

## **Black Abolition**

History is a continuous concept of life that can be overwhelming to learn about and has many ups and downs and tiny details. These tiny details have a significant meaning to Black history and contribute greatly to the great history of Black people. Black history has great depth; and can include concepts like Black sovereignty, Black joy, Black flourishing and thriving, and Black abolition.

Dr. Freeman defines Black Abolition as “being willing to fight injustice and dismantle practices, systems, institutions, or power structures.” When Dr. Freeman refers to fighting injustice, he is referring to all people fighting for justice when injustice is demonstrated. This definition demonstrates greatly what Black abolition means. The ability to fight injustice is extremely difficult for a Black person living in the United States. Some of the reasons come from feeling scared to be called out by other people, feeling scared to have fingers pointed at you as a Black person, and overall standing up for something that is not right or equitable to another person or group of people. According to the National Parks Service publication, “Black Abolitionists and the Fifteenth Amendment,”

African Americans assumed prominent roles in the transatlantic struggle to abolish slavery between the 1820s and the Civil War. Some three hundred Black abolitionists were regularly involved in the movement as speakers, writers, managers of anti-slavery offices, and in other very visible ways, while thousands more labored behind the scenes, including the work of the Underground Railroad. They heightened the credibility of the cause and broadened its agenda, shaping the struggle into America’s first civil rights movement.

The Black abolitionists were Black men and women who were fighting for their brothers and sisters. It was a crucial time to stand with their loved ones and do the best they could

eradicate slavery ownership. While many of the Black abolitionists also included white religious Americans who stood in support of Black people, it was very crucial that Black people had a voice in the movement and did not have to rely on white religious American people standing up for them. White people can only understand so much of what a Black person goes through to be able to live in their own skin; therefore, it isn't adequately being told to everyone. As explained in “Black Abolitionists and the Fifteenth Amendment,”

When slavery ended in 1865, many white activists viewed their work as done and called to disband the American Anti-Slavery Society and similar abolitionist organizations.

Black abolitionists, however, viewed slavery as part of a continuum of racial oppression – one component of a larger struggle. They protested that important work remained to be accomplished to make freedom real, including the achievement of full civil rights and the vote. Douglass argued that “slavery is not done until the black man has the ballot.”

Garnet charged that “the battle has just begun in which the fate of the black race is to be decided.”

Even though slavery ended in 1865, it did not end overnight, and many white people continued to treat Black people poorly after slavery had ended. There was a lot of work to do to have Black people fully free after decades and decades of being enslaved by white people. To have their identity taken away often made them hate to embrace who they were as Black people.

Black abolition was very important to Black history and had a great contribution to the history today in the United States. It was a crucial time for Black people to get their freedom.

Black abolition was important and plays an important role in our society today:

They heightened the credibility of the cause and broadened its agenda, shaping the struggle into America’s first civil rights movement. Even as they fought for an end to

bondage in the South, many black abolitionists lobbied state legislatures in the 1840s and 1850s for equal African American access to the ballot box” (Black Abolitionists and the Fifteenth Amendment).

This was the time when Black history was made in the United States where slaves in the South obtained their freedom after so many sacrifices and getting treated horribly and more like  $\frac{3}{5}$  of a person.

Higher education can be draining for a Black person and especially for educators who are a part of higher education. Many of these people are constantly fighting against the unfair policies and trying to stand up for themselves and for their Black students. Higher education can be detrimentally difficult to Black people because they can be looked down upon and not be respected. Having people who are going to stand up for the ones who are not brave enough to stand up for themselves is very crucial. Therefore, being a Black educator or a student in higher education can be difficult because of rules that have been set for decades to bring Black people down and make them feel as a less of a person. While it is important to recognize that institutions like the University of Idaho was not created with Black people in mind. I and other Black students, faculty, staff, and administrators are committed to ensuring that Black people on campus have a sense of belonging. And we draw inspiration for the legacy of Black abolitionists who fought to give us the freedoms and rights we have today.

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## Works Cited

“Black Abolitionists and the Fifteenth Amendment (U.S. National Park Service).” *National Parks Service*, U.S. Department of the Interior, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/black-abolitionists-and-the-fifteenth-amendment.htm>.