**Let’s talk about…** The American South & The Struggle for Equality

The American South is a distinct region of the US which is shaped by its shared past and its unique culture. Even though “the South” is sometimes also used in a geographical context, it more often refers to a cultural unit south of the ***Mason-Dixon line.***

***Hospitality***, ***civility,*** and ***tenacity*** are often used to describe core Southern ***values*** and the lifestyle of the Old South is often romanticized in films and novels such as “Gone with the Wind”. These, however, only portray a reality which was merely true for a small proportion of the population.

For more than 250 years *slavery* was ***common practice*** in the Southern states of the United States where slaves were needed as cheap laborers on huge ***plantations****.* The ***antebellum*** period is characterized by the rise of the ***abolition*** movement and the gradual ***polarization*** of the country between abolitionists and supporters of slavery. When it looked as if the new President Abraham Lincoln might try ***to abolish*** slavery, the Southern states decided ***to secede*** and left the Union. The American ***Civil War*** (1861-1865) had begun. President Lincoln’s ***Emancipation Proclamation*** marked the government’s intention to end ***slavery*** and officially freed all slaves in 1863.

The war ended in 1865 and many former slaves moved west, east and north to more industrialized areas and big cities hoping to find a better life there. But for almost a century, African Americans were still not treated equally. Racial ***segregation*** and ***discrimination against*** Black people in terms of ***housing,*** ***education*** and ***employment*** were the rule rather than the exception. It was not until the 1960s that the ***Civil Rights Movement*** gained pace and Black leaders were able to motivate Black and White citizens to fight for more ***equality***. ***Non-violent*** marches, demonstrations and protest finally resulted in President Johnson signing the **Civil Rights Act** of 1964.

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| **English** | **synonyms / antonyms / word families etc.** | **German** |
| Mason-Dixon line  Mason and Dixon line | ~ the dividing line between slave states south of it and free-soil states north of it. | Mason-Dixon Linie |
| hospitality | hospitable, welcoming | Gastfreundschaft |
| civility | syn.: politeness  (to) be polite | Anstand, Höflichkeit |
| tenacity | syn.: persistence | Beharrlichkeit, Hartnäckigkeit |
| values | e.g. Southern values  Christian values, core values | Werte |
| common practice |  | gängige Praxis |
| plantation | sugar, cotton, tobacco ~  a planter, (to) plant | Plantage |
| antebellum | ~ before the Civil War | Vor dem Sezessionskrieg |
| (to) abolish sth. | syn.: (to) get rid of | etw. abschaffen |
| abolition | syn.: abolishment  an abolitionist | Abschaffung, Aufhebung |
| polari**z**ation [Am. Engl.] | polari**s**ation [Brit. Engl.] | Polarisierung |
| (to) secede | secession | abtrünnig werden, abfallen |
| (American) Civil War | ~ 1861 - 1865 | Amerikanischer Bürgerkrieg, Sezessionskrieg |
| Emancipation Proclamation | (to) emancipate  (to) proclaim | Verkündung der Sklavenbefreiung |
| slavery | a slave  (to) enslave sb. | Sklaverei, Unfreiheit  jmd. versklaven |
| segregation | ant.: desegregation  (to) segregate, (to) desegregate | Trennung, Absonderung |
| discrimination against | (to) discriminate against | Benachteiligung von |
| housing | e.g. social housing | Wohnverhältnisse, Wohnbau |
| education | (to) be educated  basic education, academic education | Bildung, Ausbildung |
| employment | (to) seek / (to) find employment | Anstellung, Arbeitsplatz |
| civil rights | ~ The Civil Rights Movement | Bürgerrechte, Grundrechte |
| equality | ant.: inequality  (to) be equal | Gleichheit, Gleichberechtigung |
| equal | ant.: unequal | gleichberechtigt, gleichwertig |
| non-violent | ant.: violent | gewaltlos, gewaltfrei |
| Civil Rights Act (1964) |  | Bürgerrechtsgesetz, das die Diskriminierung aufgrund von Rasse, Herkunft oder Religion verbietet. |
| race relations | (to) establish relations  (to) maintain relations  (to) discontinue relations | ethnische Beziehungen, Verhältnis zwischen ethnischen Gruppen / Rassen |
| racism | racial (adj.) | Rassismus |
| ancestor |  | Vorfahr, Familiengründer |
| ancestral | e.g. ancestral home | angestammt, Ahnen- |
| descendant |  | Nachkomme |
| heritage | hereditary | Erbe, Erbschaft |
| helpfulness | helpful | Hilfsbereitschaft, Zuvorkommenheit |
| manners | mannerly | Manieren, Benehmen |
| rural | ant.: urban | ländlich |
| resistance | (to) resist | Widerstand, Gegenwehr |
| riot | (to) riot, a violent riot | Unruhe, Ausschreitung |
| civil disobedience | (to) disobey sb. / sth. | ziviler Ungehorsam |
| (to) stage a protest | e.g. (to) stage a sit-in | öffentlich protestieren, gegen etwas protestieren |
| boycott | (to) boycott | Boykott |
| (to) intervene | (to) intervene in a conflict | einschreiten, eingreifen |
| (to) demand one’s rights | syn.: (to) claim one’s right | seine Rechte einfordern |
| (to) violate sb.’s right |  | jnds. Rechte verletzen |
| (to) deny sb.’s rights | ant.: (to) grant sb. their rights | jnd. Rechte aberkennen |
| (to) be carved in one’s memory | syn.: to be imprinted on sb.’s memory | sich ins Gedächtnis eingeprägt haben |
| assassination | (to) assassinate, (to) kill | Ermordung, Attentat |
| inferiority | (to) feel inferior  Inferior (adj.) | Unterlegenheit, Minderwertigkeit |
| superiority | (to) feel superior  superior (adj.) | Überlegenheit |
| social / economic status | (to) increase your status  (to) lose your status | Status, Stand |
| (to) be confronted with | syn.: (to) be faced with | auf etw. stoßen, mit etw. konfrontiert sein |
| prejudice | racial prejudice  social prejudice | Vorurteil |
| (to) be at disadvantage | (to) be at disadvantage compared to… | im Nachteil sein |
| (to) suffer from s.th. | syn.: (to) be afflicted with | an / unter etw. leiden |
| pejorative | syn.: belittling, disparaging | abschätzig, abwertend |
| separate | (to) separate s.th. | getrennt |
| disparity | e.g. age disparity  economic disparity | Ungleichheit, Unterschied |
| strife | an inner strife (psych.)  a civil strife  a friendly strife | Kampf, Streit |
| (to) struggle | (to) struggle with, (to) struggle against | kämpfen, ringen |
| integration | (to) integrate | Eingliederung, Integration |
| residential area | ~ neighbourhood | Wohnviertel |
| facilities | here: hospitals, restaurants, hotels, etc. | Einrichtungen |
| barrier | e.g. social barrier  (to) bar sb. from s.th. | Schranke |
| (to) be trapped | (to) be caught in a trap | gefangen sein |
| lynching | (to) lynch sb., a lynch mob | Lynchmord, Hängen |
| (to) enact a law | enactment | ein Gesetz erlassen |
| (to) enforce (a law) | law enforcement officer = policeman | ausführen, durchsetzen |
| Confederate States of America | a confederate  confederate (adj.)  (to) confederate | Zusammenschluss der Südstaaten, konföderierte Staaten von Amerika |
| casualty | sb. injured or killed in battle | Opfer, Todesopfer |
| (to) surrender | syn.: (to) give up  a surrender | kapitulieren, aufgeben |