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by S J

Submission date: 10-May-2021 05:33PM (UTC-0400)

Submission ID: 1583054120

File name: civil_rights_in_Virginia.edited.docx (31.34K)

Word count: 1595

Character count: 8712

Virginia Civil Rights Struggle

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Civil rights in Virginia are traced back to when the United States colonized and made the native people slaves. Slavery was a common issue in those days because colonialists came and invaded American soil, which made them use the native people as their properties and made them work in their lands. Nevertheless, the secrets are critical in understanding the historical nature of how civil rights were attained. Although the Americans were taken as slaves, more people were transported in dilapidated situations using the ship and sold to become the property of another colonialist. Therefore, the purpose of the paper will focus on explaining how several slavery figures helped in the initiation of the civil war movement, the effect of the Antebellum age on civil rights, the manumission of slaves, and the civil war in America. Similarly, the paper added that the recent issue in civil rights is the death of George Floyd, which indicated that racism is in the United States and interfering with the equality for all movement. The Virginia, civil rights struggle, was achieved by several slave figures and changed other people's thinking about slavery, the manumission of slaves, the civil war, and the Kansas-Nebraska Act, ensuring people had equal rights.

Civil rights are a critical aspect in individuals' life because it ensures all people have equal access and opportunities regardless of their race, gender or ethnicity. Therefore, by the culmination of the American Revolution, the United States entered the Antebellum age. The antebellum age is a period between the revolutionary era and the civil war.¹ Also, the same source added that the Antebellum age started with the election of America's third president, Thomas Jefferson, and was continuous during the years preceding the civil war. Therefore, it is essential to consider the antebellum age because it significantly impacted the civil rights

¹Levy, Peter B. *The Civil Rights Movement: A Reference Guide*. ABC-CLIO, 2019.

movement. It comprised immense divisions and provincialism in America, which ultimately resulted in civil war.

Moreover, the civil rights movement between 1950 to the 1970s focused on attaining black freedom. The first African individuals entered Virginia in 1619; however, the most nefarious activity was, and the horrendous image was acquired from the Deep South. Virginia's work in the movement seems to superintend. The action was initiated because most people were eager to enter the United States soil, considering that the colonialist could use any means, including buying their passages to enter the country. Slaves entered the country in different ways, including servitude and other kidnapped and brought as slaves.² Servitude was taken to their masters and will be provided with food, shelter, and clothes. After completing their contract, they would be given freedom and cultivate almost fifty to one hundred acres. Nonetheless, by the 17th century, many servitudes were taken as slavery and not given their freedom as agreed because colonists needed more laborers in their farms, which resulted in increased forced slavery. This made the business flourish and very lucrative for the merchants despite many people dying through kidnappers and transportation, nevertheless, by 1800, more servitude was performed by enslaved individuals that were either kidnapped and taken to the United States or those that were born as slaves because their parents were abducted and considered as slaves.

The majority of American leaders were involved in owning slaves. For example, the third president of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, had slaves and looked at several kids of

² Wilson, Cam. "Speaking for history: Tracing the historical debate surrounding the origins of black slavery in Virginia." *Agora* 52, no. 1 (2017): 41-44.

the enslaved individuals.³ Nevertheless, several enslaved individuals obtained liberty through their masters. Similarly, the freed slaves were allowed to purchase their farms and live their lives as well as with the money received from working in the previous works. Therefore, the giving of freedom to the slaves voluntarily is known as manumission. Nonetheless, most enslaved individuals gained their independence by absconding their slavery by moving to the Northern States that were regarded as free states.

After the whole period of the Antebellum age, Virginia anticipated the space of fitting slavery in the nation as it develops. Therefore, at the start of the civil war in the United States, Virginia decided to different from the Union to unite with the confederacy. Nevertheless, by 1860, Virginia was advancing and progressing well because of its success. This made their economy flourish and become irresistible. The growth of the economy emerged due to farming which resulted in significant crops thriving and factory development. Nonetheless, the problems of slavery occurred amid the successful transition of the economy and industry development. During the 1832 debates, which focused on slavery and individuals against it, it became antagonistic.

Nevertheless, through the discussion on abolishing slavery becoming violent, many American individuals supported the idea of slavery to feel threatened. Also, the idea impacted the societies because it made people begin changing the notion of taking slaves as their property. Although opponents were few individuals during that time, because many people who were willing to voice their ideas of ending slavery were hastily silenced and given fines, the idea did not take long for it to be championed to eradicate slavery.

³ Holland, Jesse. *The invisibles: The untold story of African American slaves in the White House*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2016.

Slave figures that championed the freedom of other slavery were also essential in bringing civil rights to Virginia. The United States had many slaves working in the land fields. For example, Nat Turner was among the slaves that initiated a common slave revolution in the United States. However, due to Turner uniting the slaves and showing them the direction of fighting for their freedom and equality, he was caught and murdered. Still, the move resulted in the emancipation movement. Although many slaves suffered the consequences of being involved in the Turners movement, the initiation began the civil rights movement despite it being violent. Similarly, Turner united other slaves that worked together and joined in killing the family of their master and continued their grisly mission in the night, devastating women, men, and kids.

Another important slave figure is Dred Scott. Scott started finding his liberty in 1846 and was among the first slaves to attain the freedom that many slave individuals did not believe it can be possible. Therefore, Scott started the battle in the justice system and began the journey that resulted in a typical case called the Dred Scott V. Sandford.⁴ Although Scott was born a slave, most of the time, he utilized working on getting independence. Furthermore, Dred consumed ample time in other states that were free because of the Missouri Compromise. Although the period was vital for the United States as a country, it used 11 years for the decision to be presented, which did not favor liberty. This resulted in the case taken to the supreme court, which later decided that the Missouri Compromise was unlawful as Scott was a slave hence not an American citizen. The Missouri Compromise was then stopped and resulted in a substantial setback for all individuals' civil rights. the foundation of civil rights began despite more setbacks occurring. "While Truman's committee was preparing its report, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) staged a journey in several upper South states. Like the better-known freedom rides of

⁴Levy, Peter B. *The Civil Rights Movement: A Reference Guide*. ABC-CLIO, 2019.

the 1960s, which CORE also organized the journey of Reconciliation sought to desegregate public facilities and raise public awareness of the racial problem in America."⁵

The issue of segregation is immense and continues to grow in children even while in academic institutions. Therefore, individuals need to be informed on equal rights for all people regardless of their race or ethnicity. The use of previous oral history on the civil rights movement is essential in educating students concerning the past liberation events. Therefore, the civil rights movement banned discrimination comprising bus station waiting rooms and restrooms utilized by interstate bus lines. For instance, five institutions integrated proceedings comprising of court's decision on *Brown v. Board*.⁶ Nevertheless, the recent issue in Virginia that has roots in the struggle is the "Black Lives Matter" protest. The protest was initiated by the increased death of Black Americans in the United States. Therefore, upon the death of George Floyd, three young black women started a "Black Lives Matter" protest in Southern Virginia.⁷

In summation, civil rights movements are initiated by individuals who are eager and determined to get their freedom and others back. Therefore, it will always require significant figures that are willing to give their life for the sake of liberty, such as Dred Scott and Nat Turner. Also, another influence that resulted in the civil rights movement is through manumission and antebellum age. The civil war is also another motivating event that helped in

⁵ Levy, Peter B. *The Civil Rights Movement: A Reference Guide*. ABC-CLIO, 2019.

⁶ Suh, Yonghee, and Brian J. Daugherty. "Oral History as Inquiry." *The History Teacher* 51, no. 4 (2018): 697-709.

⁷ Hannah, Natanson. When Black Lives Matter came to White, rural America. *The Washington Post* (2020).

opening the slave's eyes. Similarly, the slaves played a significant role because they were taken as property which made most of them to revolt against their masters in need of freedom.

Although many people have achieved to work together and increased the development of human rights in the constitution, there are still events that indicate the struggle for civil rights. For instance, the "Black Lives Matter" during the death of George Floyd means a movement championing for equal rights of all races in Virginia and the United States in general.

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