

Juneteenth:

Knowledge and Power for Freedom

June 17, 2022, Beaufort, SC

Presentation at the Juneteenth Celebration with 326 Project Freedom

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Juneteenth Presentation Topics

- ▶ Knowledge is Always Power...
- ▶ **Emancipation Day**
 - *The Emancipation Proclamation in context*
- ▶ **Jubilee Day**
 - *The Proclamation reaches Galveston, Texas*
- ▶ **Freedom Day**
 - *The fight for freedom continues*

Emancipation Day



- ▶ January 1, 1863 – Understanding President Lincoln’s ‘fit and necessary war measure’:
 - “...all persons held as slaves *within the rebellious states* are, and henceforward shall be free.”
 - “...such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States...”
- ▶ Understanding Texas’ position during the Civil War:
 - No large-scale fighting or significant Union troop presence during the War
 - Over 150,000 enslaved Africans were forcibly moved from points east to Texas after Union Army’s 1862 capture of New Orleans

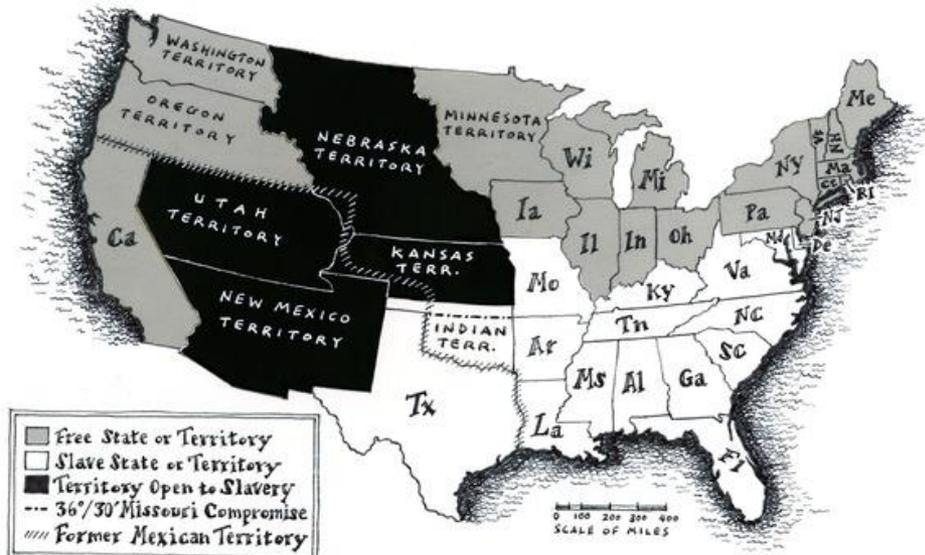
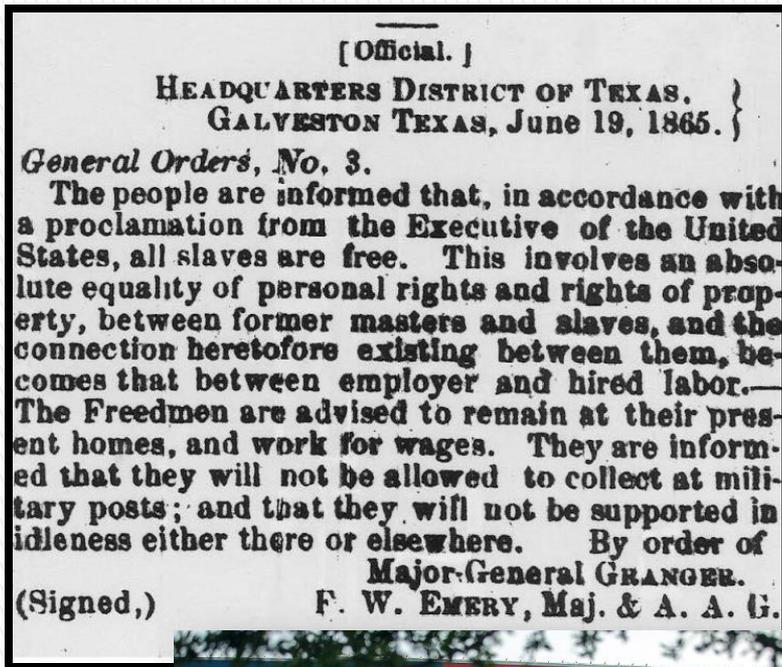


Image source: Cuny.edu

Jubilee Day



- ▶ June 19, 1865 – occupation and emancipation finally reaches Texas:
 - Military occupation of all former Confederate states
 - ‘Black soldiers in blue uniforms’ – Maj. Gen. Granger & 2,000 Union troops arrive in Galveston Bay
 - Over 250,000 enslaved African people proclaimed free
- ▶ Many plantation owners react with rebellion and violence
- ▶ Formerly enslaved Africans react with jubilation and commemoration



Image source:
Time.com

Freedom Day

- ▶ June* 1870 – African Americans in Houston, TX pool \$800 to purchase 10 acres of land for Emancipation Day celebrations
- ▶ January 1, 1980 – Texas recognizes Juneteenth as a state holiday:
- ▶ June 1997 – Juneteenth Flag created:
 - A new star & new horizons
 - Freedom of Black Americans in Texas, and in every state



Image source:
eponservancy.org

Juneteenth Independence Day



- ▶ June 17, 2021 – Juneteenth approved as a federal holiday:
 - First new holiday approved since MLK Day (1983)
 - Recognized by all federal agencies on June 19th (actual day off may be Friday or Monday)
 - "We can't forget that it's ceremonial, holidays are points of recognition, **what is needed though, is substance.**" – Dr. Bernice A. King

Juneteenth... *a party with a purpose*



Metropolitan areas with greater devaluation of Black neighborhoods are more segregated and produce less upward mobility for the Black children who grow up in those communities.

Owner-occupied homes in Black/African-American neighborhoods are undervalued by \$48,000 per home, on average, compared with comparable homes in other neighborhoods, which translates to a cumulative loss of \$156 billion in potential wealth accumulation.

THE BLACK EXPERIENCE IN SOUTH

THE BLACK NEIGHBORHOODS

To create a sense of belonging and security, 19 Black families pooled their money together to purchase nearly 97 acres of land in Wilkinson County, Georgia.

As a part of it's 'The Black Experience in the South Juneteenth campaign, the Southern Economic Advancement Project has developed one-pagers highlighting challenges as well as the progress made by the Black/African American community. This pager focus on neighborhoods.

SOURCES

1 https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/2018.11_Brookings_Metro_Devaluation-Assets-Black-Neighborhoods_Final.pdf
2 <https://abnews.gp.com/US/black-americans-leaving-homes-start-black-communities/story?id=1354471>

Performative vs substantive

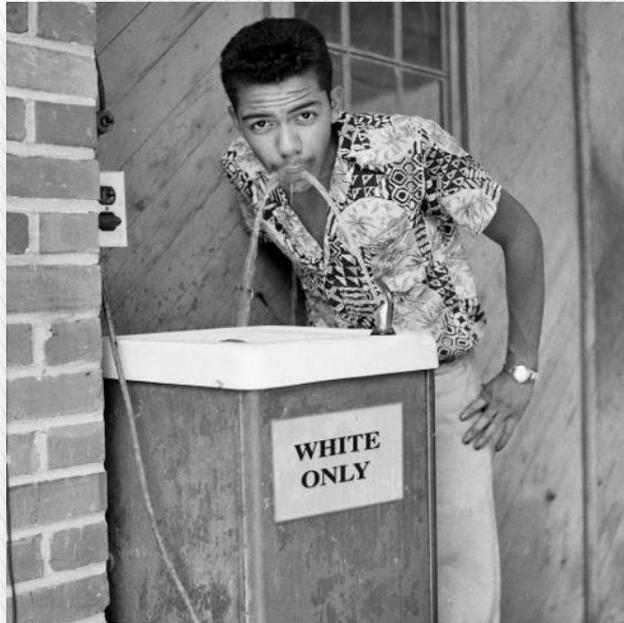
Improve the Black Experience in the USA.

Links

- ▶ [Change.org Juneteenth Federal Holiday Petition](https://www.change.org/p/united-states-congress-make-juneteenth-a-national-holiday-in-2021) –
<https://www.change.org/p/united-states-congress-make-juneteenth-a-national-holiday-in-2021>
- ▶ [National Archives Emancipation Proclamation](https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/emancipation-proclamation/transcript.html)–
<https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/emancipation-proclamation/transcript.html>
- ▶ [National Museum of African American History](https://nmaahc.si.edu/blog-post/historical-legacy-juneteenth) – <https://nmaahc.si.edu/blog-post/historical-legacy-juneteenth>
- ▶ [NBC News article](https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/9-things-know-about-history-juneteenth-n594546) – <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/9-things-know-about-history-juneteenth-n594546>
- ▶ [History.com article](https://www.history.com/news/what-is-juneteenth) – <https://www.history.com/news/what-is-juneteenth>
- ▶ [Juneteenth.com website](https://juneteenth.com/) – <https://juneteenth.com/>
- ▶ [PBS article](https://www.pbs.org/wnet/african-americans-many-rivers-to-cross/history/what-is-juneteenth) – <https://www.pbs.org/wnet/african-americans-many-rivers-to-cross/history/what-is-juneteenth>
- ▶ [The Black Experience](https://theseap.org/juneteenth-campaign-2022) – <https://theseap.org/juneteenth-campaign-2022>
- ▶ [Time.com article](#) – Juneteenth Honors Black Americans Who Created Their Freedom | Time

Download presentation at www.najmahthomas.com

History in the Hands of the Future



- ▶ **Read** the plans, policies, and the fine print...
- ▶ **Recognize** the power and necessity of knowledge and self-emancipation...
- ▶ **Realize** that freedom does not materialize with an announcement or proclamation...

Cecil J. Williams, SC Civil Rights Museum

Party with a purpose!