

A Brief Timeline of the History of Racism in the United States (Based on *Stamped from the Beginning* Chapters 21-29)

1868: W.E.B. DuBois is born in Massachusetts

- Andrew Johnson is impeached

1870: The 15th Amendment is ratified, preventing the limitation of voting rights based on race. Enforcement Acts are passed to limit Klan activity and voter suppression, but are barely enforced

1875: The Civil Rights Act is passed

1878: Henry Morton Stanley publishes *Through the Dark Continent*, which inspires Joseph Conrad

1880s: The concept of the New South spreads support of segregationist and assimilationist thought in popular culture

1882: Washington Williams publishes *History of the Negro Race in America from 1619 to 1880*, which illustrates the role Black men had in American history

1883: The Civil Rights Act is declared unconstitutional

1885: Editor Henry Grady proposes “equal accommodations for each race but separate” (265)

- Around this time, newspapers and popular sources falsely state that discrimination is ending and that it is not the cause of socioeconomic disparities
- At the Berlin conference, European leaders “partitioned Africa on the dishonest pretext that they were bringing civilization to the continent” (268)

1890: Senators, including a former Klan Grand Dragon, propose colonization

- William Vaughan tries to establish pensions for former slaves, sparking the reparations movement
- Mississippi adds literacy tests with an “understanding clause” to voting requirements

1892: 255 people are lynched in one year—the most in U.S. history. That same year, Ida B. Wells publishes *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases*

1895: Frederick Douglass dies

- In his “Atlanta Compromise,” Booker T. Washington “asked southern Whites to stop trying to push Blacks out of the house of America, and to allow them to reside comfortably in the basement—to help them rise up, knowing that when they rose, the whole house would rise” (277)

1896: In *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the Supreme Court announces that separate accommodations for White and Black people are legal

- The National Association of Colored Women is founded

- Frederick Hoffman writes that Black people were in a decline after emancipation—a policy that enables insurers to deny them life insurance

1897: DuBois presents assimilationist arguments for ending racial tension

1899: Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is published, as is DuBois's *The Philadelphia Negro*,

Early 1900s: Thomas Dixon Jr. publishes the "Reconstruction Trilogy" of racist fiction

1901: Booker T. Washington publishes his autobiography, *Up from Slavery*. President Theodore Roosevelt invites him to the President's House. In an attempt to appease racists after this event, Roosevelt renames this building the White House.

1903: W.E.B. DuBois publishes *The Souls of Black Folk* and the Talented Tenth essay

1909: The NAACP is founded

1910s: The Eugenics movement grows

1910: Jack Johnson defeats the "Great White Hope," Jim Jeffries

- DuBois becomes founding editor of *The Crisis*

1911: *The Crisis* starts featuring Black firsts, but "the publicity around Black firsts...reinforced racist ideas blaming Blacks and not the remaining discriminatory barriers" (304)

1912: *Tarzan* makes "the association between animals, savages, and Africa permanent in the American mind." (page 300)

- Wilson is elected, in large part by misleading Black voters

1914-1918: World War One

- 1915: "Hollywood's first feature-length studio production" is *The Birth of a Nation* (305)
 - DuBois publishes *The Negro*
- Approx. 1916: The Great Migration begins. "Over the course of six decades, some 6 million Black southerners left their homes." (309)
- 1916: Marcus Garvey comes to New York from Jamaica and founds the Universal Negro Improvement Association
- Madison Grant publishes *The Passing of the Great Race*, which inspires Hitler
- Lewis Terman creates an IQ test, ignoring arguments that its questions are subjective

1919: The Treaty of Versailles is signed with clauses that divide Germany's former African colonies among other European nations.

- The League of Nations is formed and rejects "Japan's proposal that the League's charter confess a commitment to the equality of all peoples." (313)
- The Red Summer: White supremacists murder hundreds of Black people

Early 1920s: DuBois and Garvey spar over color politics and segregationism

- 1924: Coolidge signs the Immigration Act, limiting immigration from certain areas
- DuBois publishes *The Gift of Black Folk: The Negro in the Making of America*, which advocates for “a multiracial pluralism,” (321), but he still maintains racist ideas
 - The Harlem Renaissance grows, along with a call for media suasion

1926: The antiracist Niggerati movement forms

1928: A special issue of the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* effectively says that the Great Migration had disproved segregationism, but maintains an assimilationist stance

1929: The Great Depression begins

- Claude G. Bowers’s book, *The Tragic Era: The Revolution after Lincoln* “helped the Democratic Party keep the segregationists in power for another generation.” (331)
- 1930s: DuBois, Carter G. Woodson, and others call for the formation of Negro Studies programs
 - Black workers join unions to combat capitalism and flawed practices of the New Deal
 - Housing officials begin redlining
- 1931: The Scottsboro boys are falsely convicted of rape
- 1932: The Tuskegee syphilis study begins (and denies men treatment for 40 years)
- 1933: DuBois shares an account of the evolution of his thinking towards antiracism
- 1934: DuBois writes in favor of bolstering segregated institutions and argues that assimilation isn’t an effective way to combat racism
- 1935: DuBois publishes *Black Reconstruction in America: 1860-1880*, which argues that the Reconstruction years were the closest to true democracy that the U.S. ever came
- 1936: Jesse Owens wins 4 gold medals at the Berlin Olympics
- 1937: Zora Neal Hurston publishes *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
- 1938: The American Anthropological Association denounces biological racism
- 1939: E. Franklin Frazier’s book criticizes Black families and argues for assimilation
- The movie version of *Gone with the Wind* is released to wild popularity

1939-1945: World War Two

- 1940: Ruth Benedict defines racism as “an unproved assumption of the biological and perpetual superiority of one human group over another” (342)
 - The Clark doll study
 - Richard Wright’s *Native Son* is published
- 1944: Gunnar Myrdal publishes *An American Dilemma* states that ignorance led to racism, and “inspired a cadre...to power up the next generation of racist ideas and the assimilationist wing of the civil rights movement.” (page 351)
 - The GI Bill gives benefits to veterans, but limits benefits for Black veterans
- 1945: Richard Wright publishes *Black Boy*
 - Members of the Pan-African Congress demand immediate decolonization of Africa
 - Dean Acheson warns Truman that racism in the U.S. negatively impacts foreign relations

1947: The Truman Doctrine declares that the U.S. is the leader of the free world.

- Dobzhansky and Montagu develop the dual-evolution theory
- The Committee on Civil Rights releases *To Secure These Rights*, naming racism as a moral problem and recommending new legislation

1948: Truman uses an executive order to desegregate the military. Sports leagues also desegregate

- Truman beats Strom Thurmond in the presidential election
- The Supreme Court's *Shelley v. Kramer* ruling strikes down discriminatory housing policies, leading to White flight

1950: McCarthy drums up the Red Scare

1951: Antiracists release *We Charge Genocide*

- The USIA releases *The Negro in American Life*, arguing that racial disparities had lessened over the course of American history

1953: Eisenhower ends civil rights work, calling racism "a failure of individual feelings" (361)

- The *Brown v. Board of Ed.* ruling declares that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal" because they limited Black students' exposure to White culture (362)

1955: Emmet Till is killed

1956: The Montgomery Bus Boycott

1957: The Civil Rights Act is passed, but has no means of enforcement

- The Little Rock Nine are prevented from desegregating a school until Eisenhower sends soldiers to protect them
- E. Franklin Frazier publishes *Black Bourgeoisie*

1960: The lunch counter sit-ins begin

- *To Kill A Mockingbird* is published

1961: DuBois goes to Ghana to work on *Encyclopedia Africana*

1963: Alabama governor George Wallace speaks in support of segregation

- Moynihan and Glazer's *Beyond the Melting Pot* presents a hierarchy of ethnic racism and blames African-Americans for the struggles they face
- Dr. King writes "Letter from the Birmingham Jail" amidst Bull Conner's violent response to demonstrations in Birmingham
- President Kennedy introduces civil rights legislation, but is motivated by a desire to improve the way other nations see the U.S.
- W.E.B. DuBois dies the day before The March on Washington