

KEY HISTORICAL POINTS

Early Presence and Enslavement

- Historians suggest that Black people were present in North America before European colonization.
- The first documented instance of enslaved Africans being trafficked to the U.S. occurred in 1526 in South Carolina.
- This event marked the beginning of the transatlantic slave trade, where millions of African people were kidnapped and sold as property in the Americas.

The Middle Passage

- Enslaved Africans endured the horrific Middle Passage, shackled and packed into ships under inhumane conditions.

Economic Impact

- Enslavers forced people into labor in homes, businesses, farms, and on plantations.
- The U.S. and global economy was built on our forced labor.
- Exploitation of enslaved people built the wealth of white enslavers.
- White enslavers believed that Black people were inferior to white people, justifying their continual brutality.

We hope this pamphlet
inspires you to continue
learning about Juneteenth
and Black History.

TO FIND OUT MORE...



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UNDERSTANDING THE HISTORY OF JUNETEENTH

The history of chattel slavery in the United States is a crucial and challenging part of American history. It is a narrative of immense suffering and injustice, but also one of incredible resilience and the fight for freedom. Comprehending this history is vital to understanding the significance of days like Juneteenth.

**UNDERSTANDING HISTORY
HELPS US UNDERSTAND WHY
CERTAIN DAYS, LIKE
JUNETEENTH, ARE SO
IMPORTANT TODAY.**

RESISTANCE AND ABOLITION

Enslaved people resisted through:

- Subtle acts of defiance.
- Running away.
- Organizing rebellions.
- Abolitionists worked hard to expose and end the horrors of slavery.

COMPARISONS TO OTHER SYSTEMS

Unlike other forms of slavery, which often allowed for freedom and integration, U.S. chattel slavery was based on race and permanent ownership.

Chattel slavery in the United States treated enslaved people as permanent property based solely on race.

JUNETEENTH AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

The issue of slavery led to the American Civil War (1861–1865).

- President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 aimed to weaken the Confederacy by freeing enslaved people in rebellious states.
- The 13th Amendment (1865) legally abolished slavery, but freedom was delayed in some areas.
- June 19, 1865, marks the day Union General Gordon Granger announced freedom for enslaved people in Galveston, Texas.
- It symbolizes the end of slavery in Confederate-controlled areas, though not all were freed immediately.
- Celebrated with gatherings focusing on education, heritage, music, and calls for justice.

National Recognition

- Juneteenth became a federal holiday on June 17, 2021, recognizing its importance in African American history.
- Juneteenth serves not only as a celebration but as a poignant reminder of this journey.

ERASURE AND CHALLENGES

Attempts to Erase History

- Some have tried to minimize or exclude Black history from educational curricula.
- Textbooks have inaccurately portrayed slavery, and significant events like the Tulsa Race Massacre are often omitted.

Ongoing Efforts

- Activists continue to push for accurate representation and understanding of Juneteenth and Black history.
- This erasure is part of a broader pattern of institutional racism in education.

Understanding the history of chattel slavery and its lasting impacts is essential in acknowledging America's ongoing journey toward equality and justice.