WE’VE GOT TO TELL THE UNVARNISHED TRUTH

— JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN

FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AFTER ENSLAVED AFRICANS WERE FIRST BROUGHT TO VIRGINIA, MOST AMERICANS STILL DON’T KNOW THE FULL STORY OF SLAVERY.
We are committing educational malpractice.'
The goal of The 1619 Project is to reframe American history, making explicit what slavery is the foundation on which this country is built. For generations, we have been adequately taught this history. Our hope is to paint a fuller picture of the institution that shaped our nation.

Why Can't We Teach This?
By N'Kita Stewart

In the preface to “The Geographical Reader for the Children of the World,” the late Dr. Carter G. Woodson wrote: “Every science of Geography has its special method. Each will succeed in bringing this beautiful and useful study within the grasp of little folks, and in making it both interesting and pleasant, more attractive than any other studies. This book is written especially for the use of schools and kindergartens. The Series of Schools is in the midst of the Civil War. Teachers could review the lessons with suggested questions in the book of the back. Part of Lesson IX’s suggested read:

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Is the African savage in this country?
A. The Caucasian.

Q. Which race is the most civilized?
A. The Caucasian.
Sometime in 1619, a Portuguese slave ship, the São João Bautista, traveled across the Atlantic Ocean with a hull filled with human cargo: captive Africans from Angola, in southwestern Africa. The men, women and children, most likely from the kingdoms of Ndongo and Kongo, endured the horrific journey, bound for a life of enslavement in Mexico. Almost half the captives had died by the time the ship was seized by two English pirate ships; the remaining Africans were taken to Point Comfort, a port near Jamestown, the capital of the British colony of Virginia, which the Virginia Company of London had established 12 years earlier. The colonist John Rolfe wrote to Sir Edwin Sandys, of the Virginia Company, that in August 1619, a "Dutch man of war" arrived in the colony and "brought not anything but 20 and odd Negroes, which the governor and cape merchant bought for victuals." The Africans were most likely put to work in the tobacco fields that had recently been established in the area.

Forced labor was not uncommon — Africans and Europeans had been trading goods and people across the Mediterranean for centuries — but enslavement had not been based on race. The trans-Atlantic slave trade, which began as early as the 15th century, introduced a system of slavery that was commercialized, racialized and inherited. Enslaved people were seen not as people at all but as commodities to be bought, sold and exploited. Though people of African descent — free and enslaved — were present in North America as early as the 1500s, the sale of the "20 and odd" African people set the course for what would become slavery in the United States.

MARY ELLIOTT is curator of American slavery at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture, where she co-curated the "Slavery and Freedom" exhibition. JAZMINE HUGHES is a writer and editor at The New York Times Magazine.
IN 1624, after her brother's death, Njinga gained control of the kingdom of Ndongo, in present-day Angola. At the time, the Portuguese were trying to colonize Ndongo and nearby territory in part to acquire more people for their slave trade, and after two years as ruler, Njinga was forced to flee in the face of Portuguese attack. Eventually, however, she occupied a nearby kingdom called Matamba. Njinga continued to fight fiercely against Portuguese forces in the region for many years, and she later provided shelter for runaway Africans. Hand-colored lithograph by Achille Devéria, 1830s.

Cultivating Wealth and Power

The SLAVE TRADE provided political power, social standing and wealth for the church, European nation-states, New World colonies and individuals. This portrait — John Greenwood connects slavery and prestige through the image of a group of Rhode Island slave captives and merchants drinking at a tavern in the Dutch colony of Surinam, a hub of trade. These men made money by trading the commodities produced by slavery globally — among the North American colonies, Spain, Portugal, England, France, the Netherlands and Denmark and England — seeking similar economic and geopolitical power in the trade, exchanging goods and people with leaders along the West African coast, who ran self-sustaining societies known for their mined-rich land and wealth in gold and other trade goods. They complied to secure the assent and cohesion of the New World. With these efforts, a new form of slavery came into being. It was endorsed by the European nation-states and based on race, and it reached its most realized form in the world: Some 12.5 million men, women and children of African descent were forced into the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The sale of their bodies and the product of their labor brought the Atlantic world into being, including colonial North America. In the colonies, status began to be defined by race and class, and whether by custom, case law or statute, freedom was limited to maintain the enterprise of slavery and ensure power.

‘All children borne in this country shall be held bond or free only according to the condition of the mother.’

Virginia law enacted in 1662

Virginia law enacted in 1662
Left: An iron ballast block used to counterbalance the weight of enslaved persons aboard the São José Paquete Africa slave ship, which left Mozambique in 1794 and sank near what is now Cape Town, South Africa.

Right: A child’s iron shackles, before 1860.

Means Of Control

“The iron entered into our souls,” lamented a formerly enslaved man named Caesar, as he remembered the shackles he had to wear during his forced passage from his home in Africa to the New World. Used as restraints around the arms and legs, the coarse metal cut into captive Africans’ skin for the many months they spent at sea. Children made up about 26 percent of the captives. The cargo capacity was determined by the tonnage of the vessel and the size of its crew, so enslavers considered children especially advantageous: They could fill the ship’s small space, allowing more human capital to be shipped to the New World. African children were crammed into ships, with no knowledge of where they were going or if they would ever be released. This forced migration is known as the Middle Passage. As Olaudah Equiano, the formerly enslaved author, remembered, “I was soon put down under the deck, and I lost sight of the sun, and the尘土iness of the stench, and crying together. I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had the least desire to taste anything. I now wished for the last friend, death, to relieve me.” Dehydration, starvation, and disease were common aboard slave ships, and roughly 15 percent of each ship’s enslaved population died before they ever reached land. Suicide attempts were so common that many captains placed netting around their ships to prevent loss of human cargo and therefore profit; working-class white crew members, too, committed suicide or ran away at port to escape the brutality.

Enslaved people did not meekly accept their fate. Approximately one out of 10 slave ships experienced resistance, ranging from individual defiance (like refusing to eat or jumping overboard) to full-blown mutiny.
ENSLAVED BLACK people came from regions and ethnic groups throughout Africa. Though they came empty-handed, they carried with them memories of loved ones and communities, moral values, intellectual insight, artistic talents and cultural practices, religious beliefs and skills. In their new environment, they relied on these memories to create new practices infused with old ones. In the Low Country region of the Carolinas and Georgia, planters specifically requested skilled enslaved people from a region stretching from Senegal to Liberia, who were familiar with the conditions ideal for growing rice. Charleston quickly became the busiest port for people shipped from West Africa. The coiled or woven baskets used to separate rice grains from husks were a form of artistry and technology brought from Africa to the colonies. Although the baskets were utilitarian, they also served as a source of artistic pride and a way to stay connected to the culture and memory of the homeland.

A Deadly Commodity

**BEFORE COTTON dominated American agriculture, sugar drove the slave trade throughout the Caribbean and Spanish Americas.** Sugar cane was a brutal crop that required constant work six days a week, and it maimed, burned and killed those involved in its cultivation. The life span of an enslaved person on a sugar plantation was often shorter than seven years. Unfazed, plantation owners worked their enslaved laborers to death and prepared for this high turnover by ensuring that new enslaved people arrived on a regular basis to replace the dying. The British poet William Cowper captured this ethos when he wrote, “I pity them greatly, but I must be mum, for how could we do without sugar or rum?” The sweetening of coffee and tea took precedence over human life and set the tone for slavery in the Americas.
‘If one minute’s freedom had been offered to me, and I had been told I must die at the end of that minute, I would have taken it.’

— Mum Bett
God Wouldn’t Want Segregated Sanctuaries

BLACK PEOPLE, both free and enslaved, relied on faith to hold onto their humanity under the most inhumane circumstances. In 1807, the Rev. Richard Allen and other black congregants walked out of services at St. George’s Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia to protest its segregated congregations. Allen, an abolitionist who was born enslaved, had moved to Philadelphia after purchasing his freedom. There he joined St. George’s, where he initially preached to integrated congregations. It quickly became clear that integration went only so far: he was directed to preach a separate service designated for black parishioners. Dismayed that black people were still treated as inferiors in what was meant to be a holy space, Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal denomination and directed to preach a separate service designated for black parishioners. Dismayed that black people were still treated as inferiors in what was meant to be a holy space, Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia to protest its segregated congregations. Allen, an abolitionist who was born enslaved, had moved to Philadelphia after purchasing his freedom. There he joined St. George’s, where he initially preached to integrated congregations. It quickly became clear that integration went only so far: he was directed to preach a separate service designated for black parishioners. Dismayed that black people were still treated as inferiors in what was meant to be a holy space, Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal denomination and directed to preach a separate service designated for black parishioners. Dismayed that black people were still treated as inferiors in what was meant to be a holy space, Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia to protest its segregated congregations. Allen, an abolitionist who was born enslaved, had moved to Philadelphia after purchasing his freedom. There he joined St. George’s, where he initially preached to integrated congregations. It quickly became clear that integration went only so far: he was directed to preach a separate service designated for black parishioners. Dismayed that black people were still treated as inferiors in what was meant to be a holy space, Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal denomination and directed to preach a separate service designated for black parishioners. Dismayed that black people were still treated as inferiors in what was meant to be a holy space, Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia to protest its segregated congregations. Allen, an abolitionist who was born enslaved, had moved to Philadelphia after purchasing his freedom. There he joined St. George’s, where he initially preached to integrated congregations. It quickly became clear that integration went only so far: he was directed to preach a separate service designated for black parishioners. Dismayed that black people were still treated as inferiors in what was meant to be a holy space, Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal denomination and directed to preach a separate service designated for black parishioners. Dismayed that black people were still treated as inferiors in what was meant to be a holy space, Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia to protest its segregated congregations. Allen, an abolitionist who was born enslaved, had moved to Philadelphia after purchasing his freedom. There he joined St. George’s, where he initially preached to integrated congregations. It quickly became clear that integration went only so far: he was directed to preach a separate service designated for black parishioners. Dismayed that black people were still treated as inferiors in what was meant to be a holy space, Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal denomination and directed to preach a separate service designated for black parishioners. Dismayed that black people were still treated as inferiors in what was meant to be a holy space, Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia to protest its segregated congregations. Allen, an abolitionist who was born enslaved, had moved to Philadelphia after purchasing his freedom. There he joined St. George’s, where he initially preached to integrated congregations. It quickly became clear that integration went only so far: he was directed to preach a separate service designated for black parishioners. Dismayed that black people were still treated as inferiors in what was meant to be a holy space, Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal denomination and directed to preach a separate service designated for black parishioners. Dismayed that black people were still treated as inferiors in what was meant to be a holy space, Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia to protest its segregated congregations. Allen, an abolitionist who was born enslaved, had moved to Philadelphia after purchasing his freedom. There he joined St. George’s, where he initially preached to integrated congregations. It quickly became clear that integration went only so far: he was directed to preach a separate service designated for black parishioners. Dismayed that black people were still treated as inferiors in what was meant to be a holy space, Allen founded the African Methodist Episcopal denomination and directed to preach a separate service designated for black parishioners. Dismayed that black people were still treated as inferiors in what was mean...
Brethren, arise, arise! Strike for your lives and liberties. Now is the day and the hour. . . . Let your motto be resistance!

— Henry Highland Garnet, 1843
Enlisting in a Moral Fight

The Emancipation Proclamation

Freedom Begins

Always on Your Person

One Family's Ledger

Growing National Tension

The Slave Patrols

Liberation Theology

IN 1831, Nat Turner, along with about 70 enslaved and free black people, led a revolt in Southampton County, Va., that shocked the nation. Turner, a preacher who had frequent, powerful inklings, planned his uprising for months, jettisoning it if affecting a solar eclipse, which he interpreted as a sign from God. He and his followers burned and killed white men, women and children, sparing only a number of poor white people. They killed nearly 60 people over two days, before being discovered. Turner went into hiding, but he was found and hanged in about six months. It was one of the deadliest revolts during slavery. A powerful act of resistance that left enslaved people — reflected on the events, stating a powerful act of resistance, that left enslaved people — that controlled the lives of black people, free or enslaved, that controlled the lives of black people, free or enslaved. Stringent laws went into effect after the revolt, including one that controlled the movement of the enslaved. Large assemblies of Negroes Negro preaching. It is those large assemblies of Negroes Negro causes the sickness! More stringent laws went into effect after the revolt, including one that controlled the movement of the enslaved. Large assemblies of Negroes Negro preaching. It is those large assemblies of Negroes Negro causes the sickness!

The Emancipation Proclamation

Lincoln issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, stating that if the Confederacy did not end its rebellion by Jan. 1, 1863, “all persons held as slaves” in the states that had seceded would be free. The Confederacy did not comply, and the proclamation went into effect. But the Emancipation Proclamation did free those enslaved in Union-controlled states — approximately 3.5 million people who did not apply to half a million enslaved people in states that weren’t part of the Confederacy — Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, Delaware and what would become West Virginia — or those people in parts of the Confederacy that were already under Northern control. They remained enslaved until Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox on Apr. 9, 1865. The freedom promised by the Emancipation Proclamation still left millions of enslaved people in bondage — did not occur until the ratification of the 13th Amendment on Dec. 6, 1865. Only then was the tyranny of slavery truly over. Nevertheless, the Emancipation Proclamation was deeply meaningful to the community of formerly enslaved African-Americans and their allies. Annual emancipation celebrations were established, including Juneteenth, across the country. African-Americans gathering spots were renamed Emancipation Farms. Juneteenth celebrations were meant as a reminder that African-Americans, enslaved and free, could be freed for freedom for all and change on entire nation.

IN 1846, Col. Henry W. Adams, of the 6th Infantry, Virginia Militia, started a slave patrol in Pittsylvania County, Va., that would visit all Negro quarters . . . as oftentimes, unlawfully assembled, meet in one place from one plantation to another, without a legal assembly, with some amount of tumult or noise or noise, to take them before the next justice of the peace, if at such a case, it is required to order the master to effectuate the purpose; and the juries will receive any number of lashes, not exceeding 20 in his or her back.” Slave patrols throughout the nation were created by white people who were fearful of revolution and were seeking to protect their human property. While overseers were enslaved on plantation sites as a means of control, slave patrols — which prohibited plantations, streets, woods and public space — were thought to serve the larger community. White slave patrols were not an isolated event but part of a larger movement of the enslaved community, who still found ways around them.

Growing National Tension

Younger Congress passed a new federal antislavery law, required that all citizens aid in the capturing of fugitive enslaved black people. Lack of compliance was punished by fining the law. The previous law, from 1793, enslaved enslaved to escape runaway enslaved persons, but it was difficult to enforce. The 1850 act — which created a legal obligation for Americans, regardless of their moral views on slavery, to support the enforcement the enforcement — divided the nation and undergirded the path to the Civil War. Black people could not testify on their own behalf, so if a white person incorrectly charged the status of a black person, the person was unable to tell his or her own defense and could not be enslaved. In 1837, David Scott, who was enslaved, went to court to claim his freedom after his enslaver transported him into a free state and territory. The Supreme Court determined his fate when Chief Justice Roger B. Taney stated that no person — was building capital, a black people, led a revolt in the South, Virginia, and the words of the proclamation were established, including Annual emancipation celebrations were established, including Juneteenth, across the country. African-Americans gathering spots were renamed Emancipation Farms. Juneteenth celebrations were meant as a reminder that African-Americans, enslaved and free, could be freed for freedom for all and change on entire nation.

The Emancipation Proclamation

IN 1846, Col. Henry W. Adams, of the 6th Infantry, Virginia Militia, started a slave patrol in Pittsylvania County, Va., that would visit all Negro quarters . . . as oftentimes, unlawfully assembled, meet in one place from one plantation to another, without a legal assembly, with some amount of tumult or noise or noise, to take them before the next justice of the peace, if at such a case, it is required to order the master to effectuate the purpose; and the juries will receive any number of lashes, not exceeding 20 in his or her back.” Slave patrols throughout the nation were created by white people who were fearful of revolution and were seeking to protect their human property. While overseers were enslaved on plantation sites as a means of control, slave patrols — which prohibited plantations, streets, woods and public space — were thought to serve the larger community. White slave patrols were not an isolated event but part of a larger movement of the enslaved community, who still found ways around them.

Growing National Tension

Younger Congress passed a new federal antislavery law, required that all citizens aid in the capturing of fugitive enslaved black people. Lack of compliance was punished by fining the law. The previous law, from 1793, enslaved enslaved to escape runaway enslaved persons, but it was difficult to enforce. The 1850 act — which created a legal obligation for Americans, regardless of their moral views on slavery, to support the enforcement the enforcement — divided the nation and undergirded the path to the Civil War. Black people could not testify on their own behalf, so if a white person incorrectly charged the status of a black person, the person was unable to tell his or her own defense and could not be enslaved. In 1837, David Scott, who was enslaved, went to court to claim his freedom after his enslaver transported him into a free state and territory. The Supreme Court determined his fate when Chief Justice Roger B. Taney stated that no person — was building capital, a black people, led a revolt in the South, Virginia, and the words of the proclamation were established, including Annual emancipation celebrations were established, including Juneteenth, across the country. African-Americans gathering spots were renamed Emancipation Farms. Juneteenth celebrations were meant as a reminder that African-Americans, enslaved and free, could be freed for freedom for all and change on entire nation.
'I shall never forget that memorable night, when in a distant city I waited and watched at a public meeting, with 3,000 others not less anxious than myself, for the word of deliverance which we have heard read today. Nor shall I ever forget the outburst of joy and thanksgiving that rent the air when the lightning brought to us the Emancipation Proclamation.'

— Frederick Douglass

‘The story of the African-American is not only the quintessential American story but it’s really the story that continues to shape who we are today.’ – Lonnie G. Bunch III, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution