

HISTORICAL WITNESS

★ SOCIAL MESSAGING ★

TIMELINE

73–71 B.C.

The slave and peasant revolt led by the gladiator Spartacus engulfs all of southern Italy and leads to the defeat of five Roman armies and the sacrifice of over five thousand slaves/gladiators.

A.D. 1–25

Grave Relief of Publius Curtilius Agatus, Silversmith is carved by a Roman artist in Italy.

About 39

Seneca the Elder (also known as Seneca the Rhetorician), who argued that slaves should at least be treated fairly, dies.

80

The Colosseum is completed. The opening is marked with one hundred days of games that feature hundreds of gladiator fights (usually between slaves) and the slaughter of over nine thousand animals.

About 250

The Kingdom of Axum (Ethiopia) gains controls of Red Sea trade.

641

Muslims conquer Egypt.

1215

In England, the Magna Carta is written, a document that continues to influence common laws today.

1240

The Kingdom of Ghana declines, and dozens of slave trading posts are established on the Gold Coast of Ghana.

1347–50

The Black Death occurs in Europe, killing about one million people.

1441

The European slave trade begins in Africa. Portuguese captains capture twelve Africans in Cabo Branco (modern-day Mauritania) and take them to Portugal as slaves.

1452

African slaves are put to work on the sugar plantations in Portuguese colonial territories, starting the "sugar-slave complex."

1476

Carlos de Valera of Castile in Spain enslaves four hundred people from Africa.

1482

Portugal sets up trading settlements in Ghana.

1519

Ferdinand Magellan leaves on his journey to sail around the world from Spain.

1522

The first slave revolt occurs on the Caribbean Island of Hispaniola.

1564–69

Sir John Hawkins travels from England to the Sierra Leone River. He transports twelve hundred Africans across the Atlantic Ocean to sell to Spanish settlers on Hispaniola.

1607

England establishes its first permanent colony in Jamestown, Virginia.

1619

Virginia becomes a destination for the arrival of enslaved Africans.

1624

The Dutch invade and establish a North American community in New Amsterdam.



1636

America's first slave carrier, *Desire*, is built and launched in Massachusetts.

1641

Massachusetts becomes the first of many colonies to legalize slavery.

1652

The Dutch establish a colony at the Cape of Good Hope, South Africa.

1655

England seizes Jamaica from Spain.

1660

Virginia legalizes slavery.

About 1680–1820

The Enlightenment, a rational approach to economic, religious, social, and political issues, promotes a nonreligious worldview.

1705

The Virginia General Assembly declares: "All Negro, mulatto and Indian slaves...shall be held to be real estate. If any slave resist his master...correcting such slave, and shall happen to be killed in such correction...the master shall be free of all punishment."

1720–30

Almost two hundred thousand enslaved Africans are transported across the Atlantic Ocean in British ships.

1740

South Carolina passes the Negro Act, prohibiting slaves from assembling in groups, wearing clothes made from certain high-quality fabrics, and learning to read or write. Owners are permitted to execute slaves who attempt to run away.

1758

Bust of a Man is produced by Francis Harwood in Florence, Italy.

1762

The Social Contract is published by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the French philosopher, natural rights theorist, and literary figure.

1775

The American Revolution begins.

1776

The Declaration of Independence declares that "all men are created equal."

1783

The American Revolution ends; the British recognize the United States as an independent country.

1787

"Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil of Slavery" by Quobna Ottobah Cugoano is published.

1789

The French Revolution begins with the storming of the Bastille. Church property is nationalized.

The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African is published in England and distributed in America. Equiano becomes a central figure in the abolitionist movement in England.

1790s

British Caribbean colonies are populated by almost half a million enslaved people.

1791

A slave uprising in Haiti (Saint-Domingue) is led by Toussaint L'Ouverture.

HISTORICAL WITNESS

★ SOCIAL MESSAGING ★

1807

Slavery is abolished in the British Empire, due, in part, because of the antislavery activism of the abolitionist William Wilberforce.

1808

The U.S. Congress bans the importation of slaves.

1814

The Dutch outlaw the slave trade.

1829

Mexico abolishes slavery and becomes a haven for fugitive slaves from the United States.

1830

Congress passes the Removal Act, forcing Native Americans to settle in territory west of the Mississippi River.

1831

William Lloyd Garrison founds *The Liberator*, an abolitionist newspaper, in New England.

1833

A new British law declares the ownership of slaves illegal.

1839

Africans aboard the Cuban slave ship *Amistad* revolt while being transported to a Caribbean plantation.

1845

Frederick Douglass publishes his *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*.

1848

France abolishes slavery.

1850

Harriet Tubman is made an official "conductor" of the Underground Railroad, a network of routes to lead former slaves to free territory.

1852

Harriett Beecher Stowe publishes *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, an antislavery novel.

1860

Abraham Lincoln is elected as the sixteenth president of the United States.

The U.S. slave population is close to four million. The ratio of free to enslaved Americans is about seven to one.

1861

The American Civil War begins.

Tsar Alexander II issues a proclamation emancipating Russia's serfs.

1862

Slavery is prohibited in Washington, D.C., and the territories.

Slaves of General Thomas F. Drayton is produced by Henry P. Moore in Hilton Head, South Carolina.

1863

Under the Emancipation Proclamation, President Lincoln declares free only those slaves living in states not under Union control.

1865

The American Civil War ends.

The Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution abolishes slavery in the United States.

1866

Race riots erupt in Memphis, Tennessee, and New Orleans, Louisiana.

The Ku Klux Klan is founded in Tennessee by Confederate Civil War veterans.

1886

Slavery is abolished in Cuba.



1888

Slavery is abolished in Brazil.

1896

The Supreme Court decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* allows Louisiana's "separate but equal" facilities for whites and blacks on and near railroads.

1936

Slavery is made illegal in Northern Nigeria.

1964

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is passed, banning discrimination in public places and enforcing equal opportunity in the workplace.

2008

The U.S. prison population is 2.3 million, making the ratio of free to incarcerated Americans ten to one. One in fifteen black adults and one in nine black men between the ages of twenty and thirty-four are incarcerated.