

Many say that the past is the past and it is best to just leave it alone or you will become stuck in it; however, if that is true then why is the past constantly being brought up today? The past is brought up so often because what is currently happening in the present is wrong. We must always be better and that can be through learning from our past mistakes and being able to connect scenarios in order to help us find the best solution. That is the purpose many of these historians have when they make comparisons as such. Here we will discuss three different artifacts of historians making these connections in relation to the past events of gender mistreatment, pre colombian America, and the cotton revolution.

The issue of gender mistreatment has gone on for centuries, with women being looked at as housewives, capable of keeping the house and children clean and nothing more. They were seen as having little to no rights or respect, compared to their husbands. Those who were actually able to find work, were paid little to nothing much less than their husbands. Women and Children at times went to work in order to assist their husband/father who was struggling financially, they would make figures like a dollar for a week's work. The great disparity was an issue back in the 1800's; however, sadly in some cases it is still prevalent today. As while our society has vastly changed from the 1800's(evidenced from a study in 2011 stating that women made up slightly more than half of the workforce),as more and more women are settling into jobs that were previously only occupied by men, such as Presidents, or high level Chief Executives, etc; there still is some gender mistreatment present in terms of salary. While studies do show that more women are working than ever, it also shows that in comparison to their male predecessors, these women are being underpaid for their work. As studies from Bloomberg show that women in executive positions are being paid approximately 18% less than men, this is even after graduating from the same schools and doing the same jobs as their male counterparts. These

women start off with a lower salary and don't ever seem to catch up to the men. This inequality in pay is not right and while it certainly has and could be a lot worse of an issue for women, that still does not make it right.

Back in this time period of colonial society, the European states had anything but a democratic rule. As democracy/government in Europe was said to better represent oligarchies(a small elite group having control over a country) then republics(state where supreme power is held by the people and who they elect, rather than a monarch who is simply given the power through birthright or family ties) as only the elite members of society were selected to rule in these powerful positions. As most European states did not even hold elections, the ones that did(examples include Britain and Dutch Republic) only allowed for a tiny percentage of males to vote. This is anything but democratic and that is something that many people will argue that is non-existent to this very day through the right of freedom of speech. It is the right of the people in a democratic society to be able to let their voices be heard, whether that is through their votes or ability to speak their mind or believe in who they chose freely; these are both traits of democracy that have been diminished then and now. It seems that as every passing year goes by the list and severity of offensive acts, religion, phrases and beliefs exponentially grows even larger. Year after year we have seen controversy after controversy of our current culture fighting against those who chose to believe something else; that is through getting people fired for supporting the President, firing and blackballing people for saying awful things many years ago, and so many more. However one recent example we can use to represent the year of 2020 can be the "Black Lives Matter" movement that followed after the tragic death of one George Floyd. This death angered a great deal of people into taking part in riots that I personally have never seen before, it was shocking and heartbreaking to turn on the news and see so much destruction

all over the United States to say the least. Now not only did the murder of George Floyd anger people, but it also divided people; as due to the riots, the looting, and all the other types of violence or non-violent acts such as peaceful protests of ads on television (to make people aware of the issue) that transpired many would go on to say that "All Lives Matter. Now this might sound crazy to whomever is reading this but this phrase was deemed by many to be controversial and racist, as the "Black Lives Matter" supporters found it to be ignoring and an attempt to push aside the black communities' need for help right now! The best way to depict this is through the firefighter/burning building example, as a firefighter sees one building on fire much worse than another you would naturally give you attention to the worse fire; and that is what is happening here as the black community needs the attention immediately. Now on the other hand those saying "All Lives Matter", are for the most part hoping that this moment does not lead to the world thinking that black lives are more important than white lives; there is no equality in that. As I said this is a very divisive topic and one where it is in most cases best to keep your thoughts to yourself because you will be pegged something if you do state it, whether that is a racist, a looter, or whatever else the one side can do to bully you into changing your mind or to bully you into shutting your mouth. This does not sound like a democratic society to me, much like the European society of little to no voting in order to deem who runs the nations. The meme I used best describes where we are today with our democracy, as it states "I believe in freedom of speech...unless you disagree with me". This is a great representation of where we are today as much like back in the day, our democratic rights are not being truly honoured. With people being taught to believe what everyone else believes or else you could be called racist, harassed, assaulted, and blackballed; our society is ignoring the democratic rights which in a way is similar to the lack of democratic rights back in the times of colonial society.

Another issue highly publicized as a form of slavery is the cotton revolution, as in its peak of the most valuable resource in the world millions of slaves were forced to pick and manufacture this valuable textile. Slavery rates soared during the cotton revolution as the majority of slaves were working on cotton, which would go on to produce billions of tons of this textile. The cotton revolution sparked the slave trade as the need for cotton caused for many more people to get involved in the trade and become more passionate about the matter, which would lead to the creation of slave states in the south who were known as one of the main manufacturers of cotton. This textile took the world by storm due to its supply and demand. The cotton industry was generating billions of dollars as is the current textile manufacturing industries today. The textile industry is one of the largest economic generating industries in the world as approximately \$450 billion is made each year and about 25 million people are employed to manufacture all of the different products. However while many of us do enjoy the results of this industry, there are also many who suffer and that is those manufacturing the products. These workers are working in sweatshops all over the globe making these products with long shifts, poor wages, all in poor working conditions. Now while it truly sounds insane to say that in 2020 that type of treatment still takes place, sadly it is the truth. As many nations around the world (most notably China) do not uphold Fair Trade Certificates, which guarantees that items are made in an ethical manner. These people are being treated similar to the way slaves were treated during the Cotton Revolution and it just is not right.

The ignorant statement that the past does not matter is something that has been proven false time and time again. Here in this reflection we have seen how the past is extremely relevant to the present, and that even though our society has improved vastly since this time in the 1800's that we spoke of, we still are far from perfect. We have seen through the continuance of gender

inequality, democracy rights being besmirched, and the continuance of sweatshops to create our cheap affordable and essential products that we love so much; that we are not all that different from the past and that we must never settle.

References

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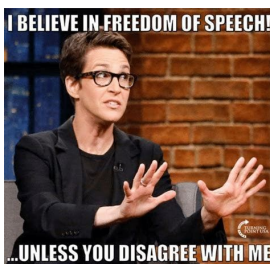
Artifact #1:

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Artifact #2:



~ Ginger Rowdy Conservatives

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