

# Critical Race Theory



The history of the Democratic Party on matters of race from the party’s inception through the Civil War.

[Complete references on the reverse side]

- ❖ 19 February 1807. Aaron Burr Arrested for Treason. Later acquitted based on suspicious circumstances involving the judge (Chief Justice John Marshall), who was a foe to President Jefferson<sup>1</sup> , who brought the suit against Burr, and Chief Juror John Randolph- who was also an outspoken critic of Jefferson.<sup>2</sup>
- ❖ 1812 Tammany Hall, the seat of the democratic party in New York City was notorious for its legendary corruption which spanned most of the 19th century and sone of the 20th.<sup>3</sup>
- ❖ March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1829. Andrew Jackson was elected president. Records indicate that Andrew Jackson was pro-slavery and was himself a brutal slave owner. Moreover, he did not free the slaves he purchased upon his death like many others, including Thomas Jefferson did.<sup>4 5</sup>
- ❖ 28 May, 1830. Democrats under Jackson pass the Indian Removal Act and begins the eradication of the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek and Seminole Nations. thousands of Native Americans died as a result of the land confiscation and human relocation efforts authorized by the act. Jackson's democrats passed the bill by a margin of 101 to 97- Jackson's democrats made up 97% of those voting for the confiscation of indian lands and the forced removal of the Indians. In contrast, about 96% of the representatives from other parties opposed the bill.<sup>6 7</sup>
- ❖ 1836, democrat Franklin Pierce, while serving in the U.S. House of Representatives, supported what came to be known as the slavery gag rule, which allowed for anti- slavery petitions to be received by the house of representatives, but not read or considered. This passed the House in 1836 and remained in place until 1844.<sup>8 9</sup>
- ❖ 4 March 1837. Democrat Van Buren wins the presidency and upholds his commitment in support of slavery. In his inauguration speech he expressed "I must go into the Presidential chair the inflexible and uncompromising opponent of every attempt on the part of Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia against the wishes of the slaveholding states, and also with a determination equally decided to resist the slightest interference with it in the States where it exists."<sup>10</sup>
- ❖ 1837. The closing of the Bank of the United States by Andrew Jackson plunged the US into the economic depression known as the "Panic of 1837". The bank closure was perceived as an attack against the funding sources of opponents to the democratic party by many. Jackson was censured by Congress for what they claimed was an abuse of presidential power against the Bank of the United States.<sup>11 12</sup>
- ❖ 1838. Van Buren completes the indian removal process initiated by Democrats under Andrew Jackson. Van Buren ordered the U.S. Army into the Cherokee Nation. The army rounded up as many Cherokees as possible into temporary stockades and then marched the captives, to the Indian Territory (what would eventually become Oklahoma. Estimates of the dead native Americans range between 4000 and 25000. The tragic event occurred over the course of between 3 to 6 months. It became known as "the Trail of Tears".<sup>13 14</sup>
- ❖ 1845. James Polk was elected President. Polk purchased slaves with his salary as President and did not free his slaves upon his death in 1853.<sup>15</sup> Polk even used his slaves in the White House instead of paid staff.<sup>16</sup>
- ❖ 1846. Democrat James Buchanan, as U.S. Secretary of State, sided with pro-slavery southern democrats in blocking the Wilmot Proviso which would have banned slavery in any territories acquired from Mexico as a result of the Mexican-American War. Supporters for the Wilmot Proviso helped form the basis for the Republican Party.<sup>17</sup>
- ❖ 1850. Buchanan supported the Compromise of 1850 which admitted California as a free state but would allow any new western territories to decide the slavery question on their own before being admitted as a state. Part of the compromise made it easier for slaveowners to recover runaway slaves.<sup>18</sup>
- ❖ In 1854 the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 was passed. This repealed the Missouri Compromise and would allow slavery west of the Missouri river. Missouri would enter the union as a slave state and Kansas would be allowed to determine the question of slavery on it's own. 69% of Democrats voted in favor of the act and 81% of the Whig party voted against it. This event led to a wave of violence against abolitionists in Kansas referred to as "Bleeding Kansas". Democrat Franklin Pierce was president at the time.<sup>19</sup>
- ❖ 1855. "Bleeding Kansas" occurs when pro-slavery democrats from Missouri beat, tar and feather and murder abolitionists in Kansas. The leader of the Pro-Slavery Missourans was Democrat United States Senator David Rice Atchison. Atchison was quoted as saying "kill every God-damned abolitionist in the district" when referring to Kansas. About 55 people were killed during the 4 year Bleeding Kansas debacle.<sup>20 21</sup>
- ❖ March, 1855. Pro-Slavery Democrats from Missouri cast 4968 fraudulent votes for slavery in a Kansas territorial election- such that 94.6% of the total of 5247 pro-slavery votes cast were fraudulent and cast by Missourans. Democrat President Franklin Pierce let the fraudulent election results stand.<sup>22</sup>
- ❖ March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1857. Democrat Justice Roger Taney hands down the Dred Scott decision effectively barring slaves from the protections of the U.S. Constitution. The supreme court decision was split 7-2 in favor, on party lines. The Whig (Republican) justices voted for constitutional protections for slaves. Justice Samuel Nelson, who voted against constitutional protections for slaves was a democrat appointed by Whig president John Tyler.<sup>23</sup>
- ❖ August 1858. Pro-slavery Missouri Democrats again attempt to steal the election for the territorial government of Kansas. Democcrat President James Buchanan accepted their efforts as legitimate and declared Kansas "as much of a slave state as Georgia or South Carolina" The fraud leading to the adoption of the pro-slavery Lecompton Constitution in Kansas was so rampant and obvious, the U.S. House of Representatives voted against the Democrat-held Senate and President and a new election was ordered, which the abolitionists won, garnering 85% of the vote.<sup>24 25</sup>
- ❖ 1858, In retaliation against Democrat Senator Stephen Douglas for not supporting the Lecompton Constitution and for opposing the electoral fraud perpetrated by Democrats in the Kansas territorial election, President Buchanan uses government contracts and Executive influence to derail Douglas' upcoming election. The effort does not succeed and Douglas was reelected. Although Stephen Douglas opposed the obvious fraud of the Lecompton Constitution, he was no friend of African Americans. In his Presidential debate with Republican, Abraham Lincoln, he said "I do not regard the Negro as my equal, and positively deny that he is my brother or any kin to me whatsoever."<sup>26 27</sup>
- ❖ August 1861- July 1864, the Republican Congress passed the set of acts collectively known as the Confiscation Acts. The acts were designed to weaken the confederacy, first by freeing the slaves that were used in support of the confederate military and then those that were owned by civilian and military confederate officials. Another act extended to confiscation of property and ultimately the emancipation of all slaves was passed. The acts were passed by Republicans against near unanimous Democrat opposition.<sup>28</sup>
- ❖ April 16, 1862: President Abraham Lincoln signed a bill ending slavery in Washington DC. The tally showed a distinct partisan divide with all the yes votes coming from Republicans and all the Democrats and Unionists voted against or absent. One Republican voted against the bill. The bill passed 29 to 14.<sup>29</sup>
- ❖ July 2, 1862: After being vetoed by Democrat President James Buchanan, Republican Congressman John Morrill from Vermont championed and successfully passed the Land Grant Act. The Land Grant Act established colleges and universities that would be open to native American and African Americans. The act passed in part due to the secession of 11 southern states that were aligned with the confederacy.<sup>30 31</sup>
- ❖ 8 April 1864: The 13th amendment, banning slavery passes the U.S. Senate 38 to 6 with 100% Republican support and with 43% of democrats in opposition.<sup>32</sup>
- ❖ 15 June, 1864 the Republicans amended the Militia Act of 1862 to give equal pay to African American soldiers.<sup>33</sup>
- ❖ June, 1864 the Republican controlled congress voted to repeal the Democrats Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. No Democrats voted to repeal. <sup>34</sup>
- ❖ October 29th, 1864: Sojourner Truth, a female African-American abolitionist and former slave wrote " I never was treated by anyone with more kindness and cordiality than were shown to me be that great and good man (Abraham Lincoln)"<sup>35</sup>
- ❖ 31 January 1865: the 13th amendment, banning slavery was passed by the house with unanimous Republican support and with 77% of Democrats voting against it.<sup>36</sup>
- ❖ 3 March, 1865: Republican congress establishes the Freedmen's Bureau to provide healthcare, education and technical assistance to emancipated slaves. The bill passed both houses of congress but was vetoed by President Andrew Johnson. The bill was signed by President Lincoln and became law- but it's provisions only lasted for one year. After Lincoln's assassination and when Andrew Johnson was President, Republican senator Lyman Trumbull introduced a bill to reinstate the provisions and to expand the program. Twice bills passed by the house and senate were vetoed by President Johnson until 1866 when the senate and house were able to override Johnson's veto.<sup>37</sup>
- ❖ 9 April, 1865. Confederate general Robert E. Lee surrenders to General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox courthouse in Virginia.<sup>38</sup>
- ❖ April, 1865. "Black codes", laws designed to impair the upward mobility of freed slaves in southern society were passed by Democratic-held legislatures in several southern states. The black codes were intended to ensure that African Americans remained second-class citizens in the south. The Freedmen's Bureau and the Civil Rights Act of 1866 were championed by Republicans in order to protect the interests of southern blacks. The Civil Rights Act of 1866 was passed by Republicans against unanimous Democrat opposition. <sup>39 40</sup>
- ❖ April 14, 1865. John Wilkes Booth, a pro-slavery sympathizer with the Democrat party assassinated Abraham Lincoln.<sup>41</sup>

Note: The researcher uncovered multiple references to how somehow "Republicans" and "Democrats" switched places after the civil war. No explanation is ever given with the incorrect assertion. In fact, it is based on a misunderstanding involving "Conservatives" of the time that wanted to "conserve" slavery (mostly southern Democrats) and "Liberals" that favored abolition and liberating the slaves (Republicans in general). It is the labels of "liberal" and "conservative" that have changed over time. As the history shows, pre-civil war Democrats were predominantly in favor of slavery and pre- civil war Republicans were predominantly against it. With respect to civil rights for African Americans, the pre-war trend continued well into the 20th century.

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Volume 2 of the “Critical Race HISTORY” list will address key events like the formation of the KKK, the attempts to legalize lynching, Jim Crow laws and attempts to fight or circumvent civil rights laws.