Interpretive Theme: Political Participation

Webinar Title: The Puzzle of Citizenship: Black Americans and the Birthright Principle

Scholar: Dr. Martha Jones, John Hopkins University, Department of History and SNF Agora Institute

FAQ:

1. Where can I look more closely at some of your primary sources?

   I recommend starting with the materials collected by the Colored Conventions Project (coloredconventions.org). Their site includes the minutes for scores of conventions along with interpretive essays. The New Jersey state conventions are included here.

   The website “Paul Cuffe: An African-American and Native-American Heritage Trail” has published the primary materials related to Cuffe’s story at paulcuffe.org.

2. What can I read to take a deeper dive into the history of Black Americans and citizenship?


3. What if I want to read more about these issues in New Jersey?


4. Where does the debate over birthright citizenship stand today?

Birthright citizenship remains a thorny legal question, even as the current White House administration has not expressed plans to compromise or change this aspects of the 14th Amendment.

In vitro fertilization has presented new questions about who is a birthright citizen as Sarah Zhang explained to readers of the Atlantic: https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2021/06/ivf-us-birthright-citizenship/619155/

Citizens of American Samoa are continuing a long battle to be recognized as birthright citizens of the US as Jacob Knutson explained over at Axios: https://www.axios.com/american-samoa-birthright-citizenship-ruling-4a438f31-5e68-4169-bddc-211128e97f26.html

Additional Resources:


