

Field Report

On Sunday, the EOP program hosted the field trip to the historical monuments and museum of the Underground Railroad. We had seen places where enslaved people could hide and learned how they escaped to Canada. In the museum, we heard about several people who actively participated in the Underground Railroad. The purpose of this field trip was to learn about the Underground Railroad how enslaved people escaped north to freedom in the early to mid-1800s and that it played a definite role in the destruction of slavery.

Our first visit was the barn which has a secret room that may have been built to hide people escaping from slavery. The barn hid fugitives as they awaited transportation to the next place. I actually got to feel what the slaves went through when the man closed us in this barn. I could not see the light, I started to breath really hard since it was hot and I smelt this old wooden barn as if you were taking back to the 19th century. I was scared because we could not know what would happen next. I think that enslaved people were afraid since they could get caught any moment. This secret place was the network of the Underground Railroad that helped slaves escape north to Canada to freedom.

All enslaved people were moving to Niagara falls to across the river. I just could imagine when man stood on the land and he saw that on the other side of the river is freedom since anyone entering Canada soil was free. Also, when I stood near the river I could actually feel the differences between the barn and Niagara river. The barn presented the isolation, it was a symbol of darkness, of fear. But the river was shown as a symbol of freedom, it became easier to breath. And many of enslaved people had to travel a lot in order to get to Niagara River.

In the museum, I observed that the Underground Railroad was made up of both blacks and whites who opposed the oppression of other human beings. The Hotel Cataract House employed an entirely African-American wait staff and with help from hotel employees, many “servants” (enslaved people) who came with the guests, they escaped from the hotel across the river to freedom. I noticed that the Cataract House was very important stop on the Underground Railroad since it was in Niagara Falls which makes it really close to Canada. Also, a significant role in this movement was played by Harriet Tubman. She was one of the most famous conductors on the Underground Railroad. Harriet escaped from slavery to Canada. She began helping and assisting the slaves escape. I realized that a lot of free black people did not leave others in slavery. They were so brave and fearless that they were not afraid to create this Underground Railroad since it was dangerous and illegal.

In addition, the African American demonstrated different strategies of resistance. Some of them refused to work or rebelled against slavery. In the movie “12 years a Slave” the main protagonist, Solomon, is duped and kidnapped. He refused to say that his name was Platt which was given by white people and he was beaten for it. One of enslaved men offers advice: “do and speak little, tell no one your identity or that you're literate” Solomon replies: “Tell no one who I am - that's the way to survive? Well, I don't want to survive. I want to live.” He showed personal resistance since the name shapes our identities. It defines us. Solomon wanted to keep his identity that he was a free black man since white people tried to make him a slave, giving him an idea that he was a nothing. African American have always rebelled against slavery. They used different strategies of resistance. The Underground Railroad was very effective resistance that destroyed slavery and helped to achieve a bit of justice.

In conclusion, people are doing everything to improve the life of humanity, using various

strategies of resistance. The abolitionists and black people who fought for the freedom of slaves. During the field trip, I had incredible feelings, learning about how black people escaped from U.S. They created the Underground Railroad which saved a lot of black people. It became the most dramatic protest action against slavery.