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*The Atlantic* • V Z U L W L Q J R Q U D F H D Q G U

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America recently passed the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first captive Africans brought to what would become the United States. September 2019 was chosen as an imperfect but significant date to mark the start of American slavery and the systems R I L Q H T X D O L W \ S H U S H W X D W H G E \ W K H Q D W L R

For 163 years The Atlantic has discussed, argued, and analyzed America, its lofty ideals and the reality that often falls short of them. This magazine was founded, in part, to argue in favor of abolition, and has been a home for black voices such as Frederick Douglass, Martin Luther King Jr., W. E. B. Du Bois, and Booker T. Washington<sup>2</sup> each calling upon the country to realize its promise of freedom and equity for all its citizens.

Amid a pandemic that is disproportionately killing brown and black people and an economic recession disproportionately devastating the finances of people of color, a major moment of racial reckoning has arisen after yet another series of murders of black Americans<sup>3</sup> the latest in a generations-old trend of disproportionate killing and violence against black communities by those sworn to serve and protect.

There have been protests, looting, and more police violence. Major companies and individuals are being called to account for discrimination, leaders in the public and private sectors are losing their jobs for failing communities of color, and many Americans are seeking new ways to support the movement toward racial equity. Confronting the continued realities of racism and its steep cost is painful and complex, and forces a question: How did it come to this?

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### **Calls for Abolition, Civil War, Emancipation**

Where Will It End?(Edmund Quincy, 1857)

The Election in November(James Russell Lowell, 1860)

The Pickens and 6 W H D O L Q ¶(James Russell Lowell, 1861)

The Battle Hymn of the Republic(Julia Ward Howe, 1862)

7 K H ) U H H G P ¶(William Parker, 1866)

Reconstruction(Frederick Douglass, 1866)

An Appeal to Congress for Impartial Suffrage(Frederick Douglass, 1867)

Modern analysis:

Frederick Douglass, Refugee(David W. Blight, 2017)

Why There Was a Civil War(Yoni Appelbaum, 2017)

The Myth of the Kindly General Lee(Adam Serwer, 2017)

The Quintessential Americans of Juneteenth(Vann R. Newkirk II, 2017)

Balancing the Ledger on Juneteenth(Vann R. Newkirk II, 2019)







