

WHITE, BLACK AND ALL THE COLOURS

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Black Canadians have impacted the lives of many individuals. They have contributed for a successful foundation of Canadian principles. Anderson Ruffin Abbott, a black Canadian, was a heroic individual whose determination portrays an impeccable exemplary life of motivation and perseverance. Abbott's acceptance of his race and culture, impacted his decisions to produce success among his people and the Canadian society. By establishing a society on the pros of cultural diversity, black Canadians have used their accomplishments to overcome obstacles of racial divisioning.

Abbott was born in 1837, in Toronto, Canada. Abbott's parents, Wilson and Ellen, left the state of Alabama, United States, for their own safety and decided to pursue a better future in Canada. Triumphant through their difficulties, the Abbotts were able to own almost 50 properties in Canada. Anderson Ruffin Abbott was an honour student in Toronto Academy. Later, in 1861, Abbott achieved his license from the Medical Board of Upper Canada, to practice medicine. Hence, becoming the very first black Canadian in history to become a doctor. Practising medicine, Abbott served nationally and internationally. Abbott applied his medical talents to the American Civil war effort, but sadly got rejected. Following that, he served as a civilian surgeon in Washington DC, from June 1863 to August 1865. Abbott was also the first black Canadian to receive the highest military award. Returning to Toronto, Abbott continued his private practice, and participated in writing journals for the *Coloured American Magazine*. He consistently aspired to create social change for black Canadians by fighting against schools believing in racial segregation. The debate between W.E.B Du Bois and Booker T. Washington regarding black and white issues, sparked interest to Abbott, and he believed that all blacks have a right to higher education. Using his talents, Abbott was able to succeed in his ambitions. Equality of all ethnic diversity in Canada, began with the establishments of Abbott's outreach and commitment. Foundations of social development are what created a sustainable broader future.

Culture characterizes an individual, equipping one to the values and traditions of their country and people. Promoting diversity in Canada, is a start to educating the nation about the strengths of different cultural groups. Anderson Abbott faced difficulties and personal attacks for being a black Canadian. His achievements when compared, for many black Canadians during that era was evidently impossible. Abbott's efforts in creating a podium of cultural diversity in different areas of trade, such as medicine and journalism, have overcome racial adversities throughout history. Bravery, commitment, loyalty and respect, are fundamentals that equipped black Canadians to define Canadian heritage. Such characteristics approached social change between the black and white communities to pursue friendly relations among each other. Such relations have demonstrated that, further social change can be made. Different cultures and races of individuals are an advantage to building a better Canadian society that reflects on the principles of human rights and equality.

As a woman of colour, I strongly believe that I have the same potential of succeeding in my ambitions as any other race. Although, because I am categorized as a minority, there have been many challenges that I have faced. Discrimination may have burdened me, but, I choose to use these difficult circumstances to push harder towards my ambitions and, create a brighter future for myself, and for Canada. Abbott inspired me because his goals are very similar to my goals. I hope to become a cardiac surgeon and exercise the skills that I learned in my trade, to aid the countries which lack education about positive social change. I desire to see racism eliminated in Canada and around the globe. We as Canadians should look at black Canadian historians and understand the platform of difficulty that they have faced. We should bring about a changed perspective for all Canadians to create a bigger cultural variety in our communities, and to eliminate such circumstances that the black Canadians have faced in the past.

Educating our society about the history of black Canadians is very important, because it helps us to value the strengths of every person irrespective of their colour, on a whole new angle. Abbott is just one of many black Canadians who has impacted our country on recognizing the good, of cultural diversity. His accomplishments have helped reduce racial divisioning in Canada. Canadians can look forward to developing a community which has unity in diversity. Our contributions for building a diverse heritage can set an example for other countries to do the same.

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Equality is a natural human right and numerous black Canadians have dedicated their lives to pursue this sense of freedom....