GELO - National Anthem Symbolic Speech

Historically, the fight for racial equality for Blacks was a long one. America, the land of the brave and home of the free, does not hold true to its national anthem. In 1957, at the inauguration of president Dwight D. Eisenhower, the first African American woman was allowed to sing the national anthem at the White House. Despite African Americans enlistment in the army for many centuries prior, according to an article on timeline.com (Allen McDuffy). African Americans were able to fight and die for America, but weren't allowed to play any role in the representation of America, which, singing the national anthem played a huge role in the military.

Politically, blacks had to fight for the right to vote. Thanks to the 15th amendment, Black Men were able to vote on political subjects. Prior to this, Black Men felt that they deserved a right to speech and made various political groups to display their opinion in a political field (National Black Independent Party, Black Panther Party ect…) . This type of political efficacy from the Black community became more and more prevalent with time thanks to implementations such as the 15th amendment. After the passing of this law, Black Men were able to freely voice their opinion without being held down by the majority (White's). This increased political efficacy in the Black community and they felt as though they were closely tied into the scope of the national anthem.

Culturally, blacks faced a lot of racism and prejudice treatment, as the system built in America was not fully supported by the people in power, of administering its law and freedom to Black's as well. This is evident in how slavery was allowed (early 1800’s) and the fact that Black's didn't receive equal treatment. Today, after the Emancipation Proclamation (1863), blacks still experience unfair treatment of the law. This is evident in the shootings that have happened across the U.S. (Ferguson, Trayvon Martin, ect…). The culture has gone through changes, as equality takes a stand. This is evident in the recent showings of symbolic speech that the NY Giants NFL players kneeled during the national anthem, when, traditionally you stand with your right hand over your heart while the national anthem is being orchestrated. According to the article on thegaurdian.com, the three players kneeled as a protest to the inequality, “I have the utmost respect for the military, for the anthem, for the flag ... This is about systemic oppression that has been rampant in this country for decades on top of decades (The Gaurdian).” once again, America is supposed to be the “land of the brave and home of the free.”

Reference

Allen McDuffy “The [first black woman to sing at the inauguration had been barred from Washington’s largest concert…](https://timeline.com/first-black-singer-inauguration-a029e6675c11) “ Jan 18

The Guardian “<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2017/nov/12/nfl-players-kneel-veterans-day-weekend> “ Nov 12