

# **Stereotyping**

# Stereotyping of African American peoples

Stereotypes of African Americans grew as a natural consequence of scientific racism and legal challenges to both their rights and citizenship. In the 1857 Supreme Court case, Dred Scott v. John F.A. Sandford, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney denied the humanness of people of African descent. This decision allowed the portrayal of African Americans to be simplified and exaggerated in popular culture.



Many of these stereotypes were created during the trans-Atlantic Slave Trade to dehumanise African American people and justify and support the slave trade business.

## Mammy

The 'Mammy' stereotype started as an offensive racial caricature during slavery. Black women who were enslaved worked as highly skilled domestic workers in white families' homes, caring for their children. The 'Mammy' stereotype showed these workers as having complete loyalty to their slaveholders and was created to justify slavery and make it seem acceptable. After the Civil War and into the 1900s, the 'Mammy' image was attached to mass-produced products like flour and motor oil. In the minds of white people, Mammy became a symbol of trust, making them feel nostalgic about the past and keeping alive their concerns about racial equality.

## Uncle Tom

Uncle Tom is a novel written by Harriet Beecher Stowe in 1852. It featured the Uncle Tom character as a "large, broad-chested, powerfully made man." In the story, Uncle Tom is strong and kind. He gave up his own chance at escaping slavery and lost his life to help other slaves be free. The stereotype of this character was that he was happily submissive, always obeying others and in constant want of the approval of white people. People in favour of slavery saw this stereotype as meaning slavery couldn't be wrong if servants such as 'Toms' were content and loyal. The term became popular during the Great Migration when many black people from the South moved to cities like New York, Chicago and Detroit. Jim Crow laws in these hostile environments made life difficult for these people, and so they brought with them certain ways of behaving expected in these places.

*The Jim Crow era: Jim Crow was the name of the racial caste system in America, which operated mainly in southern and border states between 1877 and the mid-1960s. It involved racial segregation and discrimination against African Americans. Jim Crow was more than a series of rigid anti-black laws. It was a way of life. Under Jim Crow, African Americans were made to be second-class citizens.*

Sources:

- Image: <https://jimcrowmuseum.ferris.edu/mammies/homepage.htm>
- [National Museum of African American History & Culture](#)
- [Jim Crow Museum](#)

# Upstanders: Harriet Tubman

**Harriet Tubman was an African American abolitionist (a person who wanted to stop slavery) and political activist who played a crucial role in the fight against slavery in the United States.**



Harriet Tubman is famous for helping many people escape slavery through the Underground Railroad, which was a network of secret routes and safe houses used by enslaved African Americans to escape into free states and into Canada. Over ten years, Harriet made 19 trips to the South and helped over 300 slaves to escape to freedom.

Although she is not directly an Upstander to the stereotyping of African American people, she is an incredibly important Upstander in History. You can read more about challenging the stereotypes of African American people in current times [in this article from Greater Good Magazine.](#)

Harriet was born into slavery in Maryland in around 1820. She worked as a house servant from the age of 5 or 6 and then was sent to work in the fields - at the age of 12!

In 1849, in fear that she, along with the other slaves on the plantation, were going to be sold, Tubman decided to run away. She set out one night on foot with some help from a friendly white woman. She followed the North Star by night, making her way to Pennsylvania and soon after to Philadelphia, where she found work and saved money. In the following years, she returned to Maryland several times to help her family and other slaves escape to the North.

Tubman used clever tricks that helped make her trips successful, including using the master's horse and buggy for the first leg of the journey; leaving on a Saturday night, since runaway notices couldn't be placed in newspapers until Monday morning; turning around and heading south if she came across possible slave hunters; and carrying a drug to use on a baby if its crying might put everyone in danger. Tubman even carried a gun which she used to threaten the fugitives if they became too tired or decided to turn back, telling them, "You'll be free or die."

Sources:

- Image: <https://picryl.com/media/harriet-tubman-c1868-69-cropped-dec0a1>
- [PBS](#)

# **Prejudice**



# Prejudice: South African Apartheid

Apartheid is a historical event that escalated through most of the stages of the Pyramid of Hate over the period of 80 years when it ended in 1990. Here, we focus on the eras between 1910 and 1950, when prejudice began to spread through South Africa.



## Various identities involved:

- **Afrikaners:** White South Africans of Dutch, German and Huguenot ancestry who immigrated to South Africa from the 1700s onwards
- **British:** The British and descendants of those who colonised South Africa
- **South Africans:** Black South Africans native to the country

Apartheid, meaning 'apartness' in Afrikaans, was the ideology introduced in South Africa in 1948 by the National Party. Apartheid proposed that different racial groups in South Africa should be developed separately. This led to laws that segregated and racially discriminated against black people. This policy led to black South Africans being barred from skilled, high-paying jobs, quality education and much more.

The reasons for this policy being introduced stemmed from years of prejudicial feelings of racial superiority and fear. South Africa was colonised in the 1600s by the British and Dutch, forcing local populations to move from their ancestral homelands to 'reserves.' Over the years leading up to 1948, white people were in the minority. However, they had taken over much of the land available, and they were worried they would lose their jobs, culture and language if the local African workforce were allowed to grow and be educated.

## Timeline leading to Apartheid

**1910**

South Africa was united into a single state: the Union of South Africa. A constitution aimed at uniting the English and Afrikaans-speaking people was formed, which denied native African people the right to vote and other basic rights.

**1912**

The South African Native National Congress (SANNC), later renamed the ANC, was formed. Its vision was to unite Africans and to secure their right to vote.

**1913**

The 1913 Land Act forced Africans to live in reserves which at first made up just over 7% of the land of South Africa and later extended to 13%.

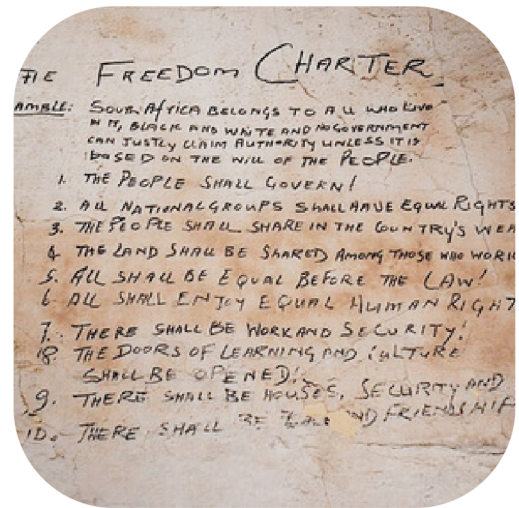
**1948**

Afrikaner nationalists won the general election. The National Party introduced the policy of Apartheid, and many laws were passed which separated different race groups socially and controlled the movement and economic activity of black people.

# Upstanders: The Defiance Campaign

The Defiance Campaign of 1952 was a series of non-violent protests and acts of civil disobedience aimed at challenging and resisting the discriminatory laws and policies of apartheid.

The Defiance campaign did not overturn apartheid but it showed the power of African leadership and strength. This campaign brought together people of all racial groups under the leadership of the ANC (African National Congress, a political party opposed to Apartheid). Thousands of people participated in the campaign and sent their demands.



## Freedom Charter of 1955

The Freedom Charter was a statement of principles and demands adopted by the Congress of the People with a view to an Apartheid free South Africa.

We, the people of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know: That South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people.

The people shall govern.  
All national groups shall have equal rights.  
The people shall share in the nation's wealth.  
The land shall be shared among those who work it.  
All shall be equal before the law.  
All shall enjoy equal human rights.  
There shall be work and security for all.  
The doors of learning and culture shall be opened.  
There shall be houses, security and comfort.  
There shall be peace and friendship.

3,000 upstanders gathered for this protest; they were people of all economic statuses, genders, races and ages. The Defiance campaign was the beginning of non-racial cooperation in the struggle against apartheid.

## Sources:

- [Apartheid Museum](#)
- [History.com](#)
- [South African History Online: Apartheid](#)
- [South African History Online: Congress of the People and the Freedom Charter](#)
- [How did South African Apartheid happen, and how did it finally end? - Ted-Ed](#)

# **Discrimination**

# Discrimination

## The Freedom Rides

The Student Action for Aborigines group (SAFA), led by Indigenous student activist Charles Perkins, visited rural towns in New South Wales and southern Queensland by bus to draw attention to inadequacies in health and housing and to support Aboriginal people in challenging the status quo.



The Australian Freedom Ride was inspired by the Freedom Rides in America, which were launched to challenge segregation on interstate buses and bus terminals in the United States. A group of 29 students formed the Student Action for Aborigines (SAFA) and were spurred on to highlight the marginalisation and discrimination against Aboriginal people in New South Wales by conducting their own Freedom ride. The group ensured the protests were covered by the media to draw as much attention as possible to the disadvantage, discrimination and racism Aboriginal people were experiencing.

Two of the most well-known protests from this ride focused on the discrimination against Aboriginal ex-servicemen who were refused membership to the Walgett RSL club and the discriminatory by-law preventing Aboriginal people from entering the Moree baths and pool, which saw racial discrimination against Aboriginal people made official

### The Walgett RSL

The Freedom Riders, along with local Aboriginal activists, protested at the Walgett RSL club, which refused membership to Aboriginal ex-servicemen. They protested from noon til sunset holding signs stating, 'Good enough for Tobruk - why not Walgett RSL?'. The protest provoked heated debate and anger in the "white" community. As the Freedom Riders left Walgett, two attempts were made to run the bus off the road.

### Moree Baths and Swimming Pool Complex

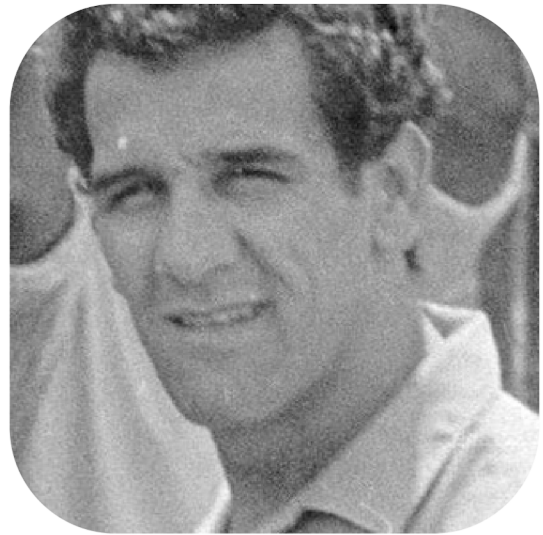
Moree was the first place the Freedom Riders had encountered a by-law that made racial discrimination against Indigenous people official. This law prevented Indigenous people from entering the Moree Baths and Pool. Charles Perkins and the Freedom Riders collected a number of children from the mission and attempted to gain entry into the pool. This led to three hours of heated negotiations, and during this time, a large and hostile crowd gathered. Fights broke out, people were knocked over, punches and eggs were thrown at the protesters, and several arrests were made. The protest ended when Moree Council rescinded the 1955 by-law.



# Upstander:

## Charles Perkins

**Dr Charles Nelson Perrurle Perkins, AO, rose to national prominence as a leading Indigenous rights activist initially through the Freedom Rides and the events at Moree Baths. His actions at Moree began a lifelong commitment to achieving economic, political, educational and social equity for Aboriginal people in Australia.**



Charlie Perkins was born at the Alice Springs Telegraph Station Aboriginal Reserve. He was the son of an Eastern Arrernte woman and a Kalkadoon father. His mother, Hetty Perkins, took up an offer of sending Charlie to go to an Anglican home for boys in Adelaide because she recognised that there were not many educational opportunities for Charlie in Alice Springs. This boy's home was for boys of mixed Aboriginal and other descent. In this environment, the boys were disciplined harshly and frequently racially taunted.

In 1963 he went to the University of Sydney and became the first Aboriginal man to graduate from university. It was here that he first focused on campaigning against racism and the rights of Aboriginal people. In 1964 he became the President of Student Action for Aborigines (SAFA) and in 1965, the group, led by Charles Perkins, went on the Freedom Ride. His actions at Moree began a lifelong commitment to achieving economic, political, educational and social equity for Aboriginal people in Australia.

Charlie joined the Commonwealth Office of Aboriginal Affairs in 1969. In 1989 he became Chair of the Arrernte Council of Central Australia. He was the first Aboriginal Australian to become a permanent head of a federal government department, and by 1984, he was Secretary of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. In 1993 Mr Perkins was elected a commissioner of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) and in 1994, he was elected Deputy Chairperson of ATSIC.

Charles Perkins passed away in October 2000, and a state funeral was held in his honour in Sydney. The then-deputy Premier of New South Wales moved a condolence motion in the NSW Legislative Assembly acknowledging Charlie's extraordinary work to bring about a better future for Aboriginal people.

### The Legacy of the Freedom Rides

The events at the Moree Baths were instrumental in the Australian Indigenous civil rights movement. It highlighted the issue of discrimination against Aboriginal people and brought it to the attention of all Australians. The Freedom Ride was an important contributor to creating an environment for change. It helped move public opinion towards a 'Yes' vote in the 1967 referendum to remove the discrimination against Aboriginal Australians from the Australian Constitution.

The Freedom Ride has been described as one of those transitional moments in Australian history when one era fades and another takes its place

#### Sources:

- [Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water](#)
- [AIATSIS](#)

# **Genocide**



# Genocide: The Holocaust

Genocide is a crime under international law where acts are committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group. The Holocaust was the systematic genocide perpetrated by Nazi Germany during World War II. It took place from 1941-1945 and targeted 6 million European Jews as well as anyone else who threatened their idea of a 'pure Aryan race', such as people from other cultures, gay people, people with disabilities, and political opponents, among many others.



The Nazi Party came to power in Germany in January 1933 and established complete control of the country and its citizens. To achieve and consolidate their power, the Nazis needed a scapegoat to blame for Germany's defeat in World War I and the deep economic problems being experienced. Jewish people were convenient victims. Propaganda was used to convince the German people the Jews and 'Jewish influence' were the cause of all their social and economic ills. Hitler's goal was to create a 'master' race of Germans based on an Aryan ideal. His policies and actions led to the Holocaust, the most systematic and industrialised genocide in history.

## Creating 'us' and 'them'

- The Nazis created a hierarchy of races with 'Aryans' (as they called themselves) at the top. The Nazi government targeted those considered inferior: Jewish people, Romani, Slavic peoples, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, the disabled, the mentally ill, and political opponents.
- Nazis used false and pseudo-scientific reasoning to support their claim that Jews were subhuman, which then justified discrimination and violence against them.
- Antisemitic stereotypes were encouraged by the Nazis to build distrust and prejudice. Lies were spread across Europe that Jews were dangerous and alien. Media such as posters, newspaper articles and illustrations, movies and speeches spread and built on negative stereotypes of Jews as being subhuman, money-hungry and corrupt.

## Escalation to Genocide

- From 1933, German Jews were systematically persecuted and expelled from public life and citizenship.
- Jewish students were prohibited from schools and universities. Jewish lawyers and doctors were forbidden to practise. Special taxes and restrictions on owning property or businesses were imposed on Jews. They were not able to serve in the military.
- Jews were forced to wear a large yellow star which made them stand out from all others.
- Marriage and extramarital relations between Jews and Germans were banned, and Jewish businesses were boycotted. Businesses and synagogues were trashed.
- Jewish people were forced into grossly overcrowded ghettos without adequate food and other necessities.
- From mid-1941, Jews were systematically shot in territory captured from the Soviet Union.
- During 1942, six extermination camps, including Auschwitz, were built in German-occupied Poland. More than 1.1 million Jewish people were gassed over the next three years. The Nazis' 'Final Solution' to exterminate the Jewish population of Europe killed almost two of every three European Jews, approximately six million people. This became known as the Holocaust.

# Upstanders: The Righteous Amongst the Nations

The Righteous Amongst the Nations were the remarkable Upstanders during the Holocaust who risked their lives to save Jews from annihilation. Had there been more Upstanders at that time, and during the other genocides throughout history, far more people may have been saved.



The Righteous Among the Nations are non-Jews who took great risks to save Jewish people during the Holocaust. This rescue took many forms, and the Righteous came from many different nations, religions and walks of life. They made it their mission to protect their Jewish Neighbours in a time when attitudes towards Jewish people were hostile.

The Righteous Among the Nations went to different lengths to save Jews. Yad Vashem, the official memorial to victims of the holocaust, outlines four key ways these individuals helped the Jewish community.

- Hiding Jews in the rescuers home or on their property, providing food and other necessities
- Obtaining false papers and identities for those they saved
- Helping Jews escape from Nazi-occupied territories to less dangerous areas
- Saving Jewish children after their parents had been taken to concentration camps or killed

The Righteous Among the Nations are made up of people from diverse backgrounds. There are Christians from all denominations, as well as Muslims and atheists. Some of the Righteous were high-ranking diplomats who used their positions to secure false papers for Jews, while others were peasant farmers who hid Jews on their property.

Many of those who rescued Jews during the Holocaust were just regular people. Some did it because of their beliefs or convictions, while others were simply caring individuals. Many didn't plan to be heroes; they found themselves in a situation where they had to make a big decision unexpectedly. What makes them special is that they were ordinary humans, and it's their kindness and compassion that we find inspiring.

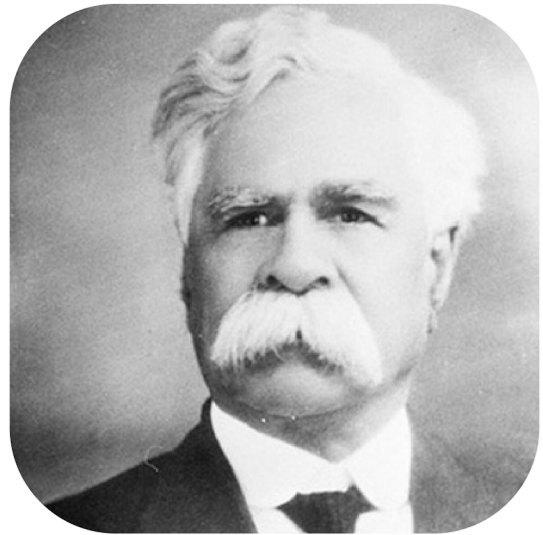
These rescuers acted independently, going against the norms and beliefs of their time. While most people were bystanders, just watching without getting involved, these rescuers were the exception. Even though it was difficult and scary, their courage shows us that ordinary people in occupied Europe had the choice to make a difference by saving Jews. The stories of the Righteous Among the Nations teach us that every person has the power to do something good.

## Sources:

- <https://www.hmd.org.uk/learn-about-the-holocaust-and-genocides/nazi-persecution/>
- [Courage to Care Upstander Handbook](#)
- <https://www.yadvashem.org/righteous/about-the-righteous.html>
- <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/righteous-among-the-nations>

# Upstanders: William Cooper

**William Cooper was an inspirational Aboriginal leader in New South Wales and Victoria in the early part of the 20th century and a founding secretary of the Australian Aborigines League.**



William Cooper was an Australian Aboriginal leader known for his activism and advocacy for the rights of First Nations peoples in Australia. He was born in the Yorta Yorta nation in Victoria in 1860 and is remembered for his efforts in advancing First Nations peoples' rights during a time of significant discrimination and marginalisation.

Cooper was politically active and represented Aboriginal communities in northern Victoria and western NSW who weren't able to receive government aid during the drought of the 1920s and the Great Depression of the 1930s. Through his family connections and political knowledge and insights, Cooper became a spokesman for the Yorta Yorta in their ongoing battles for land justice with the NSW government.

Cooper was not only concerned with the hardships of his own people but was moved by the extreme discrimination faced by other oppressed populations.

On 6 December 1938, less than a month after Kristallnacht, when Jewish people were targeted in widespread rioting and looting across Germany, Cooper led a march to the German consulate in Melbourne to condemn the 'cruel persecution of the Jewish people by the Nazi government in Germany'. He drew similarities between the mistreatment of Jewish people in Germany and the First Nations peoples of Australia.

German officials refused to take the written petition, but the protest is seen by many as the only one of its kind in the world.

His gesture was largely overlooked at the time; however, in recent years, William Cooper's actions have gained recognition as an early example of international Indigenous activism and solidarity.

In 2010, he was posthumously awarded the inaugural Australian "Human Rights Medal," and his legacy is remembered as a symbol of resilience and a commitment to justice for Indigenous Australians.

## Sources:

- <https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/william-cooper-protests>