Original Paper

How America Became an Economic Powerhouse on the Backs of African-American Slaves and Native Americans

Y. Datta

1 Professor Emeritus, Northern KY University, Highland Heights, KY 41099, USA
* Y. Datta, Professor Emeritus, Northern KY University, Highland Heights, KY 41099, USA

Received: November 9, 2021 Accepted: November 26, 2021 Online Published: December 1, 2021
doi:10.22158/jepf.v7n5p121 URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/jepf.v7n5p121

Abstract

The objective of this paper is to make the case that the United States became an economic super-power in the nineteenth century on the backs of African-American slaves and Native Americans.

It was in 1619, when Jamestown colonists bought 20-30 slaves from English pirates. The paper starts with 'The 1619 Project' whose objective is to place the consequences of slavery--and the contributions of black Americans--at the very center of the story we tell ourselves about who we are as a nation.

Slavery was common in all thirteen colonies, and at-least twelve Presidents owned slaves. The enslaved people were not recognized as human beings, but as property: once a slave always a slave.

The U.S. Constitution, adopted in 1788, never mentions slavery, yet slavery is at the very heart of the constitution.

The U.S. government used the Declaration of Independence as a license to commit genocide on the Native Americans, and to seize their land.

Racist ideas have persisted throughout American history, based on the myth that blacks are intellectually inferior compared to whites. However, in a 2012 article in the Scientific American, the authors reported that 85.5% of genetic variation is within the so-called races, not between them. So, the consensus among Western researchers today is that human races do not represent a scientific theory, but are sociocultural constructs.

After end of the Civil War, the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolished slavery in America, and the 15th Amendment protected the voting rights of African Americans.

However, in the Confederate South, Jim Crow laws legalized racial segregation between 1870-1968. In 1965, thanks to the Civil Rights movement, the Voting Rights Act was passed to overcome barriers created by Jim Crow laws to the legal rights of African Americans under the 15th Amendment.

British and American innovations in cotton technology sparked the Industrial Revolution during the
latter part of the eighteenth century. The British cotton manufacturing exploded in the 1780s. Eighty years later in 1860, Manchester, England stood at the center of a world-spanning empire—the empire of cotton.

There were three pillars of the Industrial Revolution. One was the centuries-earlier conquest by Europeans of a colossal expanse of lands in the New World. It was the control of huge territories in America, that made monoculture farming of cotton possible. Second was that the Europeans drastically—and unilaterally—altered the global competitive landscape of cotton. They did it by using their military might, and the willingness to use it—often violently—to their advantage.

The third—and the most important—was slavery: without which there would be no Industrial Revolution.

America was tremendously suited for cotton production. The climate and soil of a large part of American South met the conditions under which the cotton plant thrived.

More importantly, the plantation owners in America commanded unlimited supplies of the three crucial ingredients that went into the production of cotton: labor, land, and credit. And this was topped by their unbelievable political power.

In 1793 Eli Whitney’s revolutionary cotton gin increased ginning productivity fifty times, and thus removed the bottleneck of removing seeds from cotton.

Because of relying on monoculture farming, the problem the cotton planters were facing was soil exhaustion. So, they wanted the U.S. government to acquire more land. Surprisingly, in 1803 America was able to strike an unbelievable deal with the French—the Louisiana Purchase—which doubled the territory of the United States. In 1819 America acquired Florida from Spain, and in 1845 annexed Texas from Mexico.

Between 1803 and 1838, under President Andrew Jackson, America fought a multi-front war against the Native Americans in the Deep South, and expropriated vast tracts of their land, that culminated in the ethnic cleansing of the Deep South.

With an unlimited supply of land—and slave labor—even soil exhaustion did not slow down the cotton barons; they just moved further west and farther south. New cotton fields now sprang up in the sediment-rich lands along the banks of Mississippi. So swift was this move westward that, by the end of the 1830s, Mississippi was producing more cotton than any other southern state. By 1860, there were more millionaires per capita in Mississippi Valley than anywhere else in America.

The New Orleans slave market was the largest in America—where 100,000 men, women, and children were packaged, priced, and sold.

The entry of the United States in the cotton market quickly began to reshape the global cotton market. By 1802 America was the single-most supplier of cotton to Britain.

For eighty years—from the 1780s to 1865—almost a million people were herded down the road from the upper South to the lower South and the West, to toil on cotton plantations. The thirty-odd men walked in coffles, the double line hurrying in lock-step. Each hauled twenty pounds of iron, chains that draped from
neck-to-neck, and wrist-to-wrist, binding them all together. They walked for miles, days, and weeks, and many covered over 700 miles.

The plantation owners devised a cruel system of controlling their slaves that the enslaved called “the pushing system.” This system constantly increased the number of acres each slave was expected to cultivate. In 1805 each “hand” could tend to five acres of a cotton field. Fifty years later that target had been doubled to ten acres.

Overseers closely monitored enslaved workers. Each slave was assigned a daily quota of number of pounds of cotton to pick. If the worker failed to meet it, he received as many lashes on his back as the deficit. However, if he overshot his quota, the master might “reward” him by raising his quota the next day.

One of the most brutal weapons the planters used against the slaves, was the whip: ten feet of plaited cowhide. When facing the specter of an overseer’s whip, slaves were so terrified that they could not speak in sentences. They danced, trembled, babbled, and lost control of their bodies.

When seeking a loan, the planters used slaves as a collateral. With extraordinarily high returns from their businesses, the planters began to expand their loan portfolio: sometimes using the same slave worker as collateral for multiple mortgages. The American South produced too much cotton. However, consumer demand could not keep up with the excessive supply, that then led to a precipitous fall in prices, which, in turn, set off the Panic of 1837. And that touched off a major depression.

The slaveholders were using advanced management and accounting practices long before the techniques that are still in use today.

The manufacture of sugar from sugarcane began in Louisiana Territory in 1795. In sugar mills, children, alongside with adults, toiled like factory workers with assembly-like precision and discipline under the constant threat of boiling hot kettles, open furnaces, and grinding rollers.

To attain the highest efficiency, sugar factories worked day and night where there is no distinction as to the days of the week. Fatigue might mean losing an arm to the grinding rollers, or being flayed for not being able to keep up. Resistance was often met with sadistic cruelty.

The expansion of slavery in the first eight decades after American independence, drove the evolution and modernization of the United States. In the course of a single life time, the South grew from a narrow coastal strip of worn-out tobacco plantations, to a continental cotton empire. As a result, the United States became a modern, industrial, and capitalistic economy. This is the period in which America rose from being a minor European trading partner, to becoming the world’s leading economy.

Finally, we hope that we have successfully been able to make the argument that America became an economic powerhouse in the nineteenth century not only on the backs of African-American slaves, but also on the genocide of Native Americans, and their stolen lands.

Keywords
The 1619 Project, White Racism, Slavery, Native Americans, U.S. Constitution, Industrial Revolution, European Imperialism
1. Introduction
This is a long essay, so we have divided in six sections as follow:

- **Section I**—From 1619 to American Independence
- **Section II**—History of Slavery and Racist Ideas
- **Section III**—The Civil War to the Voting Rights Act, 1965
- **Section IV**—The Empire of Cotton
- **Section V**—The Sugar Plantations of Louisiana
- **Section VI**—This Half has Not been Told

*Section I* starts with ‘The 1619 Project,’ whose objective is to recognize the consequences of slavery and the contributions of black Americans at the center of the story we tell ourselves who we are as a nation.

Slavery was common in all thirteen colonies in 1776, and the enslaved were not regarded as human beings, but as property.

In 1975 the American Revolutionary War started when some of the colonists decided to declare their independence from Britain to protect slavery. On September 3, 1783, Great Britain formally recognized the independence of the United States.

In framing the *Declaration of Independence* in 1776, this is what Thomas Jefferson wrote:

- “The laws of nature and nature’s God” are the foundations from which reason and conscience reveal “self-evident” truth, namely, that “all men are created equal” in their possession of “certain unalienable rights.”

Jefferson chose those rights to be: “life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.”

However, Jefferson did not truly believe in what he wrote, because some people were more equal than others. The natural rights manifesto did not include women, and neither were slaves nor Native Americans.

In 1788, the U.S. government adopted the *Constitution* of the United States. The Constitution never mentions slavery; the word does not appear in it. And yet, slavery is all over the document.

The American government used the *Declaration of Independence* as a license to commit genocide of Native Americans and to seize their land.

*Section II* covers in depth the persistence of ideas of racism in the Western culture and America, starting from as early as the fifteenth century virtually to this day.

*Section III* covers the Civil War in the United States that started in 1861, when eleven southern states declared to secede from the Union, and form the *Confederate States of America*. The war ended in Confederate surrender in 1865. The conflict was the costliest and deadliest war ever fought on American soil.

The 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolished slavery in America, and the 15th Amendment was passed to protect the voting rights of African Americans.

The Jim Crow laws in the South legalized racial segregation for almost hundred years from 1870 to
1968. Following the Civil War movement, the Voting Rights Act was passed in 1965, to overcome the legal barriers of Jim-Crow laws. 

Section IV is titled the Empire of Cotton. The British—and American--innovations in cotton technology sparked the Industrial Revolution during the latter part of the eighteenth century. The British cotton manufacturing exploded in the 1780s. Eighty years later in 1860, Manchester, England stood at the center of a world-spanning empire—the empire of cotton.

To cater to their unsatiable appetite for more land, the plantation owners approached the U.S. government for acquiring more land. Surprisingly, in 1803 America was able to strike an unbelievable deal with the French--the Louisiana Purchase. This vast expanse doubled the territory of the United States. In 1819 America acquired Florida from Spain, and in 1845 annexed Texas from Mexico.

Between 1803 and 1838, under President Andrew Jackson, America fought a multi-front war with the Native Americans in the Deep South. By the end of the 1830s, all Native Americans were removed to lands west of the Mississippi.

Under Andrew Jackson’s 1819 treaty with the Choctaw nation, the U.S. acquired five million acres of extremely fertile land in the Yazoo-Mississippi delta, in exchange for vastly inferior lands in Oklahoma and Arkansas.

Between 1835 and 1842, the U.S. expropriated the extremely fertile cotton fields from the Seminoles in Florida.

With an unlimited supply of land—and slave labor—even soil exhaustion did not slow down the cotton barons; they just moved further west and farther south. New cotton fields now sprang up in the sediment-rich lands along the banks of Mississippi. So swift was this move westward that, by the end of the 1830s, Mississippi was producing more cotton than any other southern state. By 1860, there were more millionaires per capita in Mississippi Valley than anywhere else in America.

The entry of the United States in the cotton market quickly began to reshape the global cotton market. By 1802 America was the single-most supplier of cotton to Britain.

The leading sector of the emerging global economy during the first half of the nineteenth century was cotton. So, between 1820 and 1860, as many as a million African-American slaves were sold. This massive relocation and geographic redistribution of the enslaved population caused profound suffering among the slaves for two reasons: (1) The breakup of 50% of slave families, and (2) Loss of the social network that every slave family was an intimate part of.

New Orleans slave market was the largest in the nation, where 100,000 men, women, and children were packaged, priced and sold.

For most of the history of political economy of slavery in the Mississippi Valley, there was a growing tension between “the South” as a region of the global economy, and “the South” as a region of the United States.

The South believed that the U.S. was stripping them of their birthright: as slaveholders, as Americans, as whites, as men.
To satisfy their voracious greed for new territory—for which they would need more slaves—the Southern planters began a rearguard action for reopening the slave trade that the Congress had abolished in 1807. This move was based on the belief that the people in the South were governed by the laws of supply and demand: an idea that would supplant the norms of national sovereignty. So, they argued that a planter should not be compelled to go to Virginia to buy slaves for $1,500 each, when he could get them in Cuba for $600 each.

A majority of the credit powering the American slave economy came from the London money market. Britain—and much of Europe—were bankrolling slavery in America. To raise capital, state-chartered banks pooled debt generated by the slave mortgages, and repackaged it as bonds promising investors annual interest. The underlying rationale for Britain’s abolishment of slave trade was the need to “scrub the blood of enslaved workers off American dollars, British pounds, and French francs. This was an ingenious ploy to profit from slavery without getting your hands dirty.

When seeking a loan, planters used slaves as a collateral—sometimes using the same slave for multiple mortgages—which they securitized as mortgage-backed securities.

The American South produced too much cotton. However, consumer demand could not keep up with the excessive supply, and that caused a precipitous fall in the price of cotton. When the price of cotton tumbled, it pulled down the value of enslaved workers—and land, which then led to a precipitous fall in prices, which, in turn, set off the Panic of 1837. And that touched off a major depression.

For eighty years—from the 1780s to 1865—almost a million people were herded down the road from the upper South to the lower South and the West, to toil on cotton plantations. The thirty-odd men walked in coffles, the double line hurrying in lock-step. Each hauled twenty pounds of iron, chains that draped from neck-to-neck, and wrist-to-wrist, binding them all together.

They walked for miles, days, and weeks, and many covered over 700 miles. Stumbling with fatigue, staggering with whiskey…many covered over 700 miles before stepping off the road…After weeks of wading rivers, crossing state lines, and climbing mountain roads…they had moved their bodies across the frontier between the old slavery and the new.

The ruthless “pushing” system of controlling the slaves constantly increased the quota of cotton to pick that doubled over 50 years. If the worker failed to meet it, he received as many lashes on his back as the deficit. However, if he overshot his quota, the master might “reward” him by raising his quota the next day.

One of the most brutal weapons the planters employed against the slaves, was the whip: ten feet of plaited cowhide. When facing the specter of an overseer’s whip, slaves were so terrified, that they could not speak in sentences. They danced, trembled, babbled, and lost control of their bodies.

The slaveholders were using advanced management and accounting practices long before the techniques that are still in use today.
Section V says that the manufacture of sugar from sugarcane began in Louisiana Territory in 1795. In sugar mills, children, alongside with adults, toiled like factory workers with assembly-like precision and discipline under the constant threat of boiling hot kettles, open furnaces and grinding rollers. To attain the highest efficiency, sugar factories worked day and night where there is no distinction as to the days of the week. Fatigue might mean losing an arm to the grinding rollers, or being flayed for not being able to keep up. Resistance was often met with sadistic cruelty.

In Section VI, we point out that the expansion of slavery in the first eight decades after American independence, drove the evolution and modernization of the United States. In the course of a single life time, the South grew from a narrow coastal strip of worn-out tobacco plantations to a continental cotton empire. As a result, the United States became a modern, industrial, and capitalistic economy. This is the period in which America rose from being a minor European trading partner, to becoming the world’s leading economy.

Finally, we hope that we have successfully been able to make the argument that America became an economic powerhouse in the nineteenth century not only on the backs of African-American slaves, but also on genocide of Native Americans and their stolen lands.

Section I—From 1619 to American Independence

2. ‘The 619 Project’ and Slavery in America

According to Jake Silverstein (2019), editor-in-chief of The New York Times Magazine, ‘The 1619 Project’ is the brain-child of Nikole Hannah-Jones, a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist, whose article dated Aug. 14, 2019 was the first in the series. It was then exactly four hundred years ago when Jamestown colonists in the British colony of Virginia bought 20-30 enslaved Africans from English pirates. Their arrival began a barbaric system of chattel slavery that lasted for the next 250 years in America. Sometimes it is referred to as the country’s original sin, but it is much more than that: “It is the country’s very origin” (ibid, italics added).

These slaves were among 1.5 million Africans who were kidnapped from their homes and brought in chains across the Atlantic Ocean in the “largest forced migration in human history until the Second World War.” Almost two million did not survive the journey known as the Middle Passage (Hannah-Jones, 2019, italics added).

As Silverstein (2019) describes, the effect slavery had in America was so devastating —and so profound—that it can only be described as unbelievable:

- “Out of slavery—and the anti-black racism it required—grew nearly everything that has truly made America exceptional: its economic might, its industrial power, its electoral system, its diet and popular music, the inequities of its public health and education, its’ astonishing penchant for violence, its income inequality, the example it sets for the world as a land of freedom and
equality, its slang, its legal system and the endemic racial fears and hatreds that continue to plague it to this day” (Silverstein, italics added).

- “The seeds of all that were planted long before our official birth date, in 1776, when the men known as our founders, formally declared independence from Britain” (italics added).

2.1 ‘The 1619 Project’s’ Aim

The goal of ‘The 1619 Project’ is (Silverstein, 2019):

- “To ‘reframe American history by considering what it would mean to regard 1619 as our nation’s birth year. Doing so requires us to place the consequences of slavery and the contributions of black Americans at the very center of the story we tell ourselves about who we are as a country.”

The New York Times Magazine has initially published twelve articles as a part of the 1619 project (ibid).

2.2 Hannah-Jones Rejects Offer of a Tenured Position at her Alma Mater: UNCCCH

Hannah-Jones is an alumna of University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNCCCH) from where she received her Masters’ degree in 2003. Exhausted by the attacks on her work, Hannah-Jones agreed in Feb. 2021--partly in order to avoid a fight with her alma mater—to take an untenured position at UNCHH as a Knight’s chair in ‘race and investigative journalism.’ But this was contrary to the precedent at the university where all three previous Knight chairs—all white—had been granted tenure (Stripling, 2021).

However, in May, NC Policy Watch, a political website, reported that the Board of Trustees had not voted for her tenure because of political opposition to her work. So, Hannah-Jones decided she would not join UNCCCH on July 1st without tenure (ibid).

Finally, on June 30th the UNCC board, on a split vote, granted her tenure. However, “it was too little too late.” Hannah-Jones “flipped the script on Chapel Hill” and “walked away” from this belated offer (Stripling, 2021, italics added).

Later Hannah-Jones announced she had decided to join Howard University with a tenured position as the inaugural Knight chair in “race and journalism,” where she planned to found the Center for Journalism and Democracy, backed by a $20-million grant from the university (ibid).

2.3 Ibram Kendi’s Book “Stamped from the Beginning”

Ibram Kendi, now a professor at Boston University, published his book Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America for which he won the 2016 National Book Award (Ruane, 2019).

3. Slavery Common in All Thirteen Colonies in 1776

As reported above, the institution of slavery, that began in 1619, was protected by law, and had been a part of American society for more than 150 years (Maloy, 2021).

In the American colonies, for the first fifty years, most of the laborers were European indentured servants, toiling on tobacco plantations in wretched conditions. Due to the treacherous nature of the journey across the Atlantic, not many Europeans were willing to make that trip. As a result, the plantation owners faced a labor shortage. And so, they turned to the transatlantic slave trade, and over time, replaced Europeans

Published by SCHOLINK INC.
with African slaves (PBS, 2021).

The plantation owners found what they considered an endless supply of labor. Also, if the slaves ran away, they could easily be identified. So, while they could run (away), but they could not hide: because of their black color (ibid).

The black slaves brought with them some valuable expertise. They taught their masters to grow tobacco and rice (ibid).

In 1776 slavery existed in all 13 colonies. In 1780 Pennsylvania was the first state to abolish slavery. Massachusetts was the first to abolish slavery outright. The remaining New England states—New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island—adopted gradual emancipation schemes, similar to Pennsylvania’s statute, in the mid-1780s. The Congress abolished slavery in the future-states north of Ohio River in 1787 (Hylton, 2012).

Gradual emancipation came to New Jersey in 1804 and to New York in 1817 (ibid).

3.1 Twelve Presidents were Slaveowners

At least 12 Presidents—even a quarter of all—enslaved people during their lifetime. Of these eight had slaves while in office. The chief among them were George Washington who kept 300 bondsmen at his Mount Vernon plantation, and Thomas Jefferson who owned at least 175 at one time. In addition, James Madison, James Monroe, and Andrew Jackson each kept several dozen slaves (Andrews, 2019).

3.2 Once a Slave always a Slave

At this time blacks constituted one-fifth of the total population in the 13 colonies. They lived under conditions so brutal the likes of which had not been seen anywhere before. The chief characteristics of this chattel slavery were (Hannah-Jones, 2019):

- Chattel is an item of property other than real estate.
- Chattel slavery was not conditional but racial.
- It was heritable and permanent.
- “Enslaved people were not recognized as human beings, but as property that could be mortgaged, traded, bought, sold, used as collateral, given as a gift,” or disposed of violently.
- Enslaved people could not legally marry.
- They were barred from learning to read.
- They were not allowed to meet privately in groups.
- They had no claim to their own children, who could be bought, sold, and traded away from them on auction blocks.
- Enslaved people could own nothing, will nothing, and inherit nothing.
- They were legally tortured—including those working for Jefferson.
- They could be worked to death—and often were—to produce the maximum output for their white masters.

Jefferson’s fellow white colonists clearly understood that black people were human beings. Yet, they created a network of laws and customs—amazing for both their precision and cruelty—that ensured that
the enslaved people would never be treated as such. William Goodell, an abolitionist—one who wanted to abolish slavery—wrote in 1853: “If anything founded on falsehood might be called a science,” the system of American slavery would surely be a part of it (Hannah-Jones, 2019, italics added).

4. Slavery in Colonial British North America Before Independence

Before independence in 1776 America had thirteen mainland colonies (Note 1):

- New England: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut.
- Middle: New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware
- Southern: Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia

As mentioned earlier, the first black people were kidnapped from Africa and forced into slavery in Virginia in 1619. Throughout the 17th century European settlers in North America resorted to enslaved Africans as a cheaper and more plentiful source of labor than indentured servants who were mostly poor Europeans (Note 2).

Slave labor was not a significant part of the labor force in North America until the last quarter of the 17th century. But, thereafter, the slave population grew exponentially. By 1776 it encompassed 20% of the total population of the thirteen mainland colonies (Zagarri, 2021).

While it is not possible to come up with accurate figures, some historians have estimated that between 6 to 7 million enslaved Africans were brought to North America during the 18th century alone, thus depriving the African continent of some of its best men and women (Note 2).

If one were to look at the global slave-trading network, North America was relatively a minor destination. Less than 4% of all enslaved Africans were sent to mainland North America. On the other hand, the vast majority of African slaves were directed to the sugar-producing regions of Brazil and the West Indies (Zagarri, 2021).

By 1776, the slave population of South Carolina and Virginia was 60% and 40%, respectively. Whereas most enslaved Africans in Virginia toiled on small farms, many in South Carolina labored on large plantations (ibid).

The biggest percentage of the enslaved, by far, were in the South. In contrast, New England’s share was just 2-3%. However, big cities—such as, Boston, Newport, Philadelphia, and New York—supported significant enslaved populations (Zagarri, 2021).

In these urban areas the enslaved were employed in many capacities, e.g., artisans, craftsmen, sailors, dock workers, laundresses, and coachmen. In urban areas, in particular, owners often hired out their skilled enslaved workers and kept their wages to themselves. Many were employed as domestic servants because this conveyed a symbol of high status for the owners (ibid).

4.1 Tobacco the Main Cash Crop of the Colonies before the American Revolution

With an ideal climate, easy availability of land, and an army of enslaved Africans, land owners in the Southern colonies began to grow cash crops like tobacco, rice, and indigo during the 17th and 18th centuries. These cash crops were highly labor intensive—but also very profitable. These plantations were
located on the southern coast from Chesapeake colonies of Maryland and Virginia south to Georgia (Timmons, 2020; Note 2; Zagarri, 2021). The main cash crop of the colonies was tobacco. Always a fickle commodity for growers, tobacco suffered from two major problems: (1) Price fluctuations, and (2) Vulnerability to weather changes (Timmons, 2020).

More importantly, the land used to grow tobacco was mostly exhausted of its nutrients in the late 18th century. So, tobacco planters were switching to wheat (Timmons, 2020; Note 2; Johnson, 2013b).

At the end of the 18th century, slavery in the United States was an institution that was in decline. Wage labor was increasingly replacing slave labor in both the urban and the rural areas of the upper South (Johnson, 2013b).

“And then came cotton” (ibid).

5. The American Revolutionary War of Independence: 1775

By 1765 a sizeable group in the British Parliament wanted to resolve the question of the colonists’ identity. Lord Mansfield, the chief justice of the Court of King’s Bench—and a member of the House of Lords—made the case most clearly. He said that colonists were just as subject to the laws of Parliament as everyone else in England (Waldstreicher, 2009, p. 34).

5.1 The Mansfieldian Moment

James Somerset, a slave of Charles Steuart—a colonial official in Virginia—took the opportunity on a London voyage to run away. Steuart tried to have him seized, and said he planned to take him to West Indies to be sold. In 1772 Lord Mansfield ruled the case in favor of Somerset’s personal rights under the British Constitution. Mansfield ruled that Somerset could not be kidnapped and sent abroad in the absence of a positive law of slavery passed by the British Parliament (Waldstreicher, 2009, p. 39).

Thus, British constitution became a threat to colonial slave owners. So, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin levied a serious charge on the British: that the British refusal to let the colonies free themselves from slavery, was yet another proof of the administration’s tendency to enslave the colonists (ibid, p. 42).

For this “duplicity” the colonists faced serious criticism both at home and abroad. The most stinging censure came from the British author, Dr. Samuel Johnson, who rhetorically asked: “How is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of negroes?” (Hannah-Jones, 2019; Maloy, 2021).

Rhode Island pastor Samuel Hopkins, an antislavery Puritan, in a letter to Congress said that the “so-called” enslavement of the colonists by the British was “lighter than a feather” compared to the African enslavement by the Americans (Kendi, 2016, p. 107; italics added).

As mentioned above, Franklin and Jefferson’s complaint that the British took away the power from the colonists to free themselves from slavery, was just a clever ploy because when colonists really became independent, they forgot all about abolishing slavery.

In November 1775 Lord Dunmore, the British governor of Virginia, issued a proclamation promising freedom to slaves—held by the revolutionaries—in exchange for joining the British army. Virginians and
other southerners feared that it would cause widespread slave revolt. Edward Rutledge, who later became the governor of South Carolina, declared that Dunmore’s proclamation would do more than anything else to bring about permanent separation between Britain and the colonies. And George Washington went a step further. He called Dunmore “that arch-traitor to the rights of humanity” (Ostler, 2020).

In April 1975 skirmishes between the British troops and colonial militiamen in Lexington and Concord kicked off the armed conflict that signified the start of the Revolutionary War (Note 3).

5.2 Some Colonists Declared Independence to Protect Slavery

Hannah-Jones (2019) points out that some of the colonists decided to declare their independence from Britain is, because they wanted to protect slavery. In London there were growing calls to end the slave trade. But this would have upset the economies of both the Northern and Southern states. She then goes on to say:

- “It is the “wealth and prominence” that allowed Jefferson, at just 33, and the other founding fathers to believe they could successfully break off from one of the mightiest empires in the world.”

This belief “came from the dizzying profits generated by chattel slavery. In other words, we (the founders) may never have revolted against Britain if some of (them) had not understood that slavery empowered them to do so; nor if they had not believed that independence was required in order to ensure that slavery would continue” (italics added).

Finally, on September 3, 1783, Great Britain formally recognized the independence of the United States (Note 3).

6. The Framing and Declaration of American Independence

The Enlightenment philosopher John Locke (1632-1704) was one of the leading figures in the development of liberal Anglo-American political thought (Richardson, 2011). His ideas about what he called “natural rights of mankind” had a profound effect in the drafting of the Declaration of Independence. His definition of these rights included: “Life, Liberty, Health, Limb, or Goods.” He characterized “Goods” as “Property or Possessions” (Nash, 1989, p. 14, italics added; Richardson, 2011). Locke believed that “a person had a right to that which he labored to produce” (Nash, ibid, italics added).

Thomas Jefferson was a lawyer by profession. Upon his admission to the Virginia bar in 1767, he emerged as perhaps the nation’s best-read lawyer (Onuf, 2021).

When the revolutionary Second Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia in 1776, Jefferson was appointed with four other delegates to write a declaration of independence. The other four committee members were: John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston. They decided to defer to Jefferson to draft the document because of his powerful writing style, and because he represented the interests of Virginia, the most influential southern colony (Onuf, 2021).

Locke’s inclusion of property in the natural rights of men proved quite troublesome for Jefferson when slaves were included. So, he cleverly avoided the difficulty in his 1776 formulation by the substitution of “pursuit of happiness” for “property” (Nash, 1989, p. 14).
The Declaration of Independence of 1776 represented the fullest blossoming of Locke’s natural-rights philosophy. Jefferson’s manifesto was not really original thought, but rather a compilation of ideals that had been dispensed widely in England, France, and North America for at least a century. This is what Jefferson wrote (Nash, 1989, p. 15):

- “The laws of nature and nature’s God” are the foundations from which reason and conscience reveal “self-evident” truth, namely, that “all men are created equal” in their possession of “certain unalienable rights.” Jefferson chose those rights to be: “life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.”
- But Jefferson did not truly believe in what he wrote, because some people were more equal than others. The natural rights manifesto did not include women, and neither were slaves nor Native Americans (Nash, ibid).

6.1 Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1976
The Second Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence document. Its opening words are quite powerful and inspiring” (Ostler, 2020).

- “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.”

6.2 Thomas Jefferson a Slave-owning Racist
Late Stephen Ambrose (2002), Professor of History at the University of New Orleans, has written an article published by the Smithsonian Magazine, that is highly critical of Jefferson:

- “Jefferson owned slaves. He did not believe that all were created equal. He was a racist, incapable of rising above the thought of his time and place, and willing to profit from slave labor” (italics added).
- He had a slave mistress and lied about it.
- “Jefferson surely knew that slavery was wrong, but did not have the courage to lead the way to emancipation” (italics added).
- “Jefferson, the genius of politics, could see no way for African Americans to live in society as free people. He embraced the worst forms of racism to justify slavery” (italics added).

Slaves at Jefferson’s Monticello plantation were physically beaten, a practice that was common in plantations. However, most slaveholders considered such a physical task beneath their dignity, and therefore hired overseers to do their dirty work. But then Thomas Jefferson did order physical punishment of slaves (Note 4).

Jefferson had a Black mistress, Sally Hemings, who was a slave. She gave birth to at least five—and possibly as many as seven—Jefferson’s children, a paternity confirmed by DNA tests—and documents that proved the two were together nine months before the birth of each child (Kendi, 2006, p. 118; Malloy, 2021; Britannica) (Note 5).

Jefferson kept his promise to Sally Hemings and freed their children when they became adults (Kendi,
According to Ambrose (2002), civic duty was very important to Jefferson. He read deeply and widely—more than perhaps except Theodore Roosevelt. His range of knowledge was amazing. In his official correspondence, Jefferson maintained a level of eloquence that has not since been matched.

6.3 Jefferson’s Legacy: Words not Deeds

Ambrose (2002) believes that in spite of all these qualities, Jefferson was not a hero. His achievements were words as the author of Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.” Those words, according to historian Samuel Morrison, are more revolutionary than anything written by French Robespierre, or Marx and Lenin of Russia.

Ambrose (2002) suggests that those words will be a continuous challenge to us all, and an inspiration to all the oppressed of the world.

7. The U.S. Constitution, 1788: The Constitution of Slavery

David Waldstreicher’s book (2009, back page; Note 6) is the first one that recognizes slavery at the heart of the U.S. Constitution. This is what he has to say:

- “The Constitution never mentions slavery. The word does not appear. And yet, slavery is all over the document. Of its eighty-four clauses, six are directly concerned with slaves and their owners. Five other clauses had implications for slavery that were considered and debated by the delegates of the 1787 Constitutional Convention and the citizens of the states during ratification” (italics added).
- “This ‘peculiar institution’ was not a moral blind spot for America’s otherwise enlightened framers, nor was it the expression of mere economic interest. Slavery was as important to the making of the Constitution as the Constitution was to the survival of slavery” (italics added).
- “All but one of these clauses protects slavery; only one points towards a possible future power by which the institution might be ended” (p. 3, italics added).
- “In growing their government, the framers and their constituents created fundamental laws that sustained human bondage” (p. 3, italics added).

7.1 The three-fifth Clause: More Power for the Slaveholders

The U.S. Congress would consist of two chambers: the House of Representatives whose members would be elected by the people every two years, and the Senate to be elected by the state legislatures. However, the former’s number would be determined by the amount of direct taxes the national government could collect from each state (Waldstreicher, p. 4).

The number of representatives will be determined by excluding Indians not taxed, and adding to “free Persons” “three-fifth of all other Persons.” And that: meant slaves. This did not mean, however, that each slave had three-fifth (60%) of a vote—because they had none—but, rather, an additional three-fifth of a vote for his/her master (Waldstreicher, p. 4).

The three-fifth clause…gave slaveholders that much more power to regulate—or even eliminate—60%
more taxes they would have to pay (ibid, p. 5).

Thus, under the U.S. Constitution, “taxation with representation and slavery were joined at the hip” (ibid).

The Constitution allowed the Congress to mobilize “the Militia”—the state-based citizen armed forces—to suppress slave insurrections. From now on any slave rebellion would be a federal rather a state or local concern. The Constitution prohibited the federal government to end the importation of enslaved Africans for a term of 20 years (Waldstreicher, p. 6).

The Constitution forced states that had outlawed slavery to turn over slaves who had run away seeking refuge. The states that did not hold slaves had to recognize the others that did so legally. If a human being was a property in one state, no other state could free him/her (Waldstreicher, p. 8).

7.2 Waldstreicher’s Concluding Remarks on the Constitution

Finally, commenting on how the U.S. Constitution was fashioned, Waldstreicher (2009, p. 19) points out that like most politicians, the founders wanted to have it both ways. They cherished the wealth and power that slavery had brought without the moral responsibility that came with it. Thus, “silence, compromise, and artful design characterized their solutions” (Waldstreicher, p. 19, italics added).

7.3 Our Democracy’s founding Ideals were False when they were written

Based on the above discussion, it is clear that in “framing the U.S. Constitution, the framers carefully constructed a document that preserved and protected slavery without ever using the word. In the texts in which they were making the case for freedom to the world, they did not want to explicitly enshrine their hypocrisy, so they sought to hide it” (Hannah-Jones, 2019, italics added).

Hannah-Jones (2019) declares that “our democracy’s founding ideals were false when they were written,” and that “Black Americans have fought to make them true.” The American Declaration of Independence, approved on July 4, 1776, proclaims that:

- “All men are created equal,” and “empowered by their Creator with certain inalienable rights.”
- The above proclamation is “founded on both an ideal and a lie.” This is because, the white men who drafted those words did not believe them to be true for black people. “Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness” did not apply to fully one-fifth of the country (Hannah-Jones, ibid, italics added).

8. Why America has been Reluctant to admit Slavery was at the Heart of America’s Foundation?

In an article published by Time, Prof. Robert Parkinson (2021, Note 7) reports that: “Slavery and arguments about race were not only at the heart of the American founding; it was what united the states in the first place. Americans have been “reluctant to admit just how thoroughly the Founding Fathers thought about, talked about, and wrote about race at the moment of American Independence” (ibid, italics added).

8.1 John Adams’s Recollection of How America Declared Independence

One reason why we haven’t fully realized this is because of John Adams, the second President, and one of the founding fathers. More than forty years after 1776, an 83-year-old John Adams wanted Americans
to know just how amazing it was that America declared independence. Adams reminisced that getting all thirteen colonies to reach the same, historic decision, was “certainly a very difficult enterprise” and “perhaps a singular example in the history of mankind.” He said colonists really didn’t know or particularly liked one another. They fought with each other all the time. But something extraordinary happened in 1776. “Thirteen clocks were made to strike together—a perfection of mechanism which no artist had ever before effected” (Parkinson, italics added).

Adams was, of course, bragging, subtly suggesting that the work he, Jefferson, Franklin, and the Continental Congress did was quite a miracle. This magical way of thinking is quite captivating. It created an attractive, story for the United States’ exceptional origin. However, it disguised the work that Adams and his colleagues undertook at that time. That work was about publicizing stories to make Americans fearful of British-sponsored slave “insurrections” and “massacres” of whites by native Americans (Parkinson, ibid). Thus, he was hiding just how important race was to the founding of America (ibid).

Recently, a controversy over “critical race theory” has kindled public debate about the centrality of race to American history. As a part of that debate, which has been ongoing since the publication of the 1619 Project, the nation’s founding has come under great scrutiny. The question is: How much did 1776 have to do with race and slavery (Parkinson, ibid)?

The answer is yes. You “can’t tell the story without it.” We have given the founding fathers passes when it comes to race (ibid, italics added):

- “Although we have sometimes condemned an individual founder like Jefferson as a hypocrite, we have explained it away, either by citing the language in the opening paragraphs of the Declaration, or the emancipation efforts of some northern states, or by saying, well, it was the eighteenth century, what can you expect? Yet you only have to look at the very moment of Revolution to see how deeply race was embedded in the patriot cause” (Parkinson, ibid, italics added).

8.2 Founding Fathers’ Relentless False Campaign: The British were Inciting a Slave Rebellion

As mentioned earlier, in November 1775, Virginia Governor Lord Dunmore issued an emancipation proclamation promising freedom to slaves who fought for the British. In response, the founding fathers—Adams, Jefferson, Franklin, Washington and others—launched a propaganda war spreading the news that the British agents were trying to incite slave rebellions all over the South, and that royal officials were plotting with slaves to put down the rebellion. They alerted as many colonists as possible about such British “treachery” (Parkinson, 2021).

The patriots’ endeavors to get stories about “instigated insurrections” into the “mouths of American children” eventually led to the Declaration of Independence (Parkinson, 2021).

The founding leaders figured out one thing that all white colonists shared: racism. The founders embraced colonial prejudices against African Americans, and exploited those fears to mobilize colonists, and to unite them in one common cause.” Thus, the racial fear was an important factor in the march
toward independence (ibid).

Finally, Parkinson (2021) says that for too long we have taken an elderly John Adams at his account of what brought the thirteen colonies together. He then goes on to say (italics added):

- “He (John Adams) had forgotten—purposefully—how four decades earlier he had mobilized American prejudices about Black people…to get the colonists to come together as one union. That effort made America independent, but it also buried race deep in the cornerstone of the American republic that was born on July 4, 1976.”

9. Declaration of Independence: License to Seize Native American Land

Jeffrey Ostler (2020), Beekman Professor of History at the University of Oregon, makes an important point: That while the opening words of Declaration of Independence are well known, the closing words are not. They include a list of 27 grievances against King George III. The last of that list reads as follows:

- “He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian savages whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions” (italics added).

The 27th grievance raises two issues. The first is the British incitement of slave revolts, a subject we have already discussed (ibid).

The second bitter truth exposed by the 27th grievance—the racist depiction of Native Americans as “merciless Indian savages”—has received much less public scrutiny (Ostler, 2020).

The indictment of King George for unleashing Indians on the “inhabitants of our frontiers,” the Declaration was not pointing out a specific event, but rather to the recent increase in violence, which was caused by the colonists invading Native lands west of the Appalachian Mountains. In responding to this dire threat, a confederation of Natives—Senecas, Shawnees, Delawares, Ottawas, Cherokees, and other Native nations—exercised their right of self-defense and attacked new colonial settlements (Ostler, 2020).

Although the Native nations had British support, they were acting on their own, and not at the instigation of the British. Nevertheless, Jefferson hoped that by fanning the flames of settlers’ Indian racism—and implicating King George III—he could ignite a general rebellion against the British in the West (Ostler, 2020).

A decade earlier, the Proclamation of 1763 by King George had recognized Native ownership of lands west of the Appalachian mountain’s crest, and prohibited colonists from settling there. The strongest opponents of this British policy were land speculators—like Jefferson—who had invested in companies with claims to lands west of the boundary set by the proclamation. So, land companies could not gain secure titles to their claims unless those Native lands could be legally settled. Investors would thus be left with debts they had incurred in a bet on getting rich (Ostler, 2020).

In 1767, George Washington, one of the era’s major land speculators, made a prediction that the King’s
proclamation “must fall…in a few years.” In 1774 the British passed the Quebec Act which not only granted legal protection to Catholicism—which Protestants hated—but also extended Quebec’s boundary south to Ohio River and blocked settlements in the Ohio Valley (Ostler, 2020). Jefferson’s vilification of the “merciless Indian savages” was a signal that the war for independence from Britain would also be a brutal war to seize indigenous lands. From 1776 to 1783, U. S. troops and colonial militias devastated more than 70 Cherokee towns, 50 Haudenosaunee towns, and at least 10 multi-ethnic towns in the Ohio Valley, killing several hundred people (including civilians) and exposing refugees to starvation, disease, and death. In the decades to come, U. S. presidents, Washington and Jefferson included, would call for the extermination of Native Americans who fought to protect their land. Several U. S. armies would try to do just that (Ostler, 2020).

Finally, Ostler (2020) believes that ‘The 1619 Project’ has made a vast contribution to public understanding of slavery, often referred to as America’s “original sin.” However, he goes on to make the following argument that is quite compelling:

- “The 27th grievance reveals that the original sin at America’s founding was twofold. America was built by the labor of enslaved people. It was also built on stolen lands and the genocide of indigenous people. To understand where this country is now and to imagine a truly just future, America needs to reckon with both of these hard truths” (italics added).

Section II—History of Slavery and Racist Ideas

10. History of Slavery in Ancient Times

10.1 Aristotle’s defense of slavery

The history of slavery goes back to the ancient times. Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 BC) believed that a society may practice slavery if there are some people who are naturally suitable to be slaves. He argued that a fully developed human being has the capacity to reason. But those individual who lack the ability for rational deliberation, would inherently be unable to direct their own lives. Thus, if left to their own devices, they would choose badly (Lowe. 2021).

So, Aristotle goes on to say that such individuals need the direction of someone—a master—who can deliberate rationally. And, thus slavery is good even for the slaves themselves (ibid).

Aristotle failed to realize that the enslaved people were forbidden to get education, and were condemned to forced labor. That is why they could not develop the intellectual capacities of the Greek citizens who were free. As such, their lack of intellectual ability was not the result of a natural order, but a direct result of the institution of slavery itself (Lowe, 2021).

10.2 St. Paul on Slavery

In the first century, St. Paul testified in 1 Corinthians that God had ordained a three-tiered hierarchy of humans: heavenly master (top), earthly master (middle), and enslaved (bottom). However, in an important caveat in Galatians 3:28, St. Paul equalized the souls of masters and slaves as “all one in
Jesus Christ” (Kendi, 2016, p. 17; italics added).

Simmons (2018) says that in Ephesians 6:5-9, St. Paul delivers two important sermons. One is how a Spirit-filled life gives new challenges to both slaves and masters. Second, for slaves “the Spirit gives new meaning and motivation to work: that it is all about serving Christ.” For the masters, “the Spirit challenges them to treat slaves as fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to know the same Lord” (italics added).

Simmons (2018) believes both of these “exhortations are revolutionary for their time giving unmatched dignity to slaves and a new paradigm for stewarding power for masters” (italics added).

While the practice of slavery was widespread in the Roman Empire, it was vastly different in nature from the way it was practiced in the New World (America). The major characteristics of the Roman-era slavery were as follows (Simmons, 2018):

- **Contrary** to the race-based slavery in America, racial factors played no role in the Roman Empire.
- Many slaves had a reasonable expectation to be free during their lifetime.
- Many slaves worked in responsible positions, such as doctors, teachers, writers, accountants, etc. African slaves in America, by contrast, were rarely entrusted with responsible positions nor did they have the necessary training to perform such jobs.
- Many slaves received education and training in specialized skills.
- Freed slaves often became Roman citizens.

Although it is clear that the lives of slaves in the Roman era were much better those in the Antebellum South of the United States, nevertheless slavery is immoral because it involves the coercive ownership of one human by another.

**10.3 Why St. Paul Did Not Condemn Slavery?**

The point is that while St. Paul did not condemn slavery, he did not condone it either (Simmons, 2018). John Stott (2014) offers the following reasons why St. Paul could not condemn slavery (Simmons, 2018):

- Christians had no power to overthrow slavery.
- Slavery was an unfortunate, but an integral part of Roman society.
- Most slaves were eventually released after a relatively short period.
- The Roman world had already begun to reform slavery.

When we read St. Paul’ letters, we discover that he never gave a theological basis for slavery. He accepted the reality of its existence in society, and tried to help believers to realize what it means to live as a Christian within this socio-economic institution (Simmons, 2018).

**11. History of Racist Ideas in the 15th Century**

Portuguese were the first Europeans to sail along the Atlantic beyond the Western Sahara’s Cape Bojador to bring enslaved Africans to Europe. It was in 1444 that six caravels (Note 8) carrying 240
African slaves arrived in Lagos, Portugal (Kendi, 2016, p. 23)

11.1 Racist Ideas from Gomes Eanes de Zurara of Portugal (1410-1474)

The history of racist ideas in America goes back to 1452 when King Alfonso of Portugal commissioned Gomes Eanes de Zurara to write a biography of the life and work of his uncle, Prince Henry. In 1453, Zurara finished his book (Note 9). This was the first European book on Africans at that time. The book begins with anti-Black racist ideas in defense of African slave-trading by Prince Henry (Kendi, 2016, pp. 22-23, 499-500).

Despite the differences in their skin color and ethnicities, Zurara viewed them as “one inferior people” (ibid, p. 24; italics added).

In an effort to build Prince Henry’s evangelical justification for enslaving Africans, Zurara lowered their status to that of barbarians who desperately needed not only religious but also civil salvation. He wrote: “They lived like beasts, without any custom of reasonable beings”… and “they had no understanding of good, but only knew how to live in bestial sloth” (Kendi, p. 24; italics added; Ruane, 2019).

Zurara died in 1474 in Lisbon, but his ideas about slavery endured as the slave trade expanded (Kendi, p. 25).

12. The European Movement of Enlightenment and Racist Ideas

The fundamental idea that emerged from the Scientific Revolution was the abandonment of the two-thousand years old Aristotelian holistic philosophy that nature was a living organism. Instead, it was replaced by the notion that the world was a machine to be conquered and reordered (Capra, 1996, chap. 2; Datta, 1998).

Enlightenment was a European intellectual movement of the 17th and 18th centuries, that built on the foundation of the Scientific Revolution. In this movement ideas about God, reason, nature, and humanity were synthesized into a worldview that gained widespread support throughout Europe. One result of this endeavor was the birth of an idea of society as a social construct: a concept that differed sharply from societies in the real world (Duignan, 2021; also, Kendi, 2016, p. 80).

Prominent luminaries who were behind this movement were: John Locke and Jeremy Bentham in England; Montesquieu, Voltaire, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Denis Diderot, and Condorcet in France; and Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson in colonial America (Duignan, 2021).

12.1 The Myth of Mankind’s Multiple Races

Theresa Richardson (2011) reports that in their research Horkheimer and Adorno (1990) note that “every effort to rationalize the foundations of civil society also embedded those foundations in ideology and mythology” (italics added). Richardson then argues that the endeavor to ground human progress in reason (rationality)--following the Scientific Revolution--produced the fiction of multiple races of mankind (Richardson, ibid).

While this idea was common in Anglo-European thought, by the 19th century, it became important in
America, even when it directly contradicted the ideology of equality in the founding documents (Richardson, 2011).

12.2 Light is White is Right

The Royal Society was founded in 1660. One of its early leaders, Robert Boyle—father of English Chemistry—argued that “The Seat” of human pigmentation “seems to be but the thin Epidermis, or outward Skin”. Yet, he maintained that Black skin was an “ugly” deformity of normal Whiteness (Kendi, 2016, pp. 44-45).

Isaac Newton, too, agreed with Boyle that the white color is the normal or the standard color (ibid, p. 45). John Locke went a step further. He declared all unblemished minds to be White (ibid, p. 60).

Earlier, Michelangelo had painted the original Adam and God as White (Kendi, p. 60).

For Enlightenment intellectuals, the metaphor of “light” had a dual meaning. Europeans believed that they had rediscovered learning after one thousand years in religious darkness. They thought that their bright beacon of vision existed in the midst of a “dark” world that had not yet been touched by light (Kendi, 2016, p. 80).

So, light became a metaphor for Europeans and their Whiteness. This is an idea Benjamin Franklin eagerly embraced. He said “I am partial to the complexion of my Country, for such kind of partiality is natural to Mankind (Kendi, p. 80).

These Enlightenment notions lent legitimacy to the long-held racist views of the link between lightness, Whiteness, and reason on the one hand, and the connection between darkness, Blackness, and ignorance on the other (Kendi, pp. 80-81).

13. History of Racist Ideas after Enlightenment

13.1 John Locke (1632-1704)

As stated earlier, John Locke’s ideas about what he called “natural rights of mankind” that included “Life, Liberty, Health, Limb, or Goods (Property or Possessions)” had a profound effect in the drafting of the Declaration of Independence.

Although Locke supported the rise of democratic governments and the basic principle of universal rights, he was also a strong advocate of colonialism, and early versions of capitalism, including the formation of a colony based on slave labor (Richardson, 2011).

At the direction of Anthony Cooper (Lord Shaftesbury) Locke drafted a constitution for the colony of Carolina (Kendi, 2016, p. 49). So, not surprisingly, Locke enthusiastically supported the Fundamental Constitution of Carolina (“Constitution”) that was legally adopted by the eight reigning proprietors of the colony in 1669. According to this constitution, there would be “no freemen” who did not “acknowledge a God,” as represented by the Church of England. As a result, all Native Americans, Africans, Catholics, and Jews were excluded from the “free, semi-free, or wage workforce” (Richardson, 2011).

Most importantly, the “Constitution” consigned the hereditary chattel slavery of Africans to the bottom
of the heap (*ibid*).

13.2 Cotton Mather (1663-1728)

During the first century after America’s independence, racist theological ideas were critical in gaining the acceptance of slavery by Christian churches (Kendi, 2016, p. 6).

In 1706, Rev. Cotton Mather, New England’s leading Puritan theologian, a slave owner himself, published his treatise, *The Negro Christianized*, addressed to his fellow New England slave owners. In that document he wrote that the possession of slaves was a direct result of God’s wisdom, and that ownership of African slaves was a concrete expression of God’s will (Gonzalez, 2021; Kendi, 2016, pp. 6-7).

Christian slavery is central to Mather’s understanding of slavery and his conviction that slavery enables slave owners to perform, what he believed, “the greatest kindness that can be done to any,” “the noblest Work, that ever was undertaken among the Children of men.” In other words, white masters must oversee the conversion of enslaved Africans to Christianity for the salvation of their souls (Gonzalez, 2021, italics added).

13.3 Adam Smith (1723-1790)

In his book, *The Wealth of Nations*, economist Adam Smith said that the wealth of nations comes from a nation’s productive capacity which the African nations lacked. He believed that all inland parts of Africa have been in the “same barbarous and uncivilized state in which we find them at present” (Kendi, 2016, p. 106, italics added).

14. History of Racist Ideas after Independence

14.1 Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)

In Jefferson’s (1984) “Notes on the State of Virginia” (“Notes”), he describes the institution of slavery as forcing tyranny and depravity on master and slave alike. To be a slaveholder meant that the worst white man was better than the best black man. If you did not believe in these ideas, you could not justify yourself to yourself. So, Jefferson could “condemn slavery in words, but not in deeds” (Ambrose, 2002, italics added).

In the Declaration of Independence, he criminalized run-away slaves (Kendi, 2016, p. 106).

Like all slaveholders—and many others in American society—Jefferson considered Negroes as inferior, childlike, untrustworthy, and as property (Ambrose, 2002).

According to Ambrose (2002), Jefferson did not acknowledge that at “his magnificent estate, Monticello, he had slaves who were superb artisans, shoemakers, masons, carpenters, cooks” (italics added).

Kendi (2016, pp. 109-110) says Jefferson failed to acknowledge that “innumerable enslaved Africans…learned to be highly intelligent blacksmiths, shoemakers, bricklayers, coopers, carpenters, engineers, manufacturers, artisans, musicians, farmers, midwives, physicians, overseers, house managers, cooks, and bi-and tri-lingual translators.” These are all the workers who had made Jefferson’s plantation—and many others—almost totally self-sufficient (italics added).
Ironically, Jefferson was forced to overlook his own advertisements—and those from other planters—for the return of their valued skilled slaves who were “remarkably smart and sensible,” and “very ingenious at work” (italics added).

So, Kendi (ibid, p. 110) wonders why Jefferson believed that Black people were “smart in slavery” but “stupid in freedom?”

It is important to realize that Jefferson was a lawyer by profession who equated intelligence with reason and intellectual skill. And that is how Jefferson achieved his preeminence in life: as a smart thinker—but not as a doer. As such, he did not seem to appreciate the value of the practical skill—and intelligence—that all professionals need to do their jobs well.

Thus, we would like to submit that this is the reason why Jefferson believed in the intellectual inferiority of Blacks.

14.2 Jefferson Believed Ending Slavery was Unthinkable

According to Britannica, Jefferson offered the following justification in his book, “Notes,” that ending slavery was unthinkable (Note 10):

- That the Black Africans were biologically inferior to Whites and, so could never live side-by-side with Whites in peace and harmony. As such, after emancipation, they would have to be transported elsewhere, back to Africa or perhaps the Caribbean. However, because such a massive deportation was logically and economically impossible, the only conclusion one could reach was that, though slavery was wrong, ending it, at least at present, was unthinkable.

14.3 Thomas Jefferson’s Pseudoscientific Ideas about Black Racial Inferiority

Michael Ruane (2019) reports that Thomas Jefferson played an early, and extremely influential, role in the establishment of pseudoscientific notions about Black racial inferiority.

Kendi (2016, p. 109) says after the publication of his book “Notes,” Jefferson had become the preeminent American authority on Black intellectual inferiority: a clearly false narrative that would persist over the next fifty years.

Jefferson wrote that “In general, their [Blacks] existence appears to participate more of sensation than reflection.” “In imagination they are dull [and] tasteless…The unfortunate difference of colour, and perhaps of faculty, is a powerful obstacle to the emancipation of these people” (Kendi, 2016, pp. 108-109; Ruane, 2009; italics added).

Jefferson also wrote that Whites were more beautiful. However, Kendi (2016, p. 109) points out that it is ironic that such a view came from the pen of a White man who had a Black mistress—and who—as mentioned earlier, gave birth to several of his children (Kendi, 2016, p. 109).

He said that “Deep-rooted prejudices…the real distinctions which nature has made…and many other circumstances will probably never end but in the extermination of one or the other race” (ibid, italics added).

Kendi (2016) has argued that it was perhaps the “most damaging and enduring instance of scientific racism in America” (Ruane, ibid, italics added).
14.4 Jefferson Davis (1808-1869)

Jefferson Davis, who became president of the **Confederate States** in 1861, considered Black people as biologically distinct and inferior to White people. He thought of “Black skin as an ugly stamp on the beautiful White canvas of normal human beings—and this Black stamp as a **signifier** of the Negro’s **everlasting** inferiority” (Kendi, 2016, p. 3, *italics* added).

He asserted that “This Government was **not** founded by negroes nor for negroes, but **by** white men **for** white men” (*ibid*, *italics* added).

14.5 Dr. Samuel Cartwright’s Phony Science: 1851

In a *Washington-Post* report, Michael Ruane (2019, *italics* added) says that in 1849 Dr. Samuel Cartwright was engaged by a Louisiana **medical** committee (“Committee”) to investigate “the **diseases** and physical **peculiarities of our negro population:**” a job for which he seemed well qualified. He began his report by reviewing “the **anatomical** and physiological differences between the negro and the white man.” Obviously skin **color** was a clear difference. But then he wrote that the differences were **far** more serious (Ruane, *ibid*):

- “There are other differences more **deep**, **durable**, and **indelible.**” “The membranes, the muscles, the tendons…even the negro’s brain and nerves…are tinctured with a shade of pervading **darkness.**”
- He said that the real cause of the negro’s “**debasement of mind**” is the “defective hematosis, or atmosherization of the **blood**, conjoined with deficiency of **cerebral** matter in the cranium…[that] has rendered the people of Africa **unable** to take care of themselves.”

Cartwright further added (Ruane, 2019):

- That Negros withstood the rays of the sun **better** because of an eye feature found in **apes**.
- The black man’s neck was **shorter** than that of a white man, his “bile” was a **deeper** color, his blood **blacker**, his feet **flatter**, his skull **different**.
- The black man had **keener** eyesight, he had other animal-like senses: **smelling** better and **hearing** better than the white man.
- “Like **children** [Negroes] they need government in **everything**…or they will run into **excesses.**” Therefore, he said slavery was **good** for the good of the **slaves** themselves.

Dr. Cartwright, wrote that **healthy** Black slaves labored productively and **loved** enslavement. He said that whenever they offered resistance, they were suffering from, in his words, **dysesthesia**. He added that “nearly all” **free** Blacks were suffering from this disease because they did **not** have “some **white** person” to take care of them (Kendi, 2016, p. 185; *italics* added).

Dr. Cartwright wrote that when **enslaved** blacks ran away, they were suffering from **insanity**. He said he had identified the sickness as, what he called, **Drapetomania**, by combining **two** Greek words: **Drapetes**, a runaway, and **mania**, madness (Kendi, *ibid*; Ruane, 2019).

He also declared that it was fully **curable** (ibid, *italics* added).

Dr. Cartwright told his fellow doctors the following (Ruane, 2019):
• “Negroes with their smaller brains and blood vessels, and their tendency toward indolence and barbarism...had only to be kept benevolently in the state of submission, awe and reverence that God had ordained” (italics added).
• “The Negro is [then] spellbound and cannot run away” (italics added).
• They “have to be treated like children...to prevent and cure them of their desire to run away (Kendi, 2016, p. 185, italics added).

14.6 Invoking “Science” to Justify Slavery
According to Khalil Mohammed, professor at the Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government, that Cartwright’s ideas were part of a long racist tradition. However, by the time he made them public, they had acquired a new sense of urgency (Ruane, 2019).
He said that the rise of the movement to abolish slavery “created a crisis of knowledge about...who people of African descent were in the hierarchy of man, and what precisely they were capable of” (ibid, italics added).
Prof. Mohammad adds that, until then, in spite of pronouncements like that of Jefferson, science wasn’t necessary to justify slavery. But, now under the threat of the abolitionist movement, the 250-year-old institution sorely needed a “scientific” rationale in defense of slavery (Ruane, ibid).
Dr. Samuel Cartwright’s portrayal of black slaves, elicited the following comments from Ruane (2019, italics added):

• “[It] was part of the long, insidious practice of what historians call scientific racism that involved spreading bogus theories of supposed black inferiority, in an effort “to rationalize slavery and centuries of social and economic domination and plunder.” In Dr. Cartwright’s mind, the slaves were even beneath the human desire for freedom, and so he branded them as diseased.
• “Such thought exists today with pernicious assumptions about the current nature of black life and black people, still featuring age-old racist references to blacks as animals. It persists despite the advent of modern DNA science, which has shown race to be fundamentally a social construct. Humans, as it turns out, share about 99.9 percent of their DNA with each other, and outward physical characteristics such as hair texture and skin color, about which racists have long obsessed, occupy just a tiny portion of the human genome.”

14.7 Doctrine of Black Inferiority an Integral Part of White Psychology in 1800s
Legal historians, Ware, Cottrol, and Diamond (2003) report that as early as the early 1800s, White Americans, whether they owned slaves or not, “had a considerable psychological as well economic investment in the doctrine of black inferiority.” Whereas liberty was the inalienable right of Whites, slavery and subjugation became the natural fate of those who had any discernible drop of Black blood (Hannah-Jones, 2019; italics added).

14.8 The U.S. Supreme Court, 1857
The U.S. Supreme Court enshrined the above thinking into law in its 1857 Dred Scott decision, with a ruling that black people--whether enslaved or free--came from a “slave” race. As such, this made them
inferior to white people, and therefore, incompatible with American democracy. The court ruled that Democracy was for citizens, and the “Negro race was a separate class of persons,” which the founders had “not regarded as a portion of the people or citizens of the Government,” and so, had “no rights which a white man was bound to respect” (Hannah-Jones, 2019, italics added; Kendi, 2016, pp. 203-205).

This is how Hannah-Jones (2019) has reacted to the above Supreme-Court decision:

- “This belief, that black people were not merely enslaved but were a slave race, became the root of the endemic racism that we still cannot purge from this nation to this day” (italics added).

14.9 Gunnar Myrdal, 1944

In his landmark study of race relations, Swedish economist and Nobel Laureate, Gunnar Myrdal, wrote in his book An American Dilemma (Note11) that “in practically in all its divergence, American Negro culture is...a distorted development, or a pathological condition, of the general American culture (Kendi, 2016, p. 3; italics added).

15. The Birth of Eugenics

In the early 1900s, the scientifically-backed enterprise of eugenics became extremely popular among its advocates on both sides of the Atlantic (Skibba, 2019). It was based on the notion that a “race” could and should be purified by selective breeding—and the elimination of flawed people. In 1916, a New York lawyer, Madison Grant, wrote a book: The Passing of the Great Race. Grant believed in a racial-ethnic ladder—hierarchy—with Nordics (Anglo Saxons) at the top, Jews, Italians, the Irish, and Russians in the middle, and blacks at the bottom (Kendi, 2016, pp. 310-311; Ruane, 2019; also, Skibba, ibid).

Grant wrote that “Negroes have demonstrated throughout recorded time that they are a stationary species and that they do not possess the potentiality of progress or initiative from within” (Ruane, 2019; Kendi, 2016, ibid).

One admirer of Grant’s work was no other than Adolph Hitler who, however, believed in the extermination of a different “race”: the Jews (Ruane, ibid).

In 1936, African-American sprinter, Jesse Owens, made history and smashed the ideas of Hitler and Grant when he won four gold medals at the Berlin Olympics (Kendi, 2016, pp. 340-341; Ruane, 2019). Owens arrived back home in America to a ticker tape parade. Ironically, Owens’s own track coach belittled Owen’s success: “It was not long ago that his ability to sprint and jump was a life-and-death matter to him in the jungle” (Kendi, Ruane, ibid, italics added).

Owens hoped he had managed to change American’s racist ideas. Yet, that was the one race he could not win. Soon after, Owens was running against horses and dogs to stay out of poverty. He felt that the Nazis had treated him better than the Americans (Kendi, ibid).

16. The Disturbing Resilience of Scientific Racism

The British journalist, Angela Saini (2020) in her book, Superior: The Return of Race Science, reveals
that the African-American sociologist, W. E. B. Du Bois, wrote at one time: “The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line.” His ideas were borne out partly by “science,” the scientifically-backed endeavor of eugenics, as mentioned above (Skibba, 2019).

During Holocaust, Hitler’s Nazis committed a genocide of 6 million Jews. Thus, it took such a horrific event as Holocaust, to show the world that advocating eugenics was like playing with fire; and that how devastating and deadly the consequences of such a race-based ideology could be (Saini, 2020).

Saini (2020) says that right-wing fringe manages to find ways to cloak their racist rhetoric in a palatable language. As such, the “problem of the color line” still persists today in the 21st century.

Saini (2020) notes that “mainstream scientists, geneticists and medical researchers still invoke race and use these categories in their work we have been told for 70 years that they have no biological meaning, that they have only social meaning” (italics added; Skibba, 2019; Ruane, 2019).

Saini notes that after the horror of Holocaust, mainstream scientists turned their backs on eugenics and the study of racial difference. However, a worldwide network of stubborn eugenicists quietly founded journals, and funded research that was shoddy, but was eventually cited in reputable publications (Skibba, 2019).

16.1 “The Bell Curve”

One example where such “shoddy studies” were cited is the famous book, The Bell Curve (1996), which was authored by Charles Murray, political scientist, and late experimental psychologist, Richard Herrnstein (Skibba, 2019).

The book claims that intelligence is a genetically-associated characteristic of race. A panel of scholars and testing experts claim that the book is scientifically flawed (L. A. Times, 1994).

In a Howard-University symposium, scholars pointed out that the book fails to present a scientifically-balanced view, and then employs faulty conclusions to justify changes in political policy about how society should deal with the poor (ibid).

In the words of Nancy Cole, the then president of Educational Testing Service, the book “uses the data selectively and then ignores any data that contradicts its point of view (L. A. Times, 1994).

The book concludes that intelligence is primarily controlled by inheritance; that the blacks score about 15 points lower than whites on IQ tests; that this gap controls destiny and cannot be changed through the entire life. As such, the book recommends, that efforts to improve the lives of the poor through social programs are doomed to failure “because the poor are too dumb to climb out of poverty” (L. A. Times, 1994, ibid, italics added).

The late Stephen Jay Gould of Harvard University was an American paleontologist, evolutionary biologist, and historian of science. He was one of the most influential and widely-read authors of popular science of his generation (Note 12).

Gould said that all the arguments mentioned above are wrong (L. A. Times, 1994). He points out that the statistical analysis in the book used a technique that failed to account for individual differences within a group, which could “contort the conclusions” (L. A. Times, ibid, italics added).
Continuing, Gould said the book was wrong in assuming that intelligence could be accurately measured by tests; that people can be correctly rated by such tests; and that IQ remains unchanged through life, or through circumstances of culture, training, or experience (ibid).

Finally, Gould concluded that this “is a one-dimensional study based on a single data set” that has “bamboozled everybody” (L. A. Times, ibid, italics added).

In an article in Scientific American, Eric Siegel (2017) reports that the efforts to discredit Charles Murray’s famous book have failed for more than two decades. Recent college protests have propelled him into the news again, and the jump in his book sales show that such negative publicity is not all that bad for him.

In their attempts “to take the book down,” most critics go after the reasoning of the book or its sources. However, such criticism signifies a “secondary position within the attempt of a thorough rebuke” (Siegel, 2017, ibid, italics added).

Siegel (2017) suggests that a more effective approach is to criticize the “Bell Curve” by focusing on what it does not say. He says the book does not address the central question of why it uses IQ to investigate racial differences in the first place? The book never spells out the reason for reporting on these differences. This implies that the authors are “transmitting an unspoken yet unequivocal conclusion” that is totally unwarranted (ibid, italics added).

In a blog for Vox, Mathew Yglesius (2018) says that “The Bell Curve” is wrong because it is all about policy (Note 13). However, in order to understand what is behind Murray’s policy recommendations, we need to know where he is coming from. “He’s ensconced at the center of the conservative policy establishment as an emeritus scholar at the American Enterprise Institute (italics added).

So, it is not surprising that Yglesias (2018) finds that the Bell Curve is not a work of scientific research, but rather a political endeavor, written by one of the most well-known conservative writers in America (ibid).

Yglesias (2018) further adds that “Murray’s ideas are plain wrong.” Diversity is demonstrably good for society—and the economy, not the other way around. Social programs can—and do—improve the lives of people (ibid).

Finally, he says “Charles Murray is an incredibly successful—and pernicious—policy entrepreneur.” And his ideas have damaged the interests of millions (ibid, italics added).

17. Current Ideas about Racism among American Public

In the words of Kendi (2016) what “black inferiority meant has changed in every generation…but ultimately Americans have been making the same case (Ruane, 2019, italics added).

According to Kendi (Ruane, ibid, italics added), many Americans are blind to the origin of racist ideas, and “think that there’s such a thing as “black blood and black diseases,” and that “black people are, by nature, predisposed to dancing and athletics.” Take the recent example of comedian Roseann Barr, who used an ape analogy in a tweet about Valerie Jarrett, an African American advisor to President Obama,
which then led to the cancellation of Barr’s ABC TV show (Ruane, *ibid*).

Mass murderer Dylann Roof wrote in a crude manifesto, that he posted on the Internet in 2015, said (Ruane, *ibid*, *italics* added):

- “Anyone who thinks that White and black people look as different as we do on the outside, but are somehow magically the same on the inside, is *delusional*,” “Negroes have *lower* Iqs, *lower* impulse control, and *higher* testosterone levels in general. These three things alone are a recipe for *violent* behavior.”

On June 17, 2015, Roof went into an African American church in Charleston, S.C., and shot *nine* black worshipers to death. He was convicted of murder and sentenced to death (Ruane, *ibid*).

18. *The American Scientist: The Idea of Race is Dead*

Prof. Jan Sapp (2012, Note 14) has published an article in the *American Scientist* with a *dramatic* title: “*Race Finished.*” He reports that few ideas are as *emotionally* charged as that of *race*. “The word *conjures* up a mixture of associations—culture, ethnicity, genetics, subjugation, exclusion and persecution.” So, he asks *whether* the sad history of efforts to define groups of people by *race* really: 1) A *matter of the “misuse of science,”* (2) The “*abuse of a valid biological concept,”*? (3) Is race a “*fundamental reality* of human nature,”? Or, (4) Is “the notion of human “races” in fact a *folkloric myth*” (Sapp, 202, *ibid*, *italics* added)?

Many biologists and cultural anthropologists have *long* believed that human *races*—*genetically distinct populations within* the same *species*—have *a true existence in nature* (*ibid*).

*Today*, however, *many* social scientists and geneticists maintain that there is simply *no* valid biological basis for the concept (Sapp, *ibid*).

A turning point in this debate occurred in 1972, when Harvard geneticist, Richard Lewontin (1972), published a paper “*The Apportionment of Human Diversity.*” What he discovered was quite *clear*. He found that 85.5% of genetic variation was *within* the so-called races: *not* between them. The difference between *local* populations accounted for 8.5% of the variation, and difference between *regions* accounted for 6.3% (Sapp, *ibid*).

Two books published recently, also attempt to answer the questions about race posed by Jan Sapp. One is *Debunking a Scientific Myth* (2011) by Ian Tattersall and Rob DeSalle. The other is *Race and the Genetic Revolution*, edited by Sheldon Krimsky, and Kathleen Sloan (2011).

18.1 *Human Races are Sociocultural Constructs not a Scientific Theory*

The *central* message of the above two books is that the consensus among Western researchers today is that *human races are not* part of a scientific theory, *but sociocultural constructs*. *Nevertheless*, the concept of human race as an objective, biological reality *persists* in science *and* in society. Therefore, it is *high* time that policy makers, educators and those in the medical-industrial complex *rid* themselves of the *fallacy* of race as *type or* as genetic population (Sapp, *ibid*).
Section III—The Civil War to the Voting Rights Act, 1965

19. Abraham Lincoln and the American Civil War

The Civil War in the United States started in 1861. The election of the Republican President Abraham Lincoln in 1860 triggered seven southern states to secede from the Union and form the Confederate States of America; four more states soon followed suit (Note 15). The War Between the States—as the Civil War was also known—ended in Confederate surrender in 1865. The conflict was the costliest and deadliest war ever fought on American soil, with some 620,000 of 2.4 million soldiers killed, millions more injured, and much of the South left in ruins (Note 15).

19.1 Causes of the Civil War

In the mid-nineteenth century, the United States was experiencing tremendous economic growth, However, a vital difference existed between the country’s north and south (Note 15). In the North, manufacturing and industry were well established, and agriculture was generally limited to small-scale farms. On the other hand, the South’s economy was based on large-scale farming that depended on enslaved Blacks to grow crops mainly of cotton and tobacco (Note 15). After the 1830s the abolitionist (Note 16) movement began to gain strength in the North. For decades tensions were simmering between northern and southern states over three things: slavery, states’ rights, and North’s opposition to extension of slavery into the new western territories and westward expansion (Note 16). This led many southerners to fear that slavery—the backbone of their economy—was in jeopardy (ibid). And that is how the Civil War began in 1861.

19.2 Abraham Lincoln was Not an Abolitionist

Lincoln believed that slavery was morally wrong. However, as he saw it, there was one big problem: and that was that it was sanctioned by the highest law in the land: The U.S. Constitution. Although Lincoln pictured himself working with abolitionists for the anti-slavery cause, he did not consider himself one of them. Only with emancipation—and his support for the 13th Amendment that abolished slavery—that he was finally able to win over the most loyal abolitionists (Note 17).

19.3 Lincoln Against Equal Rights for Blacks and Whites

In 1858 Lincoln said that “I am not, nor I have ever been, in favor of bringing about…the social and political equality of White and Black races.” He said he opposed Black people having the right to vote, to serve on juries, and to intermarry with white (Note 17). However, like his views on emancipation, Lincoln’s position on social and political equality evolved over the course of his presidency. In his last speech of his life on April 11, 1865, he argued in favor limited Black suffrage, saying that any Black man who had served the Union during the Civil War should have the right to vote (Note 17).
19.4 Lincoln: Colonization the Solution to the Problem of Slavery

For most of his career, Lincoln subscribed to the idea of colonization. He believed that a majority of the African-American population should leave the United States and settle down in Africa or Central America. This is because he thought this was the best way to confront the problem of slavery (Note 17). Lincoln’s heroes, Henry Clay and Thomas Jefferson—both slave owners—too, favored colonization (ibid).

At that time Lincoln was considering a proclamation that would emancipate all enslaved persons in the states that had seceded from the Union, if the states did not end the rebellion. In addition, the proclamation would allow the previously enslaved to join the Union army to fight against their former “masters” (Note 17).

However, Lincoln worried about what the consequences of this radical step would be (ibid).

So, on Aug, 14, 1882 Lincoln called a delegation of five esteemed free black men to the White House for a meeting. He told the guests that he had gotten Congress to appropriate funds to ship back black people, once freed, to another country. Explaining his rationale for the proposal he said (Hannah-Jones, 2019):

• “You and we are different races… [The members] of your race suffer very greatly…by living among us, while ours suffer from your presence. In a word, we suffer on each side” (italics added).

Continuing, Lincoln said (ibid):

• “Without the institution of slavery and the colored race as a basis, the war could not have an existence. It is better for us both, therefore, to be separated” (italics added).

To say that Lincoln’s above statement must have come as a rude shock to those black men would be an understatement. This is how Hannah-Jones (ibid) has captured that dramatic moment:

• “You can imagine the heavy silence in the room, as the weight of what the president said momentarily stole the breath of these five black men. It was 243 years to the month since the first of their ancestors had arrived on these shores, before Lincoln’ family…long before most of the white insisting that this was not their country” (italics added).

This writer submits that, ironically, Lincoln’s above statement is like blaming the victims for the sins of the perpetrators! The Black Africans did not come to America of their own volition, but were kidnapped from their homes, and brought to America in chains, where they were not treated as human beings, but as chattel slaves.

Lincoln’s support of colonization triggered great anger among Black leaders and abolitionists, who pointed out that African Americans were as much natives of the country as white people, and therefore deserved the same rights (Note 17).

However, after he issued his preliminary Emancipation, Lincoln never again publicly mentioned colonization (ibid).

At an earlier convention of black leaders in New York against colonization, this is what they said (Hannah-Jones, 2019):
• "This is our home, and this is our country. Beneath its sod lie the bones of our fathers…Here we were born, and here we will die" (italics added).

20. Lincoln’s Preliminary Emancipation Declaration: A Military Policy
The Civil War was essentially a conflict over slavery. In Lincoln’s view that when emancipation became a reality, it would have to be gradual. He believed that the most important task was to prevent the Southern rebellion from severing the Union permanently in two (Note 17).

The Civil War was not going well for Lincoln as the war entered its second summer in 1862. Britain was thinking whether to intervene on behalf of the Confederacy. Moreover, Lincoln was unable to recruit enough new white volunteers for the Union. As a result, Lincoln was forced to reevaluate his opposition to allowing Black Americans to fight for their own liberation (Hannah-Jones, 2019).

Finally, on September 22, 1862 Lincoln publicly announced his preliminary emancipation proclamation. Since the Emancipation Proclamation was part of a war policy, it did not cover border slave states--Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri--because they were loyal to the Union (Note 17). Lincoln had finally come to realize that Emancipation would further weaken the Confederacy, while at the same time providing the Union with a fresh source of manpower to put down the rebellion (Note 17). Its limitations notwithstanding, Lincoln’s proclamation marked a decisive turning point in the evolution of Lincoln’s ideas about slavery. It also was a turning point in the Civil War itself (ibid).

20.1 Black Americans’ Crucial Contribution in Defeating Confederacy
In 1862 Congress annulled the fugitive slave laws, prohibited slavery in the U.S. territories, and authorized Lincoln to employ the former slaves in the army (Note 18).

By war’s end some 200,000 African American men had served the Union Army and Navy, striking a lethal blow to the institution of slavery, which eventually led to its abolition by the 13th Amendment (Notes 18).

This is how Edward Baptist (2014, p. xvii) has described their contribution:
• Those “African American soldiers would make the difference between victory and defeat for the North, which by late 1863 was exhausted and uncertain” (italics added).

Even “though the Union had not entered the war to end slavery--but rather, to keep the South from secession—yet, black men had signed up to fight. Enslaved people were fleeing their…plantations, trying to join the effort, serving as spies, sabotaging confederates, taking up arms for this cause as well as their own” (Hannah-Jones, 2019).

“And Lincoln was blaming them for the war” (ibid, italics added).

21. The 13th Amendment Abolishes Slavery in America
After its ratification by the requisite three-quarters of the states, the 13th Amendment was formally adopted on December 18, 1865 into the U.S. Constitution, ensuring that “neither slavery nor involuntary servitude…shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction” (Note 18, italics
added).

The Emancipation Proclamation transformed the Civil War from “a war against secession into “a war for a new birth of freedom,” as Lincoln declared in his Gettysburg Address in 1863. This ideological change discouraged the intervention of France or England on behalf of the Confederates (Note 18, italics added).

22. The 14th Amendment, 1868

The 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, ratified in 1868, granted citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States—including former slaves—and guaranteed all citizens “equal protection of the laws.” This was one of three amendments passed during the Reconstruction era to abolish slavery and establish civil and legal rights for Black Americans, and over the years it became the basis for many landmark Supreme Court decisions (Note 19).

23. The 15th Amendment, 1870

The 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was finally ratified in 1870. Its objective was to protect the voting rights of African Americans. Nevertheless, despite this amendment, discriminatory practices were commonly used to prevent Black citizens from exercising their right to vote, particularly in the South (Note 20).

24. Jim Crow Laws Legalize Racial Segregation: 1870-1968

24.1 Support of Northern Whites for Emancipation Skin Deep

A few years after the end of the Civil War in 1865, many northerners celebrated abolishment of slavery as one of their collective triumphs. Nevertheless, Baptist (2016, p. xvii) points out that the belief of whites in the emancipation of blacks was rather skin deep. Many northerners supported Abraham Lincoln’s actions against slavery because they hated the arrogance of slaveholders like Charles Mallory.

So, after 1876, northern allies abandoned black voters (Baptist, ibid).

Within a period of forty years the children of white Union and Confederate soldiers united against the political and civil equality of African-Americans. This partnership of white supremacy enabled southern whites to impose Jim Crow segregation laws on public places, disenfranchise African-American citizens by excluding them from the polls, and use lynch-mob noose to enforce black compliance (Baptist, ibid, p. xviii).

Jim Crow laws were a collection of state and local statutes that legalized racial segregation. Named after a Black minstrel show character, the laws—which existed for about 100 years—were intended to marginalize African Americans by denying them the right to vote, hold jobs, get an education or other opportunities. Those who attempted to defy Jim Crow laws often faced arrest, fines, jail sentences, violence, and even death (Note 21).

24.2 Most Whites Believed They Were a Superior Race

The idea of white supremacy was not just limited to the South. In non-confederate states, many restaurants would not serve black customers. Even stores and factories refused to hire black Americans
(Baptist, 2014, p. xviii).

Hundreds of midwestern communities forcibly *evicted* African American residents and became “sundown towns”—that is *all-white* towns (*ibid*).

Baptist (2014, *ibid*) describes how most whites sported a sense of *superiority* about their race:

- “Most whites…believed that *science* proved that there were biologically *distinct* human races, and that *Europeans* were members of the *superior* one. *Anglo-Americas* even believed that they were distinct from and *superior* to the Jews from Russia, Italians, Greeks, Slavs, and others who flooded Ellis Island and changed the *culture* of northern urban centers” (*italics* added).

25. The Voting Rights Act of 1965

It took about *hundred* years after the 15th Amendment before the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was signed into law by the Democratic President Lyndon Johnson. This law was the *culmination* of the powerful *Civil Rights* movement that Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. started in 1955. The objective of the law was to overcome *legal* barriers at the state and local levels that *denied* African Americans their right to *vote* under the 15th Amendment (Note 22).

Section IV—The Empire of Cotton

26. Early History of Cotton

For hundreds of years, people in countries spanning *three* continents—Gujrat in India, Sulawesi in Indonesia, Upper Volta in West Africa, Rio Grande and plains of Yucatan in Mexico, valleys of Nubia in Egypt--people had *grown* cotton in their fields. And then they *manufactured* cotton textiles in the *houses* next door, just as their ancestors had done for generations before (Beckert, 2014, p. 4). Cotton plant is quite *resilient*, and is able to survive without much help from farmers--given the right *climate*. For thousands of years many people who grew cotton were *unaware* that their efforts were being *replicated* by other people around the *globe* (Beckert, 2014, p. 4).

To reconstruct the history of *clothing* is a rather difficult task, because most cloth has *not* survived the ravages of time. However, about *five* thousand years ago, people on the *Indian* subcontinent first discovered the possibility of making thread out of cotton fibers. In Hindu scriptures cotton appears often and prominently (Beckert, 2014, p. 6).

26.1 India the World’s Leading High-Quality Cotton Manufacturer

Farmers in the Indus valley were the *first* to spin and weave cotton. In 1929, archeologists found *fragments* of cotton textiles at Mohenjo-Daro, now part of Pakistan. The Vedic scriptures, composed between 1500 and 1200 BCE, also refer to cotton spinning and weaving (Beckert, 2014, p. 7). Greek historian *Herodotus* (484-425 BCE) was familiar with India’s fine cotton clothing. In 445 BCE, he said that in the sub-continent “wild trees bear fleeces for their fruit *surpassing* those of the sheep in *beauty* and *excellence*, and the natives clothe themselves in cloths made therefrom” (Beckert, p. 7, *italics* added).
The quality of the top tier of Indian fabrics was fabulous: In the thirteenth century, the European traveler, Marco Polo elaborated on Herodotus’s observation, made more than seventeen hundred years earlier, noting that it is on the coast of Coromandelel that “the finest and most beautiful cottons are to be found in any part of the world” (Beckert, 2014, p. 8).

Six hundred years later, Edward Baines, a newspaper proprietor and cotton expert from Leeds, England, had this to say about the best Indian cotton cloth:

- That the best Indian cloth was of “almost incredible perfection …Some of their muslins might be thought the work of fairies, of insects rather than men.” They were, in effect, “webs of woven wind” (Beckert, 2014, p. 8, italics added).

From several millennia until well into the nineteenth century, the people of the Indian sub-continent were the leading cotton manufacturers in the world. Peasants in what are now India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh cultivated small quantities of cotton together with their food crops. Then, they spun and wove cotton not only for their own use, but also for sale in local and regional markets (Beckert, 2014, p. 7).

27. British—and American--Innovations in Cotton Technology Spark the Industrial Revolution

Since labor costs were a major component in the production of cotton textiles in England, everyone connected with the industry began to seriously focus on the ways to increase the productivity of its high-cost labor (Beckert, 2013, p. 65).

The first major innovation was James Hargrave’s invention of the spinning jenny in 1764. This was followed in 1769 by Richard Arkwright’s invention: water frame. The water frame is a spinning machine that is powered by a water-wheel. Although this is the first-time water-wheel technology was used in Britain, such a technology has existed since ancient Egyptian times (Note 23).

Ten years later, Samuel Crompton introduced his invention, mule in 1779. This was the capstone of the earlier inventions: it combined the elements of the jenny with those of the water frame. The mule was first powered by water, but later mostly by a steam engine after James Watt patented its technology in 1769 (Beckert, 2014, p. 66).

While the jenny was mostly employed in people’s homes, the water frame required lots of energy and space that could only be employed in a factory (Beckert, 2014, p. 66).

In 1793 American Eli Whitney built the first working model of a new kind of cotton gin that was rapidly able to remove the seeds of the upland cotton. This machine was so good that it increased ginning productivity by fifty times.

It was the concerted pursuit of the process of increasing labor productivity, as mentioned above, that finally resulted in the “most momentous technological change in the history of cotton” :a change that launched the Industrial Revolution (Beckert, 2013, p. 65; italics added).

The British cotton manufacturing exploded in the 1780s. Eighty years later in 1860, Manchester, England “stood at the center of a world-spanning empire—the empire of cotton” (Beckert, pp. 98, x, italics added).
28. Europeans Conquer the New World following Columbus’s Landing in the Americas

The West has been a leader in science and technology since medieval times. By the end of the 15th century, the technological superiority of Europe was such that even the weakest of the European nations, Portugal, could go around the rest of world conquering, looting, and colonizing (White (1967)).

Christopher Columbus’s landing in 1492 in the Americas represented the first historic event in the structuring of the global relationships. The journey set off the world’s greatest land grab when the Spanish Conquistador, Hernan Cortes attacked the Aztec Empire in 1518, that brought large portions of, what is now mainland Mexico, under Spanish control (Beckert, 2014, p. 31).

By the mid-sixteenth century, Portugal, following the example of Spain, occupied what is now called Brazil (ibid).

In 1605 France acquired Quebec; and parts of the present-day mid-western and southern United States, which were combined into a French administrative unit, called Louisiana; and a number of Caribbean islands, including in 1695, Saint-Domingue, later called Haiti (Beckert, 2014, p.31).

England founded its first successful American settlement in Jamestown, which in 1607 became a part of the colony of Virginia, that was soon followed by more colonies in North America and the West Indies (ibid).

Following the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson used it as a license to commit genocide of native Americans and to seize their land (see section 8).

Between 1803 and 1842, the U.S. expropriated a vast expanse of the Native-American lands in the Deep South, and moved them to areas west of the Mississippi (see section 32).

28.1 Deindustrialization of India

Vasco da Gama’s discovery of India in 1497—five years after Christopher Columbus’s landing in the Americas in 1492—was the second momentous event that established a direct oceanic route from Europe to India. Now for the first time, Europeans could have direct access to the products of the world’s largest cotton producers: the Indian weavers (Beckert, 2014, p. 33).

Beckert (2014, p. xv) points out that far from being a liberal state, Britain was an imperial country, characterized by immense military expenditure, in a state of constant war, and a powerful, interventionist business-friendly government. So, it is in pursuit of this militaristic ideology when the British East India Co. established its foothold in India in 1600 (ibid, p. 31).

Beckert (2014, p. 44), reports that due to the intrusion of the British power in India, the Indian weavers lost their ability to set prices for their cloth, or to sell to any customer of their choice. The weavers had to accept part of their payment in cotton yarn. They were subject to strict supervision of the manufacturing process by the company employees. Moreover, the company increasingly resorted to violence, including corporal punishment (ibid, p. 45).

Shashi Tharoor (2016, p. 2, italics added), a long-time Indian diplomat, says that taking advantage of the collapse of the Mughal empire in the eighteenth-century India, the company was successful in subjugating a vast land through the power of their artillery. However, the country that the company
“conquered was no primitive or barren land, but a glittering jewel of the medieval world.”
At the beginning of the eighteenth century, India’s share of the world economy was 23%. However, by the time the British left India, it had dropped to just 3%. “The reason for this was simple: India was governed for the benefit of Britain. Britain’s rise for 200 years was financed by its depredation in India” (Tharoor, 2016, p. 3, italics added).
Tharoor (ibid, p. 5) argues that Britain’s Industrial Revolution was built on the destruction of India’s thriving manufacturing sector: in particular, the textile industry. The British systematically set about destroying India’s textile manufacturing and exports, and substituted them with British textiles made in England.
Tharoor (2016, p. 5) points out that, ironically, the company used Indian raw material, and exported the finished product back to India and the rest of the world: “the industrial equivalent of adding insult to injury” (italics added).
Since Indian textiles were remarkably cheap, the British textile manufacturers were unable to compete with them. So, they wanted the Indian imports eliminated. Consequently, the soldiers of the company systematically smashed the looms of some Bengali weavers, and according to a widespread account (though unverified) broke the weavers’ thumbs so they could not practice their craft (Tharoor, 2016, p. 6).

29. Europe’s War Capitalism: The Empire of Cotton
In the essentially accurate words of British cotton merchant, John Benjamin Smith, the manufacture of cotton yarn and cloth had grown into “the greatest industry that ever had or could by possibility have ever existed in any age or country” (Beckert, p. 242, italics added).
The center of this industry was Manchester which in 1860--just before the Civil War--had become the most industrialized city in the world: home to two-thirds of the world’s cotton spindles (Beckert, p. ix). The question is what are the underlying factors that made this miracle possible? This is what we intend to explore in this section.
The history of an era is often defined by a particular commodity. While the 18th century belonged to sugar--and the 20th century to oil--the 19th century was definitely the century of cotton (Hochschild, 2014).
In a “major work of scholarship” --an award-winning book--Sven Beckert (2014) explores the history of cotton that was the launching pad for the Industrial Revolution (Hochschild, ibid).
Until the nineteenth century, cotton was marginal to European textile production and consumption (Beckert, 2014, p. xiii). However, over the next two hundred years all that was going to change (ibid, p. 29).
So, Beckert poses the question: why it was that the part of the world that had the least to do with cotton—Europe—created the empire of cotton, and then went on to dominate it? (Beckert, 2014, pp. xiii, xiv).
In 1600, world production of cotton was still dominated by Indian weavers. Unlike Indian or Chinese
producers, Europeans depended on the import of raw cotton from distant regions of the world over which they had little control. However, over the next 200 years all that was going to change (Beckert, 2014, p. 29).

The ultimate result was a radical reorganization of the world’s leading manufacturing industry. This involved “an explosion in how and where cotton was grown and manufactured, and a shocking vision of how the crop could yoke the world together” (Beckert, 2014, p. 30, italics added).

European capitalists and rulers unilaterally—and drastically—altered the global competitive landscape of cotton: not because of new inventions or superior technologies, but because of their military might, and the willingness to use it—often violently—to their advantage (Beckert, 2014, pp. 30-31).

The Europeans transformed global networks through a variety of means (Beckert, p. 30, italics added):

- “The muscle of armed trade enabled the creation of a complex, Eurocentric maritime trade web.”
- “The forging of a military-fiscal state allowed for the projection of power into the far-flung corners of the world.”
- “The invention of financial instruments—from maritime insurance to bills of lading—allowed for the transfer of capital and goods over long distances.”
- “The development of a legal system that gave a modicum of security in global investments.”
- “The construction of alliances with distant capitalists and rulers provided access to local weavers and cotton growers.”
- “The expropriation of land and the deportation of Africans [slaves] created flourishing plantations.”

30. Three Pillars of the Industrial Revolution

To summarize the previous discussion, there were three pillars of the Industrial Revolution. One was the conquest by the Europeans of a colossal expanse of lands in the New World.

Second was that the Europeans drastically—and unilaterally—altered the global competitive landscape of cotton. They did it by using their military might, and the willingness to use it—often violently—to their advantage.

One major casualty of this ruthless mind-set was the deindustrialization of India, which was the world’s leading manufacturer of high-quality cotton textiles. The British systematically destroyed India’s textile industry. Ironically, the British used Indian cotton, and exported the finished product back to India, thus adding insult to injury.

The third—and the most important—was slavery: without which there would be no Industrial Revolution.

31. America Joins the Empire of Cotton

As mentioned in section 27, the British cotton manufacturing exploded in the 1780s. In 1785 an American ship sailed into the Liverpool harbor. In its hold were a number of bags of cotton that were the
product of America, imported by Peel, Yates & Co. They were told by the British customs officials that it cannot be a product of America. Most Europeans believed that cotton was a product of the West Indies, Brazil, Ottoman Empire, and India. The British officials thought that while America grew a lot of tobacco, rice, indigo and even sugar, it did not grow much cotton (Beckert, 2014, p. 100).

Beckert (2014, p. 100) says that this was a “spectacular misjudgment.” He points out that America was tremendously suited for cotton production. The climate and soil of a large part of American South met the conditions under which the cotton plant thrived. That means the right amount of rain, the right patterns of rainfall, and the right number of days without frost.

More importantly, in United States—more than any other country—the plantation owners commanded nearly unlimited supplies of the three crucial ingredients that went into the production of cotton: labor, land, and credit. And this was topped by their unbelievable political power (Beckert, 2014, p. 105).

In 1786, planters began to grow the first long-staple ‘Sea Island’ cotton on islands just off the coast of Georgia with seeds brought from the Bahamas. Unlike the local cotton, this cotton had a long, silky fiber, which made it very well suited for finer yarns and cloths that were in great demand. Soon, the planting of Sea Island cotton spread up and down the coast of South Carolina and Georgia (Beckert, 2014, p. 102).

However, when planters attempted to grow “Sea Island” inland the crop failed. But it was here that a different strain of cotton—the upland cotton—was thriving. This variety of cotton was shorter in staple length, but it had one major flaw: the fiber was tightly attached to its seed, removing which was both cumbersome and labor-intensive (Beckert, ibid, p.102).

Thanks to Eli Whitney’s revolutionary technology, cotton-growing spread rapidly into the interior of South Carolina and Georgia. And as the cotton production kept going up, so did the number of African slaves where cotton was grown.

One problem that plantation owners were now facing was soil exhaustion. The same patch of land could not be used for more than a few years without planting legumes, or applying the fertilizer guano that was quite expensive. So, lands that once produced one thousand pounds per acre, were now producing merely four hundred pounds (Beckert, 2014, p. 103).

32. Expropriation of Native-American Land

After the first European colonists landed on the shores of America, they began to push inland. The Native Americans had to reckon with two things: first germs—disease—and then raw military power. Native Americans controlled extensive territories a few hundred miles inland from the coastal states. However, they were unable to stop the white colonists’ steady encroachments into their lands (Beckert, p. 105).

Between 1803 and 1838, under President Andrew Jackson, America fought a multi-front war with the Native Americans in the Deep South. By the end of the 1830s, the Seminole, the Creek, the Chickasaw, the Choctaw, and the Cherokees had all been “removed” to lands west of the Mississippi (Johnson, 2013b).

After the colonists conquered the Native-American land, they declared it as legally “empty.” This was a
land whose social structures had been catastrophically destroyed; and a land without most of its people (Beckert, 2014, p. 105).

In terms of unencumbered land, the South had no equal in the cotton-growing world (ibid).

Under Andrew Jackson’s 1819 treaty with the Choctaw nation, the U.S. acquired 5 million acres of extremely fertile land in the Yazoo-Mississippi delta, in exchange for vastly inferior lands in Oklahoma and Arkansas (Beckert, 2014, p. 109).

Between 1835 and 1842 the U.S. expropriated the extremely fertile cotton fields from the Seminoles in Florida (Beckert, pp. 107-108).

In the 1830s, hundreds of millions of acres of conquered land were surveyed, and put up for sale by the United States government. Johnson (2013b) reports that this vast privatization of the public domain triggered one of the greatest economic booms in in the history of the world up to that time.

Investment capital from Britain, the European Continent, and the Northern states in America poured into the land market, and under this stimulating environment, prices rose like “smoke.” As mentioned in the next section, these were the “flush times” (Johnson, 2013b).

32.1 U.S. Government on a Land-Acquisition Spree

To cater to the unsatiable appetite for more land by the plantation owners, southern politicians approached the U.S. government for acquiring more land. Surprisingly, in 1803 America was able to strike an unbelievable deal with the French--the Louisiana Purchase--for a mere $15 million: at three cents per acre. This vast expanse doubled the territory of the United States, and eventually, that would become all or part of fifteen states (Baptist, 2014, p. 47; Beckert, 2014, p. 105).

In 1819 America acquired Florida from Spain, and in 1845 annexed Texas from Mexico. All these lands were very-well suited for growing cotton (Beckert, 2014, p. 105).

33. The Empire of Cotton in the Mississippi Valley

With an unlimited supply of land—and slave labor—even soil exhaustion did not slow down the cotton barons; they just moved further west and farther south. New cotton fields now sprang up in the sediment-rich lands along the banks of Mississippi, the upcountry of Alabama, and the black prairie of Arkansas. So, swift was this move westward that, by the end of the 1830s, Mississippi was producing more cotton than any other southern state (Beckert, 2014, p. 104).

In 1811 one-sixteenth of all cotton grown in America came from states and territories west of South Carolina and Georgia. By 1820 that share had reached one-third, and in 1860 had climbed to three-fourths (Beckert, p. 104).

The entry of the United States in the cotton market quickly began to reshape the global cotton market. In 1790 America produced 1.5 million pounds of cotton. In 1820 that number rose sharply to 167.5 million pounds (Beckert, 2014, p. 104).

Exports to Great Britain increased by a factor of ninety-three between 1791 and 1800; and went up another seven times by 1820. By 1802 America was already the single-most supplier of cotton to Britain,
and by 1857 it produced as much cotton as China (Beckert, 2014, p. 104).

The territorial expansion mentioned above, in the words of John Weaver (2003), the “great land rush,” was closely tied to the territorial ambitions of cotton growers, manufacturers, and bankers. Cotton planters constantly sought fresh lands to grow cotton. The new lands they migrated to were characterized by the virtual absence of government (Beckert, 2014, p. 106).

In his Prize-winning book, River of Dark Dreams, Walter Johnson (2013a) writes about the cotton plantations in the Mississippi Valley during the period between Independence and the Civil War.

As mentioned in the previous section, these were the “flush times:” a period of rapid development and speculation, that reshaped the Mississippi Valley in the 1830s. It involved simultaneous booms in the land market, the cotton market, and the slave market (Johnson, 2013a, p. 5).

For millennia, the mighty Mississippi had unloaded its rich sediments in the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta—an area approximately seven thousand square miles—thus making it the seedbed of the world’s most productive cotton land: making it the Saudi Arabia of cotton in the early nineteenth century (Beckert, 2014, p. 113).

The leading sector of the emerging global economy during the first half of the nineteenth century was cotton. So, between 1820 and 1860, as many as a million African slaves were sold “down the river” (Mississippi), by coast from Norfolk to New Orleans, and overland from Fayetteville, North Carolina to Florence, Alabama (Johnson 2013a, ibid, p. 5).

Johnson (2013a, p. 14) reports that this massive relocation and geographic redistribution of the enslaved population caused profound suffering among the slaves for two reasons: (1) The breakup of 50% of slave families, and (2) Loss of the social network that every slave family was an intimate part of.

Johnson (2013a, p. 9) eloquently describes the heart-wrenching psychological and emotional trauma these slave families must have gone through:

- “When slaves went into the field, they took with them social connections and affective ties...Slaves worked alongside people they knew, people they had raised, and people they would bury. They talked, they sang, they laughed, they suffered, they remembered their ancestors and their God, the rhythms of their lives working through and over those of their work. We cannot any more separate slaves’ labor from their humanity than we can separate the ability of a human hand to pick cotton from its ability to caress the cheek of a crying child, the aching of a stooped back in the field from the arc of a body bent in supplication” (Johnson, 2013a, p. 9, italics added).

The relocation and reassignment of these slaves for the cultivation of cotton gave a new lease of life to slavery in the United States. An institution that had been on the decline throughout the eighteenth century in the Upper South, was rejuvenated in the Lower South. By the end of the 1830s, Mississippi was producing more cotton than any other southern state (Beckert, p. 104). By 1860, there were more millionaires per capita in Mississippi Valley than anywhere else in America. In 1810, the population of New Orleans was around 17,000. But, by 1860, it had ballooned to ten times that number (Johnson, 2013a, p. 5, p. 7).
The cotton grown and picked by the *enslaved* workers was America’s *most* valuable export. The combined value of enslaved people was *higher* than that of all the railroads and factories in the country. New Orleans had a *denser* concentration of *banking* capital than New York City (Desmond, 2019).

As the Mississippi Valley expanded, thousands of investors rushed to launch their *boats* on the Mississippi river. Leaving aside land and slaves, *steamboats* were the *leading* investments in the Mississippi Valley economy after the 1820s (Johnson, 2013a, pp. 5-6).

The practice of mono-culture and *lack* of biodiversity *stripped* the land of vegetation, *leached* out its fertilizers, and rendered one of the richest agricultural regions in the world *dependent on* upriver trade for *food* (Johnson, 2013a, p. 8).

### 34. Quest for Mississippi Valley’s Alignment with the Caribbean and South America

For most of the history of political economy of slavery in the Mississippi Valley, there was a growing *tension* between “the South” as a region of the global economy, and “the South” as a region of the *United States*: “the tension between the promiscuity (*mobility*) of capital and the *limits* prescribed by the territorial *sovereignty* of the United States” (Johnson, 2013a, p. 11, *italics* added).

The laws of the United States were meant to *channel* and *limit* capitalism in a manner that many in the Mississippi Valley did *not* agree with. They believed that the U.S. was *stripping* them of their *birthright*: “as slaveholders, as Americans, as whites, as men” (Johnson, 2013a, p. 11).

#### 34.1 Mississippi Valley’s Effort to Reopen Slave Trade

In 1807 Congress had *abolished* the African slave trade that prohibited the *importation* of slaves in the United States from any foreign kingdom, place or country (Note 24).

However, the supporters of the *pro-slavery* imperialism had an insatiable *greed* for new territory for which they would need more *slaves*. So, they began a *rearguard* action for *reopening* the slave trade. The objective of this move was to make sure that the *new* territory would be *transformed* in the *image* of the Southern plantations’ social *ethos*: “*staple-crop* (e. g, cotton) agriculture for the *global* market; the equivalence of *white* manhood and *mastery*; and household *patriarchy*” (Johnson, 2013a; p. 395, *italics* added).

This move was based on the philosophy that, in relation to the *global* economy, the people in the South were governed by the laws of *supply* and *demand*: an idea that was *supplanting* the norms of national sovereignty. The argument from the proponents of the new Southern philosophy was that: “If it is right to buy slaves in Virginia and carry them to New Orleans, why is it not right to buy them in Cuba, Brazil, or Africa and carry them there?” (Johnson, 2013a, pp. 400-401).

In practical terms that a planter should “not be compelled to go to Virginia to buy slaves for $1,500 each,” when he could “get them in Cuba for $600 each” (*ibid*, p. 401).

As mentioned above, slavery was not merely *strong* on the eve of the Civil War, it was *expanding*. So, W. E. B. Du Bios (1869-1963), an African-American intellectual, had this to say about this history:
• “The slave barons looked behind them and saw to their dismay that there could be no backward step. The slavery of the new Cotton Kingdom in the nineteenth century must either die or conquer a nation—it could not hesitate or pause” (Johnson, 2013a, p. 1, italics added).

35. The British and European Banks Financed Slavery in America
One of the 12 articles published under the 1619 Project is Mathew Desmond’s (2019) essay about the cotton plantations during the antebellum period. The British banking company, House of Baring, was intimately involved in the expansion of the empire of cotton. It financed the Louisiana Purchase, negotiated and sold the bonds that sealed the deal with the French government (Beckert, p. 106; Desmond, 2019).

A majority of the credit powering the American slave economy came from the London money market. Long after abolishing the African slave trade in 1807, Britain—and much of Europe—were bankrolling slavery in America. To raise capital, state-chartered banks pooled debt generated by the slave mortgages, and repackaged it as bonds promising investors annual interest (Desmond, 2019). However, the underlying rationale for Britain’s abolishment of slave trade was the need to “scrub the blood of enslaved workers off American dollars, British pounds, and French francs. And this was an ingenious ploy to profit from slavery without getting your hands dirty” (Desmond, 2019, italics added).

When seeking a loan, planters used slaves as a collateral. In the first decade of the 19th century, they could leverage their enslaved workers at 8% interest, on which they could earn a return three times that (Desmond, ibid).

With such hefty returns, the planters began to expand their loan portfolio: sometimes using the same slave worker as collateral for multiple mortgages. And the banks were more than happy to oblige. By 1883, Mississippi banks had issued 20 times as much paper money, as they had gold in their reserves. In several Southern counties, slave mortgages injected so much capital in the economy, that it was higher than the sales from the crops harvested by the enslaved workers (Desmond, 2019).

Wall Street’s financial instrument C.D.O.s—collateralized debt obligations—were the “ticking bombs backed by inflated home prices in the 2000s. C.D.O.s were the “grand children” of mortgage-backed securities based on the inflated value of enslaved people sold in the 1820s and 1830s. Each product generated massive fortunes for the few before blowing up the economy (Desmond, 2019).

Enslavers were not the first to securitize assets and debts in America. However, they made the use of securities to such an extent that it compromised the global economy (ibid).

The American South produced too much cotton: thanks to an abundance of cheap land, cheap labor, and credit. However, consumer demand could not keep up with the excessive supply, that then led to a precipitous fall in prices (Desmond, 2019).

As early as 1834, the price of cotton began to drop before “plunging like a bird winged in mid-flight,” which then set off the Panic of 1837. When the price of cotton tumbled, it pulled down the value of enslaved workers—and land. Slaves bought for $2,000 were now selling for a mere $60 (Desmond, ibid).
As a result, investors and creditors called in their debts. However, because the planters could not liquidate their assets, they were unable to repay their loans (ibid).

The states decided not to foreclose on the defaulting plantation owners. But when they tried, the planters absconded to Texas—an independent republic then—with their money and the enslaved workers (Desmond, 2019).

Drawing parallels between the Panic of 1837 and the financial crisis of 2008 (Note 25), Desmond (1919) paints a picture that is quite devastating:

- “All the ingredients are there: mystifying financial instruments that hide risk while connecting bankers, investors and families around the globe; fantastic profits amassed overnight; the normalization of speculation and breathless risk taking; stacks of paper money printed on the myth that some institution (cotton, housing) is unshakable; considered and intentional exploitation of black people; and impunity for the profiteers when it all falls apart—the borrowers were bailed out after 1837, banks after 2008” (italics added).

According to historian Joshua Rothman (2014), during slavery, “Americans built a culture of speculation unique in its abandon”—a boom or bust mentality. That culture drove up cotton production up to the Civil War, and “it has been a defining characteristic of American capitalism ever since. It is a culture of acquiring wealth without work, growing at all costs and abusing the powerless” (Desmond, 2019, italics added).

36. New Orleans: Home of the Largest Slave Market in America

In his insightful book, Soul by Soul, Walter Johnson (1999) tells the story of slavery in antebellum America (Note 26). By moving away from the cotton plantations to the heart of the domestic slave trade, he takes us inside the New Orleans slave market—the largest in the nation—where 100,000 men, women, and children were packaged, priced and sold (back of the front cover).

Johnson “transforms the statistics of these chilling transactions into the human drama of traders, buyers, and slaves, negotiating sales that would alter the life of each. What emerges is not only the brutal economics of trading but the vast and surprising interdependence among the actors involved” (Johnson, 1999, back of the front cover, italics added).

The traders packaged their slaves by “feeding them up,” dressing them well,” and oiling their bodies. But they ultimately relied on the slaves themselves to play their role as valuable commodities (ibid).

Slave-buyers stripped the slaves, and questioned them about their past, trying to elicit more honest answers than they could from the traders (ibid).

These examinations provided enough information to the slaves that they could take advantage of, and try to shape the sale to their advantage (Johnson, 1999, back of the front page).

Throughout the antebellum period, New Orleans was unique in one respect. Not far from the levee was North America’s largest slave market. The slave market consisted of clusters of competing firms: each of which maintained its own yard for keeping slaves—“slave pens” (Johnson, 1999, p. 2).
The walls surrounding the pens were very high—fifteen or twenty feet—to prevent them from being seen from the street (ibid, p. 24).

36.1 Forced Relocation Breaks-up Many Slave Families

The U.S. Constitution, ratified in 1789, contained a provision that imposed a ban on the importation of African slaves after 1808: a provision that was supported both by opponents of slavery as well as most Virginians, who were afraid that continued importation of slaves would dilute their economic and political power.

The implication of this ban on importation of slaves into America was, that any expansion of slavery into farther South and further West would require forcible relocation of American-born slaves. As a result, between 1820 and 1860—as mentioned in section 33—as many as a million African slaves were sold in America (Johnson, 1999, pp. 4-5).

Of the two-thirds of a million inter-state sales made in the decades before the Civil War, twenty-five percent involved the dissolution of the first marriage, and fifty percent destroyed a nuclear family (ibid, p. 19).

At the end of the eighteenth century, thousands of slaves from all over the South passed through New Orleans slave pens every year in the antebellum period (Johnson, 1999, pp. 5, 7).

36.2 Slaves in Constant Fear of Being Sold

The slaves “felt no security whatever for their family ties” (Johnson, 1999, p. 22, italics in the original). Under the chattel principle, every attempt by slaves to exercise normal human behavior— to be closer to, or rely upon the members of their family, a lover, or friends—carried with it the constant fear of being taken away from them. The slaveholders often used the threat of selling to a slave trader to scare the slaves when they had violated some rule (ibid, pp. 22-23).

In addition to “threatening social death—the permanent disappearance of a person as a playmate, parent, child, friend, or lover—the slave trade was understood by slaves as threatening literal death” (Johnson, 1999, p. 23, italics added).

37. Slaves Driven in Coffles over 700 Miles for 80 Years

In his Prize-winning book, The Half Has Never Been Told, Edward Baptist (2014) reports that over the course of eighty years from the 1780s to 1865, almost a million people were herded down the road in slave coffles from the upper South to the lower South and the West to toil on cotton plantations. Baptist describes their gruesome tale in the following words (pp. 1-2, italics added):

- “Not long after they heard the first clink of iron, the boys and girls...saw the double line (coffle) coming around the bend. Hurrying in lock-step, the thirty-odd men came down the dirt road like a giant machine. Each hauled twenty pounds of iron, chains that draped from neck-to-neck, and wrist-to-wrist, binding them all together...As they moved, some looked down like catatonics. Others stared at something a thousand yards ahead.”
“For eighty years, enslaved migrants walked for miles, days, and weeks. Driven south, and west over flatlands and mountains, step after step, they went farther from home. Stumbling with fatigue, staggering with whiskey...many covered over 700 miles before stepping off the road...After weeks of wading rivers, crossing state lines, and climbing mountain roads...they had moved their bodies across the frontier between the old slavery and the new.”

38. The Cruel “Pushing” System of Controlling Slaves

The plantation owners devised a complex system of controlling their slaves that the enslaved people called “the pushing system.” This system constantly increased the number of acres each captive “hand” was expected to cultivate. In 1805 each “hand” (meaning a right-handed slave) could tend to--and keep free of weeds--five acres of a cotton field. Fifty years later that target had been doubled to ten acres (Baptist, pp. 116-117).

Overseers closely monitored enslaved workers. Each individual was assigned a quota of number of pounds of cotton to pick. If the worker failed to meet it, he received as many lashes on his back as the deficit. However, if he overshot his quota, the master might “reward” him by raising his quota the next day (Desmond, 2019).

38.1 The Barbaric Use of a Whip to Punish Slaves

One of the most brutal weapons the planters employed against the slaves, was the whip: ten feet of plaited cowhide. When facing the specter of an overseer’s whip, slaves were so terrified that they could not speak in sentences. They “danced,” trembled, babbled, and lost control of their bodies. The enslavers’ rationale for use of the whip was: (1) To assert their dominance over the slaves, and (2) To terrify them so much that they would abandon any thought of successfully resisting the overwhelming demands of the “pushing system” (Baptist, 2014, p. 121).

To extract maximum output of cotton from the enslaved, the modus operandi of the slave-holders was “to extort it by the lash.” Thus, in the “pushing system,” the whip was just as important in growing cotton, as sunshine and rain (Baptist, 2014, p. 121).

Between 1790 and 1860, there was a vast increase in the amount of cotton grown in America. However, this impressive result was achieved at a tremendous human cost. This human cost included: (1) Many slaves who caught malaria in a disease-prone environment, (2) Those who died young due to lack of enough food—and back-breaking labor, (3) High infant mortality, and (4) A decrease in the life expectancy of all African Americans (Baptist, 2014, p. 122).

In the words of a planter, enslaved workers were to be “followed up from day-break until dark.” The slaves were lined up in rows sometimes longer than five football fields. This set-up allowed overseers to spot anyone lagging behind. The uniform layout had a rationale: and that was to dominate. Faster workers were placed at the head of the line, which encouraged those who followed to keep up with the captain’s pace (Desmond, 2019).

Charles Ball, a migrant slave, paints a vivid picture of how the slaves worked on the cotton fields. He
says they picked in long rows, bent bodies shuffling through cotton fields that were white when in bloom. Men, women, and children picked, using both hands to hurry the work. Their haul would be weighed after sunlight. If it came up short, the slaves would often be whipped (Desmond, 2019).

After the Civil War, many cotton planters would pay pickers by the pound. However, free labor motivated by a wage did not produce the same amount of cotton per hour as slave labor had (Baptist, 2014, pp. 129-130).

39. Plantation Management Practices and the Theory of Scientific Management

In a highly-acclaimed book, Accounting for Slavery, Caitlin Rosenthal (2018) successfully challenges Alfred Chandler’s (1977, p. 64) assertion that slave plantations employed such an “ancient” form of organization that modern historians can disregard their practices (Rhode, 2020).

The essence of Accounting for Slavery is the study of productivity analysis conducted by the antebellum cotton planters. Rosenthal specially focuses on the use of printed account books, such as the cotton books by Thomas Affleck after 1847. Plantation managers used these formalized records to determine the maximum output that workers could sustainably produce. This yardstick was then used several ways: (1) To establish work expectations, (2) Impose punishments, and (3) Plan future production (Rhode, 2020).

Rosenthal argues that these methods were similar to what Frederick Taylor and the scientific movement later tried to do (Rhode, 2020).

The slave owners used the double-entry book-keeping system. They kept dual records, with corresponding and opposite entries (Jewell, 2019). Rosenthal also documents the efforts of southern planters to commodify their slave properties. This was based on standardized labor units: full, half, and quarter “hand.” They kept detailed inventories that reflected their human property at market values (Rhode, Jewell, ibid).

One of the major advances of the era was the use of depreciation for the value of a slave: a practice that was widely regarded as a landmark in advancing management practices. The enslaved became well aware of how a person could be devalued: anything from illness to running away (Jewell, 2019).

Such valuations of individual slaves became the basis for slave mortgages and insurance policies (ibid).

Section V—The Sugar Plantations of Louisiana

40. The Sugar Plantations of Louisiana

Khalil Muhammad (2019), has authored an article on sugar plantations in the South: one of the 12 published for ‘The 1619 Project.’ For thousands of years sugarcane was a heavy and unwieldy crop that was very labor-intensive. It was the introduction of slavery that changed everything. “The true Age of Sugar had begun—and it was doing more to reshape the world than any ruler, empire, or war had ever done.” Over the four centuries following the arrival of Columbus in the New World, innumerable lives were destroyed and around 11 million Africans were enslaved* (italics added; also, Datta, 2020).
The manufacture of sugar from sugarcane began in Louisiana Territory in 1795. Within decades, Louisiana planters were producing as much as a quarter of the world’s cane-sugar output. However, this impressive achievement was the fruit of a bitter harvest grown on the backs of enslaved labor. In sugar mills, children, alongside adults, “toiled like factory workers with assembly-like precision and discipline under the constant threat of boiling hot kettles, open furnaces and grinding rollers” (Muhammad, 2019; Datta, 2020).

To attain the highest efficiency—like the round-the-clock Domino refinery today—sugar factories worked day and night, where there is no distinction as to the days of the week. Fatigue might mean losing an arm to the grinding rollers, or being flayed for not being able to keep up. Resistance was often met with sadistic cruelty (Muhammad, 2019, italics added; Datta, 2020).

Louisiana led America in destroying the lives of black people: all in the name of efficiency. Life expectancy on a sugar plantation was less like that on a cotton plantation, but more that on a Jamaican cane field, where the “most overworked and abused could drop dead after just seven years” (Muhammad, 2019, italics added; Datta, 2020).

Section VI—This Half Has Never Been Told

41. This Half Has Never Been Told

In an award-winning book, The Half Has Never Been Told (2014), Edward Baptist opens his book with a 1937-interview of a former slave, Lorenzo Ivy, in which he was asked the question: “Have you been happier in slavery or free?” His answer was: “Truly, son, the half has never been told” (p. xxiii).

Baptist (2014) argues that Americans tend to regard slavery as a pre-modern institution: that is isolated in time and divorced from America’s later success. However, to do so robs the millions of slaves—who suffered in bondage--of their full legacy (ibid, back cover).

The expansion of slavery in the first eight decades after American independence, drove the evolution and modernization of the United States. In the course of a single life time, the South grew from “a narrow coastal strip of worn-out tobacco plantations to a continental cotton empire.” As a result, the United States became a modern, industrial, and capitalistic economy (Baptist, 2014, back cover).

Baptist (ibid) argues that the fundamental assumptions about the history of slavery, and that of America, remain essentially unchanged.

The first major assumption is that as an economic system American slavery was fundamentally different from the rest of the modern economy. Stories about industrialization highlight white immigrants and clever inventors, but they omit altogether cotton fields and slave labor. This view implies that slavery—and enslaved African Americans—had little long-term effect on the rise of the United States during the nineteenth century. This is the period in which America rose from being a minor European trading partner, to becoming the world’s leading economy (Baptist, p. xx).

The second assumption is that slavery was part of an ongoing political process, and sooner or later, it will
be resolved in favor of the liberal North (Baptist, 2014, p. xx).

The third assumption is that the worst thing about slavery was the denial of liberal rights (e.g., voting) of modern citizens. But slavery also killed a large number of slaves. And from those who survived, it stole everything. A million slaves were ripped off from their homes, were brutally driven to new, disease-ridden places, and were made to live in terror and hunger as they continually built and rebuilt the cotton empire (Baptist, 2014, pp. xx-xxi).

The stories about slavery are told in ways that reinforce all the above assumptions. Text books segregate 250 years of slavery into just one chapter (Baptist, 2014, p. xxi).

During the Civil War, the African-American soldiers made the difference between victory and defeat for the North: which by late 1863 was exhausted and uncertain (Baptist, ibid, p. xvii).

“The idea that the commodification and suffering and forced labor of African Americans is what made the United States powerful and rich is not an idea that people necessarily are happy to hear. Yet, it is the truth” (Baptist, 2014, p. xxiv, italics added).

In the end, Baptist argues that if we accept the truth, it can set us free (Baptist, p. xxii).

Finally, as we have shown in section 9, America became an economic powerhouse in the nineteenth century, not only on the backs of African-American slaves, it was also because of the genocide of Native Americans, and their stolen lands.

42. Conclusion

We hope we have been successful in being able to make our main thesis: that America became an economic super-power in the nineteenth century, not only on the backs of African-American slaves, but also due to the genocide of Native Americans, and the lands America stole from them.

Mathew Desmond (2019) makes an intriguing revelation about slavery that is devastating in its implications. For white workers, slavery did complement with what, W.E.B. Du Bois has called, a “public and psychological wage.” This made it possible for them to roam freely and feel a sense of entitlement. Slavery pulled down wages of all workers. Both in the cities and countryside, employers had access to a large and flexible labor pool made up of enslaved and free people. Just like today’s gig economy, day laborers during the slavery’s reign often lived under conditions of scarcity and uncertainty, and jobs meant to be worked for a few months, became jobs for a lifetime. Labor had very little power, when the managers could choose between “buying people, renting them, contracting indentured servants, taking on apprentices, or hiring children and prisoners.”

Desmond (2019) further goes on, and says this not only created a blatantly uneven playing field--dividing workers from themselves--it also made “all non-slavery appear as freedom,” as the economic historian Stanley Engerman (2000), has written. Witnessing the horrors of slavery drilled into poor white workers: that things could be worse. So, they generally accepted their lot. Thus, American freedom became broadly defined as the opposite of bondage. It was a freedom that stood for what it was against, but not
what it was for: “a malnourished and mean kind of freedom that kept you out of chains, but did not provide bread or shelter” (Desmond, *ibid*, italics added).

Desmond (2019), quoting W. E. B. DuBois, points out that plantation owners thought of themselves as *invincible*. The mere fact that a man could legally be the master of the mind and body of a *human* being, had to have *devastating* effects. It tended to *inflate* the *ego* of most planters, which made them “arrogant, strutting, quarrelsome kinglets” (*italics* added).

We have found *four major themes* in this paper:
- (1) America’s independence was based on the foundation of *slavery*, (2) The *persistence* of ideas of *racism* in the Western and American culture, (3) The Industrial Revolution, and (4) The unimaginable *barbarism* and *cruelty* that the Southern plantation owners inflicted on the African-American slaves for hundreds of years.

*The first* theme is that while America’s independence was based on the foundation of *slavery*, America’s rulers and elites tried to *hide* behind *lofty* ideals, *sugar-coat* it, or to *pretend* that slavery was actually *good* for the slaves.

Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin levied a *serious* charge that the British *refused* to let the colonies free *themselves* from slavery was yet another proof of the administration’s tendency to *enslave* the colonists. The most *stinging* rebuke of this charge came from the *British* author, Dr. Samuel Johnson, who rhetorically asked: How is it that we hear the *loudest* yelps for liberty among the drivers of *negroes*? The *Enlightenment* philosopher, John Locke’s was one of the leading figures in the development of *liberal* Anglo-American political thought. His ideas about what he called “natural rights of mankind” had a *profound* effect in the *drafting* of the Declaration of Independence. His definition of these rights included: “Life, Liberty, Health, Limb, or Goods.” He characterized “Goods” as “Property or Possessions.”

Thomas Jefferson was assigned the job of *drafting* a statement of the *Declaration of Independence*. Locke’s inclusion of *property* in the natural rights of men proved quite *troublesome* for Jefferson when *slaves* were included in “goods” or “property.” However, he cleverly *avoided* the difficulty in his 1776 formulation by the substitution of “the pursuit of happiness” for “property.”

Thus, the Second Continental Congress *approved* the Declaration of Independence document whose *opening* words are quite *lofty, powerful and inspiring*:

- “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.”

So, Nicole-Hannah Jones is quite right that American democracy’s founding ideals were *false* when they were written, and that *Black* Americans have fought to make them true.

Abraham Lincoln, for *most* of his career, subscribed to the idea of *colonization*. He believed that a *majority* of the African-American population should *leave* the United States and *settle down* in Africa or Central America. This is because he thought this was the *best way* to *confront* the problem of slavery.
During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln called a delegation of five free African Americans, and told them that without the institution of slavery and the colored race as a basis, there would be no Civil War. Therefore, it is better for us to be separated.

Ironically, Lincoln’s above statement is like blaming the victims for the sins of the perpetrators!

The second theme is the persistence of ideas of racism in the Western culture--and in America--starting from as early as the fifteenth century virtually to this day.

- Zurara of Portugal wrote in 1453 about Africans that: “They lived like beasts, without any custom of reasonable beings”…. and “they had no understanding of good, but only knew how to live in bestial sloth.”
- The Enlightenment movement gave birth to the idea of society as a social construct. It is during this period that the notion of “light is white is right” gained wide acceptance that included Isaac Newton and John Locke.
- In 1706, Rev. Cotton Mather, New England’s leading Puritan theologian—a slave owner himself—wrote that ownership of African slaves was a concrete expression of God’s will.
- In his book, The Wealth of Nations, economist Adam Smith said that the wealth of nations comes from a nation’s productive capacity which the African nations lacked.
- Like all slaveholders—and many others in American society—Thomas Jefferson considered Negroes as inferior, childlike, untrustworthy, and as property. After the publication of his book “Notes,” Jefferson became the preeminent American authority on Black intellectual inferiority.
- Jefferson Davis, who became president of the Confederate States in 1861, considered Black people as biologically distinct and inferior to White people.
- In 1849 Dr. Samuel Cartwright was engaged to investigate “the diseases and physical peculiarities” of the negro population. Under the threat of the abolitionist movement, the 250-year-old institution of slavery sorely needed a “scientific” rationale in defense of slavery. This was part of the long, insidious effort of what historians call scientific racism. This involved spreading bogus theories of supposed black inferiority, in an effort “to rationalize slavery, and centuries of social and economic domination and plunder.
- In Dr. Cartwright’s mind the slaves were even beneath the human desire for freedom, and so he branded them as diseased.
- As early as the early1800s, White Americans, had a considerable psychological as well as economic investment in the doctrine of black inferiority. Whereas liberty was the inalienable right of Whites, slavery and subjugation became the natural fate of those who had any discernible drop of Black.
- The U.S. Supreme Court enshrined the above thinking into law in its 1857 Dred Scott decision, with a ruling that black people came from a “slave” race. As such, this made them inferior to white people, and therefore, incompatible with American democracy.
In his 1944 landmark study of race relations, Swedish economist and Nobel Laureate, Gunnar Myrdal, wrote that American Negro culture is...a distorted development, or a pathological condition, of the general American culture.”

In the early 1900s the scientifically-backed enterprise of eugenics became extremely popular among its advocates. It was based on the notion that a “race” could--and should--be purified by selective breeding--and the elimination of flawed people.

During Holocaust Hitler’s Nazis committed a genocide of 6 million Jews. Thus, it took such a horrific event as Holocaust, to show the world that advocating eugenics was like playing with fire; and that how devastating and deadly the consequences of such a race-based ideology could be.

Mainstream scientists, geneticists and medical researchers still invoke race, and use these categories in their work that we have been told for 70 years that they have no biological meaning: only a social meaning. Yet, a worldwide network of stubborn eugenicists quietly founded journals, and funded shoddy research that was eventually cited in reputable publications.

One example where such “shoddy studies” were cited is the famous book, The Bell Curve. The book claims that intelligence is a genetically-associated characteristic of race. A panel of scholars and testing experts claim that the book is scientifically flawed.

What black inferiority means has changed in every generation…but ultimately Americans have been making the same case. Many Americans are blind to the origin of racist ideas, and think that there’s such a thing as “black blood and black diseases,” and that “black people are by nature predisposed to dancing and athletics.”

Finally, in a 2012 article in the Scientific American, the authors reported that 85.5% of genetic variation is within the so-called races, not between them. So, the consensus among Western researchers today is that human races are not part of a scientific theory, but are sociocultural constructs.

So, based on the massive evidence presented above, it seems quite appropriate to quote Sven Beckert and Seth Rockman, that American slavery is necessarily imprinted on the DNA of American capitalism (Desmond, 2019).

Theme three is the Industrial Revolution that was founded on three pillars. One was the centuries-earlier conquest by the Europeans of a colossal expanse of lands in the New World. The second pillar was that the Europeans drastically—and unilaterally--altered the global competitive landscape of cotton. They did it by using their military might, and the willingness to use it—often violently--to their advantage.

One major casualty of this ruthless mind-set was the deindustrialization of India, which was the world’s leading manufacturer of high-quality cotton fabrics. The British systematically destroyed India’s textile industry. Ironically, the British used Indian cotton, and exported the finished product back to India, thus adding insult to injury.
The third—and the most important pillar—was slavery: without which there would be no Industrial Revolution.

Theme four is the unimaginable barbarism and cruelty that the Southern plantation owners inflicted on the African slaves for hundreds of years:

- For eighty years—from the 1780s to 1865—almost a million people were herded down the road from the upper South to the lower South and the West, to toil on cotton plantations. The thirty-odd men walked in coffles, the double line hurrying in lock-step. Each hauled twenty pounds of iron, chains that draped from neck-to-neck, and wrist-to-wrist, binding them all together.
- They walked for miles, days, and weeks, and many covered over 700 miles. Stumbling with fatigue, staggering with whiskey…many covered over 700 miles before stepping off the road…After weeks of wading rivers, crossing state lines, and climbing mountain roads…they had moved their bodies across the frontier between the old slavery and the new.
- When slaves went into the field, they took with them social connections and affective ties. Slaves worked alongside people they knew, people they had raised, and people they would bury. They talked, they sang, they laughed, they suffered, they remembered their ancestors and their God, the rhythms of their lives working through and over those of their work. We cannot any more separate slaves’ labor from their humanity than we can separate the ability of a human hand to pick cotton from its ability to caress the cheek of a crying child, the aching of a stooped back in the field from the arc of a body bent in supplication.
- Finally, one of the most brutal weapons the planters employed against the slaves, was the whip: ten feet of plaited cowhide. When facing the specter of an overseer’s whip, slaves were so terrified that they could not speak in sentences. They danced, trembled, babbled, and lost control of their bodies.

Acknowledgements

In this essay we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to several authors for their brilliant scholarly contributions: And here they are:

- Hannah Nicole Jones, a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist, for her unbelievable article: “Our democracy’s founding ideals were false when they were written. Black Americans have fought to make them true.”
- Ibrahim Kendi for his award-winning book: Stamped from the beginning: The definitive history of racist ideas in America.
- Sven Beckert for his Prize-winning book: Empire of cotton: A global history.
- Edward Baptist for his Prize-winning book: The half has never been told: Slavery and the making of American capitalism.
• Walter Johnson for his prize-winning book: River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and empire in the cotton kingdom.
• Walter Johnson for his brilliant book: Soul by Soul: Life inside the Antebellum slave market.
• Caitlin Rosenthal for her widely-acclaimed book: Accounting for slavery: Masters and management.
• David Waldstreicher for his ground-breaking book: Slavery’s constitution: From revolution to ratification.
• Shashi Tharoor for his incredible book: Inglorious empire: What the British did to India.
• Mathew Desmond for his penetrating ‘The 1619 Project’ article: “In order to understand the brutality of American capitalism, you have to start on the plantation.”
• Khalil Muhammad for his eye-opening ‘The 1619 Project’ article: “The sugar that saturates the American diet has a barbaric history as the ‘white gold’ that fueled slavery.”
• Stephen Ambrose for his Smithsonian Magazine article: “Founding fathers and slaveholders.”
• Jeffrey Ostler for his article: “The shameful final grievance of the Declaration of Independence.”

References
Ambrose, S. (2002). Founding fathers and slaveholders. Smithsonian Magazine, Nov. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/founding-fathers-and-slaveholders-72262393/
Andrews, E. (2019). How many U.S. Presidents owned enslaved people? https://www.history.com/news/how-many-u-s-presidents-owned-slaves
Baptist, E. (2014). The half has never been told: Slavery and the making of American capitalism. New York: Basic Books.
Beckert, B. (2014). Empire of cotton: A global history. New York: Vintage Books.
Beckert, S., & Rockman, S. (Eds.). (2018). Slavery’s capitalism: A new history of American economic development. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Capra, F. (1996). The web of life. New York: Simon & Schuster
Chandler, A., Jr. (1977). The visible hand: The managerial revolution in American business. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press.
Datta, Y. (1998). The mechanistic foundations of strategic management. Current topics in strategic management, Vol. 3, 125-150.
Datta, Y. (2010). Maslow’s hierarchy of basic needs: An ecological view. Oxford Journal, 10 (1), 39-57.
Datta, Y. (2020). The U.S. Toothpaste market: A competitive profile. Journal of Economics and Public Finance, 6 (1), 145-167. https://doi.org/10.22158/jepf.v6n1p145
Desmond, M. (2019). In order to understand the brutality of American capitalism, you have to start on the plantation. The New York Times Magazine, Aug. 14. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/
Duignan, B. (2021). *Enlightenment: European history.* https://www.britannica.com/event/Enlightenment-European-history

Engerman, S. (2000). Slavery at Different Times and Places. *The American Historical Review, 105*(2), 480-484.

Gonzalez, E. (2021). *Of one blood: Cotton Mather’s Christian slavery.* https://historicbostons.org/blog-1/ofblood

Hannah-Jones, N. (2019). Our democracy’s founding ideals were false when they were written. Black Americans have fought to make them true. *The New York Times Magazine*, Aug. 14. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/black-history-american-democracy.html?searchResultPosition=1

Hochschild, A. (2014). *Empire of Cotton,* by Sven Beckert. *The New York Times*, Dec. 31. https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/04/books/review/empire-of-cotton-by-sven-beckert.html

Horkheimer, M., & Adorno, T. (1990). *Dialectic of enlightenment.* New York: Continuum.

Hylton, G. (2012). *Before there were “Red” and “Blue” states, there were “Free” states and “Slave” states.* https://law.marquette.edu/facultyblog/2012/12/before-there-were-red-and-blue-states-there-were-free-states-and-slave-states/comment-page-1/

Jefferson, T. (1984). *Autobiography: Notes on the state of Virginia, public and private papers, addresses letters.* New York: Library Classics of the United State, Inc.

Jewell, J. (2019). *Book review: “Accounting for slavery”—Plantation roots of scientific management.* https://artsfuse.org/184255/book-review-accounting-for-slavery-plantation-roots-of-scientific-management/

Johnson, W. (1999). *Soul by soul: Life inside the Antebellum slave market.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Johnson, W. (2013a). *River of dark dreams: Slavery and empire in the cotton kingdom.* Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Johnson, W. (2013b). King cotton’s long shadow. *The New York Times*, March 30. https://opinionatorblogs.nytimes.com/2013/03/30/king-cottons-long-shadow/

Kendi, I. (2016). *Stamped from the beginning: The definitive history of racist ideas in America.* New York: Bold Type Books.

Krimsky, S., & Sloan, K. (2011), editors. *Race and the genetic revolution: Science, myth, and culture.* New York: Columbia University Press.

L. A. Times. (1994). ‘Bell Curve’ scientifically flawed, panel says. Dec. 14. https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1994-12-14-ml-8926-story.html

Lewontin, R. (1972). *The apportionment of human diversity.* https://collopy.net/teaching/2017/evolution/readings/The%20Apportionment%20of%20Human%20Diversity.pdf
Lowe, D. (2021). Aristotle’ s defense of slavery. https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2019/09/10/aristotles-defense-of-slavery/

Maloy, M. (2021). The founding father’ s views of slavery. https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/founding-fathers-views-slavery

Muhammad, K. (2019). The sugar that saturates the American diet has a barbaric history as the ‘white gold’ that fueled slavery. New York Times, August 14. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/sugar-slave-trade-slavery.html

Murray, C., & Herrnstein, R. (1996). The bell curve: Intelligence and class structure in American life. New York: Free Press.

Nash, R. (1989). The rights of nature: A history of environmental ethics. Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Onuf, P. (2021). Thomas Jefferson: Life before the Presidency. https://millercenter.org/president/jefferson/life-before-the-presidency

Ostler, J. (2020). The shameful final grievance of the Declaration of Independence. The Atlantic, Feb. 8. https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/02/americas-twowold-original-sin/606163/

Parkinson, R. (2021). You can’t tell the story of 1776 without talking about race and slavery. Time, July 4. https://time.com/6077468/united-states-1776-racism-slavery/

PBS. (2021). Race: The power of an illusion. Program Transcript. https://www.pbs.org/race/000_About/002_04-about-01-01.htm

Richardson, T. (2011). John Locke and the myth of racism in America: Demystifying the paradoxes of the Enlightenment as visited in the present. Ohio Valley Philosophy of Education Society. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ960330.pdf

Rhode, P. (2020). Accounting for slavery: Masters and management, by Caitlin Rosenthal. https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-economic-history/article/abs/accounting-for-slavery-masters-and-management-by-caitlin-rosenthal-cambridge-ma-harvard-university-press-2018-pp-320-3500-hardcover/E4D439A5AC41A3B965E31AB09EE145AE

Rosenthal, C. (2018). Accounting for slavery: Masters and management. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Rothman, J. (2014). Flush Times and Fever Dreams: A Story of Capitalism and Slavery in the Age of Jackson. Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press.

Ruane, M. (2019). A brief history of the enduring phony science that perpetuates white supremacy. Washington Post, Apr. 30. https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/a-brief-history-of-the-enduring-phony-science-that-perpetuates-white-supremacy/2019/04/29/20e6aef0-5aeb-11e9-a00e-050dc7b82693_story.html

Saini, A. (2020). Superior: The return of race science. Boston: Beacon Press.

Sapp, J. (2012). Race finished. The American Scientist. March-April. https://www.americanscientist.org/article/race-finished
Siegel, E. (2017). The real problem with Charles Murray and “The Bell Curve”. https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/voices/the-real-problem-with-charles-murray-and-the-bell-curve/

Silverstein, J. (2019). Why we published The 1619 Project. The New York Times Magazine, Dec. 20. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/12/20/magazine/1619-intro.html

Simmons, L. (2018). Why doesn’t the apostle Paul speak against slavery? https://gateway.redemptionaz.com/why-doesnt-the-apostle-paul-speak-against-slavery/

Skibba, R. (2019). The disturbing resilience of scientific racism, May 20. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/disturbing-resilience-scientific-racism-180972243/

Stott, J. (2014). The message of Ephesians. Westmont, IL: Intervarsity Press Academic.

Stripling, J. (2021). How to Nikole-Hannah-Jones flipped the script on Chapel Hill. The Chronicle of Higher Education, July 9. https://www.chronicle.com/article/how-nikole-hannah-jones-flipped-the-script-on-chapel-hill

Tattersall, I., & DeSalle, R. (2011). Race? Debunking a scientific myth. College Station, TX: Texas A & M University Press.

Tharoor, S. (2016). Inglorious empire: What the British did to India. Minneapolis. MN: Scribe Publishers.

Timmons, G. (2020). How slavery became the economic engine of the South. https://www.history.com/news/slavery-profitable-southern-economy

Waldstreicher, D. (2009). Slavery’s constitution: From revolution to ratification. New York: Hill and Wang.

Ware, L., Cottrol, R., and Diamond, R. (2003). Brown v. Board of Education: Caste, Culture, and the Constitution. Lawrence, KS: The University of Kansas Press.

Weaver, J. (2003). The great land rush and the making of the modern world, 1650-1900. Kingston, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press.

White, L. (1967). The historical roots of our ecological crisis. Science, vol. 155, pp. 1203-1207.

Yglesias, M. (2018). The “Bell Curve” is about policy. And it’s wrong. https://www.vox.com/2018/4/10/17182692/bell-curve-charles-murray-policy-wrong

Zagarri, R. (2021). Slavery in colonial British North America. https://teachinghistory.org/history-content/ask-a-historian/25577

Notes

Note 1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirteen_Colonies

Note 2. https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/slavery

Note 3. https://www.history.com/topics/american-revolution/american-revolution-history

Note 4. https://www.monticello.org/slavery/slavery-faqs/property/

Note 5. See Note 12.

Note 6. David Waldstreicher is Professor of History at Temple University.
Note 7. Robert Parkinson is an Associate Professor of History at Binghamton University. He is the author of *Thirteen Clocks: How Race United the Colonies and Made the Declaration of Independence* (2021). His *Time* article is based on that book.

Note 8. A caravel is a small fast Spanish or Portuguese sailing ship of the 15-17\textsuperscript{th} centuries.

Note 9. The book’s title was: *The Chronicle of the Discovery and Conquest of Guinea*.

Note 10. https://www.britannica.com/biography/Thomas-Jefferson/Slavery-and-racism

Note 11. Gunnar Myrdal (1996). *An American Dilemma, vol. 2. The Negro problem and modern democracy* (pp. 828-829). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Note 12. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephan_Jay_Gould

Note 13. https://www.vox.com/2018/4/10/17182692/bell-curve-charles-murray-policy-wrong

Note 14. Jan Anthony Sapp is a professor of Biology at York University, Canada.

Note 15. https://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/american-civil-war-history

Note 16. The movement to end slavery.

Note 17. https://history.com/news/5-things-you-may-not-know-about-lincoln-slavery-and-emancipation

Note 18. https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/slavery-abolished-in-america

Note 19. https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/fourteenth-amendment

Note 20. https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/fifteenth-amendment

Note 21. https://www.history.com/topics/early-20th-century-us/jim-crow-laws

Note 22. https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/voting-rights-act

Note 23. https://www.google.com/search?q=water+wheel+ancient+egypt&ei=KEp_Yc3sOaeCwbkPyiY2As&oq=water+wheel+and+egypt&gs_lcp=Cgdnd3Mtd2l6EAEYATIGCAAQFhAcMgYIABAWEB46BwgAEEcQsAM6BQgAEjECOGUIABCABDoLCC4QxwEQRwEQkQI6CwguEIAEMcBEK8BQg4ILhCBBDHARCvARCTAkECEEEYAFcsfj2tAFg68oBaARwAngAgAF_iAHHDZIBBDcuMTCYAQCgAQHjAQjAAQE&sclient=gws-wiz

Note 24. https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/congress-abolishes-the-african-slave-trade

Note 25. For an understanding of the 2008 financial crisis, see Datta (2010).

Note 26. Antebellum represents the period after 1812 and before the Civil War.