valuable political experience by working on the Texas State Senate campaign of Welly Hopkins. By 1935, he had gained so much political recognition in the state that he was appointed to the Texas National Youth Administration.

Lyndon Johnson began his career on the national political stage in 1937, when he ran a successful campaign to be a representative for the 10th congressional district of Texas. Johnson maintained this office for four consecutive terms. He used his time in this office to make great improvements to Texas infrastructure and to create more political allies locally and nationally that would help with his future campaigns and ambitions. During his time as representative, he stayed true to his deep Southern roots by being a loyal member of the Southern bloc. He voted down every single proposed civil rights bill that reached the floor of Congress during his tenure as representative. Johnson also gained a reputation because of his ability to appeal to Southern legislators by adapting his use of pejorative words or phrases, such as the n-word, to the specific regional dialects of each Southern legislator during his conversations with them.

By 1948, Johnson had won a very close U.S. Senate race. The race was so close that it went to a runoff, where Johnson won narrowly by 87 votes. Three years into his Senate career, he was chosen to be the Senate majority whip. However, after the Republican victory in the House and Senate during the election of 1952, Johnson was elected as the minority leader. Two years later, the Democratic Party retook the U.S. Senate, and Johnson became the majority leader. During this span, a significant shift in Johnson's political alliances occurred. The bills that he fought so vigorously against as a part of the Southern bloc of Representatives gained momentum in the Senate. At a political impasse, Johnson decided to work vigorously to help pass the Civil Rights Act of 1957. However, despite this change of heart, he continued to use racist rhetoric. He and other prominent Southern legislators referred to this as well as other civil rights legislation simply as "n-word bills." Many scholars note how influential Johnson was in passing this particular bill as well as the Civil Rights Act of 1960. He was the most effective

Senate majority leader in the U.S. political history. Johnson's long political career had given him a knack for efficiently discovering where a politician stood on an issue and what was necessary to persuade them. He developed what scholars termed "the Treatment," to exert his control over politicians. The length of his patented treatment varied in time, and Johnson could use it virtually anywhere. It encompassed a variety of tones and has been described by many journalists as hypnotic. One certainty about "the Treatment" is that after it happened, Johnson always got his way.

Johnson's persuasive power made him an invaluable part of John F. Kennedy's presidential campaign in 1960 and would also prove to be instrumental several years later during his own presidency. Johnson offered the Kennedy administration votes from Southern Democrats. As vice president, Johnson sought to maintain the power he had obtained while serving in the Senate. Kennedy appointed Johnson to be chairman of the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunities. Although this was supposed to be a position with little power, Johnson used his political clout to push for stronger and faster civil rights legislation. By 1963, Johnson would be at the forefront of the struggle of civil rights when he assumed the office of the presidency, after Kennedy's assassination. Johnson acted quickly not only to pass Kennedy's initiatives, but some of his own as well. He passed legislation to declare "War on Poverty" by creating the Job Corps, the Economic Opportunity Act, and the Community Action Program. Johnson used "the Treatment" to persuade Republican leader Everett Dirksen get the necessary support for the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Johnson went on to pass the Immigration Act and Voting Rights Act in 1965. The Voting Rights Act was a remedy for the disenfranchisement of millions of African Americans throughout the United States, while on the other hand, the Immigration Act created unprecedented immigration into the United States. In 1968, Johnson did not run for reelection and retired to his ranch in Stonewall, Texas. He died four years later of heart failure.

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## Utah

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Deidre Ann Tyler

### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **Pre-colonial era**

Archeological evidence supports the existence of Native populations living in Utah in small bands and extended family units, with many being nomadic hunters and gathers; the Fremont culture emerges in northern and eastern Utah, and mud-plastered pithouse villages are later established as permanent residences

#### **1300–1800s**

A diverse group of historic tribes claim the Utah region as their home, including the Anasazi, Shoshonean, Ute, Paiute, Goshute, Shoshone, and Navajo

#### **1776**

European explorers begin to make contact with the Native people, establishing trade agreements

#### **1824**

James Beckwourth, a black man, works as a fur trapper in Utah

#### **1847**

Mormons pioneers settle in Utah with three black slaves in the group—Hark Lay, Green Flake, and Oscar Crosby

#### **1847**

An estimated 20,000 Indians live in the Utah area, and Mormons settlers are instructed to attack Ute Indians if they will not give up their resources without a fight

#### **1847**

Jane Manning James, a black pioneer known for her deep faith in the Mormon religion, marries Isaac James and migrates to Utah; Mrs. James gives birth to the first black child born in Utah—Mary Ann James

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**1849**

Francis and Mary Grice, a black couple, move to Utah and open a restaurant

**1850**

Under the compromise of 1850, Utah and New Mexico territories are allowed under the doctrine of popular sovereignty to accept or ban slavery as the majority of voters decide

**1852**

Brigham Young, governor and president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, delivers the speech “An Act in Relation to Service”; this speech indicates that slavery is acceptable and no person of African descent should be ordained into the Mormon priesthood

**1852**

On February 4, Utah passes the Act of Relation to Service, legalizing slavery in the Utah Territory; an estimated 100 blacks are enslaved

**1853–1854**

The Walker War erupts between Mormon settlers and the Ute Indians

**1853**

When Elijah Abel, a biracial man ordained into the Mormon priesthood by Joseph Smith, arrives in Utah with his wife and son and asks to participate in the same temple ordinances available to white Mormons; he is denied permission

**1862**

The U.S. Congress abolishes slavery in all territories, including Utah

**1865–1868**

The Ute Black Hawk War marks the last major Indian conflict in Utah

**1869**

The completion of the transcontinental railroad draws many African Americans to Utah, especially the Ogden area, to work for the railroad

**1883**

During a fight at Grice’s restaurant between Francis Grice and Sam Joe Harvey, Harvey, an African American man, shoots and kills a Mormon bishop; Harvey is lynched by a mob in Salt Lake City on August 25

**1886**

African American buffalo soldiers are located at Fort Duchesne

**1890**

Trinity African Methodist Church, the first African American church in Utah, is established in Salt Lake City

**1892**

Mrs. Emma Jackson uses her home for prayer and Bible study, leading to the establishment of Calvary Baptist Church in Salt Lake City, the first black Baptist church in Utah



**1895**

Julius Taylor establishes the first black newspaper in Utah, the *Broad Ax*

**1896**

Utah becomes the 45th state in the Union on January 4

**1897**

William Wesley Taylor establishes a second black newspaper in Utah, the *Plain Dealer*

**1898**

Utah enacts a miscegenation law, prohibiting marriage between blacks and whites

**1913**

Booker T. Washington delivers a lecture at Calvary Baptist Church in Salt Lake City

**1916**

The Porters and Waiters Club opens in Ogden, Utah; in addition to musical and other forms of entertainment, the club offers blacks overnight accommodations

**1919**

The Salt Lake City chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is established

**1921**

Mignon Richmond is the first black student to graduate from a Utah college, earning her degree from Utah State University

**1924**

The Coon Chicken Inn opens in Salt Lake City and becomes a popular restaurant; it openly displays negative and stereotypical images of African Americans

**1925**

The president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Heber J. Grant, urges the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) not to march in Salt Lake City, but the KKK ignores his plea, and the march moves forward

**1925**

Robert Marshall, an African American man, is lynched in Price, Utah, after he is accused of murdering a white law-enforcement officer

**1937**

Internationally renowned opera singer, Marian Anderson, performs in Utah, but because she is black, she is refused hotel accommodation by white establishments

**1938**

Marion Anderson returns to Utah for an encore performance; she is granted hotel accommodation, but only if she agrees to take the service elevator

**1939**

Shelton Brewster, a Democratic state legislator and a Salt Lake City realtor, attempts to pass a law establishing a black area of the city; 1,000 people sign the

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petition, but the state refuses to pass the legislation, although “white-only” covenants continue to be used in real estate contracts

### **1943**

Clifford Worley, a 17-year-old black male resident of Utah, is shot in the back by a police officer

### **1943**

An NAACP chapter is established in Ogden

### **1948**

Local businessman and civil rights activist Robert Freed makes it possible for blacks to enjoy Lagoon Amusement Park; under previous management, blacks were not permitted to use the pool or ballrooms at Lagoon

### **1950**

Ruby Price becomes the first African American teacher in Utah; Ogden High elects two African Americans, Shirley and Carl Kinsey, to the student body

### **1963**

The Ogden NAACP chapter elects James Gillespie as president; he serves for 33 years

### **1963**

When NAACP leaders attempt to meet with the Mormon leadership to discuss issues related to civil rights and the black community, Church leaders refuse and issue a statement reading: “We have decided to remain silent”

### **1965**

The Utah legislature enacts its first civil rights bill, the public accommodations act

### **1969**

During Brigham Young University (BYU) football game against the University of Wyoming, 14 black Wyoming players wear black arm bands to protest discrimination at BYU

### **1969**

The Mormon Church issues a statement supporting civil rights

### **1970**

Ronnie Knight becomes the first black to play football at BYU

### **1971**

Black Mormons start a support group called the Genesis Group

### **1971**

Civil rights activist Alberta Hill Henry is awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Utah; she is the first black and the first woman to receive the distinction

### **1972**

Governor Calvin Rampton appoints Donald Cope to serve as the first black ombudsman for the State of Utah

**1974**

Alberta Hill Henry runs for the state legislature, but loses the primary by one vote

**1974**

On April 22, three black airmen from the Hill Air Force enter the Hi-Fi shop in Ogden, Utah, to rob and kill the people inside; the victims are forced to drink Drano, three are shot to death, and one is raped and then shot

**1975**

The Utah Peace Gardens, led by Alberta Hill Henry, are dedicated to the black people of Utah

**1976**

Utah elects its first black state legislator, Reverend Robert Harris

**1978**

Black males are given the opportunity to receive the priesthood in the Mormon Church

**1980**

Terry Williams from Salt Lake City is elected as Utah's first black state senator

**1980**

On August 20, two black men, Ted Fields, age 20, and David Martin, age 18, are killed while jogging in the park with two white girls; the shooter, John Paul Franklin, was traveling around the country shooting black people

**1984**

Utah elects its first black judge, Tyrone Medley

**1986**

The NAACP dedicates an ark in memory of Mignon Richmond, the first black graduate of a Utah college

**1986**

NAACP president Alberta Hill Henry, along with other community and church leaders, successfully campaigns to make the third Monday in January Human Rights Day in Utah; the day is later recognized as Dr. Martin Luther King Day

**1993**

Salt Lake City road 600 South is renamed Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard

**1996**

Dr. Grace Sawyer Jones becomes the first black and the first woman president of a Utah college, the College of Eastern Utah

**1998**

Reverend France Davis and others dedicate a gravestone to Robert Marshall, who was lynched in Price, Utah, in 1925, after he was suspected of shooting Deputy Sheriff James Milton Burns

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### **1999**

Shauna Graves Robertson becomes the first black female judge in the Salt Lake County Justice Court

### **2001**

George Garwood is elected mayor of South Ogden, becoming the state's first black mayor

### **2002**

Robert J. Foster becomes the first black student body president at Brigham Young University; Foster and others eventually produce a documentary entitled *Nobody Knows: The Untold Story of Black Mormons*

### **2005**

Hurricane Katrina victims arrive in Utah for relocation

### **2006**

The Utah chapter of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society (AAHGS) is organized with Phyllis Caruth as president and Pastor France Davis as chaplain

### **2010**

An anonymous group mails around Utah a list of 1,300 people, with personal information; the group contends that the people on the list are undocumented immigrants; the list spreads fear among Utah's Hispanic community

### **2011**

Utah creates a guest worker program for undocumented immigrants in the state

### **2013**

James Evans, a former Utah state senator, is elected as the first African American chairman of the Utah Republican Party

### **2014**

Mormon Haitian American Mia Love, Republican, is the first African American woman elected to Congress from Utah

### **2015**

Sandra Hollins, a Baptist Democrat, becomes the first black woman to serve as a Utah state representative

### **2017**

Brigadier General Stacey Hawkins, an African American, becomes the new Ogden Air Logistics commander

## **NARRATIVE**

When one thinks of the history of the state of Utah, it is almost synonymous with that of the Mormon faith. Indeed, it is difficult to separate the two; however, much like all of the regions and territories that would eventually become part of

the United States of America, Native Americans occupied the area that we call Utah long before the Mormon settlers arrived.

The Utah valley is located in the western part of the United States, in a region scarcely populated in comparison to other parts of the nation. The earliest historical recordings suggest that a diverse, self-sustaining population of Native peoples thrived in the area for thousands of years prior to the European invasion. First described as nomadic hunters and gathers, the Native people over time established stable, permanent communities, creating extended family units that utilized natural environmental supports for their survival. Around 400 CE, the Fremont culture emerged, further advancing social development in the Native community. They occupied the northern and eastern sections of Utah and “lived in masonry structures and made sophisticated basketry, pottery, and clay figurines for ceremonial purposes” (Lewis, “Native Americans in Utah”).

The Anasazi, Shoshone, Goshute, and Ute followed, each contributing their own unique cultural traditions. For example, the Anasazi built mud-plastered, masonry dwellings to house their families. Archeological evidence reveals that they also constructed pithouse villages that served as more permanent residences. By the early eighteenth century, when Europeans’ presence began to expand in the area, the Navajo and Ute were the dominant tribes in the region.

The Navajo were experienced hunters and gathers who were the most recent Native migrants to the Utah Territory. Having previous contact with the Spanish explorers, the Navajo learned to domesticate livestock and developed working relations with the Spanish and Pueblo peoples. However, conflict with the Ute forced many Navajo out of Utah. Conflict between the Shoshone and Ute also strained Native relationships in the area.

The Mormon settlement that began in 1847 in Salt Lake valley would forever change the lifestyle and future direction of the Native people. The Church of the Latter-day Saints (LDS), or Mormons, was founded in New York in by Joseph Smith. The group’s religious beliefs and social practices ran counter to the postcolonial community. The small community of worshippers quickly became an outcast and were targeted for violence and acts of aggression. Following the murder of Smith in 1844, the Mormons headed further west, seeking to establish a community in a more socially isolated area. And Utah was a desirable place. Under the leadership of Brigham Young, the Mormons’ vision of a permanent settlement began to unfold.

The newly occupied land had been shared by both the Utes and the Shoshone Indian tribes for hundreds of years. The free use of land and all the natural resources was a vital aspect of Indian survival. But the continued expansion of Mormon settlements had a deleterious impact on Native lifestyle and culture. Within a few years, the Mormons occupied the most desirable lands of Utah. While it has been documented that, in paternalistic fashion, the Mormon leaders taught their members to be fair and kind to the Indians, the tribal chiefs who first welcomed the Mormons to the area also witnessed their community members being expelled from the land due to the Mormon practice of safeguarding and storing the limited resources available. This forced the Indians to raid the Mormon areas to take resources in order to avoid starvation. The Mormons, under the

leadership of Brigham Young, responded in warlike fashion. Both the Walker and the Black Hawk Wars resulted from the ongoing conflict surrounding Indian need to provide food and other valuable resources to their communities. However, the strength and vitality of the Indian community was limited, diminishing their ability to engage in war with the Mormon settlers. The Black Hawk War (1865–1868) would mark the last major Indian conflict in Utah.

In 1824, the United States established the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to negotiate agreements and monitor relationships with the Native population. By the early 1860s, the BIA would begin to force its will on the Utah Indians. As the dominating political force in the area, the Mormon Church joined forces with the BIA to find a workable solution to the problems faced by the Ute, Shoshone, Bannock, and Goshute who had few remaining viable choices for survival. They could continue to fight, conduct raids and take bounty, beg for resources, assimilate, or just leave. The government's solution was to remove all land rights from the Natives and forcefully move them to Indian reservations. Many resisted. However, by 1863, the government initiated the process of relocation of the Utah Indians onto reservations.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, the federal government's General Allotment Act of 1887 attempted to break up the larger Indian reservations and turn them into small farms. An abysmal failure, for the Utah Indians, this resulted in the loss of land, cultural and tribal identity, and a trend toward social deterioration that led to poverty, unemployment, sickness, alcoholism, illiteracy, and a host of social problems. Given the restrictions and limitations placed on the Native American community, notions of "sovereign nations" were totally unrealistic. However, the federal government's 1934 Indian Reorganization Act called on Utah Indians to demonstrate the will and desire for "self-determination." They were required to elect tribal governments, institute governing laws, and develop business initiatives that would lead to economic development and independence on Indian reservations.

Ownership of Utah Indian tribal lands continued to decline in the twentieth century. Utah's Native Americans received, perhaps, the most devastating blow to their autonomy and survival as a result of actions taken by Utah senator Arthur V. Watkins.

Indian policy made a radical swing backward in the 1950s when Utah senator Arthur V. Watkins, chairman of the Senate Indian Affairs Subcommittee, promoted passage of an act to terminate all federal responsibility toward Indian tribes. To set an example, Watkins pushed for termination of Utah Indian groups, including the Shivwits, Kanosh, Koorsharem, and Indian Peaks Paiutes, as well as the Skull Valley and Washakie Shoshone. Following termination, these groups rapidly lost control of what little land they had. In 1954, following a long-standing internal dispute, the northern Ute tribe accepted the termination of mixed-blood Utes who became known as the Affiliated Ute Citizens.

Inspired by the "Red Power Movement" that occurred during the second half of the twentieth century, Utah Indians fought for the right to self-determination and preservation of their cultural heritage. They, too, benefited from claims against the U.S. government, which argued that historic treaty agreements were violated and some form of compensation or reparations were required to settle the debt.

Additionally, they also took advantage of the natural resources on reservation land. Attempts at mining of mineral deposits, improved utilization of water resources, and the development of tourism and recreational outlets created employment opportunities for tribal members. Finally, the surge in pride of Indian culture and heritage also resulted in a significant rebound in the Indian population in Utah. In a 50-year span, individuals self-identifying as Native Americans (and Alaskan) grew from slightly more than 5,000 in 1960 to an estimated 40,000 in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau).

### **African Americans**

Utah is and has always been a majority-white and Mormon state. However, before the Mormon settlers arrived, there were black entrepreneurs who were involved in the fur tapping business. One of the most famous was a mulatto trapper named James Beckwourth, who is also described as an explorer, guide, Indian fighter and mountain man Beckwourth worked for the Rocky Mountain Fur Company in Utah from 1824 to 1826 and left a record of his adventures in his autobiography. History also records another black adventurer, Jacob Dodson, who worked for the John C. Fremont's expedition from 1843 to 1847.

There were three enslaved black men who arrived in Utah with the first settlement of Mormons in 1847: Hark Lay, Green Flake, and Oscar Crosby. The first census taken in 1850 indicates the presence of 50 blacks, both free and enslaved. Most worked as farmers; a few worked in the local businesses. Jane Manning James and her husband Isaac, a freeman and a free woman, also arrived in Utah in 1847. A black pioneer known for her deep faith in the Mormon religion, Mrs. James gives birth to the first black woman born in Utah—Mary Ann James.

In 1852, a mere five years following the establishment of the first Mormon settlement, the Utah territorial legislature recognized the legality of slavery in “An Act in Relation to Service,” forging the way for the possible expansion of slavery in the area. The act offered guidelines, detailing the expectations and limitations of the master–slave relationship. There were two interesting aspects of the law: (1) there were serious restrictions placed on the Mormon population regarding sexual relationships with African slaves, imposing a fine and jail time for any violators; and (2) the law emphasized the importance of making sure that food, clothing, shelter, and education were provided to the slaves. However, its impact would be limited. A decade later, the U.S. Congress banned all forms of slavery in the U.S. territories, including Utah. Thus, attempts to assess the impact of enslavement on Utah's black community are severely limited.

#### ***An Act in Relation to Service***

Below are excerpts from “An Act in Relation to Service,” which was passed by the Utah territorial legislature in 1852. The act recognized slavery as a legal institution and sought to define master–slave relations.

Sec. 4. That if any master or mistress shall have sexual or carnal intercourse with his or her servant or servants of the African race, he or she shall forfeit all claim to said servant or servants to the commonwealth; and if any white person shall be guilty of sexual intercourse with any of the African race, they shall be subject, on conviction thereof to a fine of not exceeding one thousand dollars nor less than five hundred, to the use of the territory, and imprisonment, not exceeding three years.

Sec. 5. It shall be the duty of masters or mistresses, to provide for his, her, or their servants comfortable habitations, clothing, bedding, sufficient food, and recreation. And it shall be the duty of the servant in return therefore to labor faithfully all reasonable hours, and do such service with fidelity as may be required by his, or her master or mistress.

Sec. 6. It shall be the duty of the master to correct and punish his servant in a reasonable manner when it may be necessary, being guided by prudence and humanity; and if he shall be guilty of cruelty or abuse, or neglect to feed, clothe, or shelter his servants in a proper manner, the Probate Court may declare the contract between master and servant or servants void, according to the provisions of the fourth section of this act.

While the small presence of blacks had a negligible impact on Utah's development, once the territory was declared free, blacks continued to migrate to the area, attracted by economic and job opportunities in developing industries, including mining, railroad, and military service. It was the dark soldier with wooly hair resembling the buffalo that resulted in the Native Indian population coining the moniker "the buffalo soldier." And the biggest boom in the black population came when the military sent the buffalo soldiers to Utah.

Records show that the military was the driving force in the increase in Utah's black population. For example, the black population, both military and civilian, increased to 1,800 in 1896 and 2,300 in 1898. So, what brought most black people to Utah? We can say that the military brought the black people to Utah.

In 1886, the buffalo soldiers came to Fort Duchesne in Utah. They received \$13.00 a day along with clothing, food, and shelter. This was more money than most young black men could receive on any job during that time period. In an editorial entitled "An Unfortunate Change," it was reported that many of the white residents of Utah were hesitant about the black soldiers coming to Utah because they feared the black men would get drunk and be aggressive with the white female population. Senator Frank J. Cannon of Utah met with Secretary of War Daniel Lamont and asked him to send any other regiment but the colored regiment because of its close proximity to the University of Utah. However, the 24th Colored Regiment was sent to Utah. Julius Taylor, black editor of the local black paper, the *Broad Ax*, described his meeting with the 24th regiment as follows:

After we had mingled with a great many members of the twenty-fourth regiment, we came to the conclusion that they would rather crawl in bed with a thousand rattlesnakes rather than associate with the following well-known negro hating-sheet, the Salt Lake Tribune; P.C. Lannan, ex-butcher and manager of the same; Ex-Mayor



George M. Scott, Ex-Banker James H. Bacon; Hon. James Glendinning and the Hon. Frank J. Canon. (*Broad Ax* 1896, 4)

An article in the *Broad Ax* also shared concerns about women and their possible contact with soldiers from the 24th Regiment:

Rev. Allensworth desires to inform the good people of our beautiful city that he would be more than pleased if all the saloons, gambling houses and immoral houses should absolutely refuse to entertain the negro soldiers, for he believes that there are a thousand white men who are willing to go to hell with the black man, but there are a very few who care to go to heaven with him. He hopes that the police will arrest every brazen faced woman, be she black or white, who attempts to travel on the street cars to and from the fort. (*Broad Ax* 1896, 4)

There were leadership opportunities for blacks in the military. During the nineteenth century, two black lieutenants—John Alexander and Charles Young—graduated from the U.S. Military Academy and served at Fort Duchesne. In 1886, President Grover Cleveland appointed black army chaplain Allen Allensworth to serve the 24th Regiment.

Many of these military men brought their families with them. By the end of the decade, both Fort Duchesne and Fort Douglas in Utah were home to several units of black soldiers, impacting the cultural life of the surrounding community. Initial



The African American 24th Infantry Regiment leaves Salt Lake City on April 24, 1898. All four African American regiments in the U.S. Army served in the war. (Library of Congress)

concern about the presence of “negroes” was countered by the model behavior of the black soldiers, whose lifestyles revolved around family, church, music, and sports. Their presence contributed to the establishment of a strong yet segregated black community.

The development of the railroad industry also led to an increased black presence in the state. For example, many of the blacks came to Utah as a result of employment on the railroad at Ogden, Utah. The Promontory Summit located in Ogden, Utah, was the connection for the Southern Pacific and Union Pacific railroads. Black men held jobs as waiters, cooks, and porters for the white passengers on the railroad. These jobs were considered good middle-class jobs for black men; however, once blacks got to Utah, they could not live anywhere they wanted. Segregation was the way of life for Utah and much of the United States. Thus, the entrepreneurial spirit flourished, and many blacks established businesses to support the growing African American community in Ogden. For example, there were black hotels, restaurants, and clubs. These segregated establishments were desperately needed at the time. However, today, none of these black businesses survived in the city of Ogden.

In Utah, the emphasis on family life made marriage a central life goal for the majority of the population. And much like the Mormon faith, religion and family life were central to the lifestyle of blacks in Utah. However, life was different for the black population because of the denial of priesthood for the black male in the LDS church. Scholar Steven Taggart (1970) suggests that the denial of priesthood started with an article that contained antislavery sentiments in Jackson County, Missouri, where a Mormon settlement was established. According to Taggart, the article stirred up anti-Mormon feelings. Thus, for protection of the Mormons in the slaveholding states, they instituted a band on the priesthood, restricting opportunities to serve for whites only.

Another explanation of the priesthood band comes from Lester Bush (1984). Bush suggests that Brigham Young denied the priesthood to black men in a speech he gave in 1852, indicating that any man with one drop of black blood could not hold the priesthood. This belief system impacted the black population. First and foremost, black males could not participate in certain ceremonies and activities that were important to their advancement in the religious community. Second, in an attempt to justify the denial of the priesthood, it was suggested that the sins of the black ancestors (Cain slew his brother Abel) caused the restrictions on the lives of blacks in the LDS faith. This punishment was ordained by God, and God would be intolerant of the people who rebelled against him. The decision to withhold the priesthood from black males invoked negative images of blacks to the entire Mormon population.

While the first group of black pioneers were part of the Mormon faith; others were not. The black religious population became more diverse with the establishment of the first African Methodist Episcopal and Baptist churches that were started in the 1800s. Black families created supportive social networks and built stable communities, most notably in the emerging urban centers near Salt Lake City and Ogden. In addition to the employment opportunities in coalmining, railroad, and military services, many black residents, particularly women, were

employed in the domestic sector. And when the opportunity presented itself, blacks in Utah established businesses—clubs, hotels, newspapers, personal services, etc.—to serve the needs of the black community.

Blacks in the state were politically diverse. This can be understood by reviewing the two local black newspapers established in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The *Broad Ax* was published by Julius Taylor from 1895 to 1899. Julius Taylor was a black Democrat, which was unusual for a black person during this period because the majority of blacks in the United States were Republicans. The other rival newspaper, the *Utah Plain Dealer*, was published by William Taylor, a black Republican. It was the black Republicans who were the stronger of the two political parties. They established one of the early civic organizations for blacks in Utah: the Abraham Lincoln Colored Club.

### The Twentieth Century

Utah's black community remained small but stable throughout the twentieth century. There were slight increases when job opportunities were available and decreases when they disappeared. Moreover, Utah had many undesirable social characteristics that were unappealing to the black community. Blacks faced discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations, supported by de jure and de facto laws. Social intermingling was restricted, and interracial marriage was prohibited. In 1919, blacks in Utah established the Salt Lake City chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), becoming one of the early supporters of the civil rights organization. The community was seeking racial justice for blacks throughout the county. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) also set up a chapter in Salt Lake City. The Klan was composed of non-Mormons, anti-Mormons, and non-Mormon businessmen. Obviously, Mormon were not welcomed in the organization. Furthermore, their religious doctrine opposed people joining secret societies, like the Klan. Klan members were active throughout Utah with parades, cross burnings, lynchings, and outdoor ceremonies.

The practice of racism and discrimination are an integral part of Utah's history. There were many, ongoing racist responses to the black community, some simply humiliating and others life-threatening. For example, in 1924, the Coon Chicken Inn opens in Utah. It becomes a popular restaurant that openly displays negative, derogatory images of African Americans. In 1925, there was the lynching of a black man in Price, Utah. Robert Marshall was a transient black man accused of murdering the sheriff in Price. The *Price Sun* (1925) reported that the people who were in the lynch mob were church members, women, children, and friends. In addition, there was the unfortunate and humiliating experience by renowned opera singer Marian Anderson. In 1937, Anderson was invited to perform in the state. However, she was later denied overnight hotel accommodation because she was black. These are just a few examples of the social restrictions that were endured by the black community on a daily basis.

The residents responded to these overt forms of racial segregation and discrimination by creating their own social supports. The black community expanded its

social network with the founding of social, civic, and fraternal organizations, connecting to larger social movements like the Elks, Odd Fellows, and the Black Women's Club Movement. And, as mentioned previously, businesses and other forms of social establishments were created to serve the segregated community. For example, along with the expansion of the railroads, the state's population became more diverse. Ogden's famous 25th street, located near the Union Station, was known for the diversity of business services that it provided, including brothels, gambling houses, clubs, and hotels. Blacks in Utah would frequent the Railroad Porters and Waiters Club. In the racially segregated community, these establishments were known as social outlets that provided "a safe space" for African Americans. The Porters and Waiters Club started in 1916 and ended in the 1950s.

Black residents in Ogden, Utah, formed another local NAACP branch in 1943, after Clifford Worley, a 17-year-old black youth, was shot in the back by a policeman. Worley was a recent draftee, traveling by bus to fulfill his obligation to serve his country. Due to a disturbance, police were called to the bus station. Worley was put in the police car, but he later escaped. The officer shot Worley in the back while he was running away. A trial by jury acquitted the police officer of any wrongdoings, citing the belief that the officer had reason to suspect that Worley had been involved in a robbery the night before. The case caused many black Ogden residents to be mindful of the areas in which they lived.

In the 1940s, an increasing number of blacks opened up businesses and raised families in Utah. A boost to Utah's black population was also notable during and after World War II, with an increased military presence in Ogden at the Hill Air Force Base and Dugway Proving Grounds. Following the war, many of the servicemen and women decided to remain in Utah due to available employment opportunities. The increase in the black population (approximately 1,200) led state legislator Sheldon Brewster to campaign for a section of Utah to become a racially segregated black community. While this plan failed, real estate agents informally agreed to sell certain sold homes to "whites only," creating restrictive covenants in the real estate market.

Blacks in Utah were active participants in the modern-day civil rights movement, fighting for increased opportunities for blacks in the public and private sectors. In the Mormon-dominated community, they created their own support group—Genesis—to voice concern over the role of blacks in the Mormon Church. The local NAACP chapters, in both Salt Lake City and Ogden, also produced strong leaders to help voice community concern about racial discrimination. Increasing black representation in areas like law enforcement was one community priority. These efforts resulted in both gains and losses. In 1963, Detective Marshall White became the first black officer in the state of Utah to die in the line of duty. White received a call about a home robbery. Once he entered the home, he was shot in the stomach by a juvenile who had escaped from the Utah State Industrial School. In 1968, the community dedicated the Marshall N. White Center for Youth as a memorial to Detective White.

One of the most sensational cases in Utah during the 1970s, which negatively impacted the black community, was the Hi-Fi Shootings. On April 22, 1974, three black U.S. Air Force men robbed a Hi-Fi shop in Ogden, Utah. They gave the

victims Drano to drink, and raped the young girl. Three victims were murdered; two survived. This incident elevated the racial tension in the community. The men were caught after someone from the air force base called to report; he overheard Andrews saying he was going to rob the Hi-Fi shop and kill anyone who got in his way. Two of the assailants, Dale Pierre Selby and William Andrews, were charged with first-degree murder and aggravated robbery. The third, Keith Roberts, who waited outside the Hi-Fi in the getaway vehicle, was charged with armed robbery. Selby was executed; later, Roberts was released from prison. William Andrews was scheduled to be executed. A petition for a stay of execution was submitted to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on behalf of Andrews. The petition alleged that during the trial a handwritten note was found that said, "Hang the n\*\*\*\*r." The judge refused to declare a mistrial. William Andrews was executed in Utah in 1992. However, in December 1996, the Inter-American Commission found that the United States had violated its international obligations by denying Andrews a trial without racial discrimination.

In the 1980s, issues surrounding racial conflict and racial justice continued to be of major concern. There were several criminal cases highlighting these concerns. On August 20, 1980, a white traveler, John Paul Franklin, who was not part of the Utah community, shot and killed two young black joggers. Ted Fields and David Martin were jogging with two white girls in Liberty Park when they were murdered. Franklin indicated that he came to Utah to do something about the race-mixing that was occurring. (Anti-miscegenation laws were finally overturned in 1964 when it became legal for interracial couples to marry in Utah.) There was an outpouring of anger and frustration from the black community, particularly among the youth. The perception among many blacks in the community was that violence was on the rise, and there were concerns about the ability of the system to deliver "justice." John Paul Franklin was tried and convicted of murder and received a sentence of life imprisonment.

There were areas of social progress. In 1980, Mrs. Alberta Hill Henry was elected president of the Salt Lake City chapter of NAACP. A well-known civil rights activist, she emerged as one of the community's most engaged and prominent leaders, developing programs and initiatives to support Utah's black population. Blacks continued to make gains on the political front. The 1970s produced the first elected black legislator, Reverend Robert Harris; in the 1980s, Terry Williams was elected the first black senator in the state, and the Honorable Tyrone Medley became the first black judge. In 1997, Dr. Grace Sawyer Jones, an Episcopalian who migrated to Utah from New York, was installed as the president of the College of Eastern Utah, becoming the first female president of a college in Utah. And at the close of the century, in 1999, Utah had its first black female in Salt Lake County Court: the Honorable Shauna Graves Robertson.

### **Race and Religion**

Religion is significant to the culture of Utah. When examining the history of the state of Utah, it is important to note that race and religion are inextricably linked. As indicated earlier, LDS, or Mormons, is the predominant religion in the

state. Roughly two-thirds of the population are followers of the Mormon faith. The national headquarters for the church is located in downtown Salt Lake City. Much like other religious denominations, questions about race and racism have proved challenging to the church. The extent of founder Joseph Smith's belief in the superiority or inferiority of nonwhite racial groups remains unclear, and some have argued that the church's views, particularly in regard to the desirability of blacks to assume the priesthood, developed after his death. As noted earlier, Smith accepted several African Americans as converts to the faith. However, it was Brigham Young, the leader of the church in Utah, who provided an interpretation of the acceptability of black enslavement and later justification for denying black males the opportunity to become priest. The prohibition would last for more than a century. The ban on blacks entering the priesthood was finally lifted in 1978. While blacks are now finally eligible to serve in the church hierarchy, questions surrounding racial equality remain.

### **The Twenty-First Century**

There is evidence that social progress is being made by Utah's black community. The population continues to grow, with the majority of black newcomers coming from Africa or the Caribbean. There are an estimated 48,000 black/African Americans, including the recent immigrants (U.S. Census Bureau 2014). Many of the newcomers are also members of the LDS religion. In response to the Hurricane Katrina disaster in 2005, Governor Huntsman sought assistance from the leaders of Utah's black religious communities to help with the relocation of those displaced by the flood. While some accepted temporary refuge, about 50 or so of the New Orleans residents remained, receiving education, housing, and employment supports. African Americans are now employed in every sector of the state's economy as physicians, lawyers, judges, teachers, pharmacists, and service occupations. On September 1, 2017, Hill Air Force Base just announced that, for the first time, a black man would serve as the new commander: Brigadier General Stacey Hawkins (Lee 2017).

Today, Utah has been identified as one of the fastest growing states in the nation. With an unemployment rate of 3.5 percent, it also has one of the strongest economies in the nation. Due to the number of high-tech companies that have relocated to Utah, the state has earned a new reputation, "the Silicon Slopes of the nation." Utah prides itself on being a family-friendly state and one of the best places to raise children. As residents enjoy the many positive aspects of life in Utah, one can only hope that race relations will continue to improve as well.

### **NOTABLE FIGURE**

#### **James, Jane Manning (1813–1908)**

Jane Manning James was born on May 11, 1813, in Wilton, Connecticut, as a free black woman. Her parents, Isaac and Eliza Manning, resided in a rural community with their six children. It is reported that at the age of six, Jane was sent to

a wealthy white family where she assumed the role of servant. She was raised Presbyterian in the Christian faith and continued to serve the family for 30 years. However, James is important to Utah history as the first recorded African American Mormon to enter the state as a free woman.

James's conversion to Mormonism began after hearing the preachings of two Mormon followers. She, too, wanted to be a part of this new religious movement and convinced eight of her family members to take the journey to Nauvoo, Illinois, where the Mormons were establishing a new settlement. Once the family arrived in Nauvoo, James met Joseph Smith, the founder of LDS. At the meeting, Smith asked James to tell him about her travels to Nauvoo. James reportedly told Joseph Smith that her family got separated from the main group as they traveled through Buffalo, New York. The authorities in Buffalo threatened to put her in jail because she could not produce "free papers." She convinced them that they were free people who had never been slaves. James and her family continued on foot, walking 800 miles until they finally arrived in Nauvoo.

James was later employed in the household of Joseph Smith as a servant where she gained greater familiarity with the beliefs and practices of the LDS. When the Mormons were forced to leave Nauvoo, James made the journey to Salt Lake City, Utah, making her the first free black Mormon woman to live in Utah with the Mormon pioneers.

She was known in the community as "Aunt Jane." She worked as a member of the Relief Society and helped with special projects. She wanted to participate, fully, in all aspects of the practicing Mormon faith; however, she was denied due to her race. As she grew older, the church authorities reserved a special seat in the middle of the tabernacle for James and her brother. Toward the end of her life, she requested temple endowments so that she could be sealed to her family, but as she was a black woman, the LDS church would not allow her to have access to such blessings. More than 60 years after her death, she was posthumously endowed.

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# 46

## Vermont

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William B. Noseworthy

### CHRONOLOGY

#### 1570

The Iroquois-Algonquin Wars breakout, lasting until the seventeenth century; the wars create a sort of “borderlands” zone in what is now Vermont

#### 1777

Vermont breaks away from New York to form the independent Commonwealth of Vermont; the commonwealth bans adult slavery in its constitution

#### 1791

On March 4, Vermont becomes the 14th state to enter the Union; the state constitution retains the prohibition on slavery

#### 1777–1857

Racism is taught as a legitimate scientific idea at the University of Vermont (UVM), Norwich University, Middlebury College, and Dartmouth College

#### 1804

The Honorable Theophilus Harrington reads the Vermont State Supreme Court decision that states slavery could only be legal if the proclaimed owner could produce a bill of sale “signed by God himself”

#### 1810

*The Blind African Slave*, a memoir of former slave Jeffrey Brace, who now lives in Poultney, Vermont, is published

#### 1818–1827

Jeffrey Brace seeks a pension for his Revolutionary War service

#### 1818

The Vermont chapter of the American Colonization Society, an antislavery and antiblack organization that seeks to return slaves to Africa, is founded at the statehouse in Montpelier

**1823**

Alexander Twilight becomes the first African American to receive a degree from a U.S. institution of higher education when he graduates from Vermont's Middlebury College

**1830s**

Abolitionism gains strength in Vermont; the Anti-Slavery Society gains members; and support for the American Colonization Society wanes

**1836**

Alexander Twilight is elected to the Vermont legislature

**1843**

Former slave Frederick Douglass attends a series of abolitionist meetings at Middlebury, speaking at three meetings over a two-day period

**1856**

Martin Henry Freeman, who was born in Rutland, Vermont, is appointed president of Allegheny Institute (later Avery College), becoming the first African American college president in the United States

**1860**

The U.S. Census counts about 700 blacks resident in Vermont

**1861–1865**

Over 100 African American soldiers from Vermont serve in the U.S. Army during the Civil War

**1865**

On March 8, Vermont ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

**1866**

On October 30, Vermont ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing full civil rights to African Americans

**1869**

On October 20, Vermont ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing black men the right to vote

**1893**

Students at UVM begin a "cakewalk" dance as part of their winter carnival that includes students performing in blackface

**1908–1909**

Taraknath Das, Bengali independence leader, attends Norwich University before being honorably discharged due to his agitation against "Great Britain"

**1924**

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) begins substantial organizational efforts in Vermont

**1924**

President Calvin Coolidge (a Vermonter) signs the Immigration Act, when set quotas for immigrants from certain countries and bars Arab and Asian immigrants altogether

**1943**

Reverend A. Ritchie Low of Johnson, Vermont, visits Adam Clayton Powell's Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, New York; the collaboration results in the conception of "the Vermont Plan," whereby 75–100 African American children from Harlem visit Vermont for two weeks each year to promote racial harmony; the programs run until 1948

**1950s–1970s**

Criticism of "flatlanders" who come to Vermont as tourists sometimes takes on anti-Semitic undertones

**1952**

An African American painter, Thomas Sanderson, and his family move to a new home in Burlington, Vermont; certain locals attempt to enforce a de facto racial covenant, but the move fails and they apologize, promising to be "good neighbors"

**1954**

Because it has two African American members—LeRoy Williams Jr. and Richard Dennis—Phi Sigma Delta fraternity at UVM breaks "cakewalk tradition" by donning "purple face" (their fraternity color) instead of black

**1957**

When LeRoy Williams Jr. and Joyce Austin are refused service at the Rest Haven Motel in Burlington because they are black, 400 students from the University of Vermont protest the Rest Haven Motel

**1957**

The University of Vermont founds the Council on Human Relations, which supports passage of a state statute that prohibits private establishments that cater to the public from discriminating based on race, creed, color, or national origin

**1963**

On March 15, Vermont ratifies the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing the poll tax

**1965**

UVM "cakewalkers" shift to "Green Face," rejecting the traditional blackface as racially unacceptable

**1969**

UVM finally removes the annual "cakewalk" from the school's winter carnival

**1969**

The first black church is organized in Burlington

**1982**

The KKK has a brief period of resurgent organizing efforts in Vermont, but KKK events are met with anti-racist protesters at five to ten times the number of Klansmen

**1983**

Francis Brooks, who moved to Vermont from Virginia, becomes the first black elected to the Vermont legislature in the twentieth century

**2000**

According to the U.S. Census, blacks constitute less than 1 percent of Vermont's population

**2010**

According to the U.S. Census, undocumented immigrants constitute about 1.6 percent of the state's population

**2013**

*The Daily Stormer*, a neo-Nazi and white supremacist news and commentary website, is founded in Burlington

**2014–2017**

Black Lives Matter (BLM)-affiliated groups peacefully protest statewide in response to incidents of hate and bias across the country; such BLM groups, by and large, have the support of state politicians and public figures in Vermont

**2014**

An estimated 1,500 undocumented immigrants are resident in Vermont, with most of them working on dairy farms

**2014**

Vermont's governor indicates the state's willingness to take in some of the unaccompanied children from Central America who had recently flooded across the southern border of the United States

**2017**

Vermont is one of a few states which allow undocumented immigrants to obtain a driver's license, though not the enhanced driver's license that can serve as a passport for U.S. citizens

**2017**

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) arrests of Latinx political organizers raise questions around race and the sanctuary movement; state offices note that they do not have a policy to report every case to ICE, so, against protocol, ICE officers enter the state without notifying local agencies

**2017**

The number of undocumented immigrants working on Vermont dairy farms rises to over 2,000

**NARRATIVE**

The problem of writing a history of race and racism for the state of Vermont is a problem of whiteness. Individuals who live in the state are also self-conscious of

this very problem. It is a problem of history and a problem of the present. It was even the focus of a recent Vermont Public Radio broadcast on the special series *Our Brave Little State* on March 3, 2017. Although the self-conscious portrayal of the contemporary community of Vermonters is very much one of constant liberalism and equity, this modern portrayal draws upon a self-envisioned historical memory that ascribes progressive politics and egalitarianism to the state's pasty white reputation. Yet, simply put, Vermont is the second whitest state in the country (96.7%), only after Maine, remaining at the top of the list for "whitest states" when "Hispanic whites" are removed from the count (94.8% "white only"). At the very same time, the state's most liberal town, "the city of Burlington," is also its most diverse, with an Asian and mixed-race population on par with the national averages (5.42% vs. 5.6%; and 2.65% vs. 2.91%, respectively). Yes, much of this diversity is in fact due to the recent increase in refugee populations that have been relocated to communities in and surrounding Burlington, partially because of Vermont's continued comparatively progressive approach to immigration policy. At the same time, refugees are not living in the state by choice, per se, but out of necessity. Nevertheless, the African American and American Indian populations are considerably lower than national averages (3.71% vs. 12.6%; and 0.56% vs. 1.7%, respectively), although they remain much higher than statewide averages for each group (African American 1%; mixed 1.95%; Asian 1.3%; and American Indian 0.32%).

The demographics of the state of Vermont are often manipulated and combined with its self-envisioned portrayal of an unusually long history of liberalism, to be critiqued by conservative-leaning punditry. In one example, D. Lambro, from the *Washington Times*, on August 7, 2003, claimed that "Vermont . . . does not have many of the problems of other states. More than 96% of Vermont residents are white" (Vanderbeck 2006, 642). Think about the implications of this statement. D. Lambro, on the pages of a national media outlet, publicly claimed that problems of "other states" are directly linked to racial diversity. Read critically, the statement is obvious support for white supremacy. Read generously, they are still indicative of the latent apologist attitude that gives white supremacists platforms to form arguments that have crept into national news outlets, the mouths of leading politicians, and those of the public. By drawing a causal relationship between racial diversity and social problems, they ignore the influence that structural economic inequalities play in shaping individual experiences and replicate centuries-old, deeply problematic racist attitudes. At the very same time, the imaginary self-perception of the state of Vermont itself must be criticized as many presentations of its history are also tied to the formation of an "alternative whiteness" that is consistently contrasted with the "poor ignorant bigot" of the Southern United States of America. A deeper examination of the history of race and racism in the state helps to contextualize the formation of this problematic "liberal whiteness," while also illuminating the contributions of people of color to the history of the state of Vermont that is often overlooked. Indeed, although white people were not always a majority in the region of the Green Mountain range, along with the surrounding Champlain and Connecticut valleys, there is a problematic trend of "whitewashing" the history of the state, which, if aptly critiqued, establishes a more significant presence of people of color in the

state's history, while beginning to point toward contemporary difficulties that Vermont faces in the present.

### **Indigenous Population**

The earliest peoples to settle the lands that came to be known as Vermont were the Western Bands (Sokoki, Missisquoi, and Cowasuck) of the Abenaki tribe of the Algonquin nation (also Wabanaki Confederacy). They came thousands of years ago; however, when French fur traders arrived in the eighteenth century, and colonial contestations with British power became more prominent, an increasing wedge was driven between the nearby Iroquois nation in what became the state of New York and the Abenaki, based upon an ethnolinguistic and geographical boundary in the Champlain valley. The ethnolinguistic divide between the Iroquois and the Algonquin nations had deepened since the Iroquois-Algonquin Wars broke out in 1570. Although the warfare did not leave the lands that are now Vermont completely abandoned, they did create a sort of "borderlands," which only furthered the divisions between the two indigenous nations. This borderlands zone lasted well into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

With Algonquin-affiliated tribes in much of the eastern and northern portions of the state, there were also other groups nearby, such as the Mohicans in the Hudson River valley and the southwestern part of the state and the Penacook and Pocumtuc, who were Massachusetts/Wampanoag peoples in the southeastern part of the state. Although Abenaki had settled the area for generations, the "Green Mount" (*Vert Mont*), became known as the "Green Mountains" or "Vermont," which was occupied by predominantly English-speaking Irish, Scottish, and English migrants. Although contestations over "proper European whiteness" continued well into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with the increased migrations of Germans, Italians, Polish, and others, there remained an often-explicit assumption that the lands of Vermont were formerly uninhabited. Between two generations of men in the 1800s, one younger asked the older about the nature of the state, and the older replied that "all people were foreigners here once, even the Indians" (Vanderbeck 2006, 648). Indeed, just as much as it was later the case with the American West, the soils of Vermont were perceived to be uninhabited in their origins, and therefore, the cooption and theft of Native lands by European immigrants were written off in the eighteenth century as a natural process. This was a view that was well maintained in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Later scholarly analysis has shown that the state was probably well populated until shifts in the Algonquin-Iroquois conflict in the seventeenth century led to the depopulation of fault lines of ethnolinguistic conflict within the lands that are now the state of Vermont.

### **African Descendants**

A second early complex issue in the history of race and racism in Vermont was the Constitution of the Republic of Vermont that supposedly banned slavery

in 1777. While both New Hampshire and New York had issued various claims on parts of the state, leaders in Vermont established their Republic and constitution, declaring themselves independent. It is often said that the reason for this was that early leadership in Vermont wanted to ban slavery. They did, in fact, place a partial ban on slavery in July 1777, with the signing of the constitution, which stated that men over the age of 21 and that women over the age of 18 could not be forced into slavery. However, there were two significant conditions that allowed slavery to, technically, continue in the state. First, and foremost, children and young adults could still be forced into slavery. Second, individuals could still be bound into slavery by their consent, to pay off debts, damages, fines, or other financial burdens. Furthermore, Southern states petitioned to deny Vermont statehood in the 1780s until a “slave state” could also be admitted. As a condition of entry into the Union of the United States of America as the 14th state in 1791, Vermont was forced to adhere to the “Fugitive Slave Clause” of Article IV, Section 2, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution, which theoretically mandated the return of slaves from “free states” to “slave states,” where both adult and child slavery was still legal. The “Fugitive Slave Acts” (1793 and 1850) further mandated that slave owners were allowed to recover all slaves who had fled to the state. However, Vermont justices delivered their ruling, via the record of Honorable Theophilus Harrington, who reported that slavery could not be legally validated unless the so-called owner could produce a bill of sale “signed by God himself.”



Portrait of African American minister Lemuel Haynes, who fought in the American Revolution and was a staunch critic of slavery. (Interim Archives/Getty Images)

Furthermore, with the infamous *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857) case, the U.S. Supreme Court explicitly racialized slavery, by insisting that the “enslaved African race were not intended to be included” in the ideals of the legal system established by the Declaration of Independence, Bill of Rights, and Constitution.

People of African descent in the early nineteenth century in Vermont were critical contributors to the national literary scene and growth of Christian communities. By 1800, the census counted 557 African-descended people in the state. The community included the famous theologian and essayist Lemuel Haynes (born in West Hartford, Connecticut, in 1753), who had been abandoned by his African father and white mother. Haynes was indentured at the age of five



to a family in Granville, Massachusetts, although he attended school on occasion and became a Calvinist. He fought in the American Revolution and afterward (in 1783), married a white schoolteacher, before taking a pulpit in Rutland in 1788, at a Congregation Church, attended by 42, mostly elderly white people. He grew the church steadily and at one point added 109 new members in a membership drive. He served in Rutland for 30 years, during which he frequently accepted invitations to other churches and later moved to a position in Manchester, Vermont, between 1819 and 1822. In 1804, he reputedly became the first African American to be awarded an honorary bachelor's degree from Middlebury College (founded in 1800). Lemuel Haynes's move to Manchester, however, was not unmotivated. In the later years in Rutland, parish members had defended him from attacks against racism by proclaiming that his "soul was white," although the growing tide of sentiment suggested that they were increasingly displeased by the idea that their preacher was a mulatto (Lovejoy 2001, 57–79). Nonetheless, Haynes continued to have a substantial career, and it was while he was stationed in Manchester that he spoke at the funeral of Lucy Terry Price.

Price had been born in Africa in 1730, kidnapped, enslaved in Rhode Island and Massachusetts, and eventually freed through marriage to her free black husband, Obijah Prince. Prince was the author of the first known work of African American English language literature (in 1756): the poem "Bars Fight." The Princes moved to Guilford, Vermont, in 1760. Lucy became locally famous for her oration and storytelling. She also attempted to have one of her sons admitted to Williams College, but was unsuccessful. After her husband died in 1794, she moved to Sunderland, Vermont, where she lived until her death in 1821. At her funeral, Lemuel Haynes preached against despotism, racism, and slavery, citing lines from her poetry as a point of reference. Just a few years after her funeral, Alexander Twilight (born in 1795 in Vermont), son of a light-skinned and a possibly mixed-race father who fought in the American Revolution, became the first African American to graduate from college in the United States, when he received a degree from Middlebury College in 1823. Like Haynes, he also became a preacher, although the clergy became a hotly contested terrain in the coming decade.

Vermont effectively outlawed adult slavery, but no Vermonters contributed to the authorship of the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, the U.S. Constitution, or the Bill of Rights, and attitudes in the state did appear entirely forward when it came to matters of race. Between 1777 and 1857, the works of Carl von Linnæus, Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, and Reverend Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith all contributed toward a scientific justification of white supremacy in the early Republic of Vermont, and the state of Vermont. Their works were taught in the natural science curriculum at Middlebury College (where Alexander Twilight received his degree in 1823), the University of Vermont, Norwich University, and at Dartmouth College (Hanover, New Hampshire), and so reinforced ideas affiliated with scientific racism. Because these works were being taught to the most accomplished young intellectuals of the state, the impact of scientific racism was widespread. It permeated the daily lives of the scholars, doctors, lawyers, teachers, business people, and the most educated of the state. There was, for example, a relatively pervasive adaptation of the racially charged term

“n\*\*\*\*r” (versus the seemingly less-charged, at the time “Negro,” or perhaps less so “African”) in correspondences.

In 1837, Charles B. Fletcher (son of Vermont congressman Isaac Fletcher) wrote to Henry Stevens (founder of the Vermont Historical Society) and described how “n\*\*\*\*rs” in the South were “better off” than Vermonters “had been led to believe” (Lovejoy 2001, 50). His correspondence notes not only the occasional usage of the term, but also the general perception of Vermonters that African-descended people in the South were inherently “poor off” and could only benefit from the social uplift of white Northerners. Democratic Party (minority party)-affiliated papers in the state, the *Vermont Congressman* (Castleton) and *Spirit of the Age* (Woodstock), used the critiques of “n\*\*\*\*rs” and “n\*\*\*\*r businesses” to attack the Whig Party (the majority party in the state from 1835 to 1853) (Lovejoy 2001, 48–50). In other words, the racism of the “nineteenth-century Democratic Party” was not purely a “Southern Democrat” phenomenon. In July 1843, when Frederick Douglas attended an abolitionist series at the Middlebury convention, it seems that he was treated with respect while riding in the coach through Vermont at night. However, in daylight, looks from his fellow riders became disrespectful as opposition to the speakers of the convention grew. Fliers were spread about the town that threatened the personal well-being of the speakers. Furthermore, attitudes of anti-black racism could have resulted in the general citation of a variety of stereotypes, as exhibited in George Gilpin Robinson’s letters to his brother Rowland Evans (1854–1859). While he was the son of a Quaker, and both men had relocated to New York (Astoria and Brooklyn), it seems that George drew widely upon stereotypes of African Americans, referring to a “n\*\*\*\*r cruise” (the Saturday afternoon ferry to Brooklyn, New York), the idea of the “Black Star Ascendant” (a reference to the black laborers who were assertive of the concept that the wealthy depended on them), and the well-known “race-based smell” problem, one associated with white critiques of black labor (Lovejoy 2001, 50–51).

The pervasive social racism of antiblack sentiment amounted to relatively widespread white support of the American Colonization Society in Vermont, which advocated for the return of free African-descended people “back to Africa” with the explicit purpose of spreading “civilization and Christianity.” The first Vermont chapter was founded at the statehouse in Montpelier in 1818 by a mix of former governors, former senators, current politicians, and financiers, not to mention several ministers who quickly joined the ranks of their membership. The Vermont Colonization Society grew until the 1830s when the Anti-Slavery Society began to cut into their ranks, as it channeled antislavery sentiment into a more radical and immediate call for emancipation. Furthermore, the Anti-Slavery Society members criticized the members of the Colonization Society as “prejudiced,” for their lack of support of immediate abolition and the apparent “unwillingness” of Colonization Society members to live with the free black population (Lovejoy 2001, 52–53). The criticism proved useful, though, as many former Colonization Society members, such as Vermont congressperson William Slade (from 1832 to 1842), withdrew their membership to join the ranks of abolitionists and publicly call for immediate emancipation, even as abolitionists were targeted by small, violent mobs during the rising tide of anti-abolitionism, particularly in

1835. The anti-abolitionists additionally came with their accusations, essentially proclaiming that abolitionist lecturers were antidemocratic, as they spoke “against the wishes of the people” demonstrating their “blind and bigoted obstinacy,” a seemingly ironic critique given more contemporary understandings of the debate, and, in one instance, turned a fire pump on a fiery abolitionist in the town of Bradford. In another incident, although the majority of the residents in the area were antislavery, enough anti-abolitionist sentiment was mustered to turn rocks upon the representatives hall in the old capital building of Montpelier during an event for the Connecticut-based Unitarian minister Samuel J. May. It was not that the residents were proslavery, but rather they did not wish to be judged by an outsider, or so they claimed. They also claimed that this was their motivating factor in a statement that they repeated when they hurled rocks and eggs at the Old Brick Congregational Church the next day (Lovejoy 2001, 55–57).

### **Asian Americans**

There is little discussion in Vermont history of anti-Asian racism or sentiments, such as the kind that would fill up the pages of textbooks on the periods of the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century in the history of the United States. One possible explanation is that the Chinese and Asian population in the state were even more negligible than the Native American and African American communities. Not one Chinese person was recorded in the Vermont census in 1880 (Sandmeyer 1991, 20–21). One of the earliest Asians in state records was Taraknath Das, a Bengali independence leader, who attended Norwich University in 1908–1909, although he was honorably discharged for agitating against Great Britain. While his case was pending, he faced several personal attacks based on his race.

### **Ku Klux Klan and White Supremacy**

While there were so few Asians in the state of Vermont, there is also a sentiment in the history of the state that there was little to no membership of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in the early twentieth century either. However, by 1924, the KKK began organizing, the very same year that President Calvin Coolidge signed the Immigration Act, which included Native Americans for citizenship, but barred Asians (except for Japanese and Filipinos). The KKK were well known for their antiblack rhetoric. However, in the state of Vermont, KKK efforts were fueled by anti-immigrant sentiment. By the late 1920s, the attitudes of white supremacy had become so prevalent that thousands were members of the Klan. The eventual decline of the KKK provided an excuse for more subtle forms of self-constructed white supremacy, even as the KKK itself remained.

Between 1924 and 1927, the KKK claimed they raised a membership of 10,000 Vermonters, or 2.85 percent of the state’s roughly 350,000 people. Springfield, Bennington, Rutland, Barre, and Montpelier all had chapters. In 1924, a public meeting of 2,000 plus members in full regalia was held in St. Johnsbury. Sentiments of the group were broadly antiblack, anti-Semitic, and anti-Catholic. But the organization profited most from anti-French Catholic and anti-French

Canadian sentiment more broadly. Although the group was less violent than in the South, in at least one incident, a burning cross nearby a Catholic church caused significant damage to the church itself. The distribution of membership fees among leadership was a dangerous get-rich-quick scheme (Wright 2011). President Calvin “Silent Cal” Coolidge (Plymouth Notch) felt it necessary to proclaim that he was not a member. However, when he went on to sign a bill granting Native American citizenship (the 1924 Immigration Act), the bill still excluded Asians from becoming citizens. Furthermore, “Silent Cal” did not openly criticize the KKK during his 1924 bid for election (Sibley 2014).

Resistance against the KKK in Vermont was distinctly local. Public ordinances banned masks or hoods in Rutland and Burlington. Press critiques appeared in the *Bellows Falls Times*, the *Burlington Free Press*, and the *St. Albans Messenger*. There were public petitions (in Springfield), public statements by politicians (in Springfield), firing KKK-affiliated officials (in Rutland), boycotts (in Rutland), and overt anti-racist groups (the Knights of the Flaming Circle, Montpelier). As the 1920s’ economic crisis in Vermont worsened, KKK leadership was caught stealing from the coffers (Neill 1989; Woodsmoke Productions and Vermont Historical Society 1989, 2016). They were forced underground, but gained small bursts of popularity in Vermont during the civil rights era and again in the 1980s from anti-foreigner sentiment.

By the 1950s, the sentiment of the state changed again toward more active progressivism, as a result of the work of Reverend A. Ritchie Low of Johnson, Vermont, among others. Reverend Low’s “Vermont Plan” was founded upon a visit to Adam Clayton Powell’s Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, New York, in 1943. Between 1943 and 1948, the “Vermont Plan” sent 75 to 100 children from Harlem to Vermont for two weeks each year to promote racial harmony. In the 1950s, there were several similarly motivated efforts to promote racial harmony, although they took different forms, and occasionally, there were still very overt struggles for racial equality. In December 1952, an African American painter, Thomas Sanderson, and his family moved to a new home in Burlington, Vermont. Anonymous phone calls with threats were made to the builder, the real estate agent. Like elsewhere, the argument from locals was that they were concerned Sanderson would “lower property values.” Sanderson informs the *Burlington Free Press* that he will move in regardless. After press attention, public sentiment changed. Locals called Sanderson’s home to confess, apologize, and state their intentions to be “good neighbors.” Also in the 1950s, Vermonters reformed a blackface performance of the “cakewalk,” known as the “Kake Walk,” at the University of Vermont, and passed the first state resolution on racial equality since the nineteenth century. The KKK was forced underground, although there were resurgent activities during the civil rights era, and again in the 1980s. In each case, however, Vermonters forced KKK membership to retreat underground. In 1982, in Brattleboro, there was a public rally of two dozen KKK members, although anti-KKK activists held protests and counterprotests numbering five to ten times that number. In May that year, 150 anti-KKK protesters shouted down 15 KKK members in an attempt at open recruiting in Wilmington, Vermont (*New York Times* 1982).

### **The “Kake Walk”**

Cakewalks originated as “Prize Walks” among slave populations in the nineteenth-century American South. The term refers to a cake that was awarded to the prize couple in an 1876 Philadelphia competition. Seventeen years later, in 1893, the first “Kake Walk” was performed at the University of Vermont (UVM) winter carnival. UVM students and faculty coopted the term from an Ebonics variation of the common parlance “cakewalk,” which they agreed was the “proper” spelling. In further mockery of slave culture, the “Kake Walkers,” as they were called, donned blackface. The “tradition” continued at UVM for nearly 60 years. In 1954, the Phi Sigma Delta fraternity broke with the blackface “tradition”; they donned “purpleface” in honor of their fraternity colors because two members of their fraternity—LeRoy Williams Jr. and Richard Dennis—were African American. These two students were treated harshly in Vermont but were often backed by their peers. In 1957, LeRoy Williams Jr. and his date, Joyce Austin, were refused service at the Rest Haven Motel “because they were negros,” per Williams’s later report. In response, 400 students protested outside the hotel, and UVM founded a Council on Human Relations, which sponsored the state’s first statute on racial equality since the nineteenth century. The statute prohibited private establishments that cater to the public from discrimination based on race, creed, color, or national origin. By 1965, the UVM “Kake Walkers” sported only “greenface” (the school’s color). In 1969, UVM finally removed the “Kake Walk” from the winter carnival. Progressive performers Janis Joplin and Smokey Robinson played as two of the main acts at the “Winter Weekend” carnival that year (Neubauer, O’Keefe, and Olson 2016).

Despite the squelching of KKK activity in the 1980s, racist sentiments remained a problem in the state of Vermont. With the rise of the tourist and ski industries, which slowly made up for the loss of mining and agricultural production, came the stated fear of the “flatlanders” who were replacing native “woodchucks,” although particularly in the case of “flatlanders” from the greater New York City area, there were sometimes (not so) subtle anti-Semitic connotations to the usage of the term, lasting well into the 1970s (Vanderbeck 2006). Furthermore, the Southern Poverty Law Center reports that there is at least one neo-Nazi-affiliated group (the *Daily Stormer*) in Burlington, Vermont, which predominantly appears as an “online news forum” masquerading as a legitimate intellectual source for the white-supremacist, self-proclaimed “alt-right” members who comment in its forum. More publicly, in recent years, incidents of hate and bias have been met with measures of response, although the state has not been able to prevent them from occurring. In 2011, the *Berkshire Eagle* reported that there might have even been some contemporary underground KKK activity (Wright 2011). When a series of KKK’s recruiting fliers appeared in Burlington in 2015, there was a public outcry, and a police investigation, although the police investigation seems to have not yielded any results (Baird 2015). Even in the past months, there have been larger issues that relate to the treatment of the Latinx working community in the state. As Latinx were often historically classified as “white,” particularly in the northern United States, historical records of Latinx in Vermont may be covered up by the presumed treatment of many Latinx individuals as “white.” Furthermore, the emergence of Latinx community in Vermont is viewed as a more recent

sociohistorical phenomenon. As widespread, systemic, anti-Latinx racism has spread since the campaign of President Donald Trump in 2016 and 2017, recent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detentions of three Vermont workers brought an additional question to the fore: even as the state has made moves to join the sanctuary movement, are undercover ICE agents being motivated by political concerns, targeting pro-worker Latinx activists?

### **Social Progress**

In the contemporary political and social climate, education reform has been a fundamental aspect of teaching about race and racism in the state of Vermont. For example, the University of Vermont now teaches courses in Critical Race and Ethnic Studies programs, which discuss local, national, and global issues of hate and bias, as well as the strategies that have been adopted to move beyond these matters toward more inclusive societies. Noriko Matsumoto (PhD, CUNY) joined the program at UVM in 2012, where she teaches courses on Race Relations in the United States and an Introduction to U.S. ALANA Ethnic Studies. At Norwich University, in the College of Liberal Arts, students have taken trips abroad to Vietnam, Thailand, and Taiwan to study cultures and histories with which they were not previously familiar. Middlebury College now has a Center for Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity, and Dartmouth College now has a Cultural Studies program, which includes courses on Postcolonial Studies and Ethnic Studies. If these institutions were so influential in the spread of scientific racism through their emphasis on the natural sciences in the nineteenth century, perhaps they can, with sufficient investment, assist in laying the groundwork for the significant anti-racist work to be done in contemporary Vermont.

### **NOTABLE FIGURES**

#### **Brace, Jeffrey (1742–1827)**

Jeffrey Brace was born as Boyrereau Brinch in West Africa in 1742. His father (Whryn Brinch) and grandfather had been captains in the king's guard in their country, although he was captured with a group of his friends at 16 years old in 1758. They were imprisoned with 300 others, who were confined to a space that allowed them only to sit or lie on their back, across the transatlantic passage, living on just two meals a day for months, before they arrived in Barbados and were sold on the slave market. While they awaited sale, they were held in the "House of Subjection," tortured and starved. After two years, in 1760, Brinch was sold to Captain Isaac Mills, at which point he was given the name Jeffrey Brace. He fought as an enslaved sailor for two years in the Seven Years' War (the French and Indian War) and was wounded in a battle at Havana, Cuba. Captain Mills then sold him to John Burwell of Milford, Connecticut, one of the several masters who was quite harsh. Brace then shifted from position to position, until he became a servant of Mary Stiles, a widow who was a bit kinder, and who taught him to read and write in English. When the Revolutionary War broke out in 1777, Brace

enlisted in the Continental Army, hoping to win his freedom for his service. He had gone through three tours of duty before his leg was injured, he was honorably discharged with a badge of merit, and he returned to Milford, where Benjamin Stiles (Mary's son) signed his manumission papers in 1784 (Winter 2005, 2006).

In 1784, Brace moved from Connecticut to Vermont, then a "frontier state" that was portrayed, in the words of Nathan Perkins (1789), as a land of "poverty, starvation, disease and social isolation," and the land of "deists & proper heathens" (Winter 2006, 476). Brace first settled in Poultney and completed a memoir: *The Blind African Slave* (1810). In 1790, he was one of 255 free nonwhites in the state, which still had 16 slaves, out of a total of 85,425 people. The number of Vermonters who were counted as "free" but in fact were consigned to term-limited forced labor contracts under indentured servitude was estimated to have been in the thousands. Antislavery sentiment was pervasive, however, as Honorable Theophilus Harrington, the junior member of a three-judge Supreme Court panel, offered an 1804 court decision that slavery could only be legal in the state of Vermont if the owner provided a bill of sale "signed by Almighty God, Himself" (Lovejoy 2001, 48). This does not negate, however, that debtors remained vulnerable to conditions of virtual enslavement or indentured labor. Nevertheless, Brace managed to stay relatively "free." Despite being cheated out of wages several times and cheated on several contracts, he, impressively, managed to save enough money to purchase land in Poultney. The tract he owned is now titled "Ames Hollow." He then went to work in Dorset, where he met a widow, Susannah (Susan) Dublin, at Manley's Tavern. They married while he was in his mid-forties, and they moved back to Poultney where they became part of the "growing New England patchwork" of African-descended people (Winter 2006, 478). Many of them contributed to a comparatively vast body of accounts of early free African-descended people in the state. However, they suffered difficulties as well. Susan Dublin was forced to bind two of her previous children to a couple in Dorset, and a farmer who sought Brace's land tapped their maple trees turned his cattle loose on their crops, harassed them, and attempted to force them to bind the Brace-Dublin children to indentured servitude as well (Winter 2005).

Harriet Wilson's book *Our Nig* (1859) provides an autobiographical account of indentured servitude in New Hampshire and may be a major avenue into what life would have been like for indentured children in the nineteenth-century Vermont. Children and indentured servants in Vermont were many runaways, as recorded in local newspapers, whose treatment was racialized. While children were subject to abuse at large, cases were simply worse for African-descended children. Furthermore, the racial biases of the institution of slavery on a national level also created the impression that African-descended parents were less responsible, a racist view that led to a disproportionate number of African-descended children in indentured servitude positions, including in the state of Vermont. Just as Brace and his wife Susan had complaints entered against their parenting simply because of their race, the state upheld decisions to remove two of Susan's children and place them in other households. When Brace attempted to file countersuits, he could not find a lawyer to support his cause. The circumstances were likely a major feature in the couple's decision to relocate from Poultney to Sheldon, before

moving again to Georgia. In his later years, Brace became blind, and B.J. Prentiss took up the task of transcribing an autobiographical oral account, eventually published as *The Blind African Slave* by St. Albans Press in 1810. Brace's later work in the abolitionist movement was recorded by John W. Lewis's biography of another black preacher, Charles Bowles (1852; born 1761). However, Brace faced more bias in the courts in 1818 when he attempted to claim pensions for his Revolutionary War service, even after he remembered the name of his last master, whom he had been registered under. He only received restitution in 1827, when his total pension paid was \$328.23, only six weeks before he died in Georgia, Vermont, on April 20, 1827. Nonetheless, after he died, it was evident that his life, along with those of his peers, had a profound impact on the abolitionist movement (Winter 2005, 2006).

### **Twilight, Alexander (1795–1857)**

Alexander Twilight was born in Corinth, Vermont, on September 23, 1795. His parents owned a farm and were of unclear racial heritage, although it is known that his mother at least was mixed race. She was recorded as African American, and a “negro,” but is also mentioned as “light-skinned” in historical documents. His father fought as a private in the Revolutionary War and is presumed to be of mixed parentage as well, although town records also record him as “a negro.” It is also widely speculated that Alexander's father, Ichabod, entered the army in an attempt to earn his freedom. Alexander began studying and working as a laborer at a young age, as was common in Vermont at the time. Some records suggest that he was forced to work as an indentured servant although he was also “allowed” to live with his parents. His work began at the age of eight, and his early studies focused directly on learning how to read, along with obtaining a basic knowledge of mathematics. He entered the local county grammar school, Randolph-Orange County Grammar School, in 1815. At Randolph-Orange County, he completed primary, secondary, and two years of college education in just six years. This was a bit fast for the era, even among the gifted, considering that he spent a good portion of his early years working full time and only studying during meals and the few spare moments that life as a child laborer offered. At the age of 21, during the end of his first, or beginning of his second, year of grammar school, he moved out of his parents' house (Lovejoy 1998; Hahan 1998).

By 1821, Alexander Twilight had enrolled in Middlebury College, one of the earliest, if not the earliest African American college student in the United States. From Middlebury, he became the first individual who was legally classified to graduate with a bachelor's degree in 1823. His achievement was remarkable as his college education took just four years in total, and it was common for students to take longer as a result of their work load. He moved to Peru, New York, to continue his studies at the Congregationalist Ministry, where he also earned a living by teaching. In 1826, he married his wife, Mercy Ladd Merrill. It was possible that Alexander Twilight's achievement as the first African American to receive a college degree would have gone entirely unknown, except that Edward Jones, a graduate of Amherst College in Massachusetts claimed he was the first African



American to receive a degree in the United States in 1826. Critics of Jones sought to discount his claim, and Twilight's records gained a wider audience. Twilight's achievements were much broader though (Lovejoy 1998; Hahan 1998).

Alexander Twilight's career was much like that of other educated members of the African American community in Vermont at the time: he began as a member of the clergy. However, his broader achievements were even more notable. He started to work as an educator in Peru, New York, soon after receiving his bachelor's degree. He then went on to preach in Vergennes, Vermont, in 1828. In 1829, he ordained as a Congregationalist minister and was hired as the Orleans County Grammar School principal in Brownington, where he raised funds for the first public granite stone building in the state, a dormitory for the grammar school's boarding students. In 1836, he became the first African American to be elected to a state-level legislative body, and the second to be elected to any office (after Wentworth Cheswell of New Hampshire) when he was elected to the Vermont General Assembly. His work in these years appears to be influenced Reverend B.B. Edwards's work, an author, and clergymen who wrote the *Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* (1836), a book that was in Twilight's library. Although he was an active leader at Brownington, and a favorite minister, Twilight left his job as principal of the grammar school in 1847. He left for Quebec, Canada, over conflicts with the school administration. He lived in Quebec at least part time for the next five years, holding a teaching post in Shipton, Canada, from 1847 to 1850, and in Hatley from 1850 to 1852, although he returned to Brownington to serve as headmaster in 1852. The school had suffered substantially after his departure, and the administration petitioned for him to return, on the condition of a promotion. Between 1853 and 1854, he preached throughout the northern part of the state. Unfortunately, he suffered a stroke in 1855 that left him paralyzed. He died in Brownington on June 19, 1857, and was buried next to his wife. Later, Alexander Twilight Hall at Middlebury College was named in his honor (Hahan 1998).

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## Virginia

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Erica F. Cooper

### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **1570–1571**

Spanish explorers attempt to bring Christianity to Indian Americans in Virginia, although most of the explorers are killed by the Indians; a year later, other Spanish explorers return to Virginia and confront the Indians, killing at least 20

#### **1607–1609**

The Jamestown colony becomes financially unstable because the English colonists neglect agricultural needs, such as planting crops; as the colonists become more dependent upon the Indians, the English resort to using force to obtain food and other goods

#### **1607**

English colonists arrive in the Chesapeake Bay and found the Jamestown settlement

#### **1609–1619**

Chief Powhatan, the leader of the confederation of tribes around the Chesapeake Bay, leads several attacks against the colonists, who retaliate, thus initiating a decade of warfare

#### **1612–1613**

Chief Powhatan's daughter, Pocahontas, is taken prisoner and marries Englishman John Rolfe a year later

#### **1618**

Chief Powhatan dies and he is succeeded by his brother Opechancanough

#### **1619**

The first African indentured servants arrive in Jamestown

**1622**

The Barbarous Massacre, led by Chief Powhatan's brother Opechancanough, results in the death of over 300 colonists, thus increasing hostility between the colonists and Indians

**1622**

In his *Declaration of the State of the Colonies and Affairs in Virginia*, Edward Waterhouse reports on the Barbarous Massacre to the Virginia Company in London; in the report, Indians are described as "wicked" and as "beasts"

**1630**

Hugh Davis, an Englishman, is "soundly whipped" in front of a group of blacks for "defiling" himself as a Christian man with a "Negro"

**1639**

Blacks are banned from owning firearms in Virginia

**1640**

Englishman Robert Sweat is ordered to do penance for impregnating a "Negro" woman; the woman is publicly whipped

**1644–1645**

During the Powhatan War, another conflict between the colonists and the Indians, over 500 colonists are killed; Opechancanough, the Indian leader, is captured and murdered, and the Powhatan tribe is defeated by the settlers

**1655**

An act of the Virginia colony is the first piece of legislation with explicit references to American Indian children; any Indian child brought to the colony could not be used as a slave and was to be raised as a Christian

**1657–1658**

An act makes it legal to tax all Indian servants regardless of gender; any male servant; and all Negroes, regardless of free, indentured, or slave status, unless they were Christians at birth or born to parents who were free upon their arrival in Virginia

**1660–1661**

A new act declares that white (indentured) servants who run away with black slaves are themselves to become servants for life

**1661–1662**

An act states that all Indian (indentured) servants must receive the same length of time for their service as English (indentured) servants

**1661**

The Virginia General Assembly decides that Metappin, an Indian, has been wrongly enslaved for life; the colonial legislature sets him free because Metappin speaks perfect English and desires to be baptized as a Christian

**1662**

Slavery is recognized in law by the Virginia colony

**1662**

Another Virginia legislation addresses interracial relationships involving Englishmen and Negro women and any subsequent offspring of this relationship; the act determines that the status of children is dependent upon the mother's status, breaking hundreds of years of English tradition; the act also makes interracial fornication involving a Christian man and a Negro woman a crime

**1670**

Virginia passes a law prohibiting free Negroes and Indians from owning white indentured servants

**1676**

A new statute declares all Indians captured during war in Virginia are to be slaves for life

**1691**

Virginia passes the first colonial law prohibiting interracial marriage between free persons

**1692**

Blacks in Virginia are no longer allowed to own horses, cattle, or hogs; separate courts with no juries are established to try slaves in Virginia

**1700–1705**

Virginia tribes begin losing their land to white colonists; by the 1790s, most of the tribes will have either lost or sold their land and merged with other tribes or became assimilated

**1705**

The legislature defines “mulattoes” as “persons who have either one Indian parent or who are the grandchild or great grandchild of a Negro”

**1775**

Virginia governor Dunmore offers freedom to slaves who will fight against the American colonists during the Revolutionary War

**1785**

The legislature defines “Negro” as anyone who possesses one-fourth or more African ancestry

**1788**

On June 25, Virginia becomes the 10th state to enter the Union

**1791**

Robert Carter, one of the wealthiest land and slave owners in Virginia, emancipates more than 500 of his slaves, in the largest slave emancipation prior to 1860

**1800**

Gabriel's Conspiracy, a planned slave rebellion in Richmond, is thwarted

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### **1806**

The Virginia legislature passes a law requiring freed slaves to leave the state within a year of their emancipation or be reenslaved

### **1821**

Former slave Lott Cary and other freed Virginians sail from Norfolk for recolonization in Africa

### **1831**

Nat Turner leads a slave rebellion in Southampton County, where the rebels kill as many as 60 whites; militia and volunteers suppress the rebellion and kill more than 100 innocent blacks in retaliation, while Turner and 20 of his followers are executed

### **1843**

Over 40 whites petition for the sale of two Powhatan reservations, accusing most of the Indians on the lands as being free or runaway Negroes or mulattoes

### **1849**

Henry “Box” Brown, an industrial slave in Richmond, escapes bondage by shipping himself to Philadelphia in a wooden crate

### **1850**

Only two Indian tribes still maintain their communal reservations within the state; without land, and rising intermarriage, many Virginia Indians are no longer considered culturally “Indian” by white legislators and courts

### **1853–1896**

The Virginia Bureau of Vital Statistics requires race to be identified on all birth and death certificates; this practice is resumed in 1912

### **1859**

White abolitionist John Brown attacks the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, with the intention of starting a slave rebellion

### **1861–1865**

More than 5,700 black Virginians serve in the Union Army during the Civil War

### **1861**

Virginia secedes from the Union on April 17

### **1863**

The unionist western counties of Virginia break away and are admitted to the Union as the state of West Virginia

### **1865**

On February 9, Virginia ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

### **1867**

On January 9, Virginia refuses to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guaranteeing the civil rights of freedmen

**1868**

Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute (later Hampton University) is founded educate blacks by General Samuel Chapman Armstrong, and agent of the Freedmen's Bureau

**1869**

On October 8, Virginia ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment over a year after the amendment took effect; on the same day, Virginia ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution securing voting rights for African American men

**1870**

Virginia is readmitted to the Union on January 26

**1883**

A group of 1,300 black tobacco factory workers in Lynchburg form the Lynchburg Laboring Association and go on strike for higher wages, shutting down the factories for several weeks

**1888**

In a disputed election, John Mercer Langston becomes the first African American elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Virginia

**1902**

The state's new constitution limits voter participation through creation of a poll tax, which effectively disenfranchises most blacks and some whites

**1904**

African Americans in Richmond boycott city streetcars in response to mandated segregation in the cars; the protest lasts until 1906 when a law is passed allowing integration of the streetcars

**1914**

In *Spencer v. Looney*, Virginia's Supreme Court overturns a trial court's ruling in a case where the plaintiff is accused of being secretly Negro and sued for defamation; the Supreme Court challenges the legitimacy of testimony used during the initial trial

**1915**

The Negro Historical and Industrial Association opens a three-week national exposition at the Richmond fairgrounds to celebrate African American achievement since emancipation

**1924**

The Act to Preserve Racial Integrity, for the first time, defines "white" as having "no trace whatsoever of any blood other than Caucasian"; the definition of "Negro" is modified to include anyone having 1/16 or more African ancestry, and "Indians" are defined as having equal proportions of Indian and non-Indian blood

**1926**

The General Assembly requires a separation of races at all public meetings

**1928**

The General Assembly declares lynching to be illegal in Virginia

**1937**

The first recorded sit-down strike in Virginia occurs in Ashland, where four African American workers at the White House Café strike for higher pay and shorter hours

**1939**

A sit-in organized by attorney Samuel W. Tucker leads to the arrest of five African Americans for refusing to leave the segregated Alexandria Public Library

**1951**

In Farmville at Robert R. Morton High School, 16-year-old Barbara Johns leads a student walkout to protest unequal facilities at African American schools; her subsequent lawsuit becomes one of the five cases incorporated into the landmark 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, which declares segregation in public schools unconstitutional

**1951**

Seven African American men, known as the “Martinsville Seven,” who had been convicted of rape are executed at the Virginia State Penitentiary; during the trial, attorneys for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) call the death penalty discriminatory toward African Americans

**1955**

Virginia adopts a program of “Massive Resistance” to the desegregation of public schools ordered by the U.S. Supreme Court in the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision

**1959**

Prince Edward County closes its school system rather than desegregate; the Prince Edward Academy opens for about 1,500 white students—no provision is made for black students

**1960**

A series of civil rights protest begin in Petersburg, Virginia

**1964**

Prince Edward County schools reopen on an integrated basis

**1967**

The Act to Preserve Racial Integrity of 1924 is challenged in *Loving v. Virginia*; the U.S. Supreme Court rules the state’s more than 200-year interracial marriage prohibition unconstitutional

**1970**

The Federal District Court in *Bradley v. Richmond School Board* orders busing to achieve racial integration in the public schools; the ruling results in “white flight,” as whites leave Richmond for the suburbs



**1973**

Hermanze E. Fauntleroy Jr. is elected the first African American mayor of Petersburg, which also elects the state's first majority-black city council

**1977**

On February 25, Virginia ratifies the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing the poll tax; Virginia's ratification comes 13 years after the amendment took effect

**1983**

John Charles Thomas becomes the first African American appointed to the Virginia Supreme Court

**1989**

L. Douglas Wilder becomes the first African American to be elected governor of Virginia

**2001**

The Virginia General Assembly denounces all past racial integrity laws

**2003**

Leroy R. Hassell Sr. becomes the first African American chief justice of the Virginia Supreme Court

**2007–2011**

The Virginia legislature passes several bills granting Native Americans official recognition as American citizens while acknowledging their status as Natives; additional legislation is proposed to provide tribal members compensation for prior injustices

**2007**

The Virginia General Assembly votes unanimously to express profound regret for its part in perpetuating the institution of slavery

**2007**

The Richmond Slavery Reconciliation Statue is unveiled not far from the site of a former slave market

**2007**

Prince William County passes a law requiring police to investigate the citizenship status of suspects under arrest

**2014**

According to the American Immigration Council, undocumented immigrants are about 3.5 percent of the total state population

**2017**

In August, an alt-right rally and accompanying protest of the rally in Charlottesville turns violent and leaves one dead and many injured; President Donald Trump responds by placing blame on "both sides"

**2017**

Confederate monuments in Richmond and Norfolk are vandalized as debate sparked by the Charlottesville rally rages across the country over the propriety of such monuments

## **NARRATIVE**

### **The Rhetoric of Racism and Identity Politics in Virginia**

Prior to the arrival of the first 20 Africans to Virginia in 1619, the “New World” was ethnically and racially diverse. In many colonies, European settlers did not enforce a color line, and therefore, a rigid racial classification system ceased to exist. European settlers such as the French, Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese married Indian women. In fact, in 1614, John Rolfe voluntarily married Pocahontas, the daughter of Chief Powhatan. It is clear that Rolfe was not ashamed of his marriage because he presented her as his wife during a visit to meet the royal family in 1616. Although it is documented that some of the people they encountered in England treated her like a savage, for the most part, she was treated with respect. The quality of their overall treatment while in England speaks to the fact that many of the British did not openly exhibit clearly racist views of this type of interracial relationship. Even the offspring of these multiracial unions, like the son of Pocahontas and Rolfe, were socially accepted within the colony. The practice of acknowledging interracial unions also continued with the arrival of African servants and slaves (Sweet 2005). Many of these mixed-race offspring were treated as equal to whites (Johnson 1910, 98). For example, these children received the same education and attained the same social status as whites.

In addition to fluid social relationships, the workforce was described as equally diverse and devoid of any hierarchy on the basis of race. In 1618, the English government shipped thousands of orphaned children, convicts, and adults seeking to escape poverty to Virginia to work as indentured servants (Bruce 1935, 612–13). Some researchers argue that many of these white workers became slaves over time because they were never able to pay off the debts owed in England or to their masters (Jordan and Walsh 2008, 108). Although many Africans who were brought to Virginia over the next 200 years were primarily identified as slaves, not all of them were treated as slaves. In fact, the first Africans who arrived to the colony were indentured servants (Anderson 2012, 5). Some of them were able to acquire their freedom if they were able to complete their indenture. After the end of his indenture, one of the first Africans to arrive in Virginia, Anthony Johnson, in the 1630s, became a successful planter with an estate that was more than 1,000 acres (Parent 2003, 43). Johnson depended upon a diverse workforce of both African and European servants. Similarly, wealthy planters from England, such as John Rolfe, became millionaires by utilizing both African and European slaves and servants in the early 1600s (Bruce 1935, 575). Initially, socioeconomic status or class served as the basis for social separation rather than race. Although racial segregation was not a sociopolitical priority in early Virginian history, beginning in the seventeenth century and extending into the twenty-first century, racism

eventually emerged as the preferred method of regulating the private and public affairs of its residents. The historical development of racism within Virginia can be grouped into four distinct time periods: (1) the colonial era (1600s to late 1780s), (2) the middle period (late 1780s to 1910), (3) the Jim Crow era (1910 to 1970), and (4) the post–civil rights era (1970 to present).

### **The Colonial Period**

Beginning in the 1630s and 1640s, it became very clear that the English colonists were quite concerned about interracial romantic relationships when compared to other colonists. The legislation that emerged from this era serves as the basis for white supremacist reasoning that dominated discussions about marriage and racial identity particularly well into the twentieth century. In fact, the English colonists in Virginia initiated a precedent of racism that was eventually adopted by other European colonists. The Hugh Davis case, in 1630, involved one of the most extreme forms of punishment against another European colonist. Hugh Davis, an English servant, was accused of “defiling his body with a Negro” and was whipped in public before a group of Negroes and other colonists (*Laws of Virginia* 1823, 136). Ten years later, Robert Sweat received a substantially lighter penalty for impregnating a Negro woman. Sweat simply was ordered to do penance in the Christian church. Meanwhile, the Negro woman received a very harsh penalty, a public whipping (Sweet 2005, 121). In other instances, white indentured servants in Virginia who ran away with Negro slaves lost their indenture and were forced to become slaves for life.

ACT XIII was the most significant example of the attitudes among English colonists during the seventeenth century toward interracial romantic relationships. Passed in 1662, this law described the legal status of a child born to a Negro mother and white father (Hening 1823, 170). It concluded that the child’s status was determined by the mother. This law was significant for three reasons. First, it overturned hundreds of years of the common English tradition of defining a child’s status on the basis of the father (Reuter 1931, 80). In addition, it dissolved any legal responsibility of a father to a child whose mother was a “Negro slave.” Third, it was a model for other states and used to justify the enslavement of millions of children and adults during the next century. The second part of this act also outlawed interracial fornication. Any Christian found guilty was forced to pay double the fines.

Thirty years later in 1691, Virginia passed a law, the first of its kind, that prohibited intermarriage between free Negroes and free Europeans (*Laws of Virginia* 1823, 86–87). Although the legal restrictions affected all participants in interracial romantic relationships, women received the most severe punishment. For example, the Negro woman whom Sweat impregnated was severely reprimanded, while he received nothing more than a “slap on the wrist.” Similarly, any free European mother who had a child by a Native American or Negro father was forced to pay a fine for 30 years (Davis 1991, 32). There is evidence that the mixed-race offspring with white mothers were particularly detested (Davis 1991, 33). Perhaps, this is the reason that white women who engaged in interracial relationships that produced children were severely punished.

In addition to the harsh penalties for engaging in interracial relationships, the General Assembly passed de jure discriminatory laws. These laws openly and unapologetically restricted the rights of Negro and Indian colonists. Starting in 1639, the colonial legislature passed Act X, which made it unlawful and punishable for any Negro to bear arms and ammunition. Similarly, in the mid-1650s, all Negro and Indian men and women were taxed, whereas only white male servants who were not Christians were forcibly taxed. In 1670, all free Negroes and Indians were prohibited from owning white servants without any restrictions placed upon the English planters (Hening 1823, 280–81). A century later, in 1798, it became a felony for free persons to assist a slave (Guild 1936, 68–69). As a part of this Act, the legislature added two clauses specifically targeting free Negroes. First, it was a felony for (only) free Negroes to transfer a freedom certificate to a slave. Second, this law mandated that all free persons pay the master of a fugitive slave that they were assisting a fine of “ten dollars.” The punishment of a free person who was unable to pay was not mentioned except in the case of free Negroes. Unfortunately, free Negroes who were unable to pay would receive up to 39 lashes.

Initially, the English colonists appeared to be more sympathetic toward Indians when compared to how they treated Negroes. However, by the end of the seventeenth century, there were clear attempts to establish a racial classification system, with European colonists securing the most coveted position and Indians and Negroes occupying equally subservient positions. For example, during the middle of the seventeenth century, the colonists created clear provisions that protected the legal status and political rights of Indians. Virginia’s legislature not only ruled that Indian children brought into the colony should not be used as slaves, it also granted freedom to an Indian man because he spoke perfect English and wanted to be baptized as a Christian (Hening 1819, 155). In 1661, the General Assembly also protected Indian indentured servants by mandating that they serve the same amount of time for their service as European (white) servants (Hening 1819, 143). Unfortunately, within a span of 20 years, the legislature had completely overturned many of these provisions. By the mid-1670s, colonists mandated that all Indians captured during war become slaves for life. At the end of that decade, the legislature also repealed a prior law that had shielded Indians, in general, from being classified as slaves (Hening 1819, 491–92).

### ***Early Tensions between the Powhatan Indians and English Colonists***

Upon their arrival and settlement in April 1607, the English colonists encountered the Powhatan tribe. One month later, Chief Powhatan (Wahunsenacawh) invited them to plant gardens and promised peace. Within two months, the colonists had run out of food but expected more gifts of food from the Powhatan. By the end of that year, Captain John Smith had been captured by members of the tribe and brought to the chief. Powhatan promised to continue to supply food, but he wanted the English to trade weapons and other metal supplies. Smith refused the offer.

Over the course of the next two years, the relationship between the Powhatan Indians and the English colonists soured even further. The tribe resorted to stealing supplies from


the English because Powhatan tradition called for the English to provide gifts to the tribe since the English had previously accepted numerous gifts from the tribe. Chief Powhatan grew tired of the English expecting goods with nothing in return. In 1609, the tribe attempted to kill Smith but failed. Later that year, the chief invited a group of colonists to a party with the promise of providing corn. The colonists were killed. By the summer of 1610, several conflicts erupted between the tribe and the colonists, resulting in the slaughter of Indian women and children. Three years later, the chief's favorite daughter, Pocahontas, was kidnapped and eventually married a colonist. A brief period of peace followed this marriage, which became symbolic of the relationship between the colonists and the tribe. In 1622, four years after the chief's death, Opechancanough, Chief Powhatan's brother, ordered a series of attacks against the colonists, initiating the Anglo-Powhatan War in which hundreds of colonists and Indians were killed.

Although laws were passed that regulated the access of certain racial groups to political and legal rights, a color line that was defined by legislators ceased to exist. The early colonists had not attempted to define "Negro," "Indian/Native American," "white/European," or "mixed race" until the eighteenth century. Perhaps the colonists recognized that the enforcement of this legislation was more difficult with the presence of a sizable racially diverse population and no clear parameters to classify individuals. The absence of clear rules for determining a person's race opened the door for Negroes and Indians to challenge laws that restricted rights on the basis of race. Therefore, in 1705, as a part of a law that was designed to identify who is eligible to hold a public office, the definition of "mulatto" was formally introduced. A mulatto was described as "a child of an Indian" or the "child, grandchild, or great grandchild of a Negro" (Hening 1819, 252). In essence, a person with one-half, one-fourth, or one-eighth Negro blood or one-half Indian blood was considered to be mixed race. In 1785, the term "Negro" was used to describe all persons who possessed one-fourth or more Negro ancestry (Sollars 1997, 396). The new law did not use the term "mulatto." For this reason, it is clear that "Negro" was not used as the equivalent of "mulatto" at the end of the eighteenth century.

The development of the color line and the restrictive covenants that were based on race most likely emerged in response to the perceived threats to the (economic) plantation system rather than the inherent racism of English planters and laborers. Virginia was a unique colony due to the amount of white laborers that easily outnumbered the number of Negro and Indian laborers (Sweet 2005, 141). In fact, more than two-thirds of the slave population were identified as European (Williamson 1995, 7). Most laborers that worked in the fields experienced the same living and work conditions regardless of race or ancestry (Bruce 1935, 104–7). Therefore, race was not a predictor of one's experiences. It did not take long before black, Native, and white laborers recognized that they faced the same challenges. The similarities of their experiences unified them. As a result, they chose to ignore their physical differences (Zinn 2003, 31).

Examples of interracial insurrections and interracial flight during the middle part of the seventeenth century serve as evidence that the workers did not

segregate themselves on the basis of race. Black and white slaves notoriously fled together in an attempt to acquire emancipation (Anderson 2012, 6). In 1663, Irish, English, and Negro servants collectively engaged in a servant/slave revolt that spanned three years. These workers were frustrated over their working conditions and appalled by the extreme lavish lifestyles of the elite. In response to this, Negro and European servants and slaves responded with the “largest interracial revolt of the century” also known as Bacon’s Rebellion (Anderson 2012, 6). Despite the white and Negro workers’ involvement in the “revolution,” in the year leading up to the rebellion, Bacon led a group of men who killed members of several Indian tribes living in Virginia. Despite his controversial background, black and white workers fought side by side in honor of Bacon until 1776, when many of them retreated in exchange for their freedom that British captain Thomas Grantham promised. Even the last rebels (who chose not to retreat in response to Grantham’s promises) were European and Negro. In the end, the yeoman class of free whites recognized that slave revolts were the greatest threat to their way of life. Therefore, they created legislation and cultivated a social hierarchy designed to divide and destabilize the working class.



**U N** away, the 23d of this  
 Instant *January*, from *Silas Crispin* of  
*Burlington*, Taylor, a Servant Man nam-  
 ed *Joseph Morris*, by Trade a Taylor,  
 aged about 22 Years, of a middle Sta-  
 ture, swarthy Complexion, light gray  
 Eyes, his Hair clipp'd off, mark'd with  
 a large pit of the Small Pox on one  
 Cheek near his Eye, had on when he  
 went away a good Felt Hat, a yelowish  
 Drugget Coat with Pleits behind, an old  
 Ozenbrigs Vest, two Ozenbrigs Shirts, a pair of Leather  
 Breeches handsomely worm'd and flower'd up the Knees,  
 yarn Stockings and good round toe'd Shoes Took with  
 him a large pair of Sheers crack'd in one of the Bows, &  
 mark'd with the Word [*Savoy*]. Whoever takes up the  
 said Servant, and secures him so that his Master may have  
 him again, shall have *Three Pounds* Reward besides reason-  
 able Charges, paid by me *Silas Crispin*.

From a Philadelphia newspaper

Advertisement from a Philadelphia newspaper offering a three-pound reward for the capture of Joseph Morris, an enslaved apprentice tailor, to his master, Silas Crispin of Burlington, Vermont, ca. 1760. (MPI/Getty Images)

## The Developing Nation

During the postcolonial, pre–Civil War era (late 1700s to 1863), many “persons of color” were adversely affected by the codification of race and slavery that was legally and judicially sanctioned. An 1819 law stipulated that a person’s slave status was determined by his or her status in 1785. Therefore, anyone who was a descendant of a woman who was a slave in 1785 would be legally defined as a slave, starting in 1819, and continuing until the end of the Civil War (Guild 1936, 79). Previously, it had been possible for individuals to obtain their emancipation by paying off their debts. However, this law made it impossible for slaves, in particular, to acquire freedom. Their status was mandated by the 1662 law. In 1823, William Thompkins, a free Negro, was sentenced to a 15-year jail term. As a condition of his release, he lost his emancipation and was to be sold as a slave to a plantation outside the state (Guild 1936, 81). In *Gregory v. Baugh* (1831), Virginia’s Supreme Court overturned two lower courts which had ruled in favor of a slave who used Indian ancestry as evidence to support his claim to be emancipated. The higher court rejected testimony as evidence that established the Indian heritage of the plaintiff. Instead, the court implied that he was a Negro. These are examples of how jurisprudence assisted in aligning the Negro race most directly with slavery.

In addition to targeting Negroes, shortly after Bacon’s Rebellion, the overall quality of Indian life was threatened by legislation. Between the late 1770s and the dawn of the Civil War, many tribes had lost their land in wars with the colonists. Similarly, with the expanding presence of the colonists, many tribes found themselves fighting over land with others, after being forced out of their original locations by the colonists. Since access to land was a major element in constructing Indian identity, many of these tribes “disappeared.” In some cases, more coveted areas were intentionally targeted by whites. In 1843, questions regarding the racial identity of the people living on a reservation was used in court to justify denying ownership of the land and other rights. Similarly, political officials denied compensation to Indian women who were married to white soldiers during the Revolutionary War. Many Indian communities were also diffused as a result of intertribal and interracial marriages. By the end of the Civil War, only two of the Powhatan tribes were successful in maintaining their reservations.

If slavery provided a sense of comfort and predictability for whites during the nineteenth century, the end of the Civil War raised their level of uncertainty about the economic and social future of the South. In fact, the changing social landscape during Reconstruction and into the early part of twentieth century contributed substantially to these “white anxieties.” Whites were primarily concerned about the extent to which the freedmen would compete with them for jobs and the rise of miscegenation involving white women (Davis 1991, 49). Therefore, in many parts of the South, Black Codes, or legal restrictions, were enacted to deny rights to freemen while protecting the interests of whites. In comparison to other Southern states, Virginia did not develop an elaborate system of legal restrictions. Virginia’s Black Code evolved from two laws that were passed in 1785 and 1787, where vagrancy was officially listed as a crime (Encyclopedia Virginia). Although the

Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments in 1865, 1867, and 1870 ended slavery, guaranteed citizenship, and gave Negro men suffrage rights, the economic position of many people of color was rather precarious and deemed as a “threat to order” by whites. In a span of a couple of years, many former slaves found themselves jobless and homeless. In response to this situation, the House of Delegates passed in 1866 a Vagrancy law. Under the law, anyone who was identified as a “vagrant” would be arrested or a forced into paid labor contract with harsh penalties for running away before the end of the contract (Encyclopedia Virginia). Any runaway who was caught was returned to the “employer” and forced to work for additional time and without pay. Negroes, in particular, were the most vulnerable at this point in time because many did not have stable housing arrangements or employment due to their emancipation. In sum, near the end of the “middle period,” economic fears provided the fertile ground for overt racism that emerged during the twentieth century.

In addition to the economic fears, whites became paranoid about miscegenation near the end of the nineteenth century. This paranoia fueled the development of white supremacist rhetoric that dominated the period following Reconstruction. In 1832, Alexis de Tocqueville, a Frenchman who had visited the United States on several occasions, predicted that the abolition of slavery would increase the hatred among whites for blacks and Indians because of their fears about miscegenation (de Tocqueville 1835, 375). In fact, this would eventually destroy American democracy during the twentieth century. The topic of race was certainly on the

### ***Historically Black Colleges in Virginia***

Prior to the Civil War, African Americans were often denied access to higher education. No college in a slave state opened its doors to them. Therefore, African Americans could acquire formal education only by traveling to Pennsylvania or Ohio, where there were institutions willing to accept them. However, the Reconstruction period saw a huge spike in the number of African Americans who attended college, particularly in the South. Black ministers and white abolitionists worked together to establish schools that initially began in old schoolhouses or even people’s homes. In 1890, a land grant required states that obtained federal money for colleges and universities to provide education to blacks. Instead of integrating existing schools, Southern states supported the establishment of separate schools. The emergent philosophy of eugenics heavily contributed to the reluctance among whites to integrate existing institutions.

Between 1865 and 1886, four out of five institutions of higher education for blacks were created in Virginia. Virginia Union was established in 1865, shortly after the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, and Hampton University was established in 1868. Virginia-born Booker T. Washington, a leading influence on African American intellectual thought during the twentieth century, walked more than 500 miles to attend Hampton in 1872. Influenced by his experiences at Hampton, Washington later founded his own institution, Tuskegee University, located in Alabama. Virginia State University and Virginia Union University of Lynchburg were established in 1882 and 1886, respectively. Norfolk State was established in 1934. In 1965, Congress officially coined the term HBCU identifying any historically black college or university that was established prior to 1964, with the explicit mission of providing education to black Americans.



minds of postwar legislature. Between 1866 and 1910, Virginia made several attempts to define, clarify, or modify the definitions of Negro, Mulatto, and Indian. For the first time in Virginia's history, "colored" or "mulatto" was synonymous with "Negro." As a result of this legislation, some Virginians who had previously enjoyed the social status of "white" found themselves occupying the other side of the color line.

The popularity of eugenics during the late 1880s legitimized white supremacy and the need to create barriers to lessen the amount of social contact with "inferior" racial groups such as Negroes and Indians. Eugenicians cultivated stereotypes about Negroes, mulattoes, and Indians that were designed to deter whites from engaging in interracial romantic relationships and would eliminate the presence of mulattoes. In many parts of the South, mulattoes were stereotyped as being "weak" due to compromised immune systems (Davis 1991, 55). Eugenicians also claimed that whites had an obligation to "protect" the purity of their bloodline, despite the fact that these arguments stood in stark contrast to the social system initially created in the colonies. For the first half of the twentieth century, many whites were frantic about the possibility of contaminating their bloodline. To add more fuel to white anxiety, the eugenicians also suggested that there were "white-looking Negroes" who were passing for white. *Spencer v. Looney* (1914) is one example of a legal challenge to "white identity." In this case, the racial identity of the plaintiff was called into question during a private dispute. The defendant accused Spencer of attempting to "pass for white," and the plaintiff sued him for defamation of character.

### **The Emergence of Jim Crow**

The eugenicians clearly controlled Virginia's legislature during the 1920s, and this resulted in the development of a very rigid two-tiered color line that was rigidly enforced—thus the emergence and enforcement of Jim Crow laws. Even Indians were forced to identify simply as "colored." The Racial Integrity Laws, passed between 1924 and 1930, were viable evidence in support of de Tocqueville's prophecy of whites' obsession with miscegenation. Collectively these three laws were designed to "protect" the purity of the "white" race. The Racial Integrity Act of 1924, prohibited intermarriage between whites and any person who had any trace of blood other than white (Wolfe, Encyclopedia Virginia). Under this law, many Indians were forced to identify as Negro. Two years later in 1926, the Public Assemblages Act mandated segregation in all public places. According to the 1930 law, a Negro was a person with any trace of African ancestry. A new sociopolitical doctrine, the one-drop rule, was articulated through this law. Under the one-drop system, "white" was defined in the most rigid manner as being devoid of any other blood except European. The only exception to this rule involved whites who could trace their lineage back to Pocahontas and Rolfe. They were able to maintain the designation as "white." Other white-Indian unions were openly denounced. By 1930, virtually every state and federal court as well as all state and federal legislators had adopted this doctrine (Cooper 2008, Sweet 2005). In addition, the Bureau of Vital Statistics in Virginia had resumed

in 1912. Between 1863 and 1898, it had mandated that all official documents such as marriage licenses and birth and death certificates identify the person's racial classification. As a result, some "white" people found themselves being forced onto the other side of the color line. In the end, these "whites" and Indians were most adversely affected by the racial integrity legislation since clarifying their racial status was the top social concern.

### **The Fight for Civil Rights**

If the rights of Negroes, white, and Indians were adversely affected during the first half of the twentieth century, the middle part of the century marked a critical turning point. The nation was in the midst of a civil rights rebellion that threatened a social revolution akin to what the nation experienced a hundred years earlier during the Civil War. Civil rights protests in the Deep South—Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina—eventually spread to other Southern states, including Virginia. De jure or Jim Crow segregation impacted every aspect of Virginia's African American community. Racial discrimination was evident in housing, employment, education, public accommodation, and social services. In May 1960, black residents in Petersburg, Virginia, responded to the call to join in the protest movement with a series of events aimed at addressing the racism and discrimination that were daily occurrences in the black community.

During the 1950s and 1960s, state and federal courts were also forced to respond to challenges associated with the existing sociopolitical system. Slowly, the restrictions that were implemented as a result of the Racial Integrity Laws and other forms of Jim Crow segregation were challenged and outlawed in the courts. In 1952, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that segregation was unconstitutional in public schools in Virginia and four other states. This led to a domino effect of eradicating segregation in all public schools across the nation. Similarly, the 1964 Civil Rights Act outlawed discrimination and segregation in public places. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 protected the suffrage rights of citizens, regardless of race and national origin. As people of color acquired more political and legal rights, they began to openly challenge the legitimacy of other long-standing race-based legislation. In 1967, the U.S. Supreme Court in *Loving v. Virginia* in response to a challenge to Virginia's interracial marriage prohibitions ruled that Virginia's 1691 and 1924 laws prohibiting interracial marriage were unconstitutional. As a result of this ruling, the Racial Integrity Act lost much of its legal footing.

### **The Twenty-First Century**

The status of race relations in Virginia in the twenty-first century is somewhat of a conundrum. Initially, attempts to reconcile the injustices against African and Native Americans were demonstrated by the progressive legislation. The presence of racial inequality remains evident. For example, despite the fact that the U.S. Supreme Court endorsed interracial romantic relationships in 1967, it took more than 40 years before the General Assembly in Virginia publicly denounced eugenics theory. In 2001, the assembly acknowledged that the Racial

Integrity Act “contributed to incalculable human damage” (General Assembly, Resolution No 607, 2001). It also promised to reject this ideology if ever presented again in the future.

The state’s Native American community faces many challenges as well. Between 2007 and 2011, state and federal laws have been passed to recognize Native Americans as U.S. citizens and members of their tribes. Retributions for the centuries of unfair policies have also been discussed. The long history of struggle against the Native Americans by European settlers and their descendants has led to the decimation and near elimination of many of the tribal groups. However, the Nansemond, Chickahominy, Mattaponi, Pamunkey, United Rappahannock, and Monacan are among those who continue to lay claim and fight for their rights as Virginia’s original inhabitants.

### **Revisiting the Past?**

In August 2017, an unfortunate event occurred in Charlottesville, Virginia, that was a reminder of Virginia’s racist past. An alt-right, white nationalist rally was held on the campus of the University of Virginia, a predominantly white institution. Reports suggest that the rally was meant to protest the removal of a Confederate statue that had been housed on the campus and to symbolize the same types of rallies that Hitler orchestrated for Nazi youth prior to World War II. News reports described a well-coordinated group of supporters, armed with sticks and shields. They were met by a large group of peaceful protesters, who opposed to the presence of this type of event on the university campus. The alt-right participants chanted racist statements against blacks and Jews. Tensions increased between the alt-right supporters and counterprotesters, ending in the death of Heather Heyer, a 32-year-old white woman who was killed when a car, driven by one of the alt-right supporters, slammed into a crowd of counterprotesters. Concern about the shocking event reverberated throughout the nation. And while many condemned the incident, President Donald Trump refused to denounce the actions of those involved in the rally, citing that counterprotesters were equally responsible in the death that resulted.

## **NOTABLE FIGURES**

### **Hill, Oliver White (1907–2007)**

Oliver White Hill was born on May 1, 1907, in Richmond, Virginia. Shortly after his birth, his father left him and his mother, forcing her to take care of him alone. In search of employment, his mother relocated to Hot Springs, Virginia. There, she met and married Joseph Hill who eventually adopted Oliver. In 1913, his mother and stepfather moved to Roanoke, Virginia. Seven years later, the family relocated to Washington, D.C. After graduating from a segregated college preparatory school in the district, Oliver White Hill attended Howard University.

During his sophomore year, a tragic event significantly impacted his life. Hill inherited a set of legal books after the death of his step-uncle who was an attorney. While reading about the legal history of African American civil rights, he was

inspired to study law with the hope of becoming an agent of change. As a law student at Howard, he was exposed to many people who were trailblazers in the quest for securing equal rights for all. Perhaps the person who influenced Hill's interest in social justice the most was vice dean Charles Hamilton Houston. Prior to accepting the position as dean, Houston had established a firm reputation as an activist who was not afraid to challenge the legality of the segregation laws that contributed to the mistreatment of African Americans throughout the South.

Dean Houston also developed a reputation for encouraging his students to become social activists in this struggle for equality. In addition to Dean Houston's influence, Hill's peers also made a major impact on his life. Future Supreme Court justice Thurgood Marshall was also a law student at Howard University during this time. Over the course of the next two decades, Hill and Marshall worked together to enact new legislation that had a profound impact on race relations in the United States for the remainder of the twentieth century.

After obtaining his law degree, Oliver White Hill returned to Roanoke to practice law during the mid-1930s. Due to the economic hardships associated with the Great Depression, he found little work. This allowed him to fully focus his attention on preserving civil rights. Soon after his arrival, Hill joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in Roanoke and became involved with the Virginia State Conference that supported the local NAACP branches. After the Virginia State Conference requested that the national office assist in supporting more legal challenges involving the unequal pay system that was present among teachers, he moved to Richmond to establish his law practice. By the end of the 1930s, Hill dedicated most of his time to completing legal tasks for the Virginia State Conference. Once Virginia's NAACP merged with the Virginia State Teacher's Association, Hill began working as counsel representing African American teachers who demanded the same pay as their white counterparts. In *Alston v. School Board of City of Norfolk*, Hill, Marshall, and William Hastie, a dean at Howard's law school, successfully prepared a solid case, supported by the U.S. Court of Appeals in 1940, which challenged the pay-scale discriminatory practices that targeted nonwhite teachers. In the early 1940s, Hill continued to represent clients in other contexts outside education. For example, he challenged the legality of discriminatory practices in other areas, such as the workplace, transportation, and voting.

In 1942, Hill's work was temporarily halted by the draft. Three years later, he was discharged and returned to Richmond to continue working as an advocate for legal equality. Within a year of his return, he and his colleagues were responsible for challenging the inequalities that existed among more than 60 school divisions within the state. By 1950, Hill and other NAACP attorneys, including Thurgood Marshall, chose to abandon their mode of attacking the legitimacy of segregation statutes on a case-by-case basis. Instead, they sought to dismantle the constitutionality of these laws on a national level.

In May 1951, another event occurred that had a profound impact on the future of Hill's career. Two students called his law office to acquire legal assistance. The students had left their school in protest of the unequal facilities. Hill and his legal partner, Spottswood Robinson, agreed to take the case, *Davis v. County School Board*

of *Prince Edward*, to the federal district court. On May 23, 1951, Hill and Robinson asked the court to declare the county's racially discriminatory policies against non-white students unconstitutional. Hill served as a lead trial lawyer. In addition to the *Davis* case, other NAACP attorneys led similar legal challenges to segregation statutes in education within South Carolina, Delaware, Kansas, and Washington, D.C. Bundled with the Virginia challenges, the U.S. Supreme Court was asked to conclude whether state segregation statutes violated the Fourteenth Amendment. In May 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court held in *Brown v. Board of Education* that segregation in public education violated the rights that are guaranteed by the constitution. This was a monumental victory for Hill and his colleagues in the area of civil rights legislation. In the immediate aftermath of the decision, Hill worked with local communities to help desegregate the public schools.

Hill's role in this historic ruling positively influenced his political career. In 1960, President John F. Kennedy appointed him as a member of a committee to develop civil rights policy for the Democratic Party. A year later, Hill was appointed as the assistant to the commissioner of the Federal Housing Administration. By the end of the 1960s, Governor Mills Godwin placed Hill on the Virginia Commission on Constitutional Revision to aid in the revision of the state's constitution. Hill continued to practice law until 1998, when he officially retired from his law firm.

Shortly after his retirement, Hill received a number of awards for his contributions to civil rights. In 1996, a court building was named after him in Richmond, making him the first and only African American to have a state building named in his honor. Hill was also awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1999. A few years later, in 2003, he was named the Virginian of the Year by the state's General Assembly. In 2005, he received the NAACP's highest honor, the Spingarn Medal. In addition, a second historically significant building, the Finance Building, was renamed after him in Richmond, Virginia. Oliver White Hill died on August 5, 2007.

### **Powhatan (Wahunsenacawh) (d. 1618)**

Powhatan was the primary chief of the federation of Indians that were named after him and who lived in the Chesapeake region prior to the settlement of English colonists in 1607. After his father's death, he inherited an empire consisting of six tribes. He has often been described as a very strict but astute ruler. Under his leadership, he acquired at least another two dozen tribes, doubling the size of his empire. At the peak of his reign, Powhatan is believed to have ruled at least 15,000 people. With the expansion of his empire, he acquired the title "Mamanatowick" or the chief of chiefs. During the height of Powhatan's reign, this empire expanded from the banks of the James River north to the Potomac River and then westward to the rolling hills of the Piedmont.

Powhatan's reputation was probably most influenced by events that occurred shortly after the arrival of the English in 1607. Near the end of that year, colonist Captain John Smith was captured by a group of Native Americans. Approximately one month after he was captured, Smith was brought to meet Powhatan. It is not fully clear what occurred during this encounter; however, according to Smith's accounts, he feared for his life and believed that if it was not for Powhatan's

daughter, Pocahontas, he would have been killed. Some historians believe that the events that Smith described probably never actually happened. Instead, scholars believe that Smith did not fully understand that Powhatan was performing a rite of passage ritual that was meant to be benevolent rather than deadly. At the end of the encounter, Powhatan offered Smith the opportunity to rule as a sub-chief in a nearby town. Powhatan also allegedly promised to provide food and other necessities to the English. Unfortunately, according to many historical accounts, after this incident, the English colonists failed to establish themselves as self-sufficient and expected the tribes to supply all of the resources to sustain themselves indefinitely. The colonists' dependence upon the tribes for food compounded with their unwillingness to equally exchange supplies with the Natives strained their relationship forever.

A year later, in 1608, colonist Captain Christopher Newport attempted to ease the tensions between the colonists and Native Americans. After returning from England, Newport offered Powhatan a cloak, pieces of furniture, and a decorated crown as gifts. Tensions mounted when Powhatan was expected to come to Jamestown to receive them. He refused stating that as a king the colonists needed to come deliver them to him. Reluctantly the colonists conceded. Upon their arrival, the colonists dressed Powhatan in his new English clothing and ordered him to kneel to receive his crown. Powhatan refused to do so. In the end, the colonists were able to get him to bend his legs so that he could be crowned. Powhatan exchanged his old cloak and shoes along with bushels of corn to mark an alliance.

Despite this gesture, for the next decade, tensions continued to exist between the colonists and Powhatan. New colonists arrived and consistently harbored negative attitudes toward the Natives. In several instances, the colonists lashed out by burning villages and killing Native American women and children. According to many accounts, Powhatan also developed an increasing dislike for the colonists due to their unwillingness to respect the Natives' cultural traditions. As a result, he often ordered his men to raid the copper supplies and other weapons from the colonists. Powhatan became quite successful in defeating the colonists prior to his declining health after 1610. As the main chief, he was also successful in influencing the actions of the colonists. He offered asylum to colonists who agreed to desert the Jamestown settlement. Many colonists left the settlement because the living conditions under Powhatan's rule were far better than what they experienced in the Jamestown colony. Powhatan's legacy was one of skill, compassion, and dedication to the survival of his people. Powhatan died in 1618. The date of his birth remains unknown.

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# 48

## Washington

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Lateasha Meyers

### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **c. 8000 BCE**

Archeologists find evidence from about this time of Native Americans in the Washington State region

#### **1792**

British explorer George Vancouver is the first European to set foot on the land of present-day Washington State

#### **1853**

Washington Territory is organized by Congress on March 2; the territory begins to develop anti-Chinese laws, starting with limiting the right to vote of Chinese Americans

#### **1855–1858**

The struggle between white settlers and the Yakima Native Americans results in the Yakima Wars, which are caused by white settlers trespassing onto Native American land

#### **1858**

Elements of the U.S. Army defeat a coalition of Native Americans at the Battle of Four Lakes, a battle of the Yakima War

#### **1865**

Seattle considers a 5th ordinance to remove and exclude Native Americans from the town

#### **1869**

Seattle's 5th ordinance on Native Americans is revisited but not further pursued



**1885**

Washington Territory residents and leaders in Tacoma force Chinese residents to abandon their homes and leave town immediately

**1885**

A combination of Native American tribes fights white miners who are digging on land granted to the Native Americans in the treaty sworn after the Battle of Four Lakes

**1886**

Anti-Chinese riots force Chinese residents out of Seattle

**1889**

Washington becomes the 42nd state to enter the Union on November 11

**1900**

Western Washington State residents petition to exclude Chinese and Japanese from working on county-funded projects

**1902**

Takuji Yamashita is denied access to the state bar exam because of his race/ethnicity as an Asian American

**1907**

White rioters in Seattle attack East Indians in their homes and on their jobs

**1910**

Seattle neighborhoods enforce segregation through housing laws

**1917**

The Washington State Federation of Colored Women is founded in Spokane

**1923**

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) organizes a rally in Wapato

**1924**

A KKK rally is held in King County

**1926**

The KKK organizes a parade in Bellingham

**1927–1928**

Anti-Filipino riots break out in Yakima and the Wenatchee valley

**1929**

The Renton Hill Community Club organizes to restrict people of color from buying or renting property in a 100-block radius in various Seattle areas

**1936**

Trustees in Spokane County move to restrict African American children from in-home foster care

## **916 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1936**

Washington accumulates a list of Japanese Americans on Bainbridge Island to begin a process of removal

### **1937**

The Washington legislature attempts to pass law prohibiting interracial marriage between Caucasians and people of color

### **1940**

The Chicano civil rights movement begins in Washington

### **1942**

Christian Friends for Racial Inequality is formed to bring together people across various religious sectors to fight for racial justice and to address discrimination

### **1942**

The Western Defense Command distributes posters that demand people of Japanese ancestry leave various places in Washington State

### **1942**

Approximately 13,000 Washington State residents of Japanese descent are jailed and forced into internment camps

### **1943**

Black Hanford employees in the tri-cities file a complaint protesting the segregation of white and black employees

### **1944**

The Hanford worksite hires Mexican Americans and continues their segregated policies and practices

### **1945**

Anti-Japanese organizations are established throughout Washington

### **1949**

Due to several racially charged acts and discrimination, the Washington State Board against Discrimination is established, resulting in an increase in the number of investigations of discriminatory practices

### **1949**

Famous African American jazz pianist Hazel Scott and her crew members are refused service at a restaurant in Pasco; this incident results in a lawsuit won by Scott

### **1955**

The King and Seattle County Civil Defense Department distributes stereotypical racially charged photos in a brochure entitled "Don't Sit under the Mushroom"; one picture depicts a Mexican couple comfortably sitting under the "Mushroom" of an atomic explosion

**1961**

Spokane's National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) secretary Reverend Ellis H. Casson addresses various discriminations African Americans in the area continue to face, such as inequitable housing, inequitable education, and discriminatory employment practices

**1962**

Seattle's NAACP branch sues the city to end segregation in public schools

**1963**

In the Wheeler Barbershop case, an estimated 35 Gonzaga University students picket a local barber shop for refusing service to African Americans

**1965**

Freedom patrols respond to the killing of an unarmed African American in Seattle; the freedom patrols include various leaders who volunteered to monitor police in action

**1968**

The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense launches a chapter in Seattle

**1971**

Flyers produced by the National Socialist White People's Party display swastikas and contain pro-segregation language; the flyers call for support for Arthur Armstrong, a known racist, to be on the school board

**1992**

Called to organize and fight against white supremacy, an anti-Nazi, anti-bigotry, and anti-violent racism rally is held in Whidbey Island State Park

**2002**

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) provision 43.101.410 is passed to fight against racial profiling

**2016**

Derogatory racial slurs are spray-painted on the Martin Luther King Jr. Center in Spokane

**NARRATIVE****Historical Foundations of Racism in Washington State**

It has been estimated that Native Americans lived in the Washington State region for more than 10,000 years. Some of the first known tribes were the Duwamish, Suquamish, Nisqually, Snoqualmie, and Muckleshoot. These tribal groups were united by what is known as a common Lushootseed or Salish language system. They had their own epistemologies and social, cultural, and economic systems. These systems were dismantled during the settlement and invasion

### ***Whitman Massacre***

In 1836, Marcus Whitman and his wife Narcissa Whitman were on a mission along with several others to force Native American people of the Cayuse tribe to convert to Christianity. The couple, along with other white settlers, set up various shelters, homes, and a mission house to begin their task of “helping” Native Americans become Christian. In addition, to their missionary work, they also brought and exposed the Native people to sickness. Most of the Cayuse people rejected the teaching of Christianity and the Whitmans altogether. Tensions between the white settlers and the Cayuse people grew as more settlers continued to migrate to the area. As tensions continued to rise and more of the Cayuse people continued to get sick from the diseases the settlers brought with them, the Cayuse people saw this as the white man’s way of trying to eliminate them to make space for more white settlers.

On November 29, 1847, some of the Cayuse tribesmen attacked the Whitman missionary grounds (The West Film Project 2001). This attack resulted in settlers dying including the Whitmans themselves. This event led to an attack on the Cayuse people and led to the Cayuse War. This war perpetuated an attack on Native people around the Oregon Trail led by the U.S. Army. The army wanted the men responsible for the attack on the missionaries to surrender. In 1850, five men were charged with the death of the Whitmans and were sentenced to death. The Cayuse people continued to fight for their land and territory even after the death of the five men. In 1855, due to low numbers, the Cayuse were defeated. Their tribal lands were taken away, and they were pushed into a reservation.

of Europeans. In 1792, the first Europeans set foot in Puget Sound. Although there were previous voyages, this was the first time Europeans came onto the land and established settlements. Before this time, explorers would stay anchored at sea. British explorer, George Vancouver, was among the first. Several decades after Vancouver’s voyage, fur traders came to Washington looking to trade goods. These fur traders brought with them a number of diseases that would eventually kill a large number of the various tribal groups in the area, effectively wiping out the indigenous population.

### **Arrival of the First African Americans and Chinese Americans in Washington State**

In the 1840s, various residents from Clay County, Missouri, decided they wanted to start a new life in Oregon. Among them was George Washington Bush. Bush was the child of an African American father and an Irish American mother. While the group was en route toward Oregon, the “Lash Law” was passed. This law made it legal for African Americans to get whipped if they were found anywhere in the Territory of Oregon. The law changed the settler’s trajectory to Washington State. George Washington Bush became one of the first known pioneers to settle in Washington State. By the late 1890s, more African Americans traveled to Washington State to establish their own businesses and seek out various economic opportunities.

In the 1850s, the discovery of gold in various rivers in the Pacific Northwest began the first large migration of Chinese descendants to Washington State.

The Chinese worked and settled in various places around Tacoma and Seattle. In addition, they started their own businesses and often lived and worked in Chinese communities. Three years after their settlement in Washington State, anti-Chinese laws were passed. These laws prohibited Chinese immigration, restricted who they married, and ensured Chinese paid extra taxes. Anger, hate, and discrimination reached its boiling point in 1885 and 1886, when Chinese Americans were forced from their homes in Tacoma and Seattle. Brutal attacks on the Chinese American community severely damaged the Chinese population and their presence in Washington State.

### **Segregation and Racial Unrest**

As reflected in the preceding brief overview, issues of race and racism have been prevalent in Washington State, which received the moniker the “Evergreen State” because of the natural beauty of the outdoor environment. Amid this beauty is the reality of historic racial injustice and social unrest, more specifically, the reality of the long history of segregation and racism in Washington State. Segregation in Washington State has manifested itself through housing practices, both legal and illegal. Some communities signed “covenant agreements” to make certain that homes were not sold to blacks and other people of color. In addition, segregation has been seen through employment practices and other various racially motivated practices. For example, the Hanford worksite was one of the most notorious places of employment to practice racism and segregation within the work environment. Restaurants, such as the Coon Chicken Inn, also engaged

### ***Ku Klux Klan in Washington***

The Ku Klux Klan (KKK), one of the largest white supremacy groups in the United States, began a chapter in Washington during the 1920s. The chapter was founded by people from Oregon and was part of the second rising of the KKK. Second rising chapters became more organized and expanded on their message of hate to target and attack groups other than blacks, including Jews, Catholics, and new immigrants. The group terrorized and harassed Washington residents and used various mechanisms as recruitment tools, including newspaper ads. The KKK distributed its newspaper, the *Watcher on the Tower*.

In 1929, the KKK held a convention in Bellingham, Washington; its leader was presented with a key to the city. The Klan intended to have a large-scale impact on Washington, as they did in Oregon. However, they were unsuccessful. The Klan remained visible throughout the decades. Although there continues to be chapters, the group slowly began to dissipate. Currently, the KKK continues to have chapters in various areas in Washington State. One of the largest chapters is housed in Colfax, Washington. While these chapters have very small activity, they continue to recruit and rally through various media outlets. In 2015, the local Spokane news (KHQ Q6) reported that some Spokane residents received flyers assumed to be from the KKK that explained, “You can sleep tonight knowing the Klan is awake” (KHQ-Q6, Spokane, 2015). Klan activity continues in Washington, where some see the Klan as a hate group, while others view the group as people exercising their freedom of speech rights.

in segregation and racist practices. The Ku Klux Klan flourished in the 1920s. Acknowledging the existence of segregation and racism in Washington State is important because it continues to affect its residents. Although Washington has made much progress to address issues of racism and segregation, there continues to be incidences of racial violence, racial discrimination, and racial injustices that occur within the state.

### **Housing Discrimination: Sundown Towns**

Numerous parts of Washington State, including one of the largest cities, Seattle, enforced what are known as “sundown laws.” Beginning in the 1890s and ending in the late 1960s, these laws were informal laws, but were enforced by residents within various communities. The sundown laws were used to ensure communities would only have white residents. Sundown laws were posted in selected neighborhoods, the posts offering the following warning: “N\*\*\*\*r, Don’t Let the Sun Go down on You” (Adams 2006, 601–2). People of color, African Americans in particular, were forewarned to be out of town by the time the sun went down. Those caught in town after sunset faced violence and severe discrimination. There are numerous accounts of “sundown” neighborhoods being spread out in different locales within Washington State. Moreover, while there were some areas with no signs, people of color were familiar with the location of the towns and the unwritten rules and codes of conduct that guided their social interactions. In addition, the “sundown” rule also meant that few people of color chose to live within these areas, due to fear and hatred from white residents. The informal laws, along with other discriminatory practices, further segregated residential and business areas. Many businesses supported these laws, contributing to racial segregation and aggressive forms of racism and discriminatory practices in Washington State. One of the most famous restaurant establishments, the Coon Chicken Inn, led the way in utilizing racialized images to market their brand and engage in a form of blatant racial discrimination in the Seattle area.

### **Coon Chicken Inn**

One must first understand the significance of what this restaurant symbolized to many African American residents. The word *coon* is derived from raccoon and has dehumanizing undertones. It began to be used as a negative term during the slavery period. *Coon*, historically, referred to lazy, childish, ignorant, unaccountable African Americans, especially African American males. The word was used to perpetuate the stereotype of the unworthy, slick, no good person of color, but more specifically, black people from slavery and beyond. In addition, *coon* was used to justify brutal beatings of slaves to ensure they would not be “lazy” slaves (Bailin 2014). *Coon* is more than just a word; it entails a long history of cruelty and racism.

The Coon Chicken Inn started in the 1920s as a fried chicken restaurant chain. It was established by Maxon Graham and Adelaide Burt (Graham). The first in the chain of restaurants was launched in Utah and later expanded to Seattle, Washington. There were intentions of opening a second Washington location in Spokane, but it never came to fruition. The front of the buildings were designed with

African American caricatures with racist features. The caricature's head served as the entrance of the restaurant. Once patrons entered the restaurant, the coon caricature was printed on everything, including souvenirs. The menus featured the coon logo: an African American face with overly large lips, *Coon Chicken Inn* written in his teeth, and his head topped off with a monkey cap. The Grahams also advertised their restaurant by having logos for people's cars and tires. This was an affront to the African American community in Seattle, and they resented the restaurant's racist marketing strategies. In 1930, one resident, Joseph Stanton, was arrested for cutting off a tire cover that had the Coon Chicken Inn logo.

Understanding the historical root of the word *coon*, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) found its use inappropriate and protested the fried chicken chain.

The organization faced a long, challenging battle against the owners; however, they would not fight the battle alone. Several attorneys also filed complaints against the restaurant's method of advertising. In response, the founders of the chain, Maxon and Adelaide Graham, changed the black face to blue and eradicated the words *Coon Chicken Inn* that were written inside of the caricature's teeth. Through the controversy, the restaurant remained opened, supported by hundreds of local patrons. It continued a thriving business in Seattle until the late 1940s, and in Utah well into the 1950s.

### Segregation in Housing

The issue of segregation was further perpetuated through landowners, homeowners associations, and landlords' creation of various housing ordinances that made it illegal to rent or sell homes and/or apartments to people of color. An example of such a restriction is found in the 1931 Queen Ann lower housing ordinance. It stated:

The parties hereto signing and executing this instrument do for themselves and with each other mutually covenant and agree with each other and for their personal



The Coon Chicken Inn was a chain of four restaurants founded in 1925 and closed during the 1950s. The restaurant's name contains the word "coon," considered an ethnic slur, and the trademarks of the restaurants were designed to look like a smiling blackface caricature of an African American porter. The smiling capped porter appeared on menus, dishes, and promotional items, such as this match holder. (Kate Patterson for The Washington Post via Getty Images)

representatives, heirs and assigns as follows: That the said property herein described shall not be sold, conveyed, leased or given to any person or persons other than of the Caucasian race, nor shall any person or persons other than of the Caucasian race be permitted to occupy or use the property excepting only employees in the domestic service on the premises of persons qualified hereunder as occupants or users and residing on the premises. (Seattle Civil Rights & Labor History Project, 2004–2017, par. 7)

Over 400 covenants and housing ordinance restrictions have been found to be similar to these. These covenants made it impossible for people of color to move into certain communities and/or buy property. These covenants also ensured white communities would remain white for several generations.

### **The Hanford Engineer Worksite in the Little Mississippi of the North**

People of color experienced segregation not only within housing practices, but also within employment practices. As indicated earlier, the Hanford Engineer worksite was one of the most notorious places that used segregated practices between people of color and white employees.

The tri-cities areas in Washington contributed to the racial unrest that was happening in the state. People of color that came to Washington looking for new opportunities were not greeted with open arms. The experience of segregation continued through various employment practices. Informal policies ensured African Americans were assigned to unskilled jobs, no matter what training or degree they had. While sites like the Hanford Engineer worksite offered African Americans and Mexican Americans employment, it became evident that the conditions in which they were employed and the issues of racism and discrimination they faced were not something they could escape.

In the *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Robert Bauman (2005) outlined how tri-cities utilized Jim Crow practices during the 1940s–1950s. Jim Crow was a set of laws that ensured segregation in various states by race. Tri-cities in Washington State are the three cities closely connected: Richland, Kennewick, and Pasco. In 2015, there was an estimated 35 percent of people of color living in Kennewick, 13 percent in Richland, 45 percent in Pasco, with Pasco having the highest number of people of color among the three cities. The historical roots of segregation have caused people of color to be forced into certain areas within the three cities, demonstrating further internal segregation practices. Besides being known for utilizing Jim Crow practices, the tri-cities in the past has also been known as the “Little Birmingham of the Pacific Northwest,” a name bestowed on them by civil rights activist Jack Tanner. Similarly, although not as intense as some of the struggles in Birmingham, Alabama, the tri-cities struggled with racial tension and racism. Some referred to the tri-cities as the Mississippi of the North. Whichever metaphor people used to describe them, all resulted from the aggressive segregation that was seen at the Hanford worksite, which emerged in the early 1940s. This worksite caused the first drastic shift in population since the colonization of Washington State.

**The Demographic Shift in Tri-Cities.** In 1943, the U.S. government seized several hundred acres of land in Hanford, Washington. Hanford joined several



other states in the Northwest in being selected for the construction of industrial buildings known as the Hanford Worksite, under the Manhattan Project. This project displaced several Native American tribes, while offering them limited access to their sacred land, now home to the Hanford Worksite. In addition to displacing various Native American tribes, this project illuminated the racial unrest in the tri-cities area. Hanford is an important historical site because of the nuclear and atomic weapons that were produced during World War II. The racial segregation and the discrimination people of color faced during this time period needs to be examined.

Because of the nature of the war and the nature of the United States during this time, the company expanded employment opportunities. The company employed both white and people of color (largely African Americans) to build various nuclear weapons. Before World War II, there were an estimated 27 African Americans living in the tri-cities. Once the Hanford Worksite was built, large numbers of African Americans came to work for the company. It has been estimated that African Americans accounted for approximately 10 percent of the employees and residents in the tri-cities during the Hanford era (Atomic Heritage Foundation 2017). In addition, about 15,000 African Americans migrated from the South. This drastically increased the number of African Americans within the tri-cities area. Some African Americans working for Hanford were looking to escape the horrific conditions that were prevalent in the South. However, once African Americans arrived in Washington State, they, too, were greeted with discrimination and racism. For the most part, African Americans were hired to do general labor, regardless of the skills or experience they possessed. At Hanford, there were only two aspects of work life that were not segregated: some of the dining halls and sport activities.

The Hanford site provided basic food and housing to some of their employees. These housing accommodations, known as barracks, were segregated by race and gender. Those who could not live in the barracks, due to space limitations, had to find their own accommodations. African Americans seeking housing outside the Hanford worksite ran into several obstacles. Because African Americans were mainly hired as temporary or short-term contractors, they were not allowed to purchase or rent homes anywhere, except in Pasco. In Kennewick and Richland, only permanent workers were allowed to buy property. According to housing ordinances and covenants, this ensured that the large African American workforce would not be able to purchase or rent homes. The conditions under which the Pasco area was maintained as a residential area during this period of time were extremely minimal. In fact, garbage services and running water were often not provided to communities in East Pasco. Mexican Americans who were also recruited to work for Hanford on a smaller scale faced similar restrictions. They were forced into segregated housing and facilities, away from African Americans and whites. While some people of color and whites interacted on the job, the company made sure interactions were kept to a minimal.

**Stories from the Past.** Several personal, firsthand accounts capture the experiences people of color had who lived in the tri-cities area and worked for the

Hanford Company. The *Tri-Cities Herald News* documented how blacks thought they were moving into a better environment from the South when they migrated to the Northwest. C.J. Mitchell (CJ), a retired teacher was interviewed by the online news distributor, reflected on his experiences as a black male teacher in the 1950s. He recalls that although he was permitted to teach at Westgate Elementary in Kennewick, he was not welcomed to live there. CJ's story is reflective of how people of color experienced life during the era and even after the Hanford facility was shut down. Pasco, and mainly East Pasco, was the only place people of color could live; they continued to face housing segregation well into the 1960s. Although there were no legal laws mandating segregation, informal laws dictated that they be banned from Kennewick and Richland. Sundown laws, discriminatory housing covenants, and other informal racially driven politics insured that people of color did not live in these areas. In addition, there were several public places and spaces that refused service to African Americans and other people of color.

**Fighting Back against Segregation.** Due to the inequality African Americans faced, they created their own spaces to service their people. Establishments such as jazz clubs, food shacks, and other places began to emerge on their own to ensure that African Americans had access to the supportive services they needed. Various forms of social activism also occurred. At the beginning of the modern-day civil rights era, Tacoma native and civil rights leader Judge Jack E. Tanner led a march in the tri-cities area, which was intended to illuminate the inequalities people of color were faced. This was not the last civil rights demonstration. In 1960, some students from the University of Washington's NAACP chapter picketed the area, protesting continued job discrimination that occurred through the tri-cities.

### **Present-Day Washington**

Washington State has made considerable progress toward being a more racially inclusive state. Although Washington is often seen as a racially progressive state, it is important to note the limitations of the progress toward eliminating issues of racism and discrimination. It was not until 2006 that Governor Christine Gregoire passed Engrossed Senate Bill 6169. This bill made it a priority for homeowners in Washington State to address any discriminatory language within their housing covenants. In addition, discrimination against any group of people that wanted to buy or rent housing in any community was unlawful, as supported by the Federal Fair Housing Amendment Act of 1988. The issue of housing ordinances proved to be just one of many battles people of color would fight in Washington State. A study by the Seattle Civil Rights & Labor History (2009) indicated that racially charged covenants from the past, although illegal, still shape residential patterns in Seattle. The legacy of segregation continues to be present in Washington State. For example, most people of color continue to be congregated in Pasco, one of the tri-cities areas. In 2015, more than half of the population in Pasco was Mexican American; however, there was only one city council member who was of Hispanic descent.

In 2016, as employees of the Martin Luther King Jr. Center approached the building, in Spokane, Washington, they saw a racist slur written on the building. The words N\*\*\*\*r had been spray-painted on the side of the building. The Martin Luther King Jr. Center provides educational resources, cultural enrichment activities, and other forms of social support to the community. This act of racial violence was seen as a hate crime. Spokane's NAACP president Philip Tyler, Mayor David Condon, and Assistant Fire Chief Brian Schaeffer spoke to concerned citizens about the racially charged event. Governor Jay Inslee also posted his concerns on Twitter: "Today's incident in Spokane is just one attempt to divide us with fear and intolerance, something that has no place in Washington" (November 15, 2016, 4:19 p.m.). However, the following day, a spray-painted swastika, along with a message referencing Donald Trump, was found on the home of a Mexican American family in Spokane (Alexander and Glover 2016). These two brief illustrations indicate that there is still work to be done in Washington State to address issues of race and racism.

Through the chronological timeline and narrative of segregation and racial unrest, it is evident that Washington State, like every state in the United States, has struggled with racism and segregation. The long legacy of discrimination began from settlement of the Europeans. This legacy continued through various housing practices, employment practices, and general segregation as seen through the narrative of housing covenants, Hanford worksite, and Coon Kitchen Inn in Washington State. In the current climate, Washington State continues to have various elements of racism and segregation.

## NOTABLE FIGURES

### Chief Si'ahl (1786–1866)

Chief Si'ahl, for whom the city of Seattle is named, was born in what is now known as Kent, Washington, to a Duwamish mother and a chief of the Suquamish tribe. His life began in a supportive community. Chief Si'ahl and his father helped the British visitors through the Puget Sound. His father committed early on to establishing a peaceful relationship with white settlers. As a young boy, Chief Si'ahl saw the effects white settlements had on the Native peoples. Between the late 1700s and early 1800s, various diseases were introduced to the Native population by the British and various European settlers. The introduction of these diseases caused several of the Native American populations to decrease, severely, and some died out altogether.

As a young adult, Si'ahl maintained and built strong alliances between the two lineages of his parents. He later inherited his position as chief. He became a great warrior and leader. As a leader, he made the decision to continue to be friendly toward white settlers as his father displayed to him as a child. By adulthood, Chief Si'ahl and his tribe worked to continue positive relationships with the white settlers. The Duwamish people helped the settlers adjust to the land that was unknown to them. In 1855, Chief Si'ahl was one of the first tribal leaders to sign the Treaty of Point Elliott, an agreement between various Native American tribes

and the government to guarantee hunting and fishing rights. In 1866, the U.S. Indian Agency proposed a reservation be created for the Duwamish people. Several European American immigrants chose to object the establishment of a reservation for the Duwamish. This protest began a new era of relationships between the settlers and the Duwamish people. The protest was also the start of various denials of goods and services to the Duwamish. The very people whom Chief Si'ahl helped to adjust to an unfamiliar environment were the same people who betrayed him and, eventually, took away the recognition of the Duwamish people. Although many Native American tribes helped some of the first settlers in Washington to survive, Seattle residents found ways to exclude Native Americans. Beginning in 1865, Seattle passed an act that banned Native Americans from living in Seattle. Before Chief Si'ahl's era, some tribes already had questionable relationships with the white settlers. This would be illustrated through several wars that happened before and after Chief Si'ahl, including the Whitman Massacre.

### **Hansen, Cecile (1937–)**

Carrying on the legacy of Chief Si'ahl is Cecile Hansen, great-great-grandniece of Chief Si'ahl. She continues to fight for the rights of the Duwamish people. Hansen is a member of the Duwamish tribe, which is now striving to be re-recognized by the federal government.

In her early years, Cecile planned to go off to college and pursue a degree in law. Her dreams soon changed once she married in 1955 and moved to a reservation in Queets. This environment changed the trajectory of her life forever. Cecile was horrified by the conditions of the reservation. The direct exposure to the unacceptable living conditions that her people endured nurtured her passion to fight for social justice. Furthering fueling her passion to fight for justice was the revocation of fishing rights for the Duwamish people. The struggle between her tribe and government officials inspired her to attend tribal council meetings. She worked with the council on various issues. In 1975, her hard work was recognized; she was elected to serve as chair of the Duwamish people tribal council. Hansen worked hard to ensure that she understood what her people needed. For more than 30 years, Hansen has served as chair of the Duwamish tribal people. She continues to strive for re-recognition and cultural improvement for the Duwamish. In addition, she continues to carry her great-great-grandfathers' legacy while also continuing to ensure the care of her people.

The Duwamish people have been filing to be re-recognized for several decades. In 2001, under the Clinton administration, the long fight of re-recognition seemed to be ending. The Duwamish people were granted temporary recognition. The recognition lasted a few days, only to be overturned by the incoming Bush administration. The Duwamish again filed for tribal recognition to the U.S. Interior Department Bureau of Indian Affairs in 2015. They were denied, as the bureau had changed some of the criteria to qualify as a recognized tribe. However, Hansen still fights for justice for the Duwamish people. She is a respected elder who continues to serve as chairwoman for the Duwamish council.

**Tanner, Jack E. (1919–2006)**

Jack Tanner was born and raised in Tacoma, Washington, the son of Ernest and Emma Tanner. Jack Tanner's father was a respected leader within the International Longshoremen's Union for which he served as founder. Tanner's childhood was impacted by the time period in which he grew up. The experiences of his early years resulted his decision to strive for justice and equality. In high school, Tanner was a star athlete in baseball and football. He was one of the very first African Americans to play center field and left back in football in "interscholastic sports in the city of Tacoma" (Olson and Fitzer 2006, 5). His talents led him to want to play professional baseball. Although this was his dream, it was short-lived due to the color of his skin. During this time, white baseball organizations would not hire African American players. Because his dream was short-lived, Tanner graduated from Stadium high school in 1943 and enlisted in the segregated U.S. Army.

Unbeknownst to him, this experience would shape his future as a legal champion for civil rights. In the army, he served in the racially segregated Jim Crow unit. This unit was commanded by white men. His experiences in the army directed his path toward becoming a civil rights lawyer. Once he completed his service in the army, he returned to Tacoma and pursued a life in the legal sector. He attended and graduated from the University of Puget Sound and later went to the University of Washington Law School. He and passed the bar exam on his first try, in 1955. When Tanner enrolled in the law school in the 1950s, he was the only African American student. Tanner faced several obstacles there, the first being his struggle with his academics. His second struggle was with some professors and staff members who did not think that African Americans should become lawyers. These obstacles further motivated Tanner to fight for justice. As a student, Tanner joined the NAACP and was actively involved. He would later serve as the regional vice president and president of the NAACP in Tacoma. Furthermore, his civil rights demonstrations and fight for justice would lead him to be appointed to the NAACP national board. "He was the regional director of the civil rights organization from 1957–1965" (Benton 2007–2017, par. 3). As mentioned in the narrative section, Tanner led a march in the tri-cities protesting racial injustice and discrimination.

After passing the bar, he faced additional barriers to establishing a career. Due to the color of his skin, law practices would not hire him. Moreover, building owners throughout the Puget Sound area would not rent him office space. With the help of one of his father's friends, he finally was able to establish office space in a bank. He decided early on that he would be a leader in civil rights litigation. Tanner became increasingly active in the civil justice arena. As a lawyer, he worked with Native American communities to help defend their fishing rights. He also fought for Native American tribes to be recognized. For 20 years, he worked with tribal chiefs and Puyallup tribal leaders on various cases. He also with other western Washington Native American activists. Tanner's fight for justice continued at the local and federal levels. In 1963, he and other civil rights advocates were called upon to offer advice to President John F. Kennedy on racial relations. In 1978, Tanner was very involved and active in the community. Judge Tanner was the first African American person of the Northwest to be a member of the federal judiciary. He worked as an attorney for over 20 years. He was active in civil justice

litigations. In 1966, he was the first African American candidate running for governor. In 1968, he finished in third place during the Democratic primaries. Although he did not win, he was not defeated and continued to work within the political sector by supporting several Democratic candidates.

After 20 years fighting as a lawyer, Tanner was nominated to serve as a federal district judge. Due to allegations from another local attorney, Tanner was forced to endure an investigation from the Washington State bar. The local attorney, who accused Tanner, claimed that he had inappropriate financial business with a smoke-shop owner. Eventually, Tanner was cleared and took the district federal judge position in 1978. Once Tanner transitioned into this position, he was often criticized and scrutinized about how he ruled. Because he was the first African American federal judge in the Northwest, he was often observed very closely by those who opposed him. He was undeterred and proved to be a resounding success as a jurist. In 1999, the Jack E. Tanner Bar Association was added to the Ethnic Minorities Bar Associations. The purpose was to assist in the growth and development of African American attorneys. In 2000, the association became an affiliated chapter with the National Bar Association. Judge Tanner was committed to ensuring that people of color, regardless of their status in society, were given and received respect and equal treatment, a privilege granted to white society. Judge Tanner died in 2006 from cancer.

He is remembered for fighting for what he believed in, even when his decisions were seen as controversial. He held a strong belief that people of color should be able to receive justice and equality in the court system. He continues to be known for his hard work, commitment to justice, commitment to public service, and strong love of relationship building. In 2006, the city of Tacoma also recognized Judge Tanner's commitment to justice work. Tacoma proclaimed January 28 as "Federal Judge Jack E Tanner Day." In addition, the Union station courthouse named a wing of the courthouse where Judge Tanner had maintained his own courtroom when he was alive as the Jack E Tanner. It was renamed after Judge Tanner to display his significance to the city and Washington State in general as a reminder for judges to fight for justice.

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## West Virginia

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Carl H. Walker

### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **1619**

The first African slaves arrive in Jamestown, Virginia

#### **1795**

The Virginia General Assembly frees Dick Pointer from slavery in appreciation for his services in fighting off an Indian attack on Fort Donnally in present-day Greenbrier in 1778

#### **1832**

Charles Faulkner of Berkeley County delivers a speech before the Virginia General Assembly in which he denounces slavery on economic grounds

#### **1835**

In Wheeling, John Templeton, John Moore, Stanley Cuthbert, and Ellen Ritchie are charged with illegally teaching African Americans to read

#### **1847**

Kanawha County native Henry Ruffner, the president of Washington College, in Lexington, Virginia, delivers an “Address to the People of West Virginia” calling for the abolition of slavery in western Virginia for economic reasons

#### **1859**

In October, John Brown and his followers seize the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry in Jefferson County, Virginia (later West Virginia), with the intention of initiating a slave uprising; Brown is hanged for treason on December 2, 1859, in Charles Town

#### **1861**

On April 17, Virginia secedes from the Union; the Unionist western counties of the state, where slavery is less prevalent, oppose secession and a series of



pro-Union conventions are held over the next two years in Wheeling to plan the withdrawal of the western counties from Confederate Virginia

**1862**

The U.S. Senate passes the West Virginia Statehood bill after changing the provision for slavery in the new state constitution to allow for gradual emancipation

**1863**

President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation takes effect on January 1; because the proclamation frees all slaves within areas in rebellion, but not slaves in areas loyal to the Union, such as Virginia's western counties

**1863**

West Virginia enters the Union as the 35th state on June 20, having effectively seceded from Virginia

**1863**

West Virginia gives African Americans the same right to a criminal trial as whites, but blacks cannot serve on a jury; West Virginia state also forbids the residency of any slave who enters the state after June 20, 1863

**1865**

On February 3, West Virginia ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery

**1867**

The Freedmen's Bureau reports the existence of seven African American schools in the Kanawha valley enrolling 241 students

**1867**

On January 16, West Virginia ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which gives citizenship rights to African Americans

**1869**

On March 3, West Virginia becomes the second state to ratify the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which gives voting rights to African American men

**1873**

Ernest Porterfield is hired as the first black police officer in Charleston, although the police chief and the rest of the force resign as a result of his hiring; the mayor retains Porterfield and hires a new police force

**1880**

In *Strauder v. West Virginia*, the U.S. Supreme Court strikes down a West Virginia law as unconstitutional because it prevents African Americans from serving on juries

**1881**

West Virginia enacts a law allowing all eligible African Americans to serve on juries

## **932 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1896**

Christopher Payne becomes the first African American elected to the West Virginia legislature

### **1902**

James E. Ellis becomes the second African American elected to the West Virginia legislature

### **1906**

The second meeting of the Niagara Movement convenes at Storer College in Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County; led by W.E.B. Du Bois, the movement becomes the forerunner to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

### **1919–1921**

Three African American state legislators—T.G. Nutter, Harry Capehart, and T.J. Coleman—are responsible for the creation of several state-funded institutions that are run by and for blacks

### **1919**

The West Virginia legislature enacts a law prohibiting entertainments that demean another race

### **1921**

The West Virginia legislature passes an anti-lynching law

### **1925**

African Americans protest the showing of D.W. Griffith's film, *The Birth of a Nation* at the Rialto Theatre in Charleston, asserting that the film violates the 1919 racially demeaning law; the state Supreme Court rules in their favor and holds against showing the film

### **1928**

Minnie Buckingham Harper is appointed to the West Virginia legislature to fill the unexpired term of her deceased husband; she thus becomes the first African American woman to serve in a legislative body in the United States

### **1931**

Two blacks accused of killing two white constables are forcibly removed from the Greenbrier County jail and lynched by a white mob; several members of the mob are convicted under the state's 1921 anti-lynching law, which is upheld by the West Virginia Supreme Court

### **1947**

Luther Bennett Ferguson becomes the first African American mine foreman in West Virginia, when he is named foreman at the Riverton coal mine in Crown Hill

### **1950**

Elizabeth Simpson Drewry becomes the first African American woman elected to the West Virginia House of Delegates

**1954**

The U.S. Supreme Court issues its decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, which prohibits segregation of schools based on race; although West Virginian State School Superintendent W.W. Trent sends out letters to all county school superintendents with suggestions for proper methods to begin integrating schools, the Greenbrier County School Board votes to continue segregated schools

**1956**

All West Virginia counties, including Greenbrier, begin integrating public schools in compliance with the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*

**1957**

The Hampshire County school district, one of the last West Virginia districts to integrate, admits four black students to its all-white high school and elementary school

**1958**

The first West Virginia chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) forms in Charleston, where it organizes boycotts of stores that refuse service to African Americans

**1961**

The West Virginia legislature creates the West Virginia Human Rights Commission to combat racism and discrimination in the state

**1972**

Levi Daniel becomes the first African American to be appointed as district president of the United Mine Workers (UMW), when he becomes president of District 29

**1998**

Marshall University professor Marie Redd becomes the first African American woman elected to the West Virginia State Senate

**2008**

According to the U.S. Census, African Americans account for about 3.6 percent of the population of West Virginia

**2013**

Undocumented immigrants are estimated to constitute less than 0.5 percent of the state's total population, a percentage smaller than most surrounding states

**2015**

President Barack Obama awards Katherine Johnson of White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, the Presidential Medal of Freedom for her work at NASA in the early days of the space program; the Katherine G. Johnson Computational Research Facility is dedicated at the NASA Langley Research Center and the motion picture, *Hidden Figures*, featuring her accomplishments, is released

**2016**

The mayor of Clay, West Virginia, resigns after causing a furor with a racist Facebook post directed at First Lady Michelle Obama

**2017**

Before it was ended by President Donald Trump, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program processed applications from 152 people in West Virginia

**NARRATIVE**

A historical review of race, racism, and the racial minority experience in West Virginia has its limitations. This is particularly true when reviewing the experiences of American Indians in the state. Normally, issues surrounding the Indian presence, settlements, rights, and privileges are raised in examining conflicts between the Native Americans and white people within an area. The westward movement of the United States, which included American Indian removal programs, largely resolved these issues before West Virginia became a state in 1863. It is most likely that the usual conflicts and difficulties between whites and Natives did not happen in West Virginia. Pauline Haga notes that, "So far as is known, the land embraced within the present boundaries of West Virginia, was never occupied by any tribe of Indians as a settled abode, with the exception of one which lived in and near the New River valley known as the 'Canawhays' from which the Kanawha River derives its name" (1997, 4). While the American Indians did not appear to find western Virginia ideal for permanent habitation, even during the early colonial period, they used the area consistently for hunting and fishing. Frank S. Riddel also notes that, "During the first decades of the eighteenth century, shortly before Europeans began to advance into the territory that would become West Virginia, there were only a few Indians living in the future state" (2008, 36).

The history of West Virginia is largely devoid of interactions with Native Americans on a regular basis, except for a few raids and physical confrontations. Therefore, this chapter reflects the history and relationships between African Americans and whites in West Virginia.

Let us start with a word of caution: The state of West Virginia could be perceived as a "state of anomaly." Anomaly is defined as a deviation from the common rule, type, arrangement, or form. And as we shall see, this definition seems relevant with regard to West Virginia's origin as a state and its historical interactions with America's largest racial minority group, the African Americans. Some scholars find it essential to understand the unusual background of West Virginia statehood (how it was admitted to the Union) in order to understand this relationship. Moreover, it is not unusual for others to attribute the special character of the state to its geographical location. For example, in 1903, T. Gillis Nutter, an African American who migrated to the area, described West Virginia as a state 50 miles north of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 25 miles south of

Richmond, Virginia, yet reaching beyond the middle of Ohio on the west. “It is referred to as the most northern of the southern states; the most southern of the northern states; the most eastern of the western states; and the most western of the eastern states” (Lutz and Ashton 1996, 292). The conflicting nature of the state’s identity (and how to identify with others in the region) is a significant aspect of its unusual history. And the state’s history of race and racism reflects this unique character and geographical positioning as well.

### **Gaining Statehood**

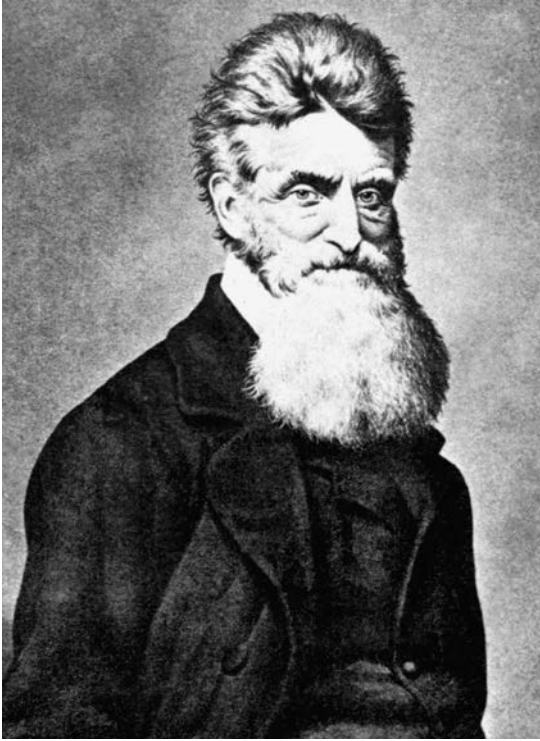
The first example of West Virginia’s image as being an anomaly arises out of the fact that the U.S. Constitution does not allow for part of a state to become a new state without the consent of the original state. West Virginia separated from the state of Virginia and entered the Union as one of only three states admitted during the Civil War era of 1861–1865, a war being waged over the freedom of millions of African Americans. Kansas was admitted in 1861, and Nevada became a state in 1864. Unlike West Virginia, both of these states were admitted to the Union after being U.S. territories. After Virginia seceded from the United States, a group of western Virginians, who were in favor of remaining part of the Union, met in the city of Wheeling on May 11, 1861. They agreed that a vote should be held so that the people (in that part of Virginia) could express their wishes. On May 23, 1861, most of the voters in western Virginia supported the view of staying in the Union. Thus, western Virginia set in motion the process for a potential state to secede from a state that had already seceded from the Union.

West Virginia was admitted to the Union on June 20, 1863, and, within 10 days, sent military units to fight in the Battle of Gettysburg. On the other hand, significant numbers of West Virginians also fought for the Confederacy. It might appear that the decision to remain in the Union and even take up arms against the rebellious Southern slaveholding states meant that West Virginia was a “northern, anti-slave” entity. That was not the case.

There was more to the volatile act of breaking away from Virginia and remaining in the Union than the issue of slavery. At least four other factors influenced the decision to establish a new state in the western part of Virginia: (1) the social and political turmoil that resulted in the Civil War; (2) disagreement on whether a state had the right to be a part of the Union; (3) the formidable geographical separation of Virginia and West Virginia caused by the Allegheny and Blue Ridge Mountains; and (4) the significant cultural and economic differences that divided the eastern and western parts of the state.

### **The Slavery Issue**

The dehumanizing institution of slavery was alive in West Virginia, and the question of abolition abounded. First, there was the famous antislavery action, which occurred in Harpers Ferry. This was the site of John Brown’s unsuccessful effort to create a slave uprising in 1859, efforts which were not rooted in the civic attitudes of



A militant U.S. abolitionist, John Brown, a white man, led an unsuccessful raid against the federal arsenal in Harpers Ferry, (West) Virginia, hoping to spark a local slave rebellion. This event contributed to the growing tensions between the North and South that led to the American Civil War in early 1861. (National Archives)

the citizens of the future state. In West Virginia, slavery was accepted and tolerated, and John Brown was a hero to none.

Second, the acceptance of slavery in western Virginia was never more apparent than in the attempt by the “Reformed Government of Virginia” to write a constitution, which was a necessary qualification for becoming the state of West Virginia. Delegates to the state convention, held in Wheeling in May 1861 (with succeeding conventions in 1862 and 1863), retained parts of the Virginia Constitution, particularly the sections regarding slavery. The initial constitution for West Virginia was completed in 1862. It allowed existing slave property to remain undisturbed and prohibited the entry of additional blacks, whether they were slaves or free, within the state’s new borders. However, the U.S. Congress rejected those provisions. Subsequently, the proposed new state amended the constitution by providing for gradual

emancipation of all slaves. Even so, the slavery issue in the new state constitution was very troubling to the U.S. Congress but was accepted after the changes.

Generally speaking, in the years leading up to the Civil War, there was not a great deal of enthusiasm for abolition of slavery throughout the new state and little interest in bringing more slaves to the state. Moreover, there were specific efforts to prohibit an increase in the Negro population, as evidenced by the proposed state constitution. The white population of the proposed new state was not characterized as antislavery advocates. Instead, the whole western area, having been a part of Virginia, reflected, for the most part, the mentality and mores of a slaveholding state. A small area of West Virginia, between Pennsylvania and Ohio that is often referred to as the northern panhandle, had active antislavery movements before the Civil War. However, in the period leading to statehood, there were many anti-Negro expressions as well. There were consistent public expressions of distaste for the current issues of the time, such as secession, abolition, the ascendancy of the Republican Party, President Lincoln and the cause for the Civil War. John Alexander Williams asserts, “this attitude also revealed, avowedly or by implication, a

racist view of blacks and their aspirations for freedom. A strain of violent negro-phobia would surface again in West Virginia politics before the statehood era was through” (1984, 78).

Third, it was clear that the sentiments of the new state were not kindly disposed to African Americans from the beginning. One of the ultimate anomalies is revealed when West Virginians adopted their state motto: *Montani Semper Liberi*, which means “Mountaineers are always free.” Obviously, this did not apply to the Negroes living in the mountains of West Virginia. Their status as slaves, and as free men of color, appeared to make them ineligible to be called “mountaineers.” As our writer notes, “the reality for tens of thousands of black Americans living west of the Blue Ridge Mountains was something far different than the popular and commonly accepted narrative—the counties of West Virginia were, right up to the close of the Civil War, home to countless slaves. . . . West Virginia was the last slave state to be admitted into the Union and the last place in America where slavery was permitted by Federal law” (Farley 2015, 45). While the state’s first constitution provided for the phasing out of slavery, it was the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865 that completely abolished slavery in West Virginia.

### Population

The second example of an anomalous situation swirls around the relatively small African American population in West Virginia’s early history—which was not the case for other Southern states. As mentioned previously, the population of Native Americans in West Virginia and their interactions with white settlers was minimal; however, the African American presence required special attention.

In the years following the war, West Virginia experienced an increase in population, especially among African Americans. This was due largely to one circumstance: the need for robust unskilled workers in West Virginia who could accept the dangers and hard physical labor required for jobs in the coal mines; rail and highway construction; and the timber, oil, and gas industries. Many descendants of the former slaves were attracted to West Virginia. They were confident in their ability to perform hard work and cope with the physical danger that characterized the jobs. They were also attracted to the new state for several other reasons including: (1) the desire to disassociate with slavery (since the work in the emerging industries was not agrarian; (2) the work would not be harder or more dangerous than slavery; (3) the payment for their labor was in money, or coal companies issued currency as opposed to “settling with the white man” at his store after the crop had been harvested and sold; (4) the right to vote, hold public office, and other less-stringent racial laws; and (5) the proximity to the former Confederate states made West Virginia accessible and attractive to the African American, especially those from the South. Many African Americans and their families came from Virginia, the Carolinas, Alabama, and Mississippi for the unskilled hard labor jobs.

A large migration of Europeans, particularly from the southeastern countries, also arrived in West Virginia for the same type jobs sought by blacks. The flow of relatives and acquaintances of the mountain people who had lost their meager existence following the Civil War, also began to pour into the new state and

offered jobs that they, too, could perform. This population growth fueled competition for jobs and increased racial conflict between black and white men.

The enforcement of “Black Codes” were far less restrictive in West Virginia. The enormous cost of sustaining a racially segregated society, especially when a high percentage of the counties had few, if any, African Americans, seemed ludicrous to many. Thus, social practices in West Virginia provided blacks with a freedom of movement and participation in society unavailable in other (Southern) states.

Historically, West Virginia’s black population never exceeded more than 10 percent of its total population. There was a population explosion from the 1890s until 1940s, at which point West Virginia began to witness a steady decline in the black population, from a high of 8 percent to approximately 3 percent. The significant departure of its black citizens that began in the 1940s is attributed to an atmosphere of racial animosity, the decline of job opportunities in the coal mines, and the implementation of federal equal opportunity programs, which created opportunities for blacks in other states and areas of employment.

While racial barriers—segregation, discrimination, social oppression—have always existed in West Virginia, many African Americans who were born or later migrated to the state made remarkable achievements. Those achievements became quite notable in politics, education, military service, arts and entertainment, and athletics.

### **Political Activity and Participation**

African Americans in West Virginia have long held an interest and willingness to participate in the political process. In 1869, a group of Republicans formulated a constitutional amendment with more liberal policies. The Flick Amendment, named after one of its sponsors, was designed to enhance the liberal position of the nineteenth-century Republican Party. The measure extended the vote to former Confederates and also, by omitting the word “white” from the qualifications to vote, enacted black suffrage as well. The black suffrage aspect was a mere symbolic gesture; the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, effective in March 1870 granted voting rights to black men. However, the state constitutional convention of 1872 affirmed black male voting rights in West Virginia; black and white females would gain the right to vote in 1920 with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment.

The election of African Americans to public office was a noteworthy accomplishment during the post-Reconstruction era (1890–1930) in American history. In 1918, three black men were elected to the West Virginia legislature: Charleston attorney T. G. Nutter; Keystone attorney Harry J. Capehart; and coal miner John V. Coleman of Fayette County. Several African American women also made tremendous contributions to the state of West Virginia and to the nation. A number of those contributions were made in politics. After receiving the vote along with white women in 1920, black women increased their influence in the political life of the state. In 1927, when black legislator E. Howard Harper died in office, his widow, Minnie Buckingham Harper (1886–1978), served the remainder of his term. She would become the first African American woman to serve as a member of a state legislative body in the United States.



### ***African American Women in Public Service***

Minnie Buckingham Harper (1886–1978), the first African American woman to serve as a member of a state legislative body in the United States, was born in Winfield, West Virginia. Her husband, Republican E. Howard Harper, had been elected to the West Virginia House of Delegates from McDowell County in 1926. Following his sudden death in 1927, West Virginia governor Howard Gore appointed Mrs. Harper to fill the unexpired term of her deceased husband in 1928.

More than two decades later, in 1950, Democrat Elizabeth Simpson Drewry (1893–1979) became the first African American woman elected to the West Virginia legislature. She, too, was elected as a representative from McDowell County and served in the House of Delegates for 13 years, from 1951 to 1966.

Mildred Mitchell-Bateman (1922–2012) was the first African American woman to be appointed to a high-ranking office in West Virginia state government. She was appointed director of the Department of Mental Health by Democratic governor William Wallace Barron in 1962 and remained in the position for 15 years. She resigned in 1977 to accept the position of chair of the Psychiatry Department at the Marshall University School of Medicine. She has served the community and state with such dedication that Governor Cecil Underwood renamed the Huntington State Hospital as the Mildred Mitchell-Bateman Hospital in 1999 to honor her accomplishments.

Finally, in 1998, another Marshall University professor, Democrat Marie E. Redd, representing portions of Cabell and Wayne Counties, became the first African American, of either gender, to be elected to the West Virginia Senate.

### **Economics**

Throughout most of its existence, West Virginia has been a poor state; it remains near bottom, in per capita income, unemployment, and life expectancy among the 50 states. The western part of Virginia found its economic stability in the extraction of natural resources where coal became king. The coal mines brought a life sustaining industry to West Virginia that had not previously been known. However, before coal could attain its domination in the state's economy in the twentieth century, other key industries had to pave the way. And African American workers played a key role in their development.

The first of these industries to make an impact was the construction and operation of a major transportation system of railroads. The rugged mountainous land of West Virginia has been described as one of the hardest places in the country to build a railroad. In one example alone, workers had to dig a 6,000-foot tunnel through the mountain in the southern part of the state. It has been difficult to determine how many men were killed during the bridge constructions and tunnel digging. Many were crushed by cave-ins in the tunnels. However, the legend of John Henry, an African American man, grew out of his extraordinary feats of physical strength during the rail construction and tunnel digging experiences in the southwest part of the state. His hero status in southern West Virginia is comparable to that of Paul Bunyan, who was a giant lumberjack in American folklore.

Another industry that emerged in the latter part of the nineteenth century that created a population boost was cutting timber from the forest. It was estimated

that two-thirds of the state was covered by forests that had never been cut. By 1900, half of the forests were gone and by 1920, almost all of the 10 million acres of tall trees were gone. Many newcomers to the state who had worked in the depleted timber industry found it possible to still make a living when the industry declined by going to work in the coal mines. Significant numbers of African American men chose to do so. Oil and gas also emerged as major industries by the latter part of the nineteenth century. For example, by 1893, Sistersville, West Virginia, had the largest producing oilfield in the world (Smucker 2003, 52–54). At one point, West Virginia relied upon the salt mine industry as a contributor to the economy and even used slave labor for that extremely difficult and dangerous work. For example, Elisha Brooks erected in 1817 the first salt furnace in the Kanawha valley at the mouth of Campbell's Creek that produced nearly 150 bushels of salt per day. By 1808, David and Joseph Ruffner succeeded in drilling to 59 feet, where they secured a good flow of strong brine. Also in that year, the first salt was shipped west, by river, on a log raft. The saltmakers formed a "trust," the Kanawha Salt Company, in order to regulate the quality and price of salt and to discourage foreign competition. This was the first "trust" in the United States. This cooperative helped the salt industry grow until it reached its peak in 1846, producing over 3 million bushels that year. At that time, the Kanawha valley was one of the largest salt manufacturing centers in the United States. It should be noted, however, that the salt industry in this area, was a slave-powered enterprise, wherein more than 2,000 slaves worked on a regular basis (Imbrogno 2013).

### **Education**

With regard to education, West Virginia was quick to establish Black Codes requiring the separation of the races in the educational arena. As early as 1865, "West Virginia provided for the creation of separate schools for black students in districts where there were at least 30 black children. In areas where fewer than 30 black children resided, local school boards were left to fund black education as 'the board thinks best' " (Hornsby 2011, 922–23). In 1872, the constitution was amended. While separate schools were still required for black and white children, in order to qualify for state or country funding, the threshold was lowered from the 30 black child rule to 15. The practice of racial segregation and disproportionate funding for black and white schools continued well into the twentieth century.

During the era of separate but equal, many of the elementary level schools were one-room facilities, particularly in most of the coal mining towns. The elementary school buildings were usually owned by the coal companies; however, operating costs were funded by taxpayers. At the high school level, buildings were much larger, with one or two high schools in each county for each race. West Virginia provided administrative oversight at the state level: a white superintendent of schools for whites and a black assistant superintendent of schools for blacks.

Attorney T. Gillis Nutter, president of the Charleston branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and representative from Kanawha County to the West Virginia House of Delegates, was a leading advocate for public education for blacks. He played a prominent role in passing

legislation for the first million-dollar appropriation for rural schools in the 1921 session of the state legislature, increasing support for the black districts. However, West Virginia law requiring a racially segregated, K–12 public school system stayed in place until 1954, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled separate but equal unconstitutional in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

West Virginia did show interest in the establishment and funding of higher-level education for blacks after the Civil War. The higher learning centers for blacks were referred to as normal schools or institutes. Before the end of the nineteenth century, three such educational centers were founded in West Virginia and geographically located in different parts of the state: Storer Normal School (northeast); West Virginia Colored Institute (central); and Bluefield Colored Institute (southwest).

Storer Normal School was the oldest of the three schools. This institution was founded in Harpers Ferry as one of the country's first black colleges and admitted its first students on October 2, 1867. Storer College also served as a memorial to John Brown and his raid on the federal arsenal in 1859. Noted African American abolitionist and lecturer Frederick Douglass (1818–1895) visited the school in 1881 to deliver his famous speech in tribute to John Brown. African American scholar and intellectual W.E.B. Du Bois (1868–1963) attended a Niagara Movement Conference at Storer, which laid the foundation for the creation of the NAACP. Virginia-born J.R. Clifford (1848–1933) was a graduate of Storer College in 1875. In 1882, he established the *Pioneer Press*, which was the first black newspaper in West Virginia. After the Supreme Court decision on school integration in 1954, West Virginia withdrew support from Storer College. The institution was closed in 1955.

West Virginia Institute for Colored was founded in a small town (near Charleston) in 1891. The school attained national prominence by the end of the nineteenth century as an institution of higher education for blacks. It began its post-secondary level of instruction in 1915, and awarded its first baccalaureate degree in 1919. The name was later changed to West Virginia State College and then changed again to its present name, West Virginia State University. In 1939, West Virginia State College became the first black college to establish a Civilian Pilot Training Program. In 1940, the college enrolled white trainees into its flight program, thereby setting a precedent for a future generation of integrated military service. George Spencer, a graduate of the training program, later became the first African American to be appointed to the U.S. Army Air Corps. The college produced many outstanding citizens in many different fields. However, the outstanding development of military officers for the U.S. Army by the West Virginia State Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) proved extraordinary and has been recognized as such.

Bluefield Institute for Colored (later changed to Bluefield State College) was founded in 1895, as a small, black teachers' college and remained so for most of its existence. As late as 1954, it boasted a total enrollment of only 354 students, including three white students. However, a mere decade later, Bluefield was a predominantly white, four-year teacher's college. In November 1968, black students staged a campus protest, a reaction against the institution's release of black faculty and staff. In the midst of the protest, someone reportedly threw a brick through the president's window, and a bomb ripped through the gymnasium. As a result, the

state closed the dormitories and displaced a significant number of the black student body. They also moved the institution's black historic documents, pictures, and artifacts into a small room. This action fueled complaints from black alumni. By 2001, Bluefield State College had 2,800, mostly white students, with few black faculty and staff, and could no longer be considered an HBCU (historically black college and university). Bluefield State College was a major institution for the preparation of teachers in the black public schools in the state for most of the twentieth century. Its proud history as one of the pioneer HBCUs is overshadowed by its transformation into a predominantly white institution of higher education.

Again, the West Virginia image is blurred by its tendency toward anomaly. Following the court-ordered desegregation of schools in 1954, West Virginia essentially removed the category of "Black Colleges and Universities" which was created to educate black citizens. The new integration requirements of 1954 worked strangely and unpredictably for the three historically black colleges in West Virginia. As a result of the push toward integration, the oldest institution for higher education, Storer College, was defunded and closed; West Virginia State College went from a black college to a predominantly white state university; and, Bluefield State College, traveled even further, by becoming a predominantly white institution where violence against a black presence was exhibited. And a final irony, following the court desegregation ruling and the dismissal of black faculty and staff, Bluefield State College was subject to federal oversight to ensure that goals for acquiring black faculty and staff are being met. There remains a high level of skepticism and doubt among black citizens as to whether the integration of the public schools in West Virginia, especially with regard to the experiences of its historically black colleges, can be regarded as an unquestioned mark of achievement for educational progress in the state.

### **Military Programs and Service**

The integration of the U.S. military resulted from President Truman's issuance of Executive Order 9981 in 1948. This order mandated equal treatment of all military personnel, regardless of race, color, religion, or national origin. The order had very little impact until the Korean War, when its gradual implementation began in 1950. However, African Americans from West Virginia had long been prepared for the transition. As noted earlier, West Virginia State College established a quality military training program during the 1940s and produced successful graduates ready to serve as junior officers at the time of the Korean War and, later, during the Vietnam War. The presence of minority group officers as leaders in multiracial, military units offered credible evidence of racial progress in the United States. It is also important to note the opportunities for advancement for African Americans who served in the military. The highest rank of achievement for an enlisted member in the U.S. Army is that of general. Prior to 1948, the first and only black general in the history of the U.S. Army was Brigadier General Benjamin O. Davis Sr. (1877–1970). However, the implementation of officers' training programs during the late 1940s and 1950s resulted in the development of at least 45 black officers obtaining the title of generals by the end of the twentieth century

### ***African American Military Might***

Thirteen men born in West Virginia, and/or graduates of West Virginia State College's ROTC program, achieved the rank of general in the U.S. military service. They include Lieutenant General Robert E. Gray, Major General Kenneth D. Gray, Major General James W. Monroe, Major General Edward Greer, Major General Charles C. Rogers, Major General Joe Turner, Major General Harvey D. Williams, Brigadier General Frank Bacon Jr., Brigadier General Dallas C. Brown Jr., Brigadier General Roscoe C. Cartwright, Brigadier General Walter F. Johnson, Brigadier General Earl M. Simms, and Brigadier General Robert L. Stephens Jr. Moreover, countless other black officers in the army were commissioned through the ROTC program at West Virginia State College and retired at one or two ranks below general.

Furthermore, two African American soldiers from West Virginia earned the Congressional Medal of Honor, the nation's highest award, during the last half of the twentieth century. Sergeant Cornelius H. Charlton (1929–1951), born in East Gulf, West Virginia, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for bravery. He was killed in combat during the Korean War. Major General Charles C. Rogers (1929–1994), born in Claremont, West Virginia, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for bravery and leadership for his service during the Vietnam War.

(Dabbs 1997, 51–129). Thirteen, or approximately one-third, of these black generals were either born in West Virginia, or were from the ROTC program at West Virginia State College. African Americans from West Virginia made a significant contribution to the advancement of racial equality in the military.

### **Crashing through Barriers**

As was true in West Virginia and throughout the nation, African Americans were denied opportunities in the entertainment and sports industries and prestigious appointments in the professions. Yet, a few members from black communities in West Virginia—the coal mine capital of the nation—were able to crash through racial barriers and make significant contributions, on a national level, to their chosen fields of endeavors. For example, singer and songwriter Bill Withers (1938– ) from Slab Fork; Bishop T.D. Jakes (1957– ) from Charleston; and comedian, radio host, and all-round television entertainer Steve Harvey (1957– ) from Welch. Also, to be recognized are sport legends Hal Greer (1936–2018) from Huntington and Randy Moss (1977– ) from Rand.

Some of the most famous African American academic giants, literary figures, and scholars were also born in West Virginia, or spent a significant part of their lives there. Abolitionist, journalist, physician, writer, and black nationalist advocate Martin R. Delaney (1812–1885) was born in Charles Town, Virginia, present-day West Virginia, as a freeman. His mother was a free woman, but his father was a slave. Delaney was one of the first three blacks to be admitted to Harvard Medical School. He was forced to leave as a result of complaints from white students concerning the admission of blacks. He studied medicine as an apprentice to several white abolitionist doctors in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He later coedited

essays, with Frederick Douglass, for the *North Star*. Delaney was commissioned as a major in the army during the Civil War and became the first African American field grade officer in the history of the U.S. Army.

Carter G. Woodson (1875–1950), the son of former slaves, was born in Virginia. The family moved to Huntington, West Virginia, when his father learned that a high school for blacks was being built there. At the age of 20, Woodson entered high school in Huntington and graduated in less than two years. Three years later, he was selected as the principal of the same high school. Woodson earned degrees at Berea College, University of Chicago, and in 1912 received his PhD from Harvard University. From 1920 to 1922, Dr. Woodson served as academic dean of the West Virginia Collegiate Institute, now West Virginia State University. In 1915, he founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History and published *The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861* that same year. In 1926, he established a week in the middle of February to commemorate the historical accomplishments of the blacks. The week was selected to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass and became known as Negro History Week. The name was changed to Black History Week in 1972, and four years later, President Jimmy Carter proclaimed February as Black History Month.

The Reverend Leon Sullivan (1922–2001) was born in Charleston, West Virginia, and attended the all-black high school. He entered West Virginia State College on an athletic scholarship and later attended both Union Theological Seminary and Columbia University in New York City. He served as an assistant minister to Reverend Adam Clayton Powell Jr. at Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York City. Reverend Powell later became a U.S. congressman from New York. Reverend Sullivan was a Baptist minister, a civil rights activist, a boycott leader, and the first black member of the board of directors for General Motors. In the early 1940s, Sullivan organized a civil rights march on Washington. In 1950, he became the pastor at Zion Baptist Church in Philadelphia and devoted enormous time and energy creating job opportunities for African Americans. He was the founder of Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC), which launched similar job training and educational programs throughout the nation and in international communities. He was author of the *Sullivan Principles*, an attempt to guide American corporations doing business in South Africa during the period of apartheid. Throughout his adult life, Reverend Sullivan worked diligently with civic and civil rights organizations and government to improve job opportunities for blacks.

Finally, mathematical genius Katherine Johnson (1918– ) is one of the most fascinating persons in American history. Mrs. Johnson was born on August 26, 1918, in White Sulphur Springs, Greenbrier County, West Virginia. She was the youngest of four children. Her father performed work as an unskilled laborer, including work at the famous Greenbrier Hotel. Her mother was a former teacher. Mrs. Johnson showed an enormous talent and gift of mathematical ability from an early age. Her home county of Greenbrier did not provide public schools for African American students past the eighth grade. Her parents moved to Institute, West Virginia, when she was 10 years old in order for her to complete high school. She graduated at the age of 14 and entered West Virginia State College. Four years later, she graduated summa cum laude with a degree in mathematics. Mrs. Johnson became a teacher at a black public school and, in 1939, left her teaching job to enter graduate school. She

began graduate school at West Virginia University in Morgantown and was one of three African American students and the first African American woman to integrate the graduate school at the university. In 1952, Mrs. Johnson was hired as a mathematician for the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA), which later became the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). It was there that she began her career, focused on getting a person into space and bringing them back safely. She was a key person in mathematical computations for the first American journey in space in 1961, as well as the successful space orbit in 1962. She performed the calculations for the 1969 *Apollo 11* trip to the moon, and the following year, she made significant contributions to the safe return of *Apollo 13* after malfunctions occurred while in space. In 2015, President Barack Obama presented her with the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Her achievements are featured in the motion picture *Hidden Figures*, which was released in 2016.

### Mixed Outcomes

For most of its history, West Virginia was unlike the other previous slaveholding states regarding African Americans. Considerable evidence shows this is true in three areas: voting, election to public office, and public transportation. The absence of those three “pressure points” (i.e., voting, holding public office, and seating in public transportation), especially during the civil rights protests of the 1960s, allowed West Virginia to avoid a fate that befell its Southern brethren, including its parent state of Virginia. Throughout its existence, including up to the last half of the twentieth century, West Virginia appeared to favor ambiguity and avoid a direct openness in race relations, hoping that it would go away if ignored. The evidence rests in the examples of the state Constitutional Convention of 1872, requiring the segregationist clause that “white and colored shall not be taught in the same school,” but on the other hand, not requiring separation of the races in public transportation. While a state-sanctioned, racially stratified, and unequal society would persist well into the twentieth century, West Virginia was unlike former Confederate states in that it integrated most of its public schools without massive resistance, following the *Brown v. Board of Education* U.S. Supreme Court decision. It seems that the state’s action was based, at least in part, on the aforementioned cost of sustaining two societies based on racial separation.

It is recognized by many that, upon close examination of the experiences of African Americans within the United States after slavery, there is a direct correlation between the number of African Americans in a state and the rigidity of the segregation system. The reference here is to the existence of a “tipping point” that manifests itself based on population. For example, if we arbitrarily use a “tipping point” of 10 percent as being the maximum percentage for less-restrictive racial laws, then West Virginia would fall into the milder category of treatment of blacks. In order to bring the impact into a sharper focus, compare the 2010 state of Virginia census with the 2010 state of West Virginia census. Virginia had a total population of just over 8 million people of which 1.5 million were African Americans (19.4% of the total population). West Virginia had a total population slightly less than 2 million people of whom 63,000 were African Americans (3.4%). In that comparison of state populations and the legal requirements of each state, the

evidence of the milder treatment can be found in the laws of West Virginia, even before the civil rights era. For example, the laws in West Virginia giving blacks the right to vote, election to public offices, and regulating public transportation, which did not impose a sanction that blacks had to “go to the back of the bus,” were considerably more liberal than those of the Southern states. These customs existed long before the 1960s. The historical experiences of integrating the public schools were vastly different in West Virginia than they were in Virginia, possibly due to the “tipping point” in population. Voting rights for blacks, election to public office, the public transportation policies, and school system experiences are examples of less rigidity in segregation laws in West Virginia than in Virginia.

The coal mining operators employed many African Americans, and they joined the labor unions along with their white coworkers. The labor union members, both black and white, supported their union leadership that included African American presidents and other officers. On the other hand, the coal mining operators, who provided the housing for the miners, practiced clear racial segregation in the housing arrangements. The following is an interesting perspective from an African American who wrote an essay in 1922, which coincides with a period of large population growth for the blacks in West Virginia. T. Gillis Nutter said, “Some of the most beautiful homes owned by Negroes in West Virginia are located in this city [Charleston]. . . . The idea of home ownership is spreading over the entire state, and magnificent homes are owned by our group in Huntington, Parkersburg, Wheeling, Bluefield, Keystone, Fairmont, Beckley, Morgantown and other sections. The social life of the people is of the highest order. In these cities, you will find as progressive and enterprising a people as is found anywhere. It is truly stated, that ‘West Virginia is the garden spot of America for the Negro’ ” (Lutz and Ashton 1996, 300–301).

### **Achieving Integration**

There are varied opinions about West Virginia and its race relationships, even among African Americans. The long march in the modern struggle for civil rights was a multifaceted undertaking with many positive and some negative results. Many of the positive accomplishments were outgrowths of integration efforts that impacted African Americans throughout the nation. Three areas relating to integration and the advancement of African American achievements in the history in West Virginia seem particularly relevant: the integration of the public schools, military services, and the entertainment and professional sports industries. Progress has been made, but much work still needs to be done.

### **NOTABLE FIGURE**

#### **Gates, Henry Louis, Jr. (1950– )**

Henry Louis Gates Jr. represents the anomaly that characterizes the state of his birth, West Virginia. He was not born with great wealth, elevated social status, a plethora of highly accomplished mentors, or into an environment of exceptional academic institutions that stressed higher education as the norm. Moreover, throughout his formative years, he faced and survived the greatest of impediments—



racism. His life's journey includes the twentieth-century periods of segregated public accommodations of hotels, restaurants, recreational facilities, and vigorous racial discrimination in school systems, housing, education, and employment. Despite these numerous obstacles, he rose to the pinnacle of success and is recognized as a world-renowned scholar, academic, and intellectual.

Dr. Gates was born on September 16, 1950, in Piedmont, West Virginia. His father worked at a local paper mill; his mother cleaned houses. He has one sibling, a brother. He described his birthplace as being "On the side of a hill in the Allegheny Mountains, two and a half hours northwest of Washington and south-east of Pittsburgh, . . . [there] sits Piedmont, West Virginia (population 2,565 in 1950, when I was born), the second major city of Mineral County. . . . It was in Piedmont that most of the colored people of Mineral County lived—351 out [sic] a total population of 22,000. . . . Piedmont was an immigrant town. White Piedmont was Italian and Irish, with a handful of wealthy WASPs on East Hampshire Street, and 'ethnic' neighborhoods of working-class people everywhere else, colored and white" (Gates 1994, 4–5).

Dr. Gates was among the early group of African American students to attend the recently integrated Mineral County public schools. He graduated from Piedmont High School at the top of his class and initially attended Potomac State College in Keyser, West Virginia. He completed his undergraduate studies at Yale University where he graduated summa cum laude. Dr. Gates earned his MA and PhD degrees in English literature from Clare College at the University of Cambridge. He taught at Yale, Cornell, and Duke Universities before joining the faculty at Harvard in 1991, where he became the W.E.B. Du Bois Professor of Humanities, chairman of the African American Studies Department, and the director of the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute of Higher Education.

Professor Gates has written an enormous body of intellectual works, most of which focus on the African American experience including *The Signifying Monkey: Toward a Theory of Afro-American Literary Criticism*; *Colored People: A Memoir*; *Loose Cannons: Notes on the Culture Wars*; *The Amistad Chronology of African-American History, 1445–1990*; *Speaking of Race, Speaking of Sex: Hate Speech, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties*; *Figures in Black: Words, Signs and the "Racial" Self*; *Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience*; *The Future of the Race*; *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Black Man*; *Three Classic African-American Novels*; and *Life upon These Shores: Looking at African American History 1513–2008*, and edited and/or coauthored a numerous other books. He was a London correspondent for *Time* magazine and has written for such publications as the *New York Times Book Review*, the *New Yorker*, the *New Republic*, *Harper's*, and the *he Village Voice*. His background also includes editor in chief of the *Oxford African American Studies Center* and editor of the daily online magazine the *Root*. In addition, he has hosted and coproduced several highly acclaimed television programs such as *African American Lives*; *African American Live 2*; *Faces of America*; and several outstanding programs on PBS. In recognition for his many exceptional intellectual contributions, Dr. Gates was awarded a MacArthur Foundation "genius grant," the George Polk Award for Social Commentary, the *Chicago Tribune's* Heartland Award, the Golden Plate

Award, *Time* magazine's "25 Most Influential Americans" list, a National Humanities Award, election to the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and an American Book Award. Dr. Gates has received more than 40 honorary degrees from institutions both domestic and international. He became the center of public attention in July 2009, when a police officer charged him with an attempted break-in as he was trying to enter his own home in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In an atmosphere fraught with racial anxieties, President Obama conducted a "beer summit," which brought the two men together after the incident for a discussion on race, more for the nation than for the two principal persons involved.

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# 50

## Wisconsin

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Patrick Delices

### CHRONOLOGY

**c. 10000 BCE**

The Paleo-Indians settle in Wisconsin

**c. 8000 BCE**

The Wisconsin glacial episode subsides

**c. 1000 BCE–c. 1000 CE**

The Effigy Mound Culture is formed and agrarian societies flourish

**c. 1000 CE–1500 CE**

The Aztalan community is established as the Oneota and Mississippian cultures expand their eco-villages throughout southeastern Wisconsin

**c. 1500–1700**

The Fox (Meskwaki), Kickapoo, Ojibwa, Pottawatomie, and Sauk populations migrate to and settle in Wisconsin

**1634**

French explorer Jean Nicolet is the first European to encounter Wisconsin and its people

**1642–1698**

The French declare war on the Iroquois

**1701–1738**

The Fox Wars, a series of conflicts between the French and Fox Indians in Wisconsin and elsewhere, are fought

**1725**

The earliest recorded date of blacks in Wisconsin

## **950 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1746**

Captain De Velie from France brings an enslaved African with him to engage in battle against the Meskwaki at Green Bay

### **1763**

Under the Treaty of Paris ending the French and Indian War, Wisconsin becomes British territory

### **1779–1800**

Jean Baptiste Pointe du Sable, a black Haitian who founded the city of Chicago, thrives as a fur trader in Illinois and Wisconsin

### **1787**

The Northwest Ordinance establishes Wisconsin as part of the Northwest Territory of the United States

### **1791**

Free blacks establish a fur trading business in what is now known as the city of Marinette

### **1793**

The founder of Marinette, Wisconsin, Marinette Chevallier (Princess Marinette), the daughter of a French voyageur and a respected Ojibwe matriarch, is born in Post Lake, Wisconsin.

### **1822**

The Brothertown Oneida, Munsee, and Stockbridge Native people from New York migrate to Wisconsin; mining leases are granted for the first time in southwestern Wisconsin

### **1826–1827**

Chief Red Bird, the leader of Winnebago (Ho-Chunk) people of Wisconsin, concedes to U.S. forces at the end of the Winnebago War

### **1830s**

Lead miners from the South bring enslaved Africans to Wisconsin

### **1832**

The Battle of Wisconsin Heights, the penultimate battle of the Black Hawk War between whites and the Sauk and Fox tribes, is fought in what is present-day Dane County

### **1836**

Lead is discovered in Wisconsin

### **1837**

The United States takes control of most of the lands in Wisconsin belonging to the Wisconsin tribe

### **1842–1861**

Wisconsin residents assist over 100 enslaved Africans to escape to Canada

### **1846**

An enslaved African from Grant County institutes legal proceedings against his owner for remuneration; at the state constitutional convention, there are ongoing

debates about suffrage, and the resulting state constitution advances voting rights for blacks

**1848**

Entering as a free state, Wisconsin becomes the 30th state of the United States on May 29

**1850s**

Many German immigrants settle in the state

**1854**

The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 is deemed unconstitutional by the Wisconsin Supreme Court after a fugitive slave, Joshua Glover, is detained in Racine; the Republican Party is formed when antislavery Whigs assemble in Ripon

**1865**

Wisconsin ratifies the Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishing slavery on February 24

**1866**

Ezekiel Gillespie, an African American civil rights leader, institutes legal proceedings in a landmark case that secures voting rights for black men in Wisconsin

**1867**

Wisconsin ratifies the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting citizenship to African Americans on February 13

**1869**

Wisconsin ratifies the Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting voting rights to African American men on March 9

**1875**

William Smith Noland becomes the first African American to graduate from the University of Wisconsin

**1914**

Black civil rights activist James Cameron is born in La Crosse

**1918**

Mabel Watson Raimey becomes the first black woman to earn an undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin–Madison

**1919**

On June 10, Wisconsin becomes the first state to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment securing the vote for women

**1922**

Mabel Watson Raimey enters Marquette University Law School, becoming the first black woman to be admitted to a law school in Wisconsin

**1927**

Mabel Watson Raimey becomes the first black woman admitted to the Wisconsin bar and the first black female attorney in Wisconsin

## **952 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1966**

Governor Warren P. Knowles sends the National Guard to quell civil rights protests in Wauwatosa, a Milwaukee suburb

### **1967**

During the summer, racial uprisings take place in Milwaukee and anti-Vietnam War riots occur at the University of Wisconsin–Madison

### **1968**

At the University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh, 90 black students are expelled for protesting and damaging the administration building

### **1969**

At the University of Wisconsin–Madison, student protests demand a Black Studies department; the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee establishes one of the first Black Studies programs in the nation

### **1978–1991**

Jeffrey Dahmer, known as the “Milwaukee Cannibal,” commits rape, murder, necrophilia, and cannibalism as he dismembers his black male victims

### **1978**

The first black constitutional officer of Wisconsin, Vel Phillips, is elected secretary of state

### **1984**

James Cameron, the only known survivor of a lynching, founds America’s Black Holocaust Museum in Milwaukee

### **1994**

Jeffrey Dahmer is killed by a black fellow inmate, Christopher Scarver, at the Columbia Correctional Institution in Wisconsin

### **2004**

Gwen Moore becomes the first African American elected to Congress from Wisconsin; she represents Wisconsin’s 4th District

### **2006**

James Cameron, founder of America’s Black Holocaust Museum, dies at the age of 92 from congestive heart failure

### **2008**

America’s Black Holocaust Museum in Milwaukee is closed permanently

### **2012**

America’s Black Holocaust Museum reopens only as a virtual museum

### **2013**

Winston Van Horn, founder of the PhD program in Africology at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee dies

### **2013**

Wisconsin has the highest rate of incarceration of black men in the United States

**2014**

Wisconsin is named the worst state in the United States for the well-being of black children

**2014**

According to a study by Pew Research, Wisconsin is home to about 85,000 undocumented immigrants, with most coming from Mexico and many working in the state's dairy industry

**2016**

Various reports and studies list Wisconsin as the worst state in the United States for blacks to live

**2016**

Undocumented immigrants living in Wisconsin rally at the state capitol building in Madison in opposition to a bill to cut funding to sanctuary cities in the state

**2017**

The number of workers in Wisconsin dairies has doubled since 2006, to 14,000, with many of them being undocumented Hispanic immigrants

**NARRATIVE****Native Population**

Native Americans were the first to occupy the area known as Wisconsin. At the end of the Wisconsin Glacial Episode (c. 10,000 BCE), a group known as Paleo-Indians, a term used for the people who entered and settled the Americas in the late glacial stages of the Pleistocene epoch, entered Wisconsin, and thus, history records them as the first group to inhabit the region. By 8000 BCE, the Wisconsin Glacial Episode came to an end, allowing agricultural societies to develop and establish permanent residency. The sacred Effigy Mound Culture flourished in the area from roughly 1000 BCE to 1000 CE. From 1000 to 1500 CE, the Oneota and Mississippian cultures expanded their eco-villages throughout southeastern Wisconsin. Aztalan, for example, was a thriving Mississippian site in what is known today as Jefferson County. They built sacred mounds, which were used for ceremonial, spiritual, social, political, and militaristic purposes. (Aztalan State Park, which was established in 1952, preserves the site of this Mississippian community. The park, which was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1964 and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1966, covers 172 acres and contains one of the largest mounds of any park in the United States.)

From about 1500 to 1700, the Meshkwahkihaki (Meskwaki or Mesquakie), Kickapoo, Ojibwa, Pottawatomie, and Sauk peoples migrated to Wisconsin and established various settlements. The Meshkwahkihaki were inappropriately labeled the Fox people by European colonial settlers. However, in their native language, the word *Meshkwahkihaki* actually means "red earth." Like the Meshkwahkihaki, the Kickapoo, Ojibwa, Pottawatomie, and Sauk peoples were Algonquian groups who spoke various Algonquian languages. The term



War dance of the Sauk and Fox. The Sauk and Fox were Algonquian tribes occupying the area around present-day Green Bay, Wisconsin. The various groups of allies eventually integrated into one tribal entity during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The Sauk and Fox were relocated west of the Mississippi as the result of treaties signed in the 1830s and 1840s and the outcome of the Black Hawk War of 1832. (Library of Congress)

Algonquian means “family,” “relatives,” or “close friends/associates.” During this same period, a non-Algonquian group, the Haudenosaunee people, also migrated to and settled in Wisconsin. The Haudenosaunee spoke an Iroquoian language and were more commonly known as the Iroquois. These diverse, indigenous populations thrived in the area, successfully passing on their cultures and lifestyles from generation to generation.

In 1634, Jean Nicolet, a French colonial settler, became the first European to enter Wisconsin and encounter the indigenous people. Nicolet, who was also the first European to explore Lake Michigan, made initial landfall in Wisconsin in the Red Banks area near Green Bay. He was seeking a route around or across North America to Asia. In Wisconsin, Nicolet encountered the Hooçaągra (Ho-Chunk) people, to whom he became the ambassador for France. Later, the French colonial settlers in the region, like Nicolet, rendered the term Hooçaągra to mean the “sea people” or “people of the sea.” However, in the Siouan or Siouan-Catawban language of the Hooçaągra people, their name actually meant “rice harvesters” or “people who harvest rice.” Not only did Nicolet and other French colonial settlers incorrectly translate the meaning of the word Hooçaągra or Ho-Chunk, they also erroneously deduced that the Hooçaągra people originated from the Pacific coast and, therefore, would be able to lead them to the Pacific Ocean and the riches of Asia, or more specifically, China. While they were unable to do so, with the help of the Hooçaągra people, Nicolet and the French were able to reach the Fox River in eastern Wisconsin. In its lower reaches, the Fox River connects Lake Winnebago and Green Bay, offering a route further west. Nicolet then explored the westward trail along the upper reaches of the Fox River, eventually nearing the source of the Mississippi River. Unfortunately, Nicolet died on November 1, 1642, when he drowned after his boat capsized during a sudden storm on the St. Lawrence River.



Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the continued invasion and expansion of the region by European settlers would prove detrimental to the indigenous people. The French settlers waged war against the Iroquois and Fox Indians. In 1763, the French conceded the territory to the British, and in 1787, the Northwest Territory is claimed by the United States. The ongoing battle for Native American rights to occupy the land, fought against the new government and other competing tribes as well, continued into the nineteenth century, ending in their eventual defeat. As the Hoocąągra, Menominee, Sauk, Fox, Iroquois, and other tribal groups were forced onto reservations, their rights as sovereign nations diminished. The Bureau of Indian Affairs, established in 1824, would assume near total control over the lives of the American Indians, as individual tribal identity was discouraged, and efforts to assimilate the Native population took hold. Dependence on the United States continued into the twentieth century, as the quality of Indian life experienced a steady decline. The “Red Power” movement, which was initiated in the late 1960s, offered some hope for change, much coming too little and too late.

In the late twentieth century, a few remaining tribes, including the Ho-Chunk, Ojibwe, Mohican, and Potawatomi, took advantage of Wisconsin legislation that permitted the establishment of gaming casinos as an economic initiative to benefit reservation communities. While some small gains have been realized, gambling casinos are no panacea for addressing the centuries of economic, social, political, and cultural loss experienced by the Wisconsin’s Native population. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, Wisconsin’s Native tribes could continue to be counted among the state’s socially, economically, and culturally oppressed minority groups.

### **African Americans**

The arrival of Jean Nicolet and French colonial settlers brought Wisconsin into the ongoing conflict between the French and Iroquois (known as the Beaver Wars or the French and Iroquois Wars), which started in 1642 and lasted until 1698. During the Fox Wars of 1701–1738, the French were also in conflict with the Meshkwahkihaki, Outagamis, Renards, and other Native peoples of Wisconsin and Michigan. It was during this period that the first African Americans came to Wisconsin. The earliest known presence of African Americans in Wisconsin was recorded in 1725, when, during the Fox Wars, an enslaved African and four French colonial settlers were killed in Green Bay. In 1746, Captain De Velie, a Frenchman sent to Green Bay to fight the Meshkwahkihaki, brought an African slave with him. Throughout the 1700s, French and British sailors, colonial settlers, military personnel, and fur traders came to Wisconsin, all bringing their African slaves with them. By 1763, when the Treaty of Paris ending the French and Indian War and Wisconsin was made a British territory, approximately 500 enslaved Africans were resident in the area.

In 1779, Jean Baptiste Pointe du Sable, a black native of Haiti, was living on the site of present-day Chicago; he conducted businesses in two states. In 1779–1780, Pointe du Sable was a thriving fur trader in both Illinois and Wisconsin. His success encouraged other blacks to establish fur trading businesses throughout the Midwest. Thanks to Pointe du Sable’s political astuteness and business savvy and

his marriage to a Potawatomi woman named Kittahawa (Catherine du Sable), Native Americans of the region bestowed upon him the honorable title of Black Chief. By 1791, Pointe du Sable's business success was so widespread and influential that more blacks established fur trading businesses in Wisconsin and the Midwest.

Successful entrepreneurial initiatives were not limited to the African American population. Another important trading business, in northeastern Wisconsin at Marinette, was founded by Marinette Chevallier (Princess Marinette or Queen Marinette), who was part Native American. Princess Marinette was born in Post Lake, Wisconsin, in 1793, the daughter of a highly revered Chippewa (or Ojibwa/Ojibwe) matriarch and a French colonial settler. Princess Marinette grew up in Green Bay but left the town with her first husband, John Baptiste Jacobs, to establish a lucrative fur trading hub near the Menominee River, which had proven successful for many black entrepreneurs. Princess Marinette continued to run the post on her own after her husband's death. She later married William Farnsworth. Princess Marinette's success as a businesswoman transformed her trading post near the Menominee River into a township. Ultimately, that township became known as the city of Marinette, which is also known as "the city for a Queen" or "the Queen City" for Queen Marinette.

### **Wisconsin and the Underground Railroad**

During the first half of the nineteenth century, antislavery sentiments were strong in the western territory, and while the population was small, both free and enslaved blacks resided in Wisconsin. Free blacks engaged in various business initiatives, proving that they could be productive, contributing members of the developing community. From 1842 to 1861, Wisconsin residents (primarily those of German descent) assisted over 100 enslaved Africans to escape to Canada for their freedom. Key to this road to freedom was the Underground Railroad. Appropriately named, the Underground Railroad was a highly organized, clandestine (underground), transport system where enslaved African were instructed, directed, and escorted to Mexico, Canada, and Northern free states within the United States of America, or even overseas. By 1850, the Underground Railroad had served as a haven for hundreds of enslaved Africans who used the system to escape chattel slavery that dominated the social landscape of the South. Given its proximity to Canada, Wisconsin was a key route to freedom. Both Canada and Wisconsin were highly favored points of access to freedom: slavery was outlawed in Canada, and Wisconsin was a free state. As a result, numerous formerly enslaved Africans settled in Canada and Wisconsin.

Although Canada prohibited slavery and Wisconsin was destined to become a free state, blacks in Canada and Wisconsin were not shielded from racial discrimination or chattel slavery. In 1846, an enslaved African by the name of Paul Jones from Grant County, Wisconsin, instituted legal proceedings against his owner, George W. Jones, for remuneration. Free blacks faced challenges as well. At the 1846 Constitution Convention, there were ongoing debates about the rights to suffrage as the state's constitution advanced voting rights for black men.

By 1848, with the enslavement of blacks and the depopulation and forced migration of the Native populations throughout the United States, Wisconsin becomes the 30th U.S. state; it is a free state and, as a result, witnessed an expansion in the black population. However, the fight for freedom continued. In 1854, an enslaved black fugitive, Joshua Glover, was detained in Racine, Wisconsin. He sued for his freedom. During the height of slavery, the Wisconsin Supreme Court audaciously ruled that the federally mandated Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 was unconstitutional, striking a decided blow against inequality. And interestingly enough, also in 1854, the socially progressive Republican Party was created, after a sizable contingent of antislavery Whigs assembled in Ripon, Wisconsin.

There were an estimated 200 blacks in 1840, a few years prior to Wisconsin's admission to the Union in 1848. By 1860, at the dawn of the Civil War, the numbers had expanded to 1,200. Following Lincoln's issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, many blacks were encouraged about the possibility of gaining more freedoms and joined the 29th Infantry Regiment of U.S. Colored Troops. However, the fate of the black community fared no better in Wisconsin than in other "free" states as notions of racial inferiority took hold. Blacks faced discrimination and racial segregation in every aspect of social, economic, and political life and a system of de jure and de facto segregation was put in place (Wisconsin Department of Health Services). For example, in 1866, shortly after the U.S. Civil War, Ezekiel Gillespie, an African American civil rights leader, filed legal proceedings concerning his right to vote as a black man.

The Great Migration, which commenced in the early part of the twentieth century, resulted in millions of Southern blacks relocating to areas in the North, Midwest, and the West, as they sought improved economic and social opportunities. The increasing number of African Americans who migrated to Wisconsin as part of this migration were concentrated in a few cities, including Beloit, Racine, and Milwaukee. The largest concentration of blacks resided in Milwaukee, which became one of the most segregated cities in America. In the social arena, Wisconsin's black citizens faced racial barriers in all areas that would lead to social advancement, including education, employment, housing, and political participation. They were forced to create their own social, cultural, and religious institutions to sustain their segregated communities. However, blacks continued the fight for their civil rights, and racial barriers would be challenges and eventually broken. The success of Mabel Watson Raimey is one such example of strives toward progress by Wisconsin's black community.

A few years following the commencement of the Great Migration, in 1915, Raimey was the first black woman to earn an undergraduate degree, a BA in English, from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. This was 40 years after William Smith Noland, the first African American man to graduate from the University of Wisconsin in 1875. As the equal rights of women were being enacted by way of the Nineteenth Amendment, which granted the right for U.S. citizens to vote regardless of gender, in 1921, Raimey was granted access to attend a law school in Wisconsin—thus becoming the first black woman to be admitted to a law school in the state—attending evening courses at Marquette University Law School. Five years later, Raimey passed the Wisconsin bar—becoming the first

black woman to be admitted to the Wisconsin bar and ultimately becoming the first black female attorney in Wisconsin.

During the first half of the twentieth century, the United States entered various wars, including World War I, World War II, and the Korean War. Wisconsin residents, black and white, enlisted in these wars; many perished. However, by mid-century, overseas warfare concluded, and a different type of domestic warfare was taking place in the United States and in the state of Wisconsin. With the rise of racial tensions during the 1960s, many blacks joined in protest over unfair, discriminatory living conditions they faced throughout the state. In 1966, Governor Warren P. Knowles dispatched the U.S. National Guard to suppress the civil rights protests at Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. A year later, during the summer of 1967, racial uprisings erupted in Milwaukee, coupled with the anti-Vietnam War riots unfolding on the campus of the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Moreover, during the summer of 1967, 159 riots or rebellions took place throughout the United States, several occurring in the state of Wisconsin. Black residents of Milwaukee frequently marched and protested against racism, police brutality, and housing discrimination, which ultimately served as the catalyst for the 1967 Milwaukee riot. During the riot, disgruntled white residents and angry white police officers engaged in violent confrontations with both peaceful black marchers and radical Black Power activists.

A year following the 1967 Milwaukee riot, 90 black students were expelled from the University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh for protesting and damaging the administration building. However, by May 1968, the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee (UWM) would ultimately comply with the demands of the black student activists and protestors by establishing one of the first Black Studies programs (the Center for Afro-American Culture) in the nation, alongside that of San Francisco State University in California, which would be led by black sociologist Nathan Hare. And, in 1969, following more black student protests and demands, the University of Wisconsin–Madison would establish a Black Studies department as well. Of special note, in 1972, a young activist and ambitious scholar, Manning Marable, would earn his graduate degree in history from the University of Wisconsin–Madison at the age of 22, and would later become a leading scholar and activist in the field of African American Studies.

### **Social and Educational Progress**

While black civil rights marches and Black Power protests were dominating the racial landscape of America, an ambitious young man from Jamaica by the name of Winston Van Horne embarked to the United States, not to study Black Studies, but to study political science at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Although Van Horne wanted to become the prime minister of Jamaica, after earning his PhD in political science at UCLA in 1970, he became a professor at the Ohio State University Center for Afro-American Studies. In 1978, at the age of 35, Van Horne became the Chairman of Afro-American Studies at the UWM.

Van Horne would play an important role in the advancement of the field of Black Studies in Wisconsin and in the nation. As chairman from 1978 to 1987, and from 1995–1998, Van Horne transformed Black Studies at UWM from a program

into a department. Thus, under his scholarly stewardship, the Afro-American Studies program at UWM became the Department of Africology—ultimately, offering a PhD in Africology by 2008. Although Dr. Van Horne is often credited with being the first scholar to coin the term Africology, that credit actually belongs to Haitian scholar and public intellectual Jean Price-Mars, who first coined the term Africology in his scholarly masterpiece *So Spoke the Uncle*, which was first published in French as *Ainsi parla l'oncle* in 1928.

African Americans also began to make progress in the political realm. Like Mabel Watson Raimey, Velvalea Rodgers (Vel Phillips) would become a woman of “first.” Phillips was a Milwaukee native born in the early 1920s. In 1953, she ran in the citywide primary election for the school board but lost to the opposing candidate. Undeterred, she successfully secured the position of Alderman for the Common Council in Milwaukee, the first woman and first African American to do so. An avid social activist, Phillips was a member of the local NAACP and, like many other of her social conscious counterparts, took to the streets during the summer rebellions of 1967. In 1971, Phillips made history as both the first woman judge in Milwaukee County and the first African American judge in Wisconsin. However, she lost her bid for reelection when the white candidate highlighted her activism during the civil rights struggles of the 1960s. Finally, in 1979, Phillips broke another barrier by becoming the first woman and African American to fulfill the position of Wisconsin secretary of state. She would serve in that capacity for from 1979 to 1983.

In 1984, ambitious black activist and Wisconsin native James Cameron (often identified as the only known survivor of a lynching) was among the first in the nation to establish a museum focusing on America’s history of slavery. America’s Black Holocaust Museum was located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a precursor to the many African American museums and historical sites that would unfold during the next three decades.

### **America’s Black Holocaust Museum**

In 1984, black activist and Wisconsin native James Cameron founded America’s Black Holocaust Museum. The main objective of the museum was to bring global awareness to the pernicious legacies of chattel slavery in the United States. Cameron wanted to demonstrate with the museum the historical fact that Africans who were brought to the United States illegally experienced a Holocaust like no other by way of the transatlantic slave trade, chattel slavery, and Jim Crow. Cameron hoped that America’s Black Holocaust Museum would repair and heal a nation that carried an enduring legacy of racial strife and tension.

From 1984 to 1988, America’s Black Holocaust Museum was a storefront. In 1988, the museum moved to a main building in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. At that time, America’s Black Holocaust Museum served as the only repository in the United States for historical and cultural objects exclusively detailing U.S. slavery and the international slave trade.

By the time of James Cameron’s death in 2006, America’s Black Holocaust Museum was plagued by poor leadership, mismanagement, and a lack of funding, which ultimately led to its demise as a brick and mortar museum. In 2008, the board of directors of America’s Black Holocaust Museum decided to close the museum, given its financial challenges and lack of institutional, governmental, corporate, and community-based support. As a result, the brick and mortar museum never reopened in Milwaukee and remained vacant until 2015. However, since 2012, America’s Black Holocaust Museum still exists as an online virtual museum.

The last decade of the century was marked by one of the most horrendous crimes in Wisconsin history, with the victims being members of the African American community. Milwaukee's serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer (German ancestry) committed rape, murder, necrophilia, and cannibalism, and he dismembered more than a dozen young black male victims. The unspeakable crimes of Jeffrey Dahmer against black males are not new, as they speak to a historical legacy of human destruction and homoeroticism within Western culture, yet it was a shock to America. Jeffrey Dahmer was tried, convicted, and sentenced to life in prison in 1992; he was beaten to death by a fellow inmate in 1994.

### **Progress in the Twenty-First Century**

From the civil rights movement to the present, Wisconsin's African American community would agree that progress has been slow. In 2006, black activist and Wisconsin native James Cameron died at the age of 92 from congestive heart failure. Seven years later, prominent Caribbean scholar Winston Van Horne, founder of the Department of Africology at the UWM, died on May 24, 2013, from colon cancer at the age of 69. In the same year, it was reported by various media outlets that the state of Wisconsin had the highest rate of black male incarceration in the United States. In 2013, the UWM found in its comprehensive research study that the rate of incarceration for black men in the state was at 13 percent, double the incarceration rate of men in the United States. Moreover, this particular research study indicated that the Wisconsin prison population had more than tripled since 1990, with an unprecedented discrete increase of black males being incarcerated. Furthermore, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, alone more than half of the black male population in their thirties had contact with the justice system or were incarcerated in a state prison. Interestingly, it has also been reported by various media sources that Wisconsin has the highest rate of incarceration for the original inhabitants of the state, Native Americans. As such, one in 13 Native American men are incarcerated in the state of Wisconsin (Pawasarat and Quinn 2013, 1–2; Demby 2013).

President Barack Obama was elected in 2008 as the nation's first African American president. There was much speculation about the coming of a post-racial America during the era of Obama. Many African Americans had high expectations about the positive impact Obama would have on their communities. However, numerous media outlets identified the state of Wisconsin as the worst state in the United States for black families and children. In a national report (NewsOne 2014), Wisconsin was listed as a top 10 state for white children with regard to overall academic achievement and economic success, while ranking dead last as the worst state in the nation regarding racial disparities, academic achievement, and economic success for black children.

Indeed, research has also shown that Wisconsin is the worst state for African Americans to live due to the following socioeconomic factors:

- The median annual income of black households in Wisconsin is just \$26,053, much lower than the median for black families nationwide and equal to just 46.5 percent of the median income of white Wisconsin households of \$56,083.

- While 29.9 percent of white adults in Wisconsin have at least a bachelor's degree, 12.8 percent of black adults in the state have completed college. This is also much lower than the bachelor degree attainment rate among black adults nationwide of 19.7 percent.
- For black Wisconsin residents, the unemployment rate is 11.1 percent—higher than the national unemployment rate for all black Americans, and far higher than the white unemployment rate of 4.1 percent in Wisconsin (Shafer 2016).

Although, Wisconsin started as a free, antislavery state, by 2016, various media sources and academic research studies confirmed that the state of Wisconsin was indeed the worst state in the United States for blacks to live. And given the reality that Wisconsin has the highest African American, and Native American, male incarceration rate in the nation, Wisconsin is now the poster state for not only the new Jim Crow, but also a new form of slavery.

### **European Immigrants**

As members of the racial minority groups, African Americans and Native Americans played a significant role in the shaping of the state of Wisconsin. However, it would be the white, European immigrants who would seize the land and political power and dominate the state's economic expansion and social development for generations to come.

Prior to Pointe du Sable, an African American, founding the city of Chicago, and Queen Marinette, Native American descendant, founding the city of Marinette, the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 established Wisconsin as a free state that prohibited slavery. However, the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 reflected U.S. appropriation of Native Americans' land and resources as it seized Native territory for homesteading for whites only. Accordingly, at \$1 per acre, the government of the United States sold American land to white colonial settlers, especially from Europe, attracting millions of immigrants to the United States. Moreover, the Congress of the United States passed the nation's first Naturalization Law in 1790, which opened the United States to white immigrants only, as its restrictive statutes prevented Native Americans and blacks from freely traveling throughout the United States, drawing up contracts and owning land. Thus, along with slavery and forfeiture of Native lands, the Naturalization Law of 1790 created the enduring, pernicious wealth and landownership racial gaps that exist in the United States.

During the first two decades of the nineteenth century, large numbers of German immigrants landed in Wisconsin. Fur and leather trading had already proven itself to be a successful enterprise; by 1822, mining leases were being granted for the first time in southwest Wisconsin, attracting more white immigrants to the area. Forced from the Native lands on the East Coast, the Brothertown Oneida, Munsee, and Stockbridge people from New York also started to migrate to Wisconsin. Conflict between the Native Americans, white settlers, and the U.S. government was inevitable.

With the expansion of the United States and seizure of Native land, along with the boom of various economic enterprises (as illustrated in the fur, leather, and mining industries), war loomed. In 1827, Chief Red Bird, the leader of Winnebago (Ho-Chunk) people, capitulated to U.S. colonial forces at the Winnebago War. In the 1832 Battle of Wisconsin Heights, between the United States and the Meskwaki and Sauk people (spearheaded by Makataimeshekiakiak—Black Hawk), the Native Americans also experienced defeat. By 1837, the United States finally gained control of most of the lands of the Wisconsin tribes.

As a consequence of continuous warfare between Native American resistance and U.S. colonial forces, the Native population started to decline; however, there continued to be a need for cheap labor. The situation was further exasperated with the discovery of lead in the 1830s; experienced lead miners from the South brought enslaved Africans to Wisconsin to replace the Native American population as a major source of free, forced labor. White migrants continued to flood the area and established themselves as the dominant power. Many were rewarded by the lucrative businesses; few were prepared for the Panic of 1837, the first major economic crisis to impact the people of the United States and descend on the people of Wisconsin.

The Panic of 1837 was an economic recession and fiscal crisis that plagued the United States until the 1840s. It was caused by declining prices in various industries, including mining, lead, and fur trading businesses, which served as the backbone of Wisconsin's economy. Residents experienced the devaluation of the U.S. dollar, decline in real estate and property values, and the deflation of wages and prices. However, following the economic recovery, the flow of immigration to the United States continued.

During the mid-nineteenth century, the United States experienced a mass wave of European immigration, especially from Germany. By the end of the century, German immigrants would represent the largest white ethnic group in America. As noted by Sowell (1981, 43) a century later, "more than 25 million Americans are of Germany ancestry. This is more than any other ethnic group except descendants of people from the British Isles, who originally colonized the country and who now number 29 million. Germans are the largest group to immigrate to the America" They would have a lasting impact on American culture, influencing popular cultural lexicon, culinary arts, education, and the brewing industry. However, interestingly enough, "a very substantial portion of the German immigration to America occurred when there was no Germany. It was until 1871 that Prussia, Bavaria, Baden, Mecklenburg, Hesse, and other Germanic states were united by Bismarck to form the nation of Germany. However, the German language is recorded as far back as 750 AD" (Sowell 1981, 43–44). Thus, similar to the impact of the of the Native Americans, African Americans, and other ethnic immigrant groups on the cultural lexicon of the English language in the United States, the influence of the German language can be found in such common English words as *plunder*, *automation*, *feast*, *delicatessen*, *hamburgers*, *frankfurters*, *bagel*, *pumpernickel*, *pretzel*, *seltzer*, *knapsack*, *hamster*, and *kindergarten*.



Germans were known for their antislavery sentiments and sought settlement in free states. A critical mass of Germans migrated to the state of Wisconsin. They were recognized as active participants in the Underground Railroad, assisting enslaved Africans to escape to freedom. The high concentration of German immigrants in Washington County, Wisconsin, led to the area officially being known as Germantown. Although Wisconsin has a Germantown, the original Germantown in the United States was in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, which was founded by German settlers in 1683. While Wisconsin was founded as a free state and served as the home of the Republican Party, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is the birthplace of the American Antislavery Society, which was established, also by German immigrants, in 1688. However, antislavery does not mean anticolonial and anti-racist, nor does it mean that whites thought that blacks were equal to them given the false racist ideology of the superiority of whites and the inferiority of blacks that existed in the seventeenth century.

As the dominant white immigrant group in the United States, in 1855, German immigrants established the first American schools that prepared children for the first grade. These schools became known as kindergartens, which were first created in Wisconsin. The German immigrants also came to Wisconsin with the skill set of brewing beer and ultimately dominated this particular industry, given the reality that they had a much refined, tastier final product than their American competitors. By 1860, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, alone, over one-third of the population was German. Profitable German breweries, such as Valentin Blatz Brewing Company, Miller Brewing Company, Pabst Brewing Company, and Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company, along with the St. Louis based Anheuser-Busch (Budweiser beer), dominated the U.S. brewing industry.

Moreover, in Wisconsin, immigrants from Germany founded the township of Berlin in 1845. In 1857, the township of Berlin was incorporated as a city in the state of Wisconsin. The city of Berlin is located between the Wisconsin's counties of Washburn and Green Lake and is named Berlin after the capital of Prussia (now Germany). During the nineteenth century, the city of Berlin was also known for its lucrative trading in fur and leather.

During the latter part of the century, German immigrants were replaced by those from Scandinavia, as Wisconsin attracted a large number of these immigrants who were employed in the logging industry. Throughout the twentieth century, Wisconsin would continue its development as a majority white (81%) state. They would produce progressive social leaders as well as extreme social conservatives. Famous among them was Robert M. "fighting Bob" La Follette, a progressive Republican politician who served as congressman, senator, and governor of the state of Wisconsin; and anti-communist activist Senator Joseph McCarthy. In addition, some of the nation's greatest contributors to its cultural and social development would also hail from the state of Wisconsin, including General Douglas MacArthur, Georgia O'Keeffe, Liberace, and Frank Lloyd Wright.

No longer a leader in mining, industry, or manufacturing, in the twenty-first century, the state has transformed into a service-based economy, focusing on medicine, education, agribusiness, and tourism. As indicated earlier, with the poor

quality of life experienced by African and Native Americans, improved, progressive race relations in the state of Wisconsin remain a challenge.

## **NOTABLE FIGURE**

### **Cameron, James (1914–2006)**

James Cameron was born in La Crosse, Wisconsin, on February 25, 1914, as the son of Vera Carter and James Herbert Cameron. After his parents separated, Cameron's mother moved the family to Birmingham, Alabama, and then to Marion, Indiana. Cameron's mother remarried in 1928, when her son was 14 years old. During the summer of 1930, while living in Marion, 16-year-old James and his two older teenaged friends, Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith, were accused of killing Claude Deeter, a white man, and of raping Deeter's white female companion during an armed robbery.

Indicted for these crimes, Cameron, Shipp, and Smith were detained in a prison cell at Marion. On August 7, 1930, an angry mob broke into the jail and seized the three prisoners. According to Cameron, a crowd of up to 15,000 angry white males dragged the three teens to nearby Grant County Courthouse Square, where they severely beat the three young men. Although Smith apparently died from his beating, his body was hung next to his friend Thomas Shipp, who also died from the lynching. Cameron was also severely beaten and had a noose placed around his neck. As the mob was about to lynch him, a female voice shouted that Cameron was not involved in the crimes and was innocent. The mob then returned Cameron to his jail cell. Cameron, thereby, became the only known survivor of a lynching. The noose left a permanent physical scar around Cameron's neck, a lasting reminder of the harsh and painful reality of racism in the United States.

In 1931, Cameron was convicted as an accessory before the fact in the murder of Deeter; he served four years in a state prison in Indiana. No indictments were ever brought against anyone in the white lynch mob that murdered Shipp and Smith, and no one was ever charged with physically assaulting Cameron. Once paroled, Cameron left Marion and moved to Detroit, where he found steady employment at the Stroh Brewery Company. He also became a student at Wayne State University, where he majored in engineering. In 1991, the state of Indiana pardoned Cameron, who was by then a prominent civil rights activist.

Because of his experience, Cameron dedicated his life to promoting civil rights and racial equality. In the 1940s, he founded three chapters of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), serving as the first president of the Madison County chapter, in Anderson, Indiana. From 1942 to 1950, Cameron also served as the director of Civil Liberties for the state of Indiana. In this position, Cameron reported directly to Governor Henry Schricker regarding any violations by state agencies of the equal accommodations laws enacted to end racial segregation. During his tenure, Cameron investigated more than 25 civil rights violations.

The recipient of occasional death threats because of his work as director of Civil Liberties, Cameron left Indiana and moved his family to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in the early 1950s. In Milwaukee, Cameron made a name for himself as

civil rights activist, achieving prominence as an associate of Dr. Martin Luther King and as a survivor of lynching. Cameron became a man of letters, publishing hundreds of articles and pamphlets between 1955 and 1989. Noted among them: “What Is Equality in American Life?” “The Lingering Problem of Reconstruction in American Life: Black Suffrage,” and “The Second Civil Rights Bill.” In 1982, Cameron published *A Time of Terror: A Survivor’s Story*, an autobiography that described the dreadful events on the night of August 7, 1930, in Marion, Indiana.

Cameron also became a noted archivist of black memorabilia, collecting especially those items that illustrated the pain and suffering of blacks under chattel slavery and Jim Crow. In 1988, Cameron founded America’s Black Holocaust Museum in Milwaukee. At the time, the museum was the largest repository of African American artifacts relating to the transatlantic slave trade, American chattel slavery, the Jim Crow era, and the civil rights movement. Cameron died in Milwaukee on June 11, 2006, at the age of 92.

In 2008, two years after Cameron’s death, the board of directors for America’s Black Holocaust Museum decided to permanently close the institution due to financial constraints. However, America’s Black Holocaust Museum was resurrected as a virtual museum on February 25, 2012, what would have been James Cameron’s 98th birthday. It is a lasting legacy dedicated to a life committed to the struggle for racial equality.

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# 51

## Wyoming

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Kristin Haltinner and Leanna Keleher

### **CHRONOLOGY**

#### **1600–1700s**

Spanish settlers move into what will become Wyoming Territory

#### **1803**

Most of present-day Wyoming comes into the possession of the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase from France

#### **1808**

The first white settlers enter what will eventually become Wyoming

#### **1825**

Conceived by William Ashley, the first fur-trading rendezvous, a gathering of mountain men, occurs in the Green River valley in western Wyoming

#### **1825**

African American trapper James Beckwourth traps in territory that will become Yellowstone National Park in northwestern Wyoming

#### **1840**

Settlers, both white and black, begin to travel along the 2,000-mile-long Oregon Trail through Wyoming to reach California and Oregon

#### **1842**

Janisse, a black slave, accompanies John C. Frémont on his expedition through central Wyoming

#### **1848**

The southwestern corner of present-day Wyoming comes into U.S. possession as part of the territory ceded to the United States by Mexico after the Mexican War

## **968 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1850**

The Compromise of 1850, which seeks to settle the question of slavery expansion into the new territories acquired from Mexico, permits slavery in parts of eastern Wyoming if local white residents support the practice

### **1851**

A council is held at Fort Laramie between representatives of the U.S. government and nine western Native populations; the resulting treaty, signed on September 17, restricts Native settlement to a specified and limited region and provides for payment of \$50,000 for 50 years to the Natives in exchange for the safety of passengers on the Oregon Trail

### **1860**

Pony Express mail service begins in Wyoming

### **1862**

U.S. Congress passes the Pacific Railway Act and the Homestead Act, both of which allow reclamation of Native American lands

### **1866**

On December 21, the Fetterman Fight occurs in northern Wyoming between U.S. soldiers and the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho Indians after Colonel Henry B. Carrington sets up a post on Crow territory to secure passage for westward emigrants; 81 U.S. soldiers are killed, and the army retreats from the region

### **1867**

U.S. Congress passes the Territorial Suffrage Act, which allows black men in the western territories to vote

### **1868**

Congress organizes the Wyoming Territory on June 25

### **1868**

A second Treaty of Fort Laramie, also called the Sioux Treaty of 1868, is signed guaranteeing Lakota ownership of the Black Hills along with land and hunting rights in additional parts of Montana, Wyoming, and South Dakota

### **1869**

Chinese migrants settle in Wyoming Territory for the first time

### **1869**

Black women achieve the right to vote in Wyoming Territory

### **1869**

On November 25, the Wyoming Territory passes an anti-miscegenation law, making illegal any marriage between whites and blacks, Asians, or “Mongolian” people

### **1869**

On December 10, the Wyoming territorial legislature enfranchises white women, but not black men, thereby ignoring the Territorial Suffrage Act of 1867, which granted African Americans in the western territories the right to vote

**1870**

The Wyoming Territory passes a law that allows for school segregation by race in districts that have more than 15 students of color

**1879**

William Jefferson Hardin becomes the first African American elected to the Wyoming territorial legislature

**1882**

The Wyoming Territory's first black legislator, William Jefferson Hardin, successfully pushes for repeal of the territory's 1869 anti-miscegenation law

**1885**

On September 2, white residents of Rock Springs violently drive out Chinese residents

**1885**

On September 30, Wyoming adopts a state constitution; unlike in other western states, the Wyoming state Constitution guarantees the right of anyone to own land; the right to equal political rights for all residents, regardless of race in all areas except employment; and equal access to education for all residents (including nearly free tuition at the University of Wyoming)

**1890**

On July 10, Wyoming becomes the 44th state to enter the Union

**1890**

Some 200 African Americans are brought from Ohio to work as coal miners near Hanna, Wyoming; the reaction of local whites is mixed

**1892**

African American troopers in the 9th and 10th Cavalries of U.S. Colored Troops are stationed in Wyoming to control Native Americans; they are also employed in settling the Johnson County Cattle War between farmers and ranchers

**1905**

Joe Martin, an African American prisoner, is lynched in Laramie by an angry mob for allegedly attacking a white woman

**1913**

Wyoming passes a second anti-miscegenation law, making marriage between whites and "Negros, Mulattoes, Mongolians, or Malaya" illegal

**1942**

On August 12, the first Japanese American resident is interned in Wyoming's Heart Mountain Internment Camp

**1943**

Wyoming passes a series of land acts, restricting access to landownership for noncitizens

## **970 A State-by-State History of Race and Racism in the United States**

### **1945**

On November 11, the final Japanese American resident interned at Heart Mountain leaves the camp

### **1952**

Mexican laborers are brought to Wyoming as part of the Bracero Project

### **1955**

Wyoming repeals its nearly 90-year-old school segregation law

### **1957**

The Wyoming Civil Rights Act is passed, desegregating public accommodations in the state

### **1960**

Wyoming outlaws segregated housing

### **1965**

Wyoming repeals its anti-miscegenation law and passes a law forbidding employment discrimination

### **1966**

James Byrd becomes Cheyenne's first African American chief of police; he serves in that role until 1974

### **1969**

Before a game against Brigham Young University, 14 black football players are kicked off the University of Wyoming football team for wearing black armbands to protest the ban on African American clergy of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

### **1978**

Harriet Elizabeth Byrd, the wife of former Cheyenne Police chief James Byrd, is elected to the Wyoming state legislature

### **1980**

In *United States v. Sioux Nation of Indians*, the U.S. Supreme Court rules on June 30 that the 1877 seizure of the Black Hills from the Lakota was illegal

### **1985**

Arthur Mercer, an African American air force veteran, becomes president of the Cheyenne School Board

### **1990**

According to the U.S. Census, Wyoming has an African American population of about 4,000

### **1990**

The Wyoming legislature designates the third Monday in January as Martin Luther King/Wyoming Equality Day

### **2000**

According to the U.S. Census, 3,722 African Americans reside in Wyoming



**2006**

The U.S. Census estimates that 5,333 African Americans reside in Wyoming

**2015**

Undocumented immigrants are estimated to account for about 1.8 percent of the state's total population, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, making Wyoming one of the least active states for undocumented immigration

**2016**

Two white men are met with federal hate crime charges after beating Clayton Denny, a man of black and Creek heritage outside a bar in Sheridan

**2017**

According to data from Immigrations and Customs Enforcement, the number of undocumented immigrants without criminal records who have been arrested and deported in Wyoming has more than doubled since President Donald Trump took office

**2017**

Wyoming remains one of five states with no hate crime laws

**2017**

Wyoming becomes the third state to require the teaching of Native American culture, history, and contemporary challenges and contributions in all public schools

**NARRATIVE****Native Americans and Early White Exploration and Settlement**

The first human residents of the region that ultimately became Wyoming are thought to have migrated to the region, via the Bering Strait, over 20,000 years ago (Larson 1978). At the time of white exploration and colonization, Native communities in present-day Wyoming included the Shoshoni (west), Crow (north), Cheyenne (southeast), and Arapaho (southeast). Prior to white expansion, other communities including the Arikara, Bannock, Blackfeet, Gros Ventre, Kiowa, Nez Perce, Sheep Eater, Sioux/Lakota, and Ute spent time in the plains of what would become Wyoming.

The first non-Native settlers in the region were Spanish immigrants. Throughout the 1600s and 1700s, they moved to what was then considered Mexico, an area that included parts of what eventually became Wyoming. Spanish settlers built haciendas on which they raised sheep and cattle and, often, forced Native Americans to labor for them (Lui et al. 2006).

In 1808, the first American explorer arrived: John Colter (Larson 1978). On this trip, Colter discovered what he called "Colter's Hell," an area of northern Wyoming that became Yellowstone in 1872. He also visited what would eventually become Jackson Hole and Cody. Three years later, American explorer Wilson Price Hunt brought 60 explorers through northern Wyoming, and one year after that, Robert Stuart brought six others through the southern part of the state.

Following this initial exploration, and the rise of the fur trade, more and more white people ventured to what eventually became Wyoming leading to tensions with existing Native American residents.

After the fur trade petered out, white settlers continued to enter the future Wyoming, this time in search of gold. Most passed through the territory en route to California. However, in the early 1800s, gold was rumored to exist in the north-eastern region, home to the Lakota Indians. This led to an influx of white trappers, traders, and gold seekers who brought with them diseases such as smallpox and measles. Many Native Americans died from these illnesses, to which they had little immunity, as white settlers continued to flock to the region.

In the 1840s, there was rising conflict between white travelers and Native people along the Platte River. This was, in part, due to an increased level of desperation among Native peoples seeking food on their ever-shrinking land. Thomas Fitzpatrick, the first U.S. agent for the High Plains Indians, and D.D. Mitchell, superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis, invited indigenous populations to a council at Fort Laramie on September 1, 1851, to resolve these problems. About 10,000 Native people came to Fort Laramie representing the communities of the Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Crow, Assiniboin, Gros Ventre, Mandan, Arikara, and the Shoshone.

The high level of indigenous representation led to a shortage of grass around the fort, requiring the council to be moved 36 miles down the Platte to the mouth of Horse Creek in Nebraska. On September 17, 1851, a treaty was created between the indigenous population and the United States. It was signed by 21 chiefs and 15 white soldiers as witnesses. The treaty set territorial claims for the Native communities in exchange for safe passage for white settlers traveling along the Oregon Trail. In addition, the United States promised to pay the Native communities an annuity of \$50,000 in goods over the next 50 years. Mitchell thought that the 50 years originally agreed upon was enough time to determine whether Native people could assimilate to the emergent white culture. However, when the U.S. Congress ratified the treaty, they reduced the annuity to \$50,000 over 10 years.

### **The Civil War and the Late Nineteenth Century**

In 1862, the U.S. Government passed the Pacific Railway Act and the Homestead Act, both of which further adversely affected Native Americans in what would become Wyoming. The Pacific Railway Act provided large swaths of land to railroad companies. This land was often taken directly from Native communities as the railways passed through their homes. The Homestead Act permitted any adult white male to claim 160 acres of land surveyed by the government in the west. This led to over 600,000 claims by the turn of the century, primarily in the western plains states, including Wyoming.

The construction of the first transcontinental railroad, from 1863 to 1869, which passed through southern Wyoming, also had a significant impact on Native communities in the region. The construction of the Union Pacific Railroad passed through a series of lands inhabited by the Sioux, Arapahoe, and Cheyenne. General Grenville Dodge led the army's efforts to cull Native resistance and relocate Native Americans to reservations.

Adding to this pressure, in 1866, white settlers created the Bozeman Trail, which traversed the land of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Lakota, seeking to connect Fort Laramie to the Oregon Trail and gold fields in Montana. In order to curb attacks on white passengers by Native residents, three forts were built on Crow land under the guidelines of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851. While the Crow believed their best interests lay with allying themselves with the U.S. government, the Bozeman Trail itself violated the Treaty of Fort Laramie of 1851, and in response, the Oglala Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho led a series of small-scale attacks against the soldiers and settlers. The largest battle was called Fetterman Fight in which 81 U.S. soldiers were killed. This was a significant military defeat for the U.S. Army and led to the U.S. withdrawing from the region.

Tensions continued to escalate between white settlers and Native Americans, particularly the Lakota. In 1868, the Lakota Sioux were forced to sign a subsequent Treaty of Fort Laramie, which created and outlined the Great Sioux reservation. In this treaty, the Lakota were promised the Black Hills “in perpetuity,” but by 1875, this promise was broken. A commission was sent from District of Columbia to the Lakota to offer \$5 million for the Black Hills. The Lakota refused on the premise that the earth could not be bought or sold. In 1876, whites launched a military action, and the Lakota were forced to sign away access to the Black Hills and nearly 23 million nearby acres of land. This exchange became federal law with the passage of the Black Hills Act in February of 1877 (Lui et al. 2006). One hundred years later, on June 30, 1980, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled, in the case *United States v. Sioux Nation of Indians*, that the land had been illegally taken from the Lakota. The Court ruled that the federal government pay the Lakota \$15.5 million for the value of the land in 1877 as well as 103 years’ worth of interest totaling \$105 million. The Lakota refused the money and, instead, continued to seek the return of the Black Hills.

Conflicts between white settlers and Native Americans also occurred in other parts of Wyoming. During October 1867, in Wyoming’s first substantial settlement, Cheyenne, a large public gathering was held to celebrate the city. H.M. Hook, Cheyenne’s first mayor, gave the toast, “Here is to the city of Cheyenne: May she ever prosper, and the tribe of Indians after whom she is named be completely exterminated” (Larson 1965, 30).

The Wind River reservation is one of the largest reservations in the country and home to the Eastern Shoshones and the Northern Arapahos. In the southern part of the reservation, miners found gold from illegal mining in 1872 and demanded that the land be opened for them. The commissioner of Indian Affairs, Francis A. Walker, announced, “It is the policy of the government to segregate such [mineral] lands from the Indian reservations as far as may be consistent with the faith of the United States” (Calloway 1991, 130). The land was taken from the people of the reservation in an attempt to protect the indigenous communities from being disturbed by the mining. That part of the reservation remained open until 1938, when the Supreme Court ruled that minerals on the Wind River reservation were “Constituent elements of the land itself” and belonged to Native peoples (Calloway 1991, 130).

In 1887, the U.S. Congress passed the Dawes Act, which sought to force Native Americans to adapt a more sedentary, agricultural lifestyle as opposed to their

nomadic traditions by dividing up reservations into individual allotments. This was part of a national strategy to encourage Native peoples to assimilate into white society. Native women were forced to give up property, and families were given rudimentary farming tools with which to cultivate the land. Land that was not allotted was then given to white settlers, resulting in a massive transfer of previously reservation land to white settlers. The Dawes Act was amended by the Burke Act in 1906, which added a provision requiring the U.S. government to evaluate whether individuals were “competent and capable” to manage their land before providing the allotment. The Burke Act also postponed the right for Native Americans to become U.S. citizens within 20 years. Native Americans became legal citizens of the United States in 1924.

Starting in the 1880s, as in other parts of the country, Native American children in Wyoming were forcibly relocated to boarding schools run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs to further the federal government’s mission to assimilate indigenous Americans. While it is unclear exactly how many children were taken from Wyoming, it is certain that members of the Crow, Arapahoe, and other Native communities were sent to out of state boarding schools, often against their will or via coercion.

Concurrent with clashes between white settlers and Native communities, race-based policies were also developed in Wyoming Territory that affected the fate of black residents. As parts of Wyoming entered in the United States via the Compromise of 1850, this small region allowed slavery to exist if local white residents desired. The rest of what was to become Wyoming was “free” as part of the Oregon Territory. However, even here, white people often illegally enslaved black people, and following the Dred Scott decision, black slaves were legally brought to the west.

In contrast to the maintenance of slavery in parts of the state, the U.S. Congress passed the Territorial Suffrage Act in 1867 that allowed black men in western territories to vote. Two years later, in 1869, black women in Wyoming became the first in the nation to secure the right to vote.

Laws were also passed limiting interracial marriage in the territory. Introduced by Councilman William S. Rockwell of South Pass City during the first Wyoming territorial legislature, the first anti-miscegenation bill was passed on November 25, 1869, as Bill No. 45. Before the bill was introduced, there was a letter to the editor sent to the *Wyoming Tribune* signed anonymously by “A Modern Democrat” that expressed disapproval with the original wording of the bill which stated, “that if any person marries another person of one-eighth negro, or Asiatic blood, such marriage shall be null and void: [and] that the children born in such wedlock, shall be illegitimate” (Hardaway 1980, 55–56). “A Modern Democrat” argued that not only was the proposed law unjust, but also that it would be almost impossible to implement given the difficulty of determining the amount and type of “blood” a person possessed in their bodies, and (3) would penalize children. The letter to the editor seemed to have influenced Councilman William S. Rockwell; when he introduced the bill on November 20, 1869, there was no mention of children, and the word “Mongolian” was added to the list of races deemed ineligible for marriage with a white person.

When Bill No. 45 was brought to Governor John A. Campbell on December 6, 1869, he vetoed it because it excluded Native Americans. However, when the Bill was sent back to the legislature, the veto was overturned and Bill 45 was signed into law on December 7, 1869. The governor's concerns about including American indigenous people was overlooked due to the imbalance of men to women in the Wyoming Territory, with men outnumbering women. During this time, it was only seen as immoral for a white woman to marry someone from another race, but it was acceptable for a white man to do so. Thus, allowing the marriage of indigenous people provided more eligible women for marriage.

The law was repealed in 1882 by the territorial legislature in response to an editorial written in 1869 in the *Cheyenne Daily Leader* that urged such action. Ultimately, Wyoming's first black legislator, William Jefferson Hardin, would repeal the territory's anti-miscegenation law.

In addition to race-based laws regarding marriage, Wyoming Territory also limited racial inclusion in education. A school segregation law was enacted in 1870 that stated, "Where there are fifteen or more colored children within any school district, the board of directors thereof, with the approval of county superintendent of schools, may provide a separate school for the instruction of such colored children" (Kaufman 2005, 13). Although this law was in place until Governor Milward Simpson repealed it 1955, following the Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), there is no record of a segregated school ever existing in Wyoming. This is likely due to the limited number of students of color in Wyoming Territory schools.

Concurrent to the events surrounding the territory's passage of race-based policies, the late 1860s saw an increase in black residents in Wyoming. As a result of the mining boom in the 1860s, free black people migrated to Wyoming and other parts of the west. While they were often barred from coal mining due to racial prejudice, they were offered temporary jobs when white workers went on strike. In 1860, there were 183 black residents in Wyoming, and by 1870, this had increased to 9,118.

The economic factors that led to white and black settlement in Wyoming also attracted Chinese migrants. They were employed in a variety of industries including farm work, domestic service, construction, and, in Wyoming in particular, coal and silver mining. During the off-season, they often doubled as railway construction workers. Chinese miners made up a significant proportion of miners in Idaho: for example, in 1870, 58.5 percent of the 6,579 Idaho miners were Chinese (Chen 1980).

Due to their strong economic position, white residents throughout the West developed resentment toward the Chinese population and blamed them for their economic struggles. Thus, between 1885 and 1920, scores of communities forced Chinese residents to leave.

One example is the case of Rock Springs. Rock Springs was home to a Union Pacific coal mine, which provided coal for the railways. Hundreds of Chinese Americans were employed to work at this coal mine. During their tenure, they lived in a segregated neighborhood called "Chinatown," which held approximately 600 residents (the employees and their families). However, their presence

was short-lived when, on September 2, 1885, armed members of the Knights of Labor and other community members drove Chinese residents out of town. The white community members began firing on the exiting Chinese residents, killing 28 people. Other residents fled with nothing but the clothes they were wearing; many subsequently died in the freezing temperatures overnight. Others hid from the violence in their homes, which the white residents looted and then burned. The saying “He doesn’t have a Chinaman’s chance” originated from this event. Relatives of those victimized in Rock Springs were paid \$148,000 by Congress but were never given a formal apology, nor were the actors ever punished. This incident also sparked violence against Chinese residents throughout the west. In the end, white residents drove Chinese residents from all but one town in the state.

In the 1880s, tensions also came to a violent head with white residents and black soldiers in Johnson County. The men, nicknamed the “buffalo soldiers,” faced racism and food shortages, but still had the lowest desertion rate of all western cavalry regiments. In 1883, members of the 9th Cavalry—a black infantry regiment in the army—were given orders to head to Wyoming.

By 1890, the 9th Cavalry found themselves involved in a civilian dispute in Johnson County, a place known to regularly hold “coon dances” in which white people dressed in black face. The soldiers were called when a group of ranchers in Johnson County protested the territory’s 1884 law that allowed major cattle ranches to claim unbranded cattle. The legislature was not responsive to public pressure due to the power of the cattle ranchers and did nothing. In 1892, the Wyoming Stock Growers’ Association, which represented large ranches, labeled the opposition as “rustlers” and hired 25 gunmen to drive small ranchers out of northern Wyoming. Law enforcement partnered with the 6th Cavalry and arrested the cattlemen and their hired guns after two rustlers were allegedly killed. The association then contacted Joseph M. Carey, senator from Wyoming, on June 1, 1892, and asked them to send in the 9th Cavalry. This strategy reignited tension between white Texans and black soldiers now living in Wyoming. Carey sent 314 of the 9th Cavalry from Fort Robinson to Johnson County and formed Camp Bettons near the town of Suggs. Though the cavalry was used to harassment from civilians, this was more hostile than most situations. Two members of the cavalry were driven out of town (Privates Abraham Champ and Emile Smith). The other troops then sought vengeance and, disobeying orders, fired their weapons in the street and exchanged gunfire with people in town. Private Willis Johnson died. Two additional companies of the 9th Cavalry then came to town and disarmed/arrested fellow cavalry members. The troopers involved in this incident were given to civilian authorities for trial, and the rest went back to Fort Robinson, Nebraska.

On July 10, 1890, Wyoming became the 44th state in the Union. Despite the racial tensions historically present in the Wyoming Territory, the newly formed state granted nearly equal political rights to all residents, regardless of race. However, reflecting the racial tension over labor, these rights did not extend to employment: only citizens and those seeking citizenship were allowed to participate in public works projects. The state constitution also pledged not to tax reservation

land, but only land owned by Native Americans who had severed ties with their communities.

Throughout Wyoming's early statehood, racial tension between white residents and black and Chinese residents continued to escalate. This was true for most of the west, which saw black populations shrink between 1890 and 1930, as black Americans fled to cities with existing black populations. Prior to this "Great Retreat," Wyoming had the greatest concentration of black residents in the western United States at 1.52 percent of its population.

### **The Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries**

Many black residents of Wyoming were farmers. In 1900, there were only two black farms in Wyoming, but by 1910, there were 19, worth approximately \$148,988. One notable black farmer in Wyoming was James Edwards. He was born in Ohio in 1871 and relocated to Wyoming in 1900. He traveled there with his father, searching for work in the coal mines. However, Italian miners drove them from this work, and instead, he began herding sheep on a ranch in Niobrara County. He took his first homestead claim in 1901—it was 90 acres that eventually became 10,000 acres and home to 200 cattle and 100 sheep. Though the only black person in the county, his white neighbors respected him as a good cattleman.

As with other states at the time, Wyoming also had a black women's club, called the Searchlight Club, which formed to support black community members. The Searchlight Club formed in 1904 in Cheyenne in response to the murder of a black man but served the broader black population through things such as scholarships for college.

By the end of the "Great Retreat," black people constituted only 0.55 percent of Wyoming's residents (Loewen 2005). This resettlement was often the result of violent expulsion and prohibitions aimed at people of color. By 1900, only 940 black residents remained in Wyoming.

In reaction to increasing racial tensions, the state passed a second set of anti-miscegenation laws in 1913 that prohibited marriage between white people and "Negros, Mulattoes, Mongolians, or Malaya." The punishment for violating this crime was between \$100 and \$1,000, in addition to one to five years of jail time. This law did not apply to marriages conducted in counties outside Wyoming in which interracial marriage was legal. Unlike the first anti-miscegenation law, this law was passed with no letters to the editor, veto, or any other public acknowledgment or outcry.

With the increase in demand for coal in the early 1900s, Japanese, Chinese, and Mexican workers also migrated to Wyoming in search for jobs in the mines. Organizations such as the Union Pacific Railroad and Mining Company sought such workers whom they were able to pay less than their white peers. Other industries soon did the same. Japanese, Chinese, and Mexican workers often had to live in separate communities than white settlers.

In addition to residential segregation, some places also saw the creation of segregated schools. For example, the town of Torrington established a school for

Mexican children in the late 1920s called the Columbia School. This school was designed to serve the children hired by the Holly Sugar Company to work in the beet fields harvesting sugar beets. After the stock market crash of 1929, white families and children also sought work with the Holly Sugar Company, alongside the Mexican laborers. After harvest season ended in November, both white and Mexican children entered the Columbia School to provide the students with an opportunity to catch up with mainstream schools.

Throughout the Great Depression of the 1930s, white residents continued to resent economic competition from populations of color. This tension erupted following the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. After this event, on February 19, 1942, President Roosevelt passed Executive Order 9066, which allowed Secretary of War DeWitt, to create military zones along the West Coast. This led to the forced removal of all Japanese residents living in said zones. On March 18, Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9102, which established the War Relocation Authority (WRA)—the body in charge of relocating Japanese residents. Milton Eisenhower, the first program director, planned to relocate Japanese Americans to communities in which they could participate in industry and agriculture. However, western governors were so fearful of Japanese residents that the program instead placed them in internment camps. Wyoming was home to one of 10 government relocation centers, or internment camps, for Japanese immigrants. This camp was named Heart Mountain due to its location in the town of Heart Mountain (half way between the larger towns of Powell and Cody). The first arrival at the camp was on August 12, 1942. At its peak in 1943, its population reached 10,767 residents. The final resident left the camp on November 11, 1945 (Smith 1948).



Symbolic Heart Mountain towers at the end of “F” Street, the main thoroughfare of the Heart Mountain Relocation Center in Wyoming, where approximately 10,000 Japanese Americans from the West Coast lived behind barbed wire in tarpaper barracks from 1942 to 1945. (National Archives)



### ***Heart Mountain War Relocation Center***

The Heart Mountain Relocation Center, one of 10 concentration camps in the American West used for the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, was constructed on part of a 46,000-acre Federal Reclamation Project. It took 62 days and 2,000 workers to build the 468 barracks, each measuring 120 feet long and 20 feet wide. Living units were sparse, containing two cots, a coal-burning stove, and a light. Toilets and showers were located in a separate building. The days began and ended with a siren. Meals were announced in the mess hall three times a day with the sound of a gong. Many of the residents were allowed to leave Heart Mountain and seek employment in the surrounding towns via a work permit, typically as farm workers.

As the end of the war drew near, the question of where the evacuees would go once they left Heart Mountain arose. One group, the "Powell Chapter to American War Dads," contacted Governor Lester Hunt and the WRA Director Dillon Mayer demanding that the Japanese be removed from Wyoming once they were no longer held at Heart Mountain. Internees believed that Japanese veterans in World War II should be recognized for their service and permitted to homestead the land on which Heart Mountain was located. The demands of the group were not met. Rather, once released, the people at Heart Mountain were free to relocate to wherever they could but were prohibited from purchasing land in Wyoming, due to the alien land act.

During World War II, tensions between the U.S. government and Native communities also persisted. For example, the members of the Wind River reservation rejected John Collier's Indian Reorganization Act, which sought to reverse the historical policy of forcible assimilation and relocated indigenous peoples, once again, to government-created reservations. It also called for Native communities to reorganize their governing structures. This rejection led Wyoming governor Lester C. Hunt to write a letter to Senator Joseph C. O'Mahoney on March 30, 1945, saying the government should stop being a "wet nurse" to the Indians and that federal services should be terminated and the tribal lands should be divided. Hunt further stated that the "Indian as we know him today would soon lose his identity and would rapidly acquire the American way of living" and the reservations "are surrounded by the highest types of civilization, and how or why they have been retarded in their advancement as much as they have is a mystery to me" (Calloway 1991, 130). The members of the Wind River reservation continued to operate with political sovereignty managed by the General Councils of the Arapahoe and Shoshoni.

Following World War II, with resistance to Jim Crow laws in the U.S. South, Wyoming saw the creation of what is known as "sundown towns," in which it was unsafe for black people to be after nightfall. One such town was Green River, which around 1950 passed an ordinance that explicitly excluded black people from living there. Another example was Laramie. This caused particular challenges when the University of Wyoming started recruiting black athletes in the early 1950s, as black athletes were not allowed to live or stay in the city overnight. White residents of the town were angry, as the university violated their racial exclusion policies and allowed black athletes to stay in the dorms. A third example was the city of Powell, which, also in the early 1950s, laid host to a sign on the east side of the town that said: "N\*\*\*\*r, Don't let the sun set on you here."

The period during and following World War II also saw the creation of the federal Bracero Program that promised a reasonable wage and decent living conditions for Mexican laborers in the United States to fill a labor shortage. While initially Wyoming was not part of the program, in 1952, 1,392 contracted Mexican workers were brought to Wyoming from Mexico. This followed a 1951 letter from the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Anderson asking that Mexican people not be placed in Wyoming and certain other states due to a history of discriminatory treatment of Mexican farm workers in which Mexican sugar beet farmers were paid less than white farmers.

As laws supporting legal racial discrimination were overturned in the rest of the United States throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Wyoming followed suit. The anti-miscegenation law was repealed in 1965 following the 1964 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the case of *McLaughlin v. Florida*. It passed in the House of Representatives on January 19 with a 51–8 vote, passed in the Senate on January 25 with a 21–3 vote, and was signed by Governor Clifford Hansen on January 27.

Wyoming's commitment to racial inclusion was tested in 1968 when the University of Wyoming planned to play athletic events against Brigham Young University (BYU), which discouraged black students from attending. A group of 14 football players, known as the "Black 14," protested BYU's policies and were released from the football team. The public did not support the actions of the football players, most of whom eventually left the University of Wyoming.

Since the civil rights movement, Wyoming has not seen formal racial bias in legislation; however, racial inequality persists, and racist organizations continue to exist. One such organization is the Creativity Movement, formerly known as the World Church of the Creator, a white nationalist organization currently operated out

### **The "Black 14"**

In 1969, mirroring similar protests in other states, students in Wyoming protested a scheduled game against Brigham Young University due to alleged racial discrimination at the university and within the Mormon Church. Respectfully, 14 black football players decided to meet with their coach, Lloyd W. Eaton, to discuss possible ways to show solidarity with the protestors.

On October 17, 14 black players met at the university dorm. Dressed in street clothes and black arm bands, they walked to Eaton's office at the Memorial Fieldhouse. Their coach was not supportive of their desire to express solidarity with the protestors. Despite their willingness to play without participating in any action, he called them "rabble-rousers" and believed they should no longer receive scholarship money from the university and, instead, should return to what he called "Negro Relief" (Bullock 1996, 8). Throughout their conversation, Coach Eaton repeatedly told the athletes to "shut up" and suggested that if it were not for the University of Wyoming, "they would be out on the streets hustling." Later, Eaton would testify that he also told them that if they were unhappy at Wyoming, they should consider attending a historically black college. Eaton dismissed the athletes from the team and revoked their scholarships. The governor, trustees, and the university president met later that day and decided to allow the athletes to remain in school with the possibility of a different source of financial aid.

The "Black 14" filed and lost a \$1.1 million lawsuit against the University of Wyoming and Coach Eaton with the assistance of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). All but one of the "Black 14" left the university. Ten of the 14 graduated from college.

of Riverton, Wyoming. The organization, led by Thomas Kroenke, identifies itself as a “racial religion” that seeks to promote white people to global leadership through a global race war against Jewish people, nonwhite supremacist Christians, and other populations of color. Local residents largely condemn the church and its doctrine.

While formal laws legislating racial inequality are no longer in place, their legacy continues to impact residents of the state. Wyoming sees contemporary disparities in a variety of measures by race. Today, Wyoming remains 93 percent white. According to the U.S. Census, the median income for white people in the state is between \$17,000 and 23,000 greater than that of populations of color. People of color disproportionately comprise the roles of those living in poverty in the state; white people are far more likely to own their own home than are people of color. Children of color living in Wyoming are more likely than white children to die from illnesses or unintentional injuries. People of color are also less likely to have health insurance and more likely to report that they were unable to visit a doctor due to cost than are white Wyomingites. Black, American Indian, and Hispanic children are more likely than white or Asian children in Wyoming to drop out of school. Only time will show when and how the “Equality State” will continue to evolve.

## NOTABLE FIGURE

### **Hardin, William Jefferson (1831–1889)**

William Jefferson Hardin was Wyoming’s first African American legislator, serving two terms in 1879 and 1882. Hardin was born in Russellville, Kentucky, in 1831, and raised in Bowling Green, Kentucky, by an adoptive Shaker community. In this context, he was able to receive formal education, something that was not common for African Americans at the time. In 1849, Hardin left the Shaker community and accepted a teaching position in Bowling Green, Kentucky, where he taught “free children of color” and married his first wife, Caroline, who was a slave. However, according to Kentucky law, any children he had with Caroline would also be enslaved. Though he tried, Hardin was unable to buy his wife’s freedom and, in 1850, left Kentucky to search for gold in California.

Failing to achieve wealth in the gold rush, Hardin returned to Louisiana and, in 1862, became a second lieutenant in the 3rd Regiment of the Louisiana National Guard under Union General Benjamin F. Butler. The 3rd Regiment was made up of escaped slaves and were used primarily as laborers harvesting sugar cane. Soon after, Nathaniel P. Banks took over the Louisiana National Guard and was not permissive of African American soldiers. Banks found several ways of extracting resignations from African American officers, including Hardin. Most black soldiers resigned from the Louisiana Guard in February 1863.

Hardin then moved to Denver, Colorado, leaving his wife and child behind, where he opened a barbershop and became well known for his public speeches and lectures, earning the nickname the “Colored Orator of Denver” (Kimball 2010, 28). While in Denver, he advocated for equal rights of African Americans in voting laws and for school integration. In 1872, he was a delegate for the Republican National Convention. Soon after, he earned a job at the U.S. Mint in Denver.

In 1873, he married his second wife, Nellie Davidson, who was white. Later that year, his first wife, Caroline K. Hardin, arrived in Denver and accused Hardin

of both bigamy and dodging the Civil War draft. Hardin pleaded guilty to being a draft dodger, but was never charged with bigamy as his first marriage was not legally recognized. However, claiming a lack of qualifications, he was fired from his job shortly after these events. Hardin and Nellie subsequently moved to Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Once in Cheyenne, Hardin opened another barbershop. Just as he had in Denver, Hardin became known throughout Cheyenne for his public speaking and orating ability and was often called to speak at public meetings. Hardin was elected to the Wyoming House of Representatives, Sixth Legislative Assembly in 1879. This was significant because racial tensions throughout the United States, including Wyoming, remained high. Despite this disadvantage, Hardin received 988 votes, making him the third highest vote earner out of the nine candidates elected to the assembly. During his first term, Hardin served on two committees: the Indian and Military Affairs Committee and a Joint Standing Committee on Printing. Hardin also introduced six bills, two of which were written into law.

Though he chose not to run for a second term after a poor showing at the 1880 Republican Convention, Hardin was nominated for the Seventh Legislative Assembly. He was the only person reelected that year. During the 1882 session, Hardin introduced three bills, two of which became law. During this session, two additional laws were passed that Hardin supported. The first law repealed the earlier 1869 law against interracial marriage, a law that was of interest to Hardin due to his marriage to a white woman. The second bill removed increased rights for women by (1) removing restrictions on married women selling property without her husband's permission, (2) giving women the right to be sued and to sue without her husband's involvement, and (3) allowing women to be witnesses to civil and criminal matters.

The remaining years of his life were full of personal strife. In 1881, Hardin sold his property in Wyoming and moved, with Nellie, to Ogden, Utah, in 1882. Staying true to his trade, Hardin again opened a barbershop in the community. Once settled in Ogden, Nellie left Hardin for another man. The next year, Hardin relocated again to Park City, Utah, in 1883, where he opened another barbershop. Here he also participated in the local Congregational Church and the Park City Liberal Party. Hardin gave his last public address in 1887 at an event held for a Liberal candidate for Congress, John M. Young. In 1889, Hardin located his ex-wife in Seattle, Washington, and learned that she was a widow. After she refused his request to reconcile and due to ongoing illness, Hardin returned to Park City and shot himself in the stomach on September 13, 1889. When doing so, Hardin stepped outside his cabin so that he would not leave any mess for someone to clean. He also left letters giving instructions on how to dress him and style his hair for burial. Hardin is buried in an unmarked grave in the Park City Municipal Cemetery in Utah.

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