

That great day, "Day of Deliverance," the day of "Freedom," or shall I say the "Emancipation Day." Emancipation can be defined as freedom from restraint, control, oppression, or the power of another. After reading more about this historical event, it has impacted my life today and into the future. Mainly this day is called Juneteenth (June nineteenth), which is a commemoration of the ending slavery. A reflection, a day of renewal, and a day of pride filled people, Juneteenth not only frees African Americans but also frees people of all races, nationalities, and ethnical groups. When I read about this day of recognition I felt passion, and even a sense of inspiration that makes me think, who really gave all people hope for a chance of freedom?

On January 1, 1863 President Abraham Lincoln issued a document by the name of the Emancipation of Proclamation. This document ordered the freedom from restrictions, convection, and release from control of others. A man named Gordon Granger entered into Galveston, Texas with an announcement that stated, "slavery in the United States has come to an end." All minorities had been freed on the day of June 19, 1865 a little longer than two years after Lincoln had signed this document that had freed all races from slavery and oppression. A year later this event became known as an annual tradition and has been celebrated since that day.

In time many African Americans wanted to distance themselves from the thought of slavery. These emotions of hurt declined the enthusiasm of the observance of Juneteenth. However, in 1980 the state of Texas granted June 19th as an official holiday. Ever since that day the observance of Juneteenth has spread to all different parts of the United States.

So then you ask what is there to celebrate? The answer to that question consists of a lot of things such as self-improvement, African American accomplishment throughout history, respect, and tolerance of all cultures in the

United States. Some of the activities that are involved are parades, picnics, tributes, speeches, music, gospel performances, baseball games, rodeos, and dances. This is a day to let go of unwanted fears and pain.

While reading more information about Juneteenth Day, I sit and ask myself a question. What does this day mean to me? This means committing myself as needed support to family, friends, and even classmates. While I read about this historical event I realize that because of it, there becomes a special bond between those I know and love. This day means acknowledging the effects of slavery and segregation. This day means bringing together all ages, young and old to learn, to refresh, to achieve what African Americans have worked for. This day means realizing the amount of wasted time of racism. Juneteenth gives my family and friends the right to an equal education. This is a day that makes me improve myself in order to fully receive the benefits of equality, respect, and appreciation of my race. In a simple conclusion, what Juneteenth means to me is the day that gives me liberty, gives me equality, and gives me a chance to be me, to be FREE!

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