



Kids Are Ready.™

Ages 5+



Bravery



History



Possibility



Racism

What's Inside?

Our history echoes with events which, over time, have become hidden, yet are important to all of us. Juneteenth is a celebration which recognizes the end of the enslavement of Black people in America. This book opens a door to understanding our history and celebrating our future—together.

About The Author

Garrison Hayes (he/him) is a filmmaker, creator, and entrepreneur who amplifies stories which change the world. He believes the truth of the past helps us better understand the present and gives us the foundation to build a better tomorrow.



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Designed in Portland, Oregon



Garrison Hayes

a kids book about Juneteenth

a
kids
book
about

JUNETEENTH

by Garrison Hayes



better together*

***This book is best read together,
grownup and kid.**



akidsco.com



**a
kids
book
about**

JUNETEENTH

by Garrison Hayes

a kids book about

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Designed and edited by Jelani Memory

Images in this book were generated
with the assistance of Midjourney.

For my Pops, Larry Hayes.

Intro

The stories we accept shape how we understand the world around us.

There are some stories we've heard a million times—Rosa Parks refusing to give up her seat on the bus or MLK's "I Have a Dream" speech. Some stories, however, are hiding in plain sight—tucked away in history books and oral histories, waiting for us to find them, cherish them, and pass them along.

Juneteenth is a story of good news!

For some, the truth of Juneteenth has yet to be discovered; this book is designed to make sure our history isn't hidden again!

My goal in writing it is to bring Juneteenth to life, introducing kids to a powerful account of resilience, joy, and solidarity that will stay with them for a lifetime.

This is a book about

JUNETEENTH.

The word Juneteenth
is the combination of 2 words,
"June" and "nineteenth."



Juneteenth celebrates the end of slavery in the United States on June 19, 1865.

You may think slavery ended when the Civil War was over, but that's not true.

Hi, my name is Garrison Hayes, and I'm the author of this book.

I wrote it for a few reasons:

1. Because I think the stories of the past help us understand today and build a better tomorrow.
2. I LOVE history.
3. I'm the descendent of people who were enslaved in the United States of America.

In order to understand Juneteenth
and my family history, we have
to go back, over...

400 YEARS.

In August of 1619, enslaved Africans were brought to Point Comfort in what is now Hampton, Virginia, by the Virginia Company.^{1, 2}

And that event...

SHAPED
AMERICA
FOREVER.

¹"The 1619 Landing - Virginia's First Africans Report & Faqs," The 1619 Landing - Virginia's First Africans Report & FAQs | Hampton, VA - Official Website.

²John Rolfe, "'Twenty and Odd Negroes'; an Excerpt from a Letter from John Rolfe to Sir Edwin Sandys (1619/1620)," Encyclopedia Virginia, December 7, 2020, <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/twenty-and-odd-negroes-an-excerpt-from-a-letter-from-john-rolfe-to-sir-edwin-sandys-1619-1620/>.

America wasn't the first country to embrace slavery. It wasn't even the first to embrace chattel* slavery, but it *did* perfect it.

*Chattel slavery is when a human being is considered the property of another person.

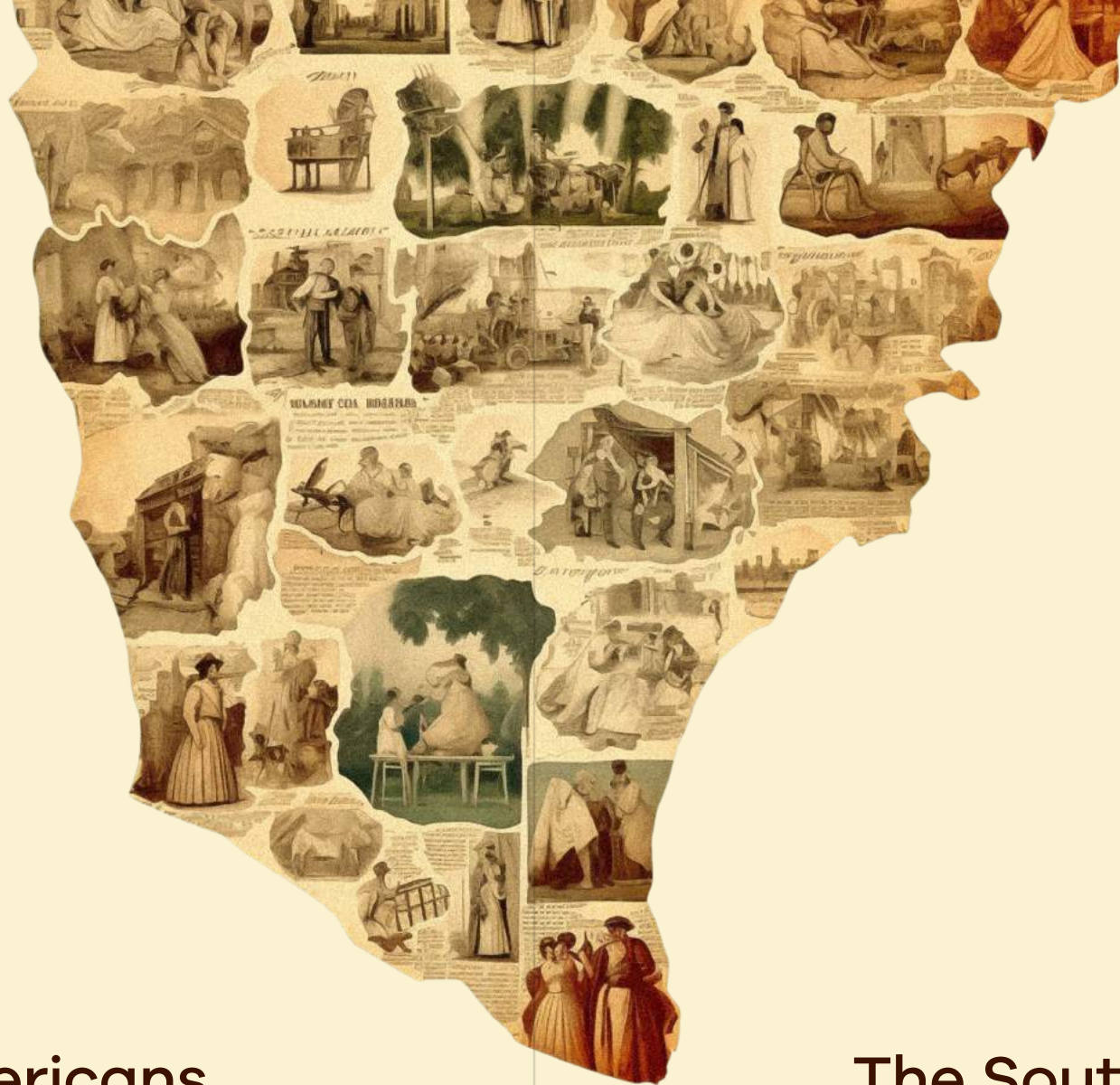
American slavery was all about race. Usually, white people enslaved Black people.

It was a cruel, inhumane, and very *profitable* institution.

America became the richest nation in the world because of the free labor of enslaved Black people.

But abolitionists like Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, and many others traveled the country arguing that slavery was wrong, no matter what.

Over time, more and more white people opposed slavery and wanted to end it.



However, many white Americans in the South were so committed to commerce supported by slavery that by the 1800s, they were willing to fight a war over it.

The South included these states:
Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia.

This was called the

CIVIL WAR.



The war was fought by the Union army, which was in the North, and the Confederate army, which was in the South.

Some people say the fight was about the States having the right to choose their own laws.

But it wasn't that simple.

The war was really about slavery.

In fact, the most influential Confederates said so!³

³"John C. Calhoun (U.S. National Park Service)," National Parks Service, April 15, 2021, <https://www.nps.gov/people/john-c-calhoun.htm#:~:text=John%20Caldwell%20Calhoun%20was%20one,of%20Southern%20nationalism%20and%20secessionism.>

In 1863, before the war ended, the US president, Abraham Lincoln, made a presidential proclamation* called the Emancipation** Proclamation.

*Sometimes known as an executive order.

**To emancipate means to free a person from restraint, control, or the power of another person.



It declared that

**ALL
PERSONS
HELD AS
SLAVES
ARE,**

**AND
HENCE-
FORWARD
SHALL BE
FREE.**

The proclamation didn't free everyone, but its message encouraged people to keep fighting.

It left slavery in place in border states between the North and the South, and, most importantly, the proclamation depended on military victory by the Union.

The Union army finally defeated
the Confederate army

IN 1865.

Okay, now let's skip ahead
to the good part...



Confederate General
Robert E. Lee surrendered
to Union General
Ulysses S. Grant.

Now there was only one
thing left to do...

tell Black people
they were free.

**YES, FINALLY
THEY WERE
FREE!**

But back then, there weren't fast ways to get the news out to people—no phones, no TVs, and definitely no internet.

News had to be shared through newspapers or from person to person, by word of mouth.

Major General Gordon Granger and his troops went from place to place on foot and on horseback reading the words of General Order Number 3, written by Major Frederick Emery, which said “all slaves are free.”⁴

And on June 19, 1865—2 months later—they finally made it to Galveston, Texas, the last place to learn that the war was over and Black people were free.

⁴www.tsl.texas.gov/outofthestacks/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/GeneralOrders3_Juneteenth.pdf

Two women in a buggy decorated with flowers for the annual Juneteenth Celebration circa 1895-1905 Houston, Texas.



As one person found out,
they told another,
and another, and another.

Black people celebrated their

FREEDOM!

They shouted, they sang, they

REJOICED!



Martha Yates Jones (left) and Pinkie Yates (right), daughters of Rev. Jack Yates, in a decorated carriage parked in front of the Antioch Baptist Church located in Houston's Fourth Ward, 1908. By Schlueters Advertising & Souvenir Photographs: Houston, Texas

What makes Juneteenth special to me is that even though it isn't the only day* Black Americans found out they were free, it was the first day every Black American found out they were free.

*There are actually lots of days of celebration leading up to the day everyone in the country finally knew about freedom.

I wish I could say that's the end of the story and everything was fine every day after.

But I can't.

There were a few good years after emancipation.

Black people...

traveled freely to find their families, which had been separated,

started businesses,

saved millions of dollars,

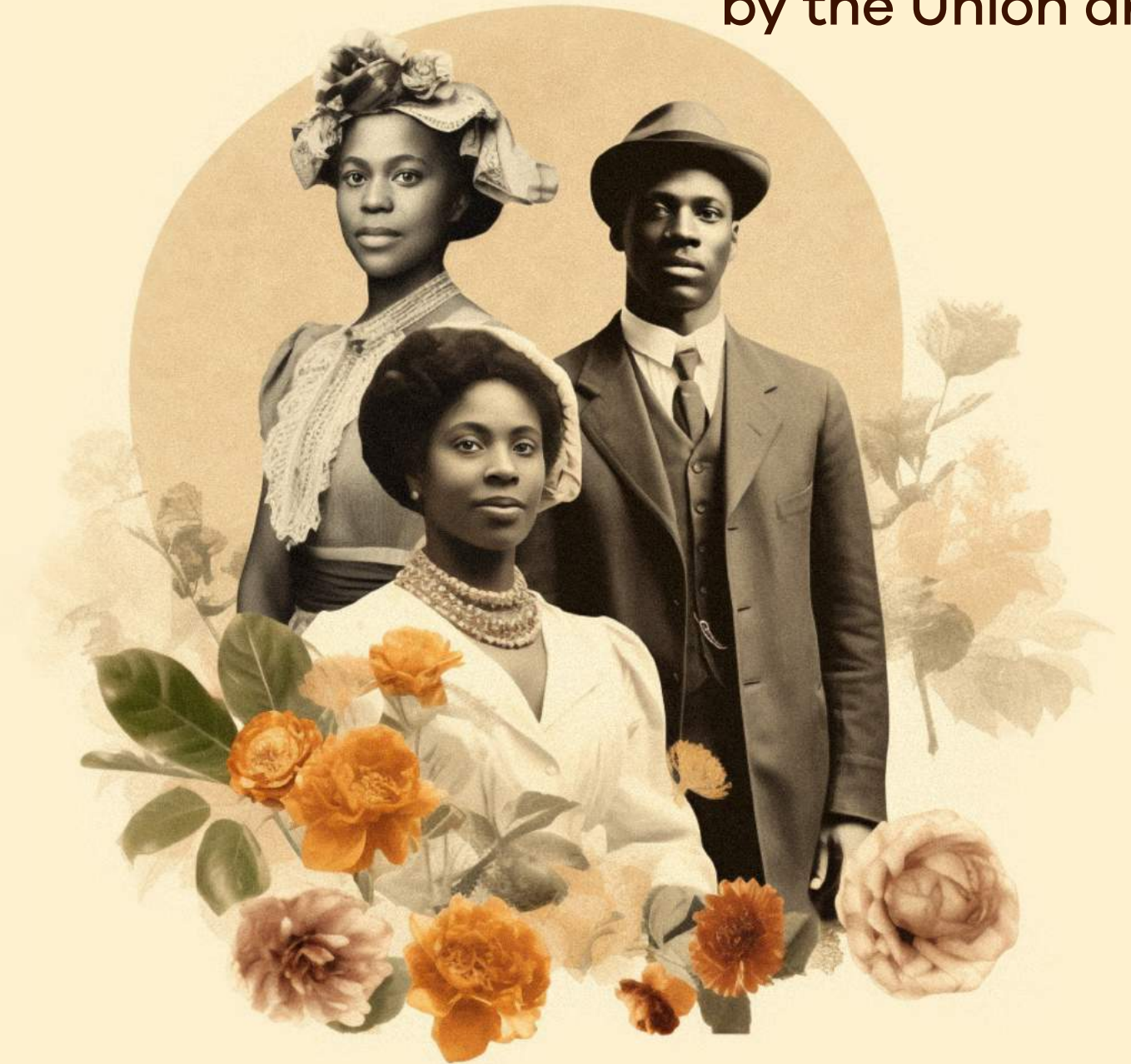
bought homes,

became senators,

and Americans even elected our first Black governor!

This period of time was called Reconstruction.

And it was all made possible because Black people in the South were protected by the Union army.



But, that protection didn't last...

In 1876, there wasn't a clear winner of the presidential election.

And to solve it, politicians agreed to make Rutherford B. Hayes the president of the United States if he would remove the Union army from the South.

It was called the Compromise of 1877.

And it completely removed protection for Black people in the South from white people who wanted them under their control.

Much of the success Black people achieved was erased almost overnight.



We call this time period Jim Crow.*

*Jim Crow was a demeaning character created by a white actor. This character eventually became synonymous with the negative and stereotypical views of Black people and was used to justify Black oppression.

**AND IT
LASTED
NEARLY 100
YEARS.**

During that time, thousands of Black people were killed and their property was stolen or destroyed.

The joys of Juneteenth celebrations faded away.

You see, Jim Crow laws made it illegal for Black people to do everyday things.

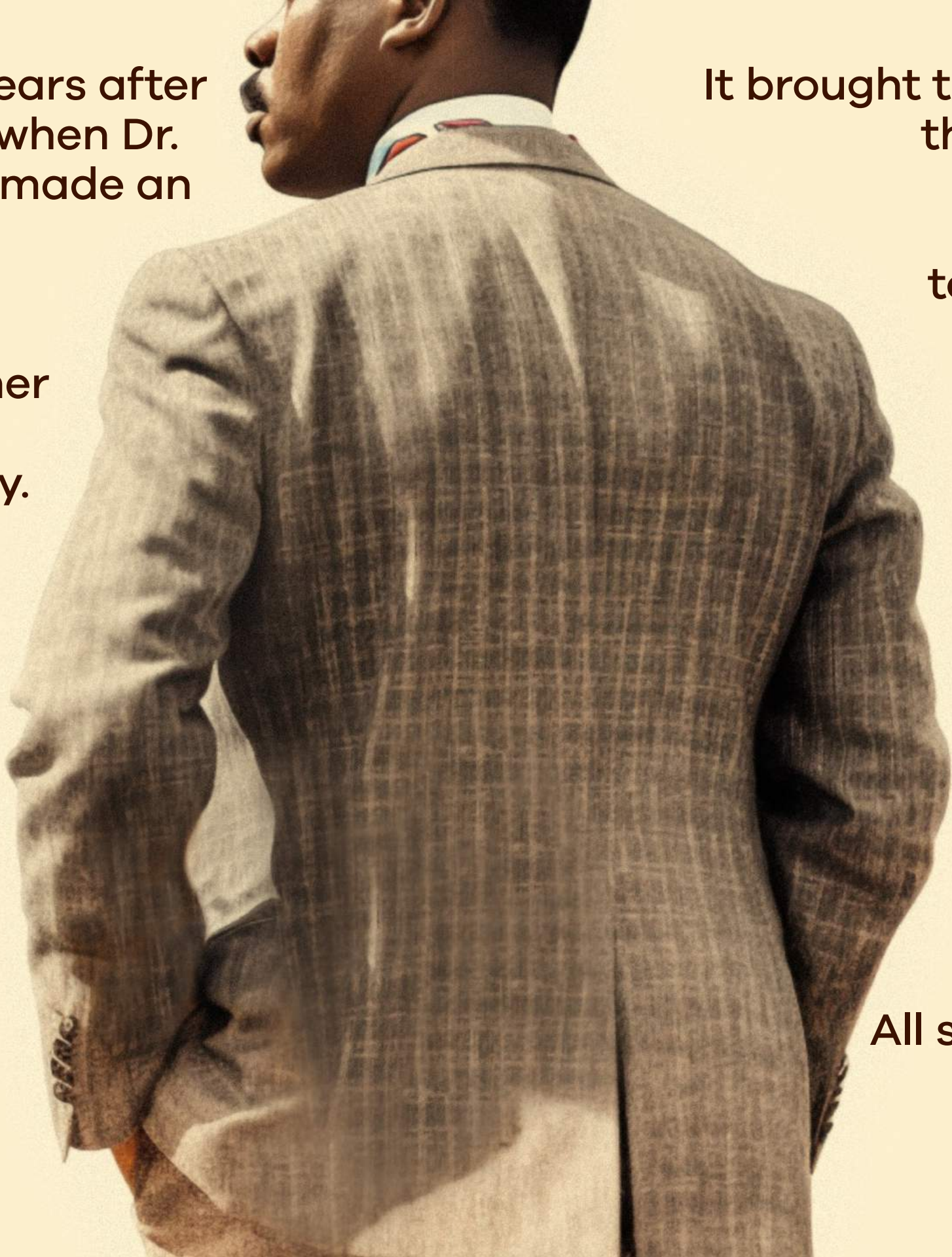
Visiting a public park: Illegal.

Voting: Illegal.

In some places, it was even illegal for Black people to laugh in public.

Jim Crow laws were meant to bring back white supremacy after Reconstruction and to enforce racial segregation.

Juneteenth became something people celebrated privately and quietly.

A man in a light-colored, textured suit jacket is shown from the back, looking towards the left. He is wearing a white shirt and a patterned tie. The background is a plain, light color.

Until 1968—over 100 years after the first Juneteenth—when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. made an important decision.

He gathered nearly 100,000 people together in Washington, DC, for the Solidarity Day Rally.

On June 19, 1968.

It brought the holiday back into the national spotlight.

This rally brought together people from many backgrounds:

Black and white,
gay and straight,

Hispanic and Latino,

Christian,

Jewish,

and Muslim.

All standing in solidarity with one another.

Because Juneteenth is about...



**FREEDOM
FOR
EVERYONE.**

It's the belief that
none of us are free
until all of us are free.

We can never be truly
free if we forget where
we came from.

IF WE
FORGET
OUR
HISTORY.

Let's skip ahead again.

On June 17, 2021, led by descendants of enslaved people—those like me—Juneteenth was finally declared a national holiday by President Joseph R. Biden.



President Joe Biden, joined by Vice President Kamala Harris, lawmakers and guests, signs the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act Bill on Thursday, June 17, 2021, in the East Room of the White House. (Official White House Photo by Chandler West)

I believe if there was ever a time we needed a yearly reminder to stand with one another *against* oppression and *for* freedom for all, it's now.

Outro

Now that you know the story of Juneteenth, what comes next? Hold on to the power of its annual reminder that no one of us is free until all of us are free. Consider talking to kids, friends, and family about ways we can all stand with those still enslaved by systemic racism.

We can ask ourselves questions to set our own personal course of action. Where in our community, country, and world are there people who need us to lift our voices on their behalf? What does solidarity look like in our day-to-day lives? What does allyship mean, and how can we be better allies for marginalized groups? Just as importantly, how can we continue to learn from the stories of the past to better understand our present and build a brighter future?

Our hope is that this book is just the beginning of a lifelong love for history and the power of standing in solidarity with those who are still waiting to be set free.



About The Author

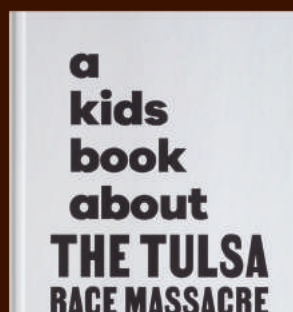
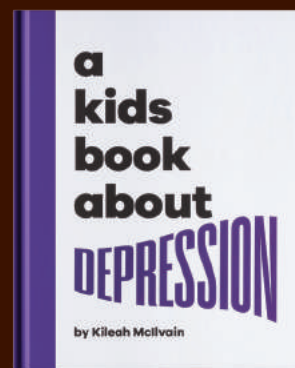
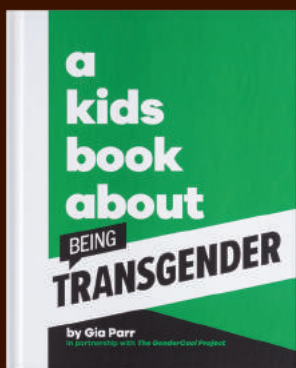
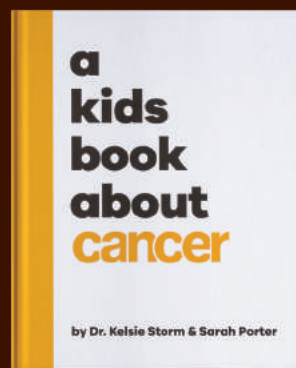
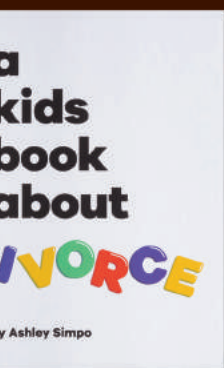
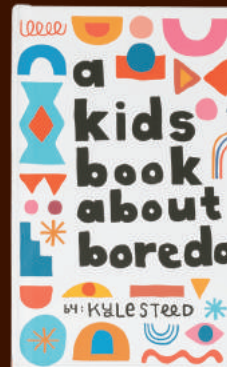
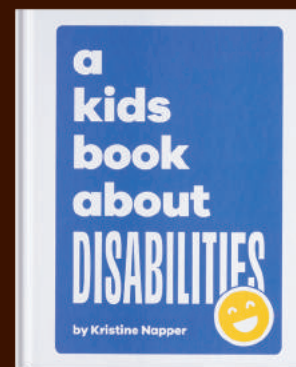
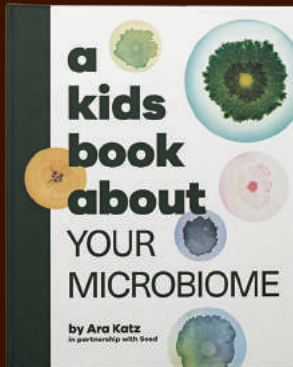
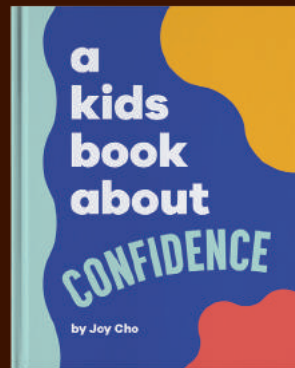
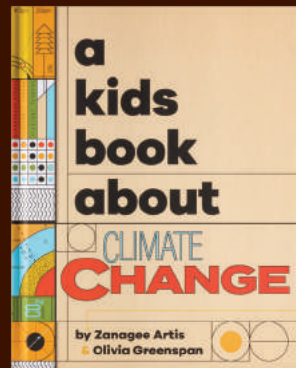
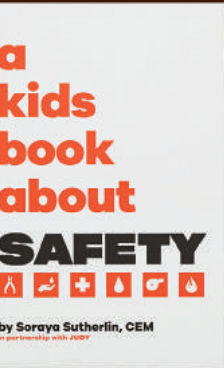
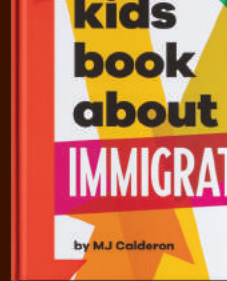
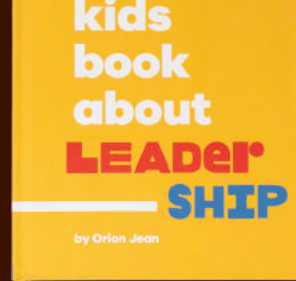
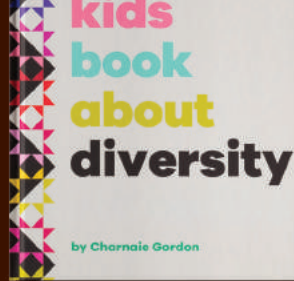
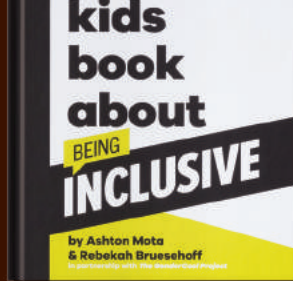
Garrison Hayes (he/him) wrote this book because he has a drive to understand our shared history. From a very young age, he was interested in stories of the past and how they shape the future.

With 400,000+ followers across TikTok and Instagram, Garrison is a powerful voice at the intersection of history, culture, and progress. His innovative storytelling situates the headlines of today within the historical context that informs them.

Garrison is the founder of Kindred Media, a video-first creative agency at the cutting edge of culturally-relevant media for Fortune 500 companies, higher education institutions, and nonprofit organizations.

Garrison creates truthful content for people everywhere, including kids like you! When not speaking or creating, he enjoys spending time with his lovely wife, Simone.





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