History Question

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A review of American history shows that many events have occurred in their long timeframe that has substantially impacted the nation's trajectory. Some of these events have been watershed for social, political, legal, and cultural change in the nation. These events have been significant in influencing and transforming the lives of Americans and illustrate change, growth, and progression. In this essay, I will discuss five important events which illustrate the social, political, legal, and cultural change in the United States history.

The first significant event is the dispossession of Native Americans. The harassment and Removal of Native American people is a significant event in American history. The passage of the Indian Removal Act in 1830 by Congress saw the president receive the mandate and power to engage in treaty negotiation that would enhance the westward expansion of white settlers. The Removal proponents saw it as an opportunity that would allow Native American communities to be protected from the influence of outsiders and thereby protect their chances of becoming civilized farmers. President Jackson insisted that the government was looking out for the best interest of the native communities. However, the removal exercise was brutal for the local Native American communities dispossessed of their lands and brutalized. The attempts of these communities to adopt Euro-Americans such as Christianity, slaving, and intensified farming were useless as they were pressured to sign treaties and surrender their lands. Native American communities such as the Cherokee, Creek, Chickasaw, and Choctaw could not protect their lands despite signing treaties. The forceful Removal saw more than six thousand Cherokee lose their lives in the trail of tears due to harsh weather conditions, difficult travel, and poor planning. [[1]](#footnote-1) The event is significant since it had significant social, political, legal, and cultural implications. On the one hand, it was the beginning of the numerous social injustices experienced by the native American peoples. It also illustrated the political standing in the nation when the Natives were forced to sign treaties and forcefully removed from their hand for the betterment of the white settlers.

The second event is the supreme court ruling in the Dred Scott case. The Dred Scott decision brought the issue of slavery to a national view. The case happened after the 1856 presidential election when Buchanan came to office. Buchanan’s presidency was defined by the Dred Scott ruling, which asserted that Black Americans could not become citizens of the United States. The decision which was given at a time where a compromise had been made accepting states that practised slavery but limiting their expansion gave support to slavery supporters. In this case, the court decided that Scot, a slave from Missouri, could not sue within the United States Courts. The decision reiterated that African Americans did not have the same rights and thus gave room for the federal government to extend slavery as far as they wanted. The ruling further made slavery national and increased the sectional crisis.[[2]](#footnote-2). The event was instrumental since it increased tensions on slavery and brought it to the forefront in the nation. It is an important event since it provides a perspective of the b view of African Americans at the formation of the nation and the application of the laws that the nation had enacted at this time.

The third important event in American history is the election of Abraham Lincoln on November 6 1860. The event was instrumental since he was a known supporter of anti-slavery. As such, his victory was seen as a threat by southern states who endorsed slavery. His victory prompted Southern states to organize their move towards secession from the Union. Failure to accept the compromises that were proposed by southern states that would see the enforcement of slave law led the southern states to leave the Union[[3]](#footnote-3). The election of Abraham Lincoln is a significant event in the history of the United States because it brought to the fore political issues that surrounded slavery and led to secession and the formation of confederate states. It is also a watershed event for the trajectory the nation would take given slavery.

The fourth important event is the American Civil war. The war began after the inauguration of Abraham Lincoln when the rebels that were part of the Confederate states that had been formed attacked Fort Sumter in South Carolina and opened fire. Although Abraham Lincoln first got into the war motivated by crushing the rebellion, it launched America into the civil war. The war marks a significant time in American history, being the bloodiest, with a casualty of over 750,000 deaths. Most of the fighters from the north were motivated by preserving the Union; however, as the war progressed, it became a fight to eradicate slavery. The war was set to mark a new dawn in the United States, with all people being free from the shackles of slavery and free to pursue their livelihoods and personal development.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The fifth important event is the reconstruction and assassination of Abraham Lincoln. This is the period following the end of the civil war, and the nation literary sought to reconstruct the infrastructure and other elements that had been destroyed. While the period was hopeful and promised great changes, it also raised numerous concerns regarding the legal protections and freedom, especially for the freed slaves. However, the assassination of Lincoln reshaped the reconstruction as Andrew Johnson took the lead in April 1865. The new president was quick to offer the restoration of the southern state to the Union. He only required them to void the secession ordinances, ratify the 13th amendment and repudiate their debts. The approach left African Americans unprotected, leading to the enactments of laws by southern states, which established the power relations in the Antebellum period. These laws, such as the black coders, regulated black behaviour and controlled them economically and socially. While the African Americans had been emancipated, the enacted laws gave them some forms of freedom but denied them their fundamental rights as citizens.[[5]](#footnote-5). These events are important since they help to illustrate some of the issues that happened in American history which gave rise to the subjugation of African Americans and disadvantaged them socially, politically and legally.

In conclusion, a review of American history shows that numerous events have occurred throughout its history, which have been instrumental in bringing about social, political, legal, and cultural change. While their impacts were far-reaching, they were not always positive, and their impact can still be felt even today.

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1. The American Yawp "12. Manifest Destiny" Americanyawp.com, June 7, 2013. http://www.americanyawp.com/text/12-manifest-desti [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The American Yawp “13. The Sectional Crisis” Americanyawp.com, June 7, 2013. http://www.americanyawp.com/text/13-the-sectional-crisis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The American Yawp “13. The Sectional Crisis” Americanyawp.com, June 7, 2013. http://www.americanyawp.com/text/13-the-sectional-crisis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The American Yawp “14. The Civil War” Americanyawp.com, June 7, 2013. http://www.americanyawp.com/text/14-the-civil-war/. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The American Yawp “15. Reconstruction” Americanyawp.com, June 7, 2013. http://www.americanyawp.com/text/15-reconstruction/ [↑](#footnote-ref-5)