

STAMPED Book Discussion – Session 2

Facilitator Introduction

Discussion Guidelines

Discussion Questions (30 minutes total for each of two small group discussion sessions; 10 minutes large group share-out/discussion)

Section 4 -1868-1963

1. W.E.B. Du Bois, one of the most influential African American leaders in the early 20th century, introduced the idea of **double consciousness** – “A self that is Black and a self that is American.” He called his double conscious group the “Talented Tenth” – the top 10% of Black America. How does double consciousness and the “talented tenth” play out in our culture today?
2. Why did Du Bois move from being an assimilationist to an antiracist?
3. Books and movies like *Tarzan* and *Birth of a Nation* have had a big role in forming and reinforcing racist ideas. What other movies/TV shows have promoted racist ideas?
4. Reynolds calls the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments examples of a “big deal” that is far from being a “done deal.” Why are these constitutional amendments not “done deals?”

Section 5 -1963- Today

1. Why have the different approaches of assimilationism and uplift suasion thinking not been helpful in dispelling racism? (Ibram Kendi’s definition of *uplift suasion*: “Based on the idea that Whites could be persuaded away from their racist ideas if they saw Blacks improving their behavior, **uplifting** themselves from their low station in American society. The burden of race relations was placed squarely on the shoulders of Black Americans. Positive Black behavior, abolitionist strategists held, undermined racist ideas; negative Black behavior confirmed them.”)
2. How has racism changed, improved, or worsened throughout American history? Do you think racism today is worse than 50 years ago?
3. Reynolds notes how Richard Nixon would reference Black people in his speeches without ever saying “Black and “white” by using words like “urban” and “ghetto.” What are other words in our culture that invoke race without mentioning race?
4. At the beginning of *Stamped* and in chapter 13, Reynolds asserts, “Life rarely fits neatly into a box. People are complicated and selfish and contradictory.” Who are some of the complicated political figures with respect to their ideas about race, past and present? What makes them complex?

Reference for Discussion of Section 4/Question 4:

Amendment XIII

Passed by Congress January 31, 1865. Ratified December 6, 1865. The 13th Amendment changed a portion of Article IV, Section 2.

SECTION. 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

SECTION. 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment XIV

Passed by Congress June 13, 1866. Ratified July 9, 1868. The 14th Amendment changed a portion of Article I, Section 2. A portion of the 14th Amendment was changed by the 26th Amendment.

SECTION. 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

SECTION. 2. Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the Executive and Judicial officers of a State, or the members of the Legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, **being twenty-one years of age**, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

SECTION. 3. No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.

SECTION. 4. The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations and claims shall be held illegal and void.

SECTION. 5. The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

Amendment XV

Passed by Congress February 26, 1869. Ratified February 3, 1870.

SECTION. 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

SECTION. 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.