

Black/African American History includes Corporate Exploitation

By [Move to Amend](#)

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Black/African American History observances this month will acknowledge people and events deserving to be remembered in the past and supported in the present in the quest for justice, and peace for all African Americans.

Observances should include how corporations and those of immense wealth have amassed political power and economic wealth by exploiting racism toward people of color, especially African Americans, in this country over several centuries.

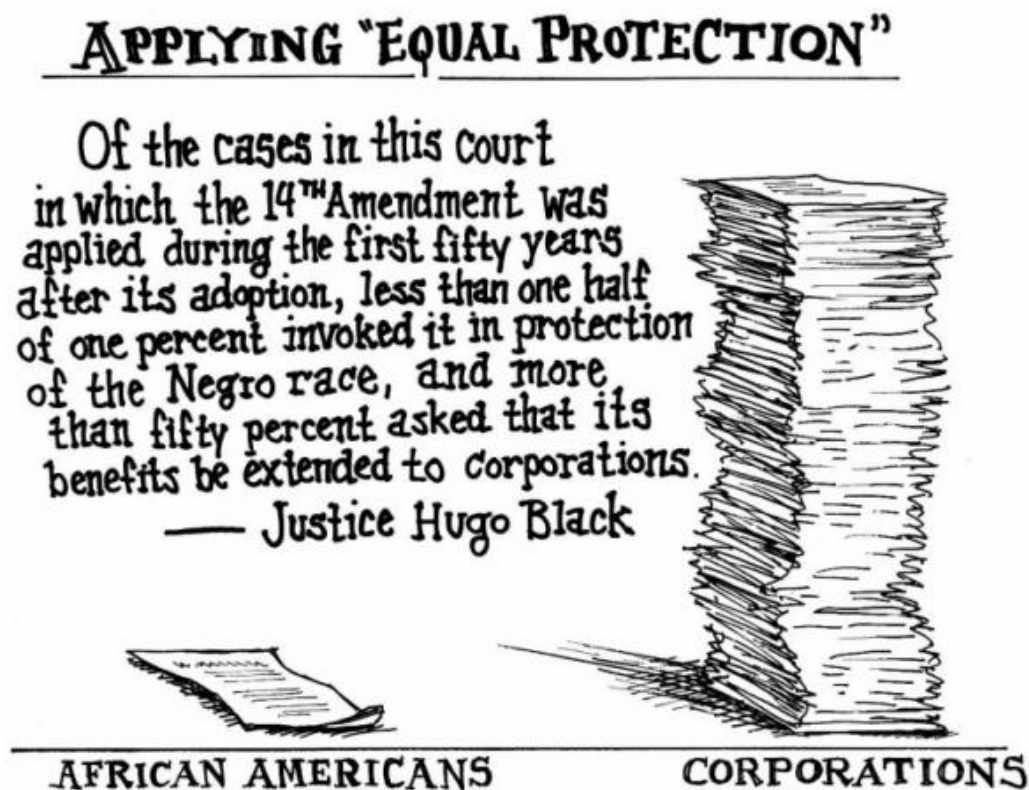
Examples:

- The Royal African Company and other British “crown corporations” transported slaves to the American colonies
- The “Fugitive Slave Clause” of the U.S. Constitution (Article I, Section 2, Clause 3) mandated that escaped slaves (the property of slaveholders) when caught had to be returned to their owners.
- The “Three-Fifths “Compromise” in the Constitution (Article I, Section 2, Clause 3) defined slaves (which had no political rights) as 3/5ths of a person in determining a state’s population – to ensure that southern states would have more votes in the Electoral College to perpetuate slavery.
- JP Morgan bank used slaves as collateral for loans to slave owners in the 19th century.
- The 13th Amendment contained an “exceptions clause” – prisoners could be used as forced labor. “Convict leasing” or “slavery by another name” involved African American forced to work for railroads, U.S. Steel and other corporations to rebuild the south after the Civil War.
- African-American strikebreakers were used widely in the meat packing, steel, coal mining, automobile, and railroad industries between the end of Civil War and New Deal to stoke racism between white and black workers to prevent the rise of unions.
- Housing, automobile, and construction corporations profited by laws (including discriminatory FHA mortgage underwriting) that promoted redlining of neighborhoods to maintain high housing values, especially in suburbia.
- The disproportionate mass imprisonment of African Americans, due to racist drug and other laws, has given rise to highly profitable and powerful private prison corporations, namely CoreCivic and Geo Group. The Prison Industries Act (promoted by ALEC, the American Legislative Exchange Council) has expanded prison labor and financially benefited many companies, among them Victoria’s Secret, Whole Foods Market, Walmart, Microsoft, Starbucks, BP, Nintendo, AT&T,

Target, Dell, Eddie Bauer, and Boeing.

- Racial predatory loans by Wall Street financial entities, which profited in the billions, fueled the 2007-9 financial crisis.
- Toxic industries tend to be placed or to expand in African American poor communities.
- The explosion of police violence against innocent African Americans in cities and subsequent financial settlements in amounts that communities can not afford has given rise to a new profitable financial instrument for corporate and individual investors: "police brutality bonds."

Not to be overlooked is the corporate hijacking of the Fourteenth Amendment, intended to provide legal due process and equal protection to African Americans when it was ratified in 1868. Two decades later, the Supreme Court hijacked the decision, ruling that a corporation is a "person" with the same due process and equal protection rights intended exclusively for African Americans.



The Court invalidated approximately 200 economic regulations of businesses from 1905 until the mid-1930's passed by legislators under the due process clause of the 14th Amendment.

Governments could no longer pass laws to protect or favor local businesses over chain stores or family farms over agribusinesses. Large corporations have perverted the Fourteenth Amendment as both a shield to protect themselves and a sword to successfully challenge public laws that they claim are "discriminatory" that were intended to protect people and communities.

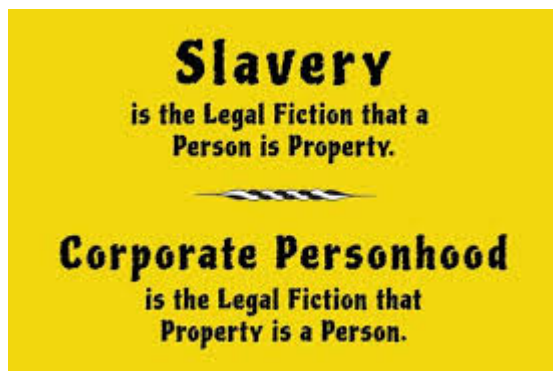
Move to Amend's [We the People Amendment](#) will end all corporate constitutional rights,

including the corporate due process and equal protection “rights” of the Fourteenth Amendment. It goes beyond simply reducing corporate money in elections, as this [comparison chart](#) describes.

Much attention will be appropriately devoted this month to the history of the movements to abolish slavery and the movement for fundamental civil rights – as a stepping stone to fundamental human rights.

The institution of slavery, which for millennia was deemed as an inevitable reality of human existence, was (minus the exceptions clause) abolished in this country due to a massive, dedicated and diverse people’s movement – including people of color and others risking their lives.

It’s past time to abolish all corporate constitutional rights. A dedicated and diverse people’s movement is needed – with inspiration and learnings taken from the anti-slavery, civil rights and all movements – enshrining the rights of people over property, including corporations.



A corporation is not a person. Period.

Solidarity,

Jason, Tara, Alfonso, Pattie, Jennie, Shelly, George, Leila, Daniel, Saleem, Jessica Joni, Keyan, Michael, Margaret, Dolores & Greg

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