

A Brief Timeline of Racist Thought in the United States Based on Chapters 13-20 of *Stamped from the Beginning*

1820s and 1830s: Blackface minstrel shows, freak shows, and plantation fiction become popular

- July 4, 1826: Both Jefferson and Adams die
- 1828: Benjamin Lundy speaks in favor of ending slavery in front of a young William Lloyd Garrison
 - The Senate Foreign Relations Committee refuses to fund colonization because of economic concerns
- 1829: William Lloyd Garrison moves to Baltimore to work with Lundy
- 1830: William Lloyd Garrison is jailed
- 1831: Nat Turner's rebellion in Virginia
- 1832: Garrison publishes *Thoughts on African Colonization*, in which he argues that the colonizationist stance is actually proslavery and that colonizationism would cause economic distress
 - Maria Stewart's speeches are "the first time an American-born woman addressed a mixed audience of White and Black men and women" (167)
- 1833: The American Anti-Slavery Society is formed, but with an assimilationist stance
- 1835: Alexis de Tocqueville says that racism is more prevalent in states without slavery and argues that uplift suasion won't work to end racism
 - The American Anti-Slavery Society conducts a media campaign
 - Around this time, groups of White men begin assaulting Black people, Black neighborhoods, and White women
- 1836: Texas state law bans free Black people from the state

1830s-1850s: Scientific debates about racial equality take place, including arguments based on skull size, reports of insanity, polygenesis, and so forth

1841: Frederick Douglass begins a speaking tour

1845: Garrison publishes *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*

- Texas is annexed to the U.S. as a slaveholding state

1848: Seneca Falls convention attendees write the Declaration of Sentiments, which "pleaded for gender equality and women's suffrage, desires considered as radical as racial equality and immediate emancipation." (191)

1850: John Bachman argues that White people are descended from Noah's son Shem, while Black people are Ham's descendants

- California is admitted as a free state, but the Fugitive Slave Act encourages northerners to capture escaped slaves and those who assist them, and "denied Blacks a jury trial" (190)
- Garrison publishes *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth*

1851: Sojourner Truth declares "ain't I a woman" at an Ohio women's convention

1852: *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is published. It contains an argument that ending slavery will make White people better Christians, but also states that Black people should be taught by Whites and then recolonized to Africa. The novel attracts northerners to the cause of abolitionism.

- While eulogizing Henry Clay, Abraham Lincoln declares support for colonization

1853: *Types of Mankind* and other texts present additional arguments supporting polygenesis and racial hierarchies

1854: Frederick Douglass says that “when men oppress their fellow-men, the oppressor ever finds, in the character of the oppressed, a full justification for his oppression,” but maintains an assimilationist stance that Africa is inferior to Europe (199)

- The Kansas-Nebraska Act encourages settlers to decide whether these states will be slave states

1857: Dred Scott's request for freedom is rejected by the Supreme Court. This legislation “ruled the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional, questioned the constitutionality of northern abolition, stripped Congress of its power to regulate slavery in the territories, and stated that Black people could not be citizens.” (204)

- Hinton Rowan Harper argues that slavery limits the economic opportunities of non-slaveholders. He is supported by Horace Greeley

1858: While campaigning for a Senate seat, Lincoln states that Black and White people have irreconcilable differences

1859: White activist John Brown captures the Harpers Ferry armory, but the revolt is put down and he is hanged

- Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* is published
- Francis Galton incorrectly asserts that certain traits are genetic and unalterable. He will later develop the concept of eugenics

The Civil War Years

1860: Jefferson Davis argues for state's rights and says that “‘the inequality of the white and black races’ was ‘stamped from the beginning’” of the U.S.'s history

- Abraham Lincoln is elected President
- South Carolina secedes

1861: Other Southern states secede. Jefferson Davis becomes president of the Confederate States of America, and the Confederates attack Fort Sumter

- The Confiscation Act is passed, declaring that any property used by the Confederate army could be confiscated by the Union, including people

1862: Multiple abolitionist laws pass, including a revision of the Confiscation Act declaring that all slaves who escape to Union territory (or whose lands are taken by Union forces) are free

- In August, Lincoln states his continued support of colonization, and prioritizes maintaining the Union over freeing slaves

- In December, Lincoln plans “gradual, compensated emancipation and colonization” by 1900 (220)

1863: The Emancipation Proclamation frees some slaves, including 50,000 in “Union-occupied Confederate areas.” But millions of others remain enslaved. (221)

1864: Colonization is no longer seen as a possibility

- William Lloyd Garrison says that Black people should not have the right to vote
- Sherman takes Atlanta and begins the March to the Sea

1865: Sherman meets with Black leaders in Savannah, who say that “there was ‘a prejudice against us in the South that will take years to get over.’” (231)

- Sherman gives 40,000 Black families land
- January 31st: The 13th Amendment officially abolishes slavery
- The Freedmen’s Bureau is established
- April 9th: The Confederacy surrenders

Reconstruction

1865: Lincoln proposes allowing some Black people to vote. Three days later, he is killed.

Andrew Johnson becomes President

- William Lloyd Garrison retires
- Johnson gives many rights back to most former Confederates and evicts Black people from their plots of land
- Debates over land and voting rights take place
- The Ku Klux Klan is founded

1866: Frederick Douglass meets with Johnson to discuss Black voting rights

- The Civil Rights Act is passed by Congress, but vetoed by Johnson
- White rioters kill nearly 50 Black people in Memphis
- The 14th Amendment is passed, declaring that anyone born in the United States is a citizen and that no state can limit the rights given to U.S. citizens
- The American Equal Right Association forms with the goal of gaining Black and women’s suffrage

Late 1860s:

- The first HBCUs are founded
- 1867-1868: Reconstruction Acts pass, establishing guidelines for readmitting states to the Union, including giving suffrage to Black men in the South
- 1868: Ulysses S. Grant is elected President
- Klan terrorism spikes
- Constitutional conventions in southern states create public institutions and bolster Black and women’s rights

1870s: Presses in the North and South vilify Black people, blaming economic and political problems on them

1870: The 15th Amendment is ratified, preventing the limitation of voting rights based on race

- Enforcement Acts are passed to support Black voting and to limit Klan activity, but the laws are barely enforced

1871: Darwin publishes *Descent of Man*, which expresses contradictory beliefs about race

- Henry Ward Beecher's book argues that there is no reason why Jesus would be White but the book's images show Jesus as white (page 252)

1872: Grant is reelected amidst a spike in violence in the South

1873: An economic depression begins, with a disproportionately negative impact on Black people. This pushes more Black people into sharecropping

1875: The Civil Rights Act makes public discrimination illegal, but offers limited means of enforcement

1876: The Hamburg, SC militia's forced disbandment becomes a key issue

- Cesare Lombardo's *Criminal Man* declares that criminality is innate
- Rutherford B. Hayes is elected
- The Enforcement Acts are nullified by the Supreme Court

1877: In the Bargain of 1877, Hayes pulls troops out of the South

1879: William Lloyd Garrison dies