



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

A Level History A

Y319/01 Civil Rights in the USA 1865–1992

Wednesday 6 June 2018 – Afternoon

Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes



You must have:

- the OCR 12-page Answer Booklet (OCR12 sent with general stationery)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Use black ink.
- Answer Question 1 in Section A and any two questions in Section B.
- Write your answers in the Answer Booklet. The question number(s) must be clearly shown.
- Do **not** write in the barcodes.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is **80**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets [].
- Quality of extended responses will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (*).
- This document consists of **4** pages.

SECTION A

Read the two passages and then answer Question 1.

- 1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the impact of the Dawes Act on Native Americans. [30]

Passage A

In particular the Dawes Act sought to turn the nomadic plains Indians, who seemed doomed to be exploited in one way or another, into settled farmers, by allotting each head of family a quarter section (160 acres), plus a one-eighth section to single adults and orphans and one-sixteenth to each dependent child. These lands were inalienable and held in federal trust for twenty-five years before title was given. This Act marked a retreat from the reservation policy, and it was subsequently criticised for opening up Indian reserve land to whites, since the quarter sections were taken over from tribal allocations, and after twenty-five years they passed into the general land market. But this criticism ignores the fact that many Indians who took advantage of it, and thus got full citizenship, did not sell their land after twenty-five years and became full members of the American farming community. In material and moral terms, assimilation was always the best option for indigenous peoples confronted with the fact of white dominance. That is the conclusion reached by the historian who studies the fate not only of the American Indians but of the Aborigines in Australia and the Maoris in New Zealand. To be preserved in amber as tribal societies with special 'rights' and 'claims' is merely a formula for continuing friction, extravagant expectations, and new forms of exploitation by white radical intellectuals.

Adapted from P. Johnson, *A History of the American People*, published in 1997.

Passage B

Through the Dawes Act of 1887 the government introduced the allotment policy by which reservation lands were divided up into homesteads, or allotments. Although its supporters hoped that it would improve conditions for the Native Americans, it did nothing to help their civil rights. The Act continued to ignore the tribal nature of Native American life and continued the policy of trying to destroy it. It could be argued that the Act improved the rights of the Native Americans and did therefore represent a change. Native Americans were given land, and, after 25 years, could own it and would have full citizenship and therefore rights. This was not what the Native Americans wanted, but what they wanted was scarcely appreciated by the government. Moreover, even if they had wanted the rights that land ownership gave them, it actually meant very little in practice as, like the African Americans, they were subject to discrimination. Not only did the allotment policy continue the determination of the government to assimilate these people, but it was a clear indication that the government either did not understand the wishes of the Native Americans or did not want to understand them. It also resulted in a decline in land held by Native Americans as much of it was bought by white settlers when the Native Americans were unable to farm it. Although they received money from the sale, they were often unable to manage such sums and therefore slipped further into poverty and debt. The act also worsened the position and status of many Native American women. This was particularly true of tribes that were matriarchal, such as the Iroquois and Cherokee, where property belonged to the women, but under the Dawes Act the land was given to the men.

Adapted from N. Fellows and M. Wells, *Civil Rights in the USA 1865–1992*, published in 2016.

SECTION B

Answer **TWO** of the following three questions.

- 2*** 'Discrimination against African Americans remained strong throughout the period 1865–1992.' How far do you agree? **[25]**
- 3*** 'The 1930s were the most important turning point in the development of Trade Union and labour rights.' How far do you agree with this view of the period from 1865 to 1992? **[25]**
- 4*** 'Throughout the period 1865–1992, Native Americans took little action themselves to improve their civil rights.' How far do you agree? **[25]**

END OF QUESTION PAPER

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