

## Chapter 71 -- The Poisoned Seeds Of Anti-Black Racism In America



**Dates:**  
1609-Forward

**Sections:**  
• The Origins Of Anti-Black Racism

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Time: 1609 Forward

### The Origins Of Anti-Black Racism



An Example of Anti-Black Racial Stereotyping

Reservations about the presence of Africans in America are most likely prevalent from the moment they arrive in the seventeenth century.

Everything about them -- from their skin color to their geographic origins, language, manners and customs -- sets them apart from the largely homogeneous white Anglo-Saxons who first settle the land.

As such, they personify “The Other,” a different tribe and possibly a hostile one, to be cast out, not embraced.

Beyond that, arriving in shackles, they prick the consciences of those who have traveled to the new world in search of personal freedom and the moral teachings of their Christian faith.

Is their treatment, as slaves, consistent with the tenets of the Bible -- or not? And, if not, is one in jeopardy of losing eternal salvation by participating in the abuses inherent in their captivity.

From these uncomfortable starting points, the human tendency to rationalize the status quo -- especially when it is self-serving -- seems to outweigh the reservations, at least for the vast majority of whites fighting for their own survival in a new land.

If these African slaves can be tamed to put in our subsistence crops, then so be it. In return, perhaps, over time, we can even “civilize them,” convert them to Christianity, help save their immortal souls, emancipate them.

But in the interim, the here and now, we will keep them in chains, and compel them to do our bidding, as dictated by the status quo.

As with all forms of human atrocities, some men come to rationalize their complicity.

One in particular, Thomas Jefferson, appears particularly conflicted by his behavior, especially during his early years at Monticello. This most complex man clearly recognizes the sin of slavery he is engaged in, but proceeds down the path anyway. He does so, in the end, by deciding that, indeed, blacks are The Other, a different and lesser species, somewhere above his cattle, perhaps the 3/5<sup>th</sup> of a man agreed to in the US Constitution – and certainly incapable of ever rising to equality with his own white race.

Jefferson is joined in this rationalization by seven of America’s first twelve Presidents – Washington, Madison, Monroe, Jackson, Tyler, Polk and Taylor –who, like him, will own slaves while in office.

By 1820, slavery has been in place for over two centuries and has achieved institutional status in the nation.

The vast majority of white citizens simply take it for granted.

Some see it for what it is – a violation of the most basic principles of their nation – but choose to remain silent.

Still a few decide, over time, to speak out in opposition.