

Jefferson's Blood-Soaked Hand

By Kayla

Thomas Jefferson is a historical figure and a Founding Father. These titles give one image of perfection, but there are many aspects of his life that would tell a different story. Thomas Jefferson was born into a slaveholding family and from owning more than 600 enslaved African Americans throughout his adulthood. There are many ways to view Thomas Jefferson:

1. as a founding father who wrote the Declaration of Independence
2. as a slave master that had a long-term relationship with one of his slaves, Sally Hemming
3. as the slave master who had very complex feelings towards slavery.

Some say Jefferson did not believe in the harsh acts involved in slavery, but he did believe in African Americans participating in servant activities.

Nikole Hannah-Jones used Thomas Jefferson to argue that the Declaration of Independence was indeed false. The very first line of the Declaration of Independence states “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.” While Thomas Jefferson wrote this there were people being enslaved beaten, traded, mortgaged, sold and killed just because of the color of their skin. He even had a slave that he owned by his side while writing this. Thomas Jefferson did not write this declaration for “all men’s” independence, but for his.