

DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- At the beginning of the video, Professor Swain states, “Racist. Sexist. Republican. These words are virtually interchangeable – at least according to most professors, journalists, and celebrities. So, are they right?” How would you answer Professor Swain’s question? Explain. Why do you think that so many people mistakenly view intolerant views as ‘interchangeable’ with Republican views?
- When discussing the original goals and platform of the Republican party, Professor Swain explains that, “The Democrats were so opposed to the Republicans and their anti-slavery stance that in 1860, just six weeks after the election of the first Republican president, Abraham Lincoln, South Carolina, a state dominated by Democrats, voted to secede from the union. The Civil War that followed... led to the passage, by Republicans, of the 13th Amendment, which freed the slaves, the 14th Amendment, which gave them citizenship, and the 15th Amendment, which gave them the vote.” Why do you think that the Republicans supported blacks so much and that the Democrats didn’t? Explain.
- Professor Swain goes on to point out that, “Republicans also kept their pledge to defend women’s rights. In 1862, the Morrill Anti-Bigamy Act was passed by the Republican-controlled Congress to put an end to polygamy. In 1920, after 52 years of Democratic Party opposition, the 19th Amendment was ratified thanks to the Republican Congress, which pressured Democratic President Woodrow Wilson to drop his opposition to women’s voting rights.” In what ways, specifically, did ending polygamy help women? Why do you think that the Republicans supported women so much and that the Democrats didn’t? Explain.
- In the video, Professor Swain also notes that, “...every black representative in the House until 1935 was a Republican. And every black senator until 1979 was, too. For that matter, the first female member of Congress was a Republican, the first Hispanic governor and senator were Republicans. The first Asian senator? You get the idea.” Considering the overwhelming historical and current evidence of Republicans being so supportive of women and minorities, how can anyone believe that conservatives are racist and sexist? Explain. Why do you think that progressives believe that their attempts to smear conservatives as racist and sexist will work? Do you think that progressives believe that conservatives actually are racist and sexist? Why or why not?
- Towards the end of the video Professor Swain concludes that, “...the Republican Party treats blacks and women as it treats everyone: as equals. The Democratic Party never has, and it still doesn’t. Today’s Democrats treat blacks and women as victims who aren’t capable of succeeding on their own. The truth is, this is just a new kind of contempt. So there *is* a party with a long history of racism and sexism...but it ain’t the Republicans.” Do you agree with Professor Swain’s point that the Republican party treats people as equals, but that the Democratic party does not? Why or why not, and what specific, valid evidence and/or reasoning do you have to support your view? Do you agree with Professor Swain’s conclusion that Democrats treat women and minorities as victims, and thus with a certain type of contempt? Why or why not?

EXTEND THE LEARNING:

CASE STUDY: Hiram Revels

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article “How the First Black U.S. Senator Was Nearly Kept From His Seat,” then answer the questions that follow.

- Who was Hiram Revels? Which political party voted him in and did he represent? What argument did the Democrats make in order to attempt to keep him out of office? What happened to that argument? Who had held the same Senate seat before Senator Revels? Why is this fact poignant and ironic? Why did Senator Revels speak out against segregation? What was Senator Revels' argument for educating freed slaves?
- How did Senator Revels accomplish what he did? Do you think that if Senator Revels was alive today that he would be happy with how many blacks view Republicans? Why or why not? Do you think that the fact that in 1870 Republicans voted in the first Black Senator is relevant and important in the modern political landscape? Why or why not?
- In what ways, specifically, does this article support Professor Swain's thesis?



QUIZ

THE INCONVENIENT TRUTH ABOUT THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

- 1. The first Republican Party platform promised to defeat _____.**
 - a. communism and nazism
 - b. capitalism and the national debt
 - c. polygamy and slavery
 - d. income inequality and poll taxes

- 2. How many Republican senators opposed The Civil Rights Act of 1960?**
 - a. 18
 - b. 11
 - c. 4
 - d. 0

- 3. Democratic President Franklin Roosevelt invited black and white Olympians to the White House.**
 - a. True
 - b. False

- 4. Who was the first Republican president?**
 - a. George Washington
 - b. Andrew Jackson
 - c. Abraham Lincoln
 - d. John Adams

- 5. Which of the following amendments to the U.S. Constitution gave blacks the right to vote?**
 - a. 11th Amendment
 - b. 15th Amendment
 - c. 17th Amendment
 - d. 19th Amendment



QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

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<http://time.com/3714088/hiram-revels/>

How the First Black U.S. Senator Was Nearly Kept From His Seat



circa 1870: Hiram R Revels

MPI / Getty Images

By Jennifer Latson
February 25, 2015

Hiram Rhodes Revels was a rising star of the Republican Party in 1869. A gifted orator — a skill he'd honed in his pre-political career as a minister — he'd just won a seat in the Mississippi state senate when he delivered an opening prayer so moving it left the statehouse awestruck.

“That prayer, one of the most impressive and eloquent prayers that had ever been delivered in the Senate Chamber, made Revels a United States Senator,” Revels' fellow Mississippi legislator, John R. Lynch, later wrote. “It impressed those who heard it that Revels was not only a man of great natural ability but that he was also a man of superior attainments.”

So why, when Revels was chosen the following year to fill one of Mississippi's two empty seats in the U.S. Senate, did his appointment raise the ruckus that would land him on TIME's top-ten list of contested officeholders? Because some Democrats argued that since the 14th Amendment, which granted citizenship to people of color (including recently-freed slaves), had been ratified in 1868, Revels had only technically been a citizen for two years — not long enough to meet the Senate's requirements.

Their argument was quashed, and on this day, Feb. 25, 1870, Revels became America's first black Senator, serving out the unexpired term in a Senate seat that had been vacated when Mississippi seceded from the Union. The state's other seat had formerly been occupied by Confederate President Jefferson Davis.

The irony of that reversal wasn't lost on Revels' Senate colleagues, including Nevada Senator James Nye.

“[Jefferson Davis] went out to establish a government whose cornerstone should be the oppression and perpetual enslavement of a race because their skin differed in color from his,” Nye declared on the Senate floor. “Sir, what a magnificent spectacle of retributive justice is witnessed here today! In the place of that proud, defiant man, who marched out to trample under foot the Constitution and the laws of the country he had sworn to support, comes back one of that humble race whom he would have enslaved forever to take and occupy his seat upon this floor.”

While Revels might have taken issue with his characterization as a member of “that humble race,” he apparently didn't mention it publicly. His time in office was marked by moderation and forgiveness. He was a staunch advocate for granting amnesty to former Confederates, provided they swore an oath of loyalty to the Union, and he spoke out against segregation, believing it only perpetuated prejudice.

“I find that the prejudice in this country to color is very great, and I sometimes fear that it is on the increase,” he said in one floor speech. Amid the tensions of the Reconstruction Era, he attempted to soothe the fears of his fellow politicians. In an argument for educating freed slaves, he promised, “The colored race can be built up and assisted ... in acquiring property, in becoming intelligent, valuable, useful citizens, without one hair upon the head of any white man being harmed.”