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English 111, Section 024-A

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Outline

# Slavery is a global issue

## FD knew this and said it

* 1. Slavery feeds from greed
  2. Slavery still continues

## Our greed still is a fuel

* + 1. Christian science monitor report

## Slavery is still as gruesome

### State department report / Housekeeper

### State department report / Farm workers

Fredrick Douglass defined slavery as a plague for the whole of mankind.

Fredrick Douglass systematically demonstrated that slavery has no redeeming value. He did not describe slavery simply as an injustice against him or even the African people. Fredrick Douglass defined slavery as a plague for the mankind. This outbreak of moral malaise that demanded nothing short of a national bloodletting to subside infected everybody. While the nation was infected with slavery, and also while it bled during the civil war everyone languished and suffered; albeit that many suffered ignorantly like Sophia Auld. Fredrick Douglass wrote “slavery proved as injurious to her as it did to me” (Douglass 66). Sophia Auld lost her humanity and good nature after coming into contact with slavery, and it all probably happened without her realizing it. Unfortunately having endured the tragedy of slavery does not vaccinate us, our nation, or our world. Epidemic diseases that afflict the body start from microscopic bacteria. Slavery, the ailment that inflected our national morality requires the smallest kernel of greed as a host, so we should vigilantly guard against it.

It is easy to blame big merchants and foreign governments for initiating slave trade between continents, but that would only be stating the obvious. Such depravities that attack a society only do so when able to reach in, and infect the individuals. How sweet would it have been if a Portuguese slave merchant ship of a thousand slaves from Africa had landed in an American port and unable to find a single buyer had to let all the slaves go free. They only sold us what our greed made us to be a customer of.

Participating in this sinful act was not limited to just a few fat cats. Colonel Lloyd “lived at the Great House Farm, and enjoyed the luxury of whipping the servants when he pleased” (Douglass 53), and Mr. Covey “a poor man, a farm-renter” (Douglass 79) worked to perpetuate his reputation as a “nigger-breaker” (Douglass 79), but I shudder when I think of Sandy Jenkins and his free wife. I do not know it for a fact that they betrayed Fredrick Douglass, yet imaging that possibility is horrifically shocking. Colonel Lloyd wanted to maintain his wealth, Mr. Covey wanted to become rich, but Sandy Jenkins and his free wife probably betrayed a fellow man to protect the very little that they had. The poison of greed is effective even in the smallest dosage.

The tragic narrative that Fredrick Douglass penned transcends his time, and unfortunately remains relevant still. Understanding his global perspective was my biggest takeaway from reading his story. He aimed correctly to free his mind by learning to read and write which inevitably made freedom of his physical-self possible. It is now up to us to keep vigilant of our own ignorance and guard against our own greed. The Christian Science Monitor cover story in September lists eleven ways that in our normal daily routine we unknowingly consume products that support slavery somewhere in the world: our morning coffee, the rubber that is used to make our car tires, the cotton in a blanket we sleep under at night (How do you contribute to modern day slavery of human trafficking?). Our greed for cheaper consumer product provides the fertile ground for slavery to persist, and that makes us culpable.

The horrific face of slavery today is just as bad as what Fredrick Douglass described. Over a century later a 2011 U.S. State Department report on human trafficking features a Sri Lankan house maid working in Saudi Arabia who complained about her heavy workload, so “her employers tortured her by hammering 24 nails into her hands, legs, and forehead” (Trafficking In Persons Report 37). The very same report refers to “up to 400 Thai men” (Trafficking In Persons Report 33) who were allegedly held on farms and threatened with violence by labor recruiters. Interestingly enough demonstrations against these labor recruiters happened in Los Angeles.

Fredrick Douglass, an American slave, was not the first slave in the world. Looking for the last slave in the world is a fool’s errand. The best we can do is to try and reduce the fertile environment that slavery could grow in. He started with himself and so should we.

Works Cited

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