

Harriet R. Kulig

Comparing Slavery in New England to Apartheid in South Africa

Grade Level: Middle School

Historical Era: U.S.: Seventeenth and Eighteenth century
South Africa: Twentieth century

Background: As part of a year-long study of world geography, students examine the long-term effects of apartheid in South Africa. They express a curiosity about the similarities and differences between colonial slavery in New England and apartheid in South Africa. This activity is meant to allow students to explore and compare and contrast.

Objective: Through the use of primary and secondary sources, students will discover the similarities and differences between apartheid in South Africa and colonial slavery in New England.

Teaching plan:

Step 1: The teacher will place two signs on opposite sides of the room, one that says “apartheid in South Africa” and the other that says “colonial slavery in New England”.

Step 2: The teacher will cut out the **Quotes and Events**, mix them up, and give one to each student.

Step 3: Students will read their quote or event with a partner and decide whether it represents apartheid or slavery. Students will then stand with the appropriate sign.

Step 4: Students will discuss their quote with their fellow students who are standing near their sign choice in order to learn from each other and listen to other students’ opinions about their sign choice. After the discussion, any student who wishes to move to the other sign should do so now.

Step 5: Each group will report out by having the student read the information on their paper and say why they believe the quote/event belongs to slavery or apartheid. The teacher will correct any mistakes and explain why.

Step 6: All students will answer the following questions.

- How are apartheid and slavery similar?
- How are apartheid and slavery different?
- What new information did you learn from this activity?

QUOTES AND EVENTS

Apartheid:

“She only became aware of her *condition* when she visited her mother ... as a young girl. It was a terrible experience for her at the house where an Afrikaner family employed her mother, when the lady of the house yelled at her for speaking English and not Afrikaans. “

“He remembered that he had to move around with a *pass* and that he was afraid of white people. He remembered black people being attacked by white people in the streets. Curfew law existed during *these* years and no black people were allowed to move about the streets after eight at night. He had to address the white males as “Baas (boss), and had to say “yes, boss, I’ll do it right, boss, sorry boss”

“Her mother was a washing lady for a couple of white families, and they were very poor. She remembered not having had shoes to wear. “

“As a small child he lived with his grandmother for a while before returning to his parents. He realized a few things at an early age, for instance that their home was raided by the police nearly every single day to check for the presence of illegal occupants. “

“He had been involved in the uprising.... During this time he was arrested many times for not carrying the identification book.”

Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act prohibited the marriage between white people and people of other races.

The Population Registration Act led to the creation of a national register in which every person's race was recorded.

The Group Area Act forced physical separation between races by creating different residential areas for different races. This led to forced removal of people living in the "wrong area".

Extension of University Education Act put an end to black students attending white universities.

The Natives Act is commonly known as the Pass Laws which forced black people to carry identification with them at all times.

Slavery

“We have no Property. We have no Wives. No Children. We have no City. No country.”

. . . . “A great number of Negroes *understand* that they have, in common with all other Men, a natural and unalienable right to that freedom - and in violation of the Laws of Nature and of Nation and in defiance of all the tender feelings of humanity, brought hither to be sold like Beasts of Burden and like them condemned to slavery for Life. . . . They therefore humbly beseech your Honors, to give this petition its due weight and consideration, and cause an Act of the Legislature to be passed, whereby they may be restored to the enjoyment of that freedom which is the natural right of Men.

. . . . “Therefore, your humble slaves most devoutly pray, for the sake of liberty, for the sake of justice, humanity, and the rights of mankind; for the honor of religion, and by all that is dear, that your honors would graciously *speak* in our behalf . . . *that* we may regain our liberty and be rank’d in the class of free agents, and that the name of SLAVE may no more be heard in *this* land”

Original

There shall never be any bond slaverie, villinage or Captivitie amongst us unles it be lawfull Captives taken in just warres and such strangers as willingly selle themselves or are sold to us.

. . .

Translation

There shall never be any slavery or captivity unless the slaves are lawfull captives captured in a just war. People can become slaves by selling themselves and slaves from other areas may be sold to local residents.

 **Several likely Negro Men, Women, Boys and Girls, some of which Arrived about a Week ago to be Sold by Hugh Hall.**

Peter remained the slave of Captain Colton until Colton's death when Colton willed Peter to his wife and son. "I give to Mary my wife and my son Timothy my Two Negro men. . . Peter and Ceasar to their dispose forever and Here by will and ordain they shall well maintain them (Peter and Ceasar) during their natural lives".

Caesar listed as having served in the "American forces ". . . . during the American Revolution He was formerly a slave in Preston, Conn. After the war, Caesar left *the town of* Preston with his friend and fellow veteran Prince Starkweather and moved to Springfield (Longmeadow), Mass. He leased a farm, including buildings, a goat, steers, a plow, and a plow chain" at a place name Watchnet" for three years and in payment he was to give the owners "50 percent of the produce of the land, grain corn. . .

Bill of sale for slave named Prince For and in consideration of the sum of two hundred and twenty five pounds, *owed* to me Ephraim Williams.

Ran away from his master, Joseph Barnard of Deerfield a negro man named Prince of middling statue . . . slow of speach but speaks good English. . . .Whoever shall apprehend old fellow and convey him to his master *will receive* ten pounds. . . .

Quotes and Events with source information

Apartheid:

“She only became aware of her *condition* when she visited her mother ... as a young girl. It was a terrible experience for her at the house where an Afrikaner family employed her mother, when the lady of the house yelled at her for speaking English and not Afrikaans. “

From: Untold Stories of a Group of Black South Africans about the Apartheid Era
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/67f7/d90b12ab2ffa21bb6216164c44672ab13d4b.pdf>

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Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act prohibited the marriage between white people and people of other races.

Apartheid legislation in South Africa
<http://scnc.ukzn.ac.za/doc/HIST/Apartheid%20Legislation%20in%20South%20Africa.htm>

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Slavery

“We have no Property. We have no Wives. No Children. We have no City. No country.”
“Felix” (unknown) Slave Petition for Freedom (January 6, 1773)

. . . . “A great number of Negroes *understand* that they have, in common with all other Men, a natural and unalienable right to that freedom - and in violation of the Laws of Nature and of Nation and in defiance of all the tender feelings of humanity, brought hither to be sold like Beasts of Burden and like them condemned to slavery for Life. . . . They therefore humbly beseech your Honors, to give this petition its due weight and consideration, and cause an Act of the Legislature to be passed, whereby they may be restored to the enjoyment of that freedom which is the natural right of Men.

“Petition of A Great Number of Negroes” to the Massachusetts House of Representatives
(January 13, 1777)

. . . . “Therefore, your humble slaves most devoutly pray, for the sake of liberty, for the sake of justice, humanity, and the rights of mankind; for the honor of religion, and by all that is dear, that your honors would graciously *speak* in our behalf . . . *that* we may regain our liberty and be rank’d in the class of free agents, and that the name of SLAVE may no more be heard in *this* land”

1779 Freedom Petition submitted by slaves to the New Hampshire state legislature, published in the *New Hampshire Gazette*, July 15, 1780 (Vol. XXIV, No1233) Original in New Hampshire Historical Society.

Original

There shall never be any bond slaverie, villinage or Captivitie amongst us unles it be lawfull Captives taken in just warres and such strangers as willingly selle themselves or are sold to us.
. . . Translation

There shall never be any slavery or captivity unless the slaves are lawfull captives captured in a just war. People can become slaves by selling themselves and slaves from other areas may be sold to local residents.

Law of the Massachusetts Colony 1630-1686

**Several likely Negro Men, Women, Boys
and Girls, some of which Arrived about a Week ago
to be Sold by Hugh Hall.**

HUGH HALL SLAVE ADVERTISEMENT FROM THE NEW ENGLAND WEEKLY
JOURNAL. Courtesy of Early American Newspapers, Series 1: 1690–1876, an Archive of Americana
collection, published by Readex. (Readex.com) a division of NewsBank, in cooperation with the American
Antiquarian Society.

A Prince among Pretending Free Men: Runaway Slaves in Colonial New England Revisited

Author(s): ANTONIO T. BLY

Source: *Massachusetts Historical Review*, Vol. 14 (2012), pp. 87-118

Published by: Massachusetts Historical Society

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5224/masshistrevi.14.1.0087>

PETER, slave of Capt. George Colton, *baptized* in Longmeadow Mass., July 13 1735
(Longmeadow Congregational church Records) Peter m. PHILLI, slave of Reverend Stephen
Williams of Longmeadow in Longmeadow May 22 1744 (Longmeadow Congregation Church
Records of Rev. Stephen Williams)

Peter remained the slave of Captain Colton until Colton's death when Colton willed Peter to his
wife and son. "I give to Mary my wife and my son Timothy my Two Negro men. . . Peter and
Ceasar to their dispose forever and Hereby will and ordain they shall well maintain them (Peter
and Ceasar) during their natural lives".

(Hampshire Co. Registry of Probate, Box 35, Case #49, Will of Capt. George Colton, Sept. 5
1760)

Caesar listed as having served in the "American forces" (Conn. Regiment of the Continental
Army) during the American Revolution (Alfred Noon, History of Ludlow 130). He was formerly a
slave in Preston, Conn. After the war, Caesar left Preston with his friend and fellow veteran
Prince Starkweather and moved to Springfield (Longmeadow), Mass. He leased a farm,
including buildings, a goat, steers, a plow, and a plow chain" at a place name Watchnet" for
three years and in payment he was to give the owners "50 percent of the produce of the land,
grain corn. . .

Bill of sale for slave named Prince For and in consideration of the sum of two hundred and
twenty five pounds, *owed* to me Ephraim Williams.

<http://www.americancenturies.mass.edu/activities/media.jsp?itemid=7799&img=0>

Ran away from his master, Joseph Barnard of Deerfield a negro man named Prince of middling stature . . . slow of speach but speeks good English. . . .Whoever shall apprehend old fellow and convey him to his master ten pounds. . . .

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