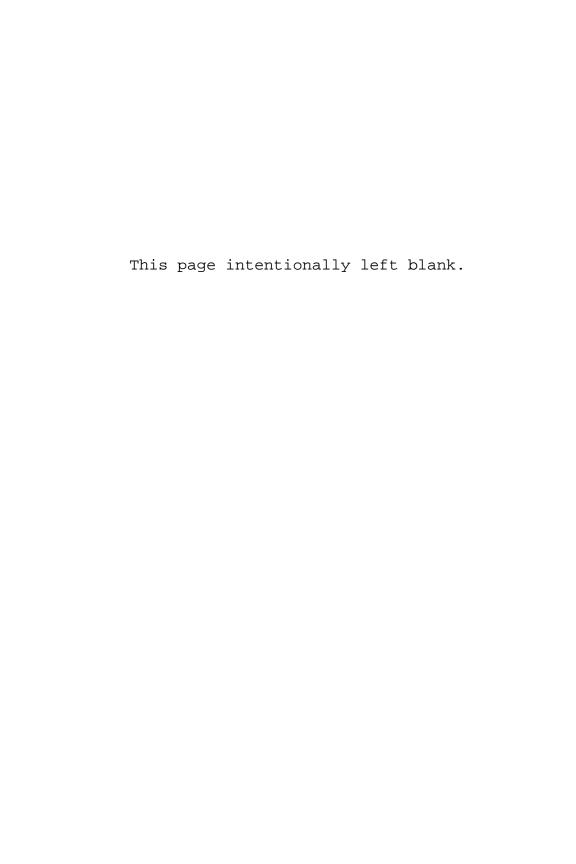# ANTI-BLACKNESS AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE BORDER SOUTH

Policy, Politics, and Protest in St. Louis, 1865–1972

CLAUDE WEATHERSBY
MATTHEW D. DAVIS

Anti-Blackness and Public Schools in the Border South

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Policy, Politics, and Protest in St. Louis, 1865–1972

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Foreword

The History of Education book series is sponsored by the Organization of Educational Historians (OEH). OEH was founded in 1965 as the Midwest History of Education Society (MHES) by Professor Kenneth Beasley of Northern Illinois University and Professor Gerald Gutek from Loyola University in Chicago. The two met at the 1964 annual meeting of the Midwest Philosophy of Education Society and realized the need for a regional history of education society in the Midwest. They invited historians of education at Midwestern colleges and universities to meet at Loyola University Chicago in Spring 1965 to organize the society. Ten historians gathered in a seminar room at Loyola's Lewis Towers, shared papers, and agreed to convene the first meeting of the Midwest History of Education Society that fall. For the next 3 decades, the society met annually at Loyola University on the last weekend in October.

The MHES operated for many years without a mission statement, a constitution, by-laws, or dues. The society was simply a convocation for historians of education. It had three officers who were elected for 1-year terms at the annual meeting: a president to preside over the annual meeting, a vice-president to organize the program, and a secretary to keep minutes and send out the annual notice of the meeting. With no dues and no funds, there was no need for a treasurer. The annual meeting consisted of papers, an evening banquet address, and a short business meeting. The meetings were informal with no official respondents to the papers but a great deal of lively conversation over the presentations. In 1973, under the leadership

of Professor Edward Rutkowski from the University of Northern Iowa, the society published its first *Annual Proceedings of the Midwest History of Education Society.*

By the late 1980s, the society had grown from its early beginnings and begun to attract members from other regions of the country. A more formal arrangement was needed, and the society adopted a constitution, by-laws, and began collecting dues. While maintaining the Society's openness, the changes helped to ensure that it would grow into a true professional organization for scholars of education history. In 2002, the *Annual Proceedings* became a peer-reviewed journal, the *American Educational History Journal.* Then, in December 2008, the membership voted to replace the name Midwest History of Education Society with the name Organization of Educational Historians. The Organization continues to meet in Chicago each fall and remains an informal, collegial venue for the exchange of ideas about the history of education.

The best historical tradition investigates the past to inform vital issues of the day. This volume is no different. The authors probe the long history of African-American activism on behalf of educational equity for their communities. In this case, the lens is turned on St. Louis, a hub city that has long connected the South, West, and Midwest. Following an overview of education history through the African-American lens, the authors detail developments in St. Louis after 1865. The story reveals consistent White antipathy to the educational aspirations of African Americans, but just as consistent activism and advocacy by African Americans on their own behalf. It is a story of neglect, duplicity, and hostility, but also of courageous individuals and forward thinking institutions. The sum is a richly textured narrative of the struggle for educational equity in one community with resonance for all communities that seek social justice in their education systems.

—Jared R. Stallones
Series Editor

Introduction

African American historians like John Hope Franklin, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Carter G. Woodson, committed to the concept of race uplift to improve the social and educational conditions of Black people, struggled to maintain objectivity in historical and social science research of the Black communities in which they reported. As the mindset of the White community grappled with the educability of Black people over the years, their slow acceptance of education for Blacks transferred to challenges of objectivity in African American historian research whose research focuses on the education of Black people. "Objectivity has long been the foundation of research in the physical and social sciences" (Alridge, 2003, p. 25). Peter Norvick (1988) argued, "The objective historian's role is that of a neutral, or disinterested, judge; it must never degenerate into that of advocate or, even worse, propagandist" (p. 2). The academy should not mitigate the efforts of Black scholars related to the question of "contaminated" research because of the objectivity issue.

The authors of this work made a concerted effort to achieve objectivity in spite of the lead author's St. Louis background, long-time resident of St. Louis City, and graduate of its St. Louis Public Schools district, which might run the risk of being too subjective and less scholarly (Collins, 2000). According to Vincent Harding (1974), the academy has asked Black scholars to offer "sympathetic but hard Black analysis concerning the nature and effectiveness of the sometimes strange and valiant approaches to the Black Freedom struggle which have arisen out of our own generation."

This narrative examined the Black Freedom struggle for equitable education in St. Louis, Missouri, via the St. Louis Public School district virtually from the inception of the school district. Unlike other public school districts in and around the City of St. Louis, Missouri, the St. Louis Public Schools district encompasses the entire City of St. Louis only. The public school district's boundaries do not exceed the St. Louis City boundaries. Dissimilar from other public school districts in the St. Louis metropolitan area that encompass several municipalities or parts of smaller municipalities, the St. Louis Public Schools district began and remained as the most influential public school district in the region from the mid-1800s through the major part of the 20th century.

Missouri's original state constitution, created in 1820 with its entry into the Union, reflected the state's slaveholding status. Missouri's beginnings as a slave state influenced the development of the St. Louis Public Schools district. Prior to the Civil War, the State of Missouri had outlawed the education of slaves with State legislation in 1847. However, a sense of educational activism accompanied other issues of self-determinism free and formerly enslaved Blacks' quest for education in Missouri. Enslaved people risked their lives to learn how to read and write because they realized the power of literacy. Educational attainment provided the way for Blacks to rise above the country's predetermined station in life for them. Blacks reached for something better for themselves and future generations. Without coming together to advocate for improvements and changes in their educational condition, Blacks would have made little progress.

While racism and anti-Black political and social governance proved a big hurdle to the creation and operation of schools for Blacks, the larger obstacle, the Black community's insistence on Black teachers as a key element of their political activism, became the lack of qualified Black teachers. During the Civil War, Blacks joined together to advocate for education in St. Louis by creating the St. Louis Board of Education for Free Colored Schools to run the American Missionary Association (AMA) schools for colored students. The first school facility developed by the AMA in St. Louis opened in Ebenezer Church on Washington Avenue in May 1863 with 50 students with a capacity to accommodate up to 400 students. On the third day of school, with 60 students in attendance, White citizens/residents burned the school down because of their opposition to the idea of educational opportunities for Blacks. This setback did not deter the AMA and it continued to hold classes in other churches and even at a nearby hotel to accommodate the Blacks' thirst for knowledge. Subsequently, free colored men of St. Louis lobbied the AMA to allow them to run their own schools. Prior to their incorporation by the St. Louis Public Schools, the

Black school board heralded the early advocacy efforts of Blacks to control their educational destinies.

The St. Louis Board of Education (Board), which governed the St. Louis Public Schools district, established the first high school for Blacks west of the Mississippi River in 1875 after Black educational activists agitated and petitioned for such a school. The Board established an elementary school for Blacks in 1867 to comply with the Missouri State Constitution of 1865. It has been in the wake of Black activism that several advancements for Blacks in the St. Louis Public Schools district occurred after 1865: the hiring of Black teachers to teach Black students, the creation of Charles E. Sumner High School, and the transition from school numbers to schools named after Blacks.

Two normal schools governed by the St. Louis Board of Education evolved into Harris Teachers College (Harris) for Whites (established in 1857) and Stowe Teachers College (Stowe) for Blacks (established in 1890). The establishment of a normal school in St. Louis for Blacks became necessary in 1877 when the Board, at the behest of Black educational activists, established the practice of assigning Negro teachers, if they were available, to Negro schools. The Board created the Normal Department within Charles E. Sumner High School in 1890. Normal schools, created in the 19th century, trained high school graduates to be teachers in the elementary schools. St. Louis became home to one of the few cities to feature longstanding city teachers' colleges.

Colonialism permeated the entire lifeworld of the enslaved. Those at the very bottom of the colonial hierarchy experienced the brunt of physical violence. The enslavement of African people did not curtail the desire of an expanding, educated, and literate population to define itself as more than mere slaves or circumscribed citizens. In essence, African enslavement throughout the diaspora bolstered the examination of liberation and all factors included within it. The "idea of progress" within the liberatory construct, involved a collective effort to become literate, enlightened thinking, and historical connectedness to radical progressive ideals. The denial of Black humanity was more than just a sociopolitical denial; it was an attempt to remove the African-American collective away from the possibilities of reimaging themselves. Rethinking the African-American role in Western civilization required a systematic engagement with Black achievements, ancient, and modern.

The Jim Crow legislation of the former slave states, legitimized with the *Plessy v. Ferguson* United States Supreme Court decision in 1896, allowed a great deal of racial discrimination to persist. The development of Black

institutions in the city of St. Louis, the creation of Black organizations (social and political), and the continued migration of Blacks to St. Louis in the early 1900s facilitated the Black educational, social, and political experiences that emerged in St. Louis.

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1

Education of African Americans Amid Anti-Black Political and Social Governance

In this effort, we will capitalize Black when referencing Black people, organizations, and cultural products. We base this usage on the definition provided by Michael J. Dumas: "Black is understood as a self-determined name of a racialized social group that shares a specific set of histories, cultural processes, and imagined and performed kinships" (Dumas, 2016, p. 12). Black, as a synonym for Negro, colored, and more recently—African American, replaces those terms in the literature; authors and researchers currently capitalize "black" in the Black freedom struggle histories/stories.

European Whites looked upon the enslaved and free Blacks in the same manner as European Whites viewed natives in other colonized locations throughout the world: The European White as the colonizer and the natives as the colonized. The American political relationship to its Black citizens has been a hoax. This relationship is more appropriately defined as the colonizer (United States) and the colonized (Blacks). In the United

States, the colonizer/colonized relationship has been more apparent in the relationship between European Whites and the Native American population: the process of drawing sustenance from the host and weakening that population in the manner as a parasite. Even though the transplanted Blacks in North America did not serve as hosts in a foreign land, the reality of chattel slavery provided sustenance from which the colonizer relied. The key to the colonizers' mastery of the colonized is to teach the colonized the colonizers' language (Memmi, 1967). English became the official language of the United States. "The colonial situation manufactures colonialists, just as it manufactures the colonized" (Memmi, 1967, pp. 55–56). "The inevitable outcome of colonialism with regard to the attitude of the colonizer towards the colonized is racism: Racism is not an incidental, but a consubstantial part of colonialism" (Memmi, 1967, p. 74).

The education of African Americans has undergone several phases during the history of the United States. Historically, before the U.S. Civil War, slaves rarely received the opportunity to learn to read or write. Initially, the dominant culture in the United States believed it a waste of time to expose African Americans to a formal education. Slave states utilized law to prohibit the education of slaves by the passage of laws forbidding slaves to learn to read or write. Many of these laws made it a crime for others to teach slaves (Anderson, 1988).

Historians have reported the state of South Carolina the first state to pass a law prohibiting the education of slaves. Moreover, South Carolina passed exceptionally repressive anti-Black literacy laws. In the absence of law, slaveholders used their own common law to keep literacy from the slaves. Slaveholders used a variety of punishment to instill fear in the minds of slaves regarding the pursuit of education. Facing all sorts of punishment for even attempting to educate themselves nonetheless many slaves risked their lives (death was a possible result) to attain even the lowest level of literacy (Rury, 2002). Anti-Black law granted slaveholders the right to use violence against a slave. Some slave states' laws "gave permission to slave owners to govern their slaves in a manner to compel their productive labor" (Morris, 1999, p. 1). A Virginia law known as the "casual killing of slaves" dating back to 1669 (the colonial era), held harmless any slave owner or overseer who while in the process of punishing a slave with a violent beating, would not be held criminally accountable for the slave's death. Courts granted slave owners substantial authority in disciplining and directing their slaves (Morris, 1999).

Fortunately for the enslaved, laws existed with the purpose of protecting slaves from cruel treatment. Courts limited owners in their mistreatment of slaves if the community suffered as a result (Wahl, 1997). However,

the laws' requirements made it difficult to prove the guilt of Whites. Because slaves could not testify against Whites, convicting a White person in these cases required the testimony of another White man against an accused White man. State legislators constructed the laws with the placement of the master–slave relationship in the highest "degree of power of governance (which meant the use of force) society left in the hands of slave owners" (Morris, 1999, p. 161). For example, South Carolina law did not allow the execution of a White man for killing a slave, but in Virginia law, the execution of a White man for killing a slave existed. Records do not show evidence that such an execution ever occurred (Morris, 1999).

Anti-Black Governance/Black Laws

The Second Continental Congress of the United States, still wrestling with the country's injustice of slavery, adopted the Northwest Ordinance on July 13, 1787, while the Federal Convention drafted the National Constitution in Philadelphia. This plan chartered a government for the area known as the Old Northwest Territory, territory that the states ceded to the national government, and provided a method for admitting new states, rather than with the expansion of existing states and their established sovereignty, to the fledgling nation from the territory. The Northwest Ordinance set the pattern for territorial governance and state-making that ultimately applied to 31 of the 50 states as the country expanded to the Pacific Ocean (Duffey, 1995). The document ordained three principal provisions: (a) The Old Northwest Territory divided into not less than three or more than five States; (b) A three-stage method provided for admitting a new state to the Union; and (c) a bill of rights protected religious freedom, the right to a writ of habeas corpus, the benefit of trial by jury, and other individual rights exclusively for Whites. In addition, the ordinance encouraged education for Whites while forbidding slavery. The prohibition of slavery in the territory set the stage for national competition over admitting free and slave states and the political and social standing of African Americans in the expanding nation.

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 declared slavery illegal in the Old Northwest Territory of the area, which became the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

> Formed as free states in the Northwest Territory, they adopted "Black Laws" which abridged the legal rights of free Black people. The "Black Laws" were state statutes, dedicated to a policy of racial discrimination. States in the Old Northwest adopted them to subordinate a racial group solely be-

cause of their color. The states organized in the Old Northwest, except Wisconsin, legalized racial oppression. Although Wisconsin did not officially adopt "Black Laws," its citizens were not humanitarians or racial reformers . . . These northwestern states had one positive social and legal feature: they prohibited slavery. (Middleton, 1993, p. xvi)

The prevailing anti-Black political and social thought of the United States determined Whites' prejudice against the people of African descent—free and enslaved. For the expansion territories and new states, the free Blacks became the central figure of regulation because of their exception to the rigidity of the institution of slavery. A slave had no civil rights. The majority of Whites in the territories and later the states held racial inequality views and used slavery to mark the ontological position of Black people. "Slavery is how Black existence is imagined and enacted upon . . . and how Whites asserted their own right to freedom, and right to the consumption, destruction, and/or simple dismissal of Blacks" (Dumas, 2016, p. 13).

Free Blacks participated, in some instances, as individuals and social groups in the socioeconomic order outside the barriers of the institution of slavery. This role brought them into position to threaten the social and economic status of Whites, due to the prominence of anti-Black laws in the states that denied the institution of slavery (Himes, 1949). The state legislatures of the western territories also enacted laws to deprive Blacks of citizenship, to exclude them from residency in their states, and to encourage them to return to Africa for colonization (Berwanger, 1967). Even though North Carolina and Tennessee, slave states, had granted suffrage to free Blacks until the mid-1830s, states formed in the Old Northwest chose to deny suffrage to free Blacks. With the country's westward expansion in the formation of the states, legislators/delegates to constitutional conventions in California, Kansas, Nebraska, and Oregon simultaneously demanded the prohibition of slavery and the exclusion of free Blacks in their states (Berwanger, 1967, p. 5).This universal exclusion of free Blacks in the expansion states characterized one of the earliest descriptors of anti-Black political and social governance.

Most White Americans during this period viewed the extension of slavery in the country and the civil rights of Blacks, free or slave, as separate issues. In fact, the anti-Black political and social governance legislated for the "Negro question" was extreme in the states where slavery had never existed. The enslavement of Africans reinforced the color prejudice of Whites. Slavery made racial discrimination inevitable. This racial discrimination manifested itself in the development of Black Laws and produced legal measures to restrict the civil rights of the race. A denial in fact of the civil rights of the

free Black is apparent in the common tendency to make much of the slave codes applicable to the free Black, usually with no justification (Berwanger, 1967; Middleton, 1993; Wilson, 1965). Whites, who identified themselves as Christians, somehow diminished the lack of dignity and humanity, immorality, and violence associated with slave codes in their application of its tenets to Black Laws.

In several instances prior to 1860, there were several legal rulings and congressional acts that favored a continuance of slavery in the United States. The most notable was the *Dred Scott* decision of 1857—a victory for the extension of slavery into the territories. The United States Supreme Court ruling in this case declared slaves, as chattel property, could be transported from place to place, state to state, and slave state to free state without the loss or forfeiture of the property (slaves) by the owner. The country's westward growth intensified the determination of statehood ratification as a free or slave state. In declaring slaves as property in the *Dred Scott* decision, the United States Supreme Court ruling also declared that all African Americans, slaves and free men/women, were not and could never become citizens of the United States (Blaustein & Zangrando, 1968). The United States is the colonizer; Blacks are the colonized.

Racist viewpoints, which essentially contributed to the descriptive nature of anti-Black political and social governance, comprised important elements in the formation of the laws of the United States. "For over 80 percent of U.S. history, American laws declared most people in the world legally ineligible to become U.S. citizens solely because of their race, original nationality, or gender" (Smith, 1999, p. 15). For slave owners and White supremacists, their notion of liberty was reinforced because the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled that African Americans were not persons under the United States Constitution and therefore had no right to liberty. Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, who supported slavery, wrote the most anti-Black and pro-slavery judicial opinion in American history (Huebner, 2010). Taney referred to language in the Declaration of Independence and reasoned, "It is too clear for dispute, that the enslaved African race were not intended to be included, and formed no part of the people who framed and adopted this declaration . . ." (Blaustein & Zangrando, 1968).

Prior to the *Dred Scott* U.S. Supreme Court ruling, Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which strengthened a 1793 congressional act regarding fugitive/runaway slaves. Whereas the earlier act required a jury trial before prospective runaway slaves were legally returned to a slaveholder, the 1850 act eliminated the jury trial requirement and placed the burden of returning fugitive slaves on federal marshals and average citizens (Harmer, 2001). White citizens who were found to be complicit in assisting fugitive

slaves faced fines and imprisonment if found guilty. The law created a force of federal commissioners empowered to pursue fugitive slaves in any state and return them to their owners. There was no statute of limitations for fugitive slaves, so alleged runaways who had been living as free women and men for several years in the North could be legally returned to slaveholders with the filing of two affidavits: from the capturer and from the claimant. Because the northern United States was no longer a legal safe haven for Blacks, this law extended the trauma and terror of Black slavery to the Canadian border.

The passage of this Act, also known as the Compromise of 1850, has become an excellent example of the ongoing debate between the South where slavery was a fixture and necessary economic engine, and the North, where many citizens and their political representatives opposed the presence of slavery in the country. The compromise, inherent in the name of the legislation, was recognition of Southern support for California statehood as a free state in the United States. The legislation comprised several bills passed by Congress; the Fugitive Slave Act was the most controversial. The provisions of the Act assisted slaveholders with their property rights to their slaves and signaled Northern legislators' acquiescence to those rights, and the country's role as colonizer in the lives of Blacks. It also enabled unscrupulous slave catchers to apprehend and remove free Blacks from free states (kidnapping). The original text of the Act refers to the alleged fugitive slaves as "fugitives from labor or service" (Blaustein & Zangrando, 1968).

On several occasions in the 1850s, prior to his presidency, Abraham Lincoln referred to the paradox of the coexistence of American liberty and American slavery. "In the 1850s Lincoln began to insist, contrary to the belief of perhaps two-thirds of White Americans, that the Declaration of Independence not merely the White man's charter of freedom" (McPherson, 1992, p. 52). Lincoln's record of acknowledging the humanity of Blacks led the Southern States to fear that as President, he would seek the abolition of slavery in the United States even though during the presidential election campaign, Lincoln pledged he would not use the federal government to abolish slavery in the South.

It is understandable that Southern leaders assumed that Lincoln, as president, feared politically as he had demonstrated his position as a forward thinker for his era. However, a humanitarian in his beliefs, his historical record offered no instances where he submitted a bill in Congress prior to the Civil War era calling for a legislated end to slavery. Therefore, he was more of a philosopher and debater; his legislative action over slavery awaited his presidency after the 11 slave states seceded from the Union. This political stance is an early characteristic of liberal politics regarding Blacks

in the United States—preference for incremental change versus sweeping transformative change from the anti-Black political and social governance.

The rebel slave states, evidenced by the Constitution of the Confederate States (CCS), were determined to continue the institution of Negro slavery. An examination of the two constitutions (United States/Confederate States) revealed that CCS was a virtual copy of the United States Constitution and differs only in the sections relating specifically to Negro slaves. For example, in Article I Section 9, the CCS stated, "No bill of attainder, or *ex post facto* law, or law denying or impairing the right of property in Negro slaves shall be passed . . ." (Blaustein & Zangrando, 1968, p. 183). Another comparative example found in Article IV Section 3, "The Confederate States may acquire new territory . . . In all such territory the institution of negro slavery, as it now exists in the Confederate States, shall be recognized and protected by Congress and by the territorial government . . ." (Blaustein & Zangrando, 1968, p. 185).

The 11 slave states' secession proved beneficial to the education of the African American slave community and free African Americans as well. This action ultimately led to the dissolution of slavery in the country and the decriminalization of education for Blacks. It is unknown what type of political compromises would have been negotiated by White men who opposed slavery but inherently anti-Black and White men who supported slavery and inherently anti-Black. Such negotiations may have extended slavery for many more years. It is obvious that while Whites debated and questioned African Americans' legal rights as citizens and moral rights as humans, there would be no concerted or formal effort to educate the African American community.

South Carolina White men have been noted for their pro-slavery views and anti-Black sentiments. To consider that White men like Senator James Hammond of the 1850s South Carolina would advocate for the education of African American slaves at any point in time is inconceivable. South Carolina has the dubious distinction of being the first state to prohibit the education of slaves and the first state to secede from the Union. Southern-initiated Black education was unlikely. (See also the mid-20th century opposition to integration of South Carolina senator Strom Thurmond.) The long-standing racist hostility to any advancement in Black conditions that might raise Blacks to equality or superiority over Whites stood as a nearly insurmountable obstacle to Black schooling (Butchart, 1980).

Southern White men from Georgia to Texas proclaimed similar views in support of secession from the Union. However, history asserts these men made a mistake in judgment.

W. E. B. Du Bois (1935) asserted:

> If the far South had trained and astute leadership, a compromise could have been made which, so far as slavery was concerned, would have held the abnormal political power of the South intact, made the slave system impregnable for generations, and even given slavery practical rights throughout the nation. (p. 56)

Instead, cries of liberty and equality for White men against the abolitionist were heard and written in Southern newspapers.

Jumpstart to the Formal Education of African Americans

The Civil War and the Emancipation Proclamation decriminalized the education of African Americans and provided a jumpstart to the formal education of African Americans in the United States without fear of reprisal. "Blacks emerged from slavery with a strong belief in the desirability of learning to read and write" (Anderson, 1988, p. 5). Along with the ex-slaves' desire to participate in education and schooling, there was some sentiment among Republican politicians, particularly its abolitionist members, northern missionary societies, and the Union Army to support the education of ex-slaves at the outset of the Civil War.

Northern intellectuals believed the education of the ex-slaves necessary to promote the health of the republic. However, many workers in the education movement did not consider the philosophical well-being of the nation, but rather that education was the humane solution for the injustice of slavery. These workers, compelled by evangelical beliefs, aligned themselves with the common goal of the various northern missionary aid societies—the education and well-being of the Black community. Their ideology, based on the religious assumption that all men created equal, and the war, although violent, purifying acts of God. They believed their actions and efforts the will of God (Jones, 1980).

The abolitionist movement (based in the North) comprised a very vocal group filled with members of the Republican Party. While White supremacy became a fundamental premise of the members of the southern Democratic Party, many Whites in the North shared this philosophy. "Nineteenth-century White America almost universally subscribed to some racial theory to explain perceived differences in traits and conditions of ethnic and racial groups" (Butchart, 1980). Abolitionists had always subscribed to the equality of the races in the eyes of God (McPherson, 1992). However, "Even the strongest abolitionists held racist views . . . it has become increasingly clear

that antislavery, and even abolitionism itself, was often explicitly anti-Black" (Butchart, 1980, p. 15). This is historical evidence of the inherent nature of the anti-Black political and social governance in the United States.

The racial theories proffered by the scientific community in the late 18th and early 19th century were "produced not in the context of a slave-holding society, but rather by a society attempting to deal with the free intermixing of diverse peoples" (Jackson & Weidman, 2006, p. 34). W. E. B. Du Bois (1944/1978) has disputed this assertion.

> The social sciences from the beginning were deliberately used from the beginning to prove the inferiority of the majority of the people of the world...History declared that the Negro had no history. Biology exaggerated the physical differences among men.

Lincoln, the central figure-of-hope for abolitionists during this period, knew that the majority of White men during this era did not share his position on slavery and the equality of all men. As the Civil War took its toll on the lives of many White men, Lincoln grew to understand that the majority of Whites were convinced that the Blacks were inferior and that even after the war; inequality between the races would likely persist along with continued anti-Black political and social governance.

The Education Initiative

In the years leading up to the start of the Civil War, several religious organizations were active in abolitionism. These groups condemned slavery as un-Christian. The Quakers reasoned that Blacks could prove their equality if given education (Butchart, 1980). Some denominational groups "articulated a paternalistic ideology that portrayed the African race as inferior by heredity...education could ameliorate inferiority, could lift the colored race into an appreciation of white civilization" (Butchart, 1980, p. 18). The American Missionary Association (AMA) has been recognized as the organization most committed to the abolition of slavery and the equality of the African race. The organization sought to purify the nation. Founded in 1846, the AMA was composed of members of several denominations, known radical Republicans, who advocated the immediate abolition of slavery and establishing political equality for Blacks (Jones, 1980).

William Lloyd Garrison (Garrison) formed the AMA as a protest against other missionaries and their wavering commitment to the anti-slavery issue in the middle of the 19th century. Garrison, publisher of the *Liberator*, allied with the AMA in spite of Garrison's harsh criticism of religious denominations