

From: **Walter Hussman** wh@whk.com
Subject: first e mail
Date: November 2, 2020 at 3:58 PM
To: Kelly Hopkins



Kelly, enjoyed our visit today. This is an e mail I sent to David Routh on Sept. 9. It was the first one, and I shared this with the others as I explained. I will send you several more e mails I shared on the same subject. If you have any questions, let me know. Thanks, Walter

David, I promised to send you some of the concerns about Nikole Hannah Jones and her writings on the 1619 project. Perhaps her most controversial statement she made in her opening essay is the the purpose of the American Revolution was not independence from England but rather to perpetuate slavery.

The article below was published in Politico by a Leslie Harris, a historian and professor at Northwestern University specializing in slavery in America. The entire article is lengthy, but it can be found here:

<https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/03/06/1619-project-new-york-times-mistake-122248>

I have copied and pasted the first few paragraph of it in case you don't have time to read it all. It deals with this claim about preserving slavery that has created the most pushback from other historians and generated the most controversy.

This historian here was contacted by the New York Times to fact check Nicole Hannah Jones work. She responded that it was not correct to claim the American Revolution was fought to preserve slavery. The New York Times ignored her fact checking and went with the claim anyway. This has led people to believe that the fact checker historian's response did not fit with their narrative so they published it anyway.

You can decide what you think for yourself. And what you think others will think if they read this. Here it is:

MAGAZINE

OPINION | HISTORY DEPT.

I Helped Fact-Check the 1619 Project. The Times Ignored Me.

The paper's series on slavery made avoidable mistakes. But the attacks
from its critics are much more dangerous.



To: jeffbrown@mvalaw.com[jeffbrown@mvalaw.com]
From: Kelly Hopkins
Sent: Fri 11/6/2020 8:42:35 AM (UTC-05:00)
Subject: Fwd: e mail #2

EXTERNAL EMAIL - USE CAUTION

From Walter

Kelly M. Hopkins
Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Walter Hussman <weh@arkansasonline.com>
Date: November 2, 2020 at 4:04:18 PM EST
To: Kelly Hopkins
Subject: e mail #2

Kelly, you will find this history based on Abraham Lincoln's speech of interest. After I read this, I thought to myself, who are you going to believe: Abraham Lincoln or Nikole Hannah Jones? Thanks, Walter

David, this is a follow-up to my previous email relating to Nikole Hannah Jones claim that the purpose of the American Revolution was not independence from England but instead to perpetuate slavery.

Below is a copy Abraham Lincoln's speech to the Republican state convention in Illinois in 1856. This was 80 years after the Declaration of Independence was signed. Slavery was the hottest topic of the day, and it was four years before Lincoln would be elected president.

You can read his entire speech, and I've copied pertinent parts of it below. But I've lifted a few items from the speech and offer a few comments.

Here is the first relevant passage:

In 1774 the Continental Congress pledged itself, without a dissenting vote, to wholly discontinue the slave trade, and to neither purchase nor import any slave;

Comment: So two years before the Declaration, delegates from every one of the colonies agreed to discontinue the slave trade, and not to purchase or import any slave. Think about this. It was 165 years after 1619, and all the colonies were against the slave trade.

Here is a second passage:

and less than three months before the passage of the Declaration of Independence, the same Congress which adopted[25] that Declaration unanimously resolved "that no slave be imported into any of the thirteen United Colonies."

Comment: Not only did they vote to end any slave from being imported into the U.S., but it applied to all 13 colonies, and the vote was unanimous by all colonies,.

So at the time of the counties founding, 1776, the colonies were all opposed to slavery. Some colonies obviously changed their thinking later, but not at the founding of the country in 1776.

There is more. A third passage from Lincoln's speech:

Indeed, abolition societies existed as far south as Virginia

Comment: My impression was that the abolitionists were mostly in New England. Not Virginia.

The fourth passage:

... it is a well-known fact that Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Lee, Henry, Mason, and Pendleton were qualified abolitionist

Comment: Jefferson, who owned slaves, had a child with a slave, and died without freeing his slaves, was an abolitionist? This one was so surprising to me I had to discuss it with Jim Leloudis, who was very helpful. Jim confirmed that Jefferson was a complicated case, but he clearly was against slavery, apparently before he changed his mind and embraced it. But I think the salient point is that Jefferson was opposed to slavery *when the country was founded, in 1776*, and as the country was prepared to go to war for independence.

When you read all of these comments by Lincoln in 1856, you realize that the country may have committed its original sin, but it was not what the founders or the colonies were intending at that time, in 1776. If not, how could the reason for the war be to perpetuate slavery?

When one reads this speech by Abraham, one has to ask: Who am I going to believe, Nikole Hannah Jones and the 1619 project, or Abraham Lincoln?

Thank, Walter

**Lincoln's speech before the first Republican State Convention of Illinois
Bloomington, May 29, 1856**

Web link: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/61966/61966-h/61966-h.htm>

The pertinent paragraphs from this speech relating to Lincoln's summary:

“In the early days of the Constitution slavery was recognized, by South and North alike, as an evil, and the division of sentiment about it was not controlled by geographical lines or considerations of climate, but by moral and philanthropic views. Petitions for the abolition of slavery [24] were presented to the very first Congress by Virginia and Massachusetts alike. To show the harmony which prevailed, I will state that a fugitive slave law was passed in 1793, with no dissenting voice in the Senate, and but seven dissenting votes in the House. It was, however, a wise law, moderate, and, under the Constitution, a just one. Twenty-five years later, a more stringent law was proposed and defeated; and thirty-five years after that, the present law, drafted by Mason of Virginia, was passed by Northern votes. I am not, just now, complaining of this law, but I am trying to show how the current sets; for the proposed law of 1817 was far less offensive than the present one. In 1774 the Continental Congress pledged itself, without a dissenting vote, to wholly discontinue the slave trade, and to neither purchase nor import any slave; and less than three months before the passage of the Declaration of Independence, the same Congress which adopted [25] that Declaration unanimously resolved “that no slave be imported into any of the thirteen United Colonies.” [Great applause.] On the second day of July, 1776, the draft of a Declaration of Independence was

reported to Congress by the committee, and in it the slave trade was characterized as “an execrable commerce,” as “a piratical warfare,” as the “opprobrium of infidel powers,” and as “a cruel war against human nature.” [Applause.] All agreed on this except South Carolina and Georgia, and in order to preserve harmony, and from the necessity of the case, these expressions were omitted. Indeed, abolition societies existed as far south as Virginia; and it is a well-known fact that Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Lee, Henry, Mason, and Pendleton were qualified abolitionists, and much more radical on that subject than we of the Whig and Democratic parties claim to be to-day. On March 1, 1784, Virginia ceded to the confederation all its lands lying northwest[26] of the Ohio River. Jefferson, Chase of Maryland, and Howell of Rhode Island, as a committee on that and territory thereafter *to be ceded*, reported that no slavery should exist after the year 1800. Had this report been adopted, not only the Northwest, but Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi also would have been free; but it required the assent of nine States to ratify it. North Carolina was divided, and thus its vote was lost; and Delaware, Georgia, and New Jersey refused to vote. In point of fact, as it was, it was assented to by six States. Three years later, on a square vote to exclude slavery from the Northwest, only one vote, and that from New York, was against it. And yet, thirty-seven years later, five thousand citizens of Illinois out of a voting mass of less than twelve thousand, deliberately, after a long and heated contest, voted to introduce slavery in Illinois; and, to-day, a large party in the free State of Illinois are willing to vote to[27] fasten the shackles of slavery on the fair domain of Kansas, notwithstanding it received the dowry of freedom long before its birth as a political community. I repeat, therefore, the question: Is it not plain in what direction we are tending? [Sensation.] In the colonial time, Mason, Pendleton, and Jefferson were as hostile to slavery in Virginia as Otis, Ames, and the Adamses were in Massachusetts; and Virginia made as earnest an effort to get rid of it as old Massachusetts did. But circumstances were against them, and they failed; but not that the good will of its leading men was lacking. Yet within less than fifty years Virginia changed its tune, and made negro-breeding for the cotton and sugar States one of its leading industries. [Laughter and applause.]”

To: jeffbrown@mvalaw.com[jeffbrown@mvalaw.com]
From: Kelly Hopkins
Sent: Fri 11/6/2020 8:43:26 AM (UTC-05:00)
Subject: Fwd: e mail #4

EXTERNAL EMAIL - USE CAUTION

From Walter

Kelly M. Hopkins
Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Walter Hussman <weh@arkansasonline.com>
Date: November 2, 2020 at 4:09:49 PM EST
To: Kelly Hopkins
Subject: e mail #4

Kelly, this is the last of the four e mails that I shared with Susan, Kevin, and Erskine. I have more information, but this is probably enough for now. Thanks, Walter

David, On June 30, 2020, Nikole Hannah Jones published an essay which was the cover story in the New York Times Sunday magazine entitled "What is owed." You can see the entire article for yourself by going to this link:

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/06/24/magazine/reparations-slavery.html>

I will not attempted in this email to argue for or against reparations. But she argues forcefully for it. Having been on the cover of this magazine and with her essay, I believe that today she is the most prominent spokesperson for reparations in America.

I would like to highlight a few of her statements in this essay which I feel will be quite controversial and divisive, especially to those opposed to reparations.

Early on in the essay, she argues that protesters should not have to risk their lives by taking to the streets "...demanding that the state not execute its citizens." We have all seen police brutality, and in the case of George Floyd, this type of brutality resulted in his death. But is excessive police force the same as an execution? And it is not just the police, she says, but "the state" executing citizens. I think this will be seen as inflammatory language. Maybe it is the meaning of the word "execute." We have seen an attempted execution just this week in Los Angeles where an individual approached a police car and fired shots point-blank at two police officers.

Shortly after that she notes the "presumption that white patrollers have the legal right to kill black people deemed to have committed minor infractions or have breached the social order." Many would concede that some blacks have died as a result of some altercation with police officers, but it's hard to believe many would agree that white police officers have the legal right to kill black people.

She later claims that the current unrest and reckoning this time is "our collective witness of what must be described without hyperbole as a modern-day lynching". From what I've read, the lynchings in the South were so horrific, and often involving far more citizens than just police officers, that her critics will argue that making a comparison with what some police officers have done today is not comparable.

She notes an author who points out "how white Americans love to play up moments of racial progress like the Emancipation Proclamation, Brown vs. Board of Education, and the election of Barack Obama, while playing

down or ignoring lynching... "I think a lot of Americans today do take pride in those moments of racial progress, but they also abhor the lynchings and racial injustices of the past, and to dismiss their pride in such racial progress will be offensive to them.

She also discusses "White Americans have had centuries of government assistance to accumulate wealth". This may sound similar to Barack Obama's claims that if you were successful with your business in America, you didn't build it, the government did it with roads, schools, etc.. Without arguing Barack Obama's point, it was one of his most controversial statements. I think many Americans could resent her statement, too.

Towards the end of her essay, where she is explaining how reparations could work, she makes a statement that I actually had to read several times to make sure I read it correctly. She says "Reparations should include... targeted investment in government constructed segregated black communities and the segregated schools that serve a disproportionate number of black children." I have read this several times, but it certainly seems like she's arguing for segregated facilities. That seems to go against everything that Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement tried to abolish.

She later states that the current social unrest "...is a radicalizing factor... that not only is society unraveling, but it might cause you to question what foundation it was built upon in the first place." I fear her critics will claim this is part of the narrative to repudiate the values of the founding fathers in an effort to substantially change American society and government.

Nikole Hannah Jones is a talented writer. She concludes her essay with these two sentences: "It is time for this country to pay its debt. It is time for reparations."

I do not dispute Nicole Heather Jones having her convictions in favor of reparations, nor do I dispute her right to advocate for it as strongly as possible. But I believe giving her a platform to argue for this as a tenured professor in the journalism school will not be beneficial, but instead detrimental, to the school. I believe it will be detrimental because it will be so controversial, contentious, and divisive. I worry that because she is already somewhat of a celebrity, reparations will become what the school is primarily known for with the public. She will still be a writer for the New York Times, living in New York, and can advocate for reparations there. But she will also be able to advocate if at the journalism school, too. No one knows exactly what she will say in the future. But she could be fired from the New York Times. But as I understand it, she could not be fired as a tenured professor.

Thanks, Walter

To: jeffbrown@mvalaw.com[jeffbrown@mvalaw.com]
From: Kelly Hopkins
Sent: Fri 11/6/2020 8:43:54 AM (UTC-05:00)
Subject: Fwd: e mail number 3

EXTERNAL EMAIL - USE CAUTION

Kelly M. Hopkins
Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Walter Hussman <weh@arkansasonline.com>
Date: November 2, 2020 at 4:06:16 PM EST
To: Kelly Hopkins
Subject: e mail number 3

David, I have now read Nikole Hannah Jones essay of August 14, 2019 for a third time. This was the first essay in the 1619 project.

My previous two emails were explaining why I believe she was factually incorrect in claiming that the founding fathers fought the American Revolution to preserve slavery rather than to create independence from England. A number of highly respected historians, including a few who have won the Pulitzer Prize, like Gordon Wood and James McPherson, dispute this as factually incorrect. If you download this essay from the New York Times, you will see that the New York Times has now issued a partial correction claiming that the "desire to protect slavery was among the motivations of *some* of the colonist who fought the revolutionary war not among the motivations of *all* of them." (Italics added). I've read where there's not a single published or available statement from any of the founders at the time supporting her view.

This email however deals with a different statement from that same first essay, and this it : "...for the most part, black Americans fought back alone." In the previous paragraph, she was talking about the struggles during slavery, after Reconstruction, and for civil rights and the equality they certainly deserved.

I think this claim denigrates the courageous efforts of many white Americans to address the sin of slavery and the racial injustices that resulted after the Civil War. Those people would include the abolitionists, many of them white, who argued strenuously against slavery before the civil war. It would include Abraham Lincoln, who signed the Emancipation Proclamation. It would include the freedom riders who came to the South during the civil rights struggle, and some of them, like Andrew Goodman, Michael Schwerner, and James Chaney who disappeared in Philadelphia, Mississippi, who paid for it with their lives. It also would include the courageous editors, publishers, and journalists who strongly advocated for the full civil rights for blacks in the 1950s and 1960s, many of whom received death threats. I remember reading Hodding Carter's "Where Main Street Meets The River" whose editorials at the Greenville, Mississippi Delta Democrat Times were especially courageous. He kept a pistol in his top desk drawer because of death threats. I think of J.N. Heiskell and his editor Harry Ashmore at the Arkansas Gazette who stood up to the mob in integrating Central High School in Little Rock in 1957. There are others in North Carolina, as well as throughout the rest of the South documented in Gene Roberts book "The Race Beat" which won a Pulitzer Prize, as did Hodding Carter and the Arkansas Gazette. So long before Nikole Hannah Jones won her Pulitzer Prize, courageous white southerners risking their lives standing up for the rights of blacks were winning Pulitzer prizes, too.

I feel this statement is not only wrong, but to many, it will be not just a slight, but an insult, and as a result will be more divisive and controversial as more people become familiar with her essay. I think they will become more familiar with her as she becomes better know as the most prominent voice in America for reparations. In fact, I believe she is that person today after forcefully arguing for reparations in her cover story on the New York Times Sunday magazine in their June 30, 2020 issue entitled "What is Owed."

Thanks, Walter