

# **American Racial Politics and A Little Town Called Arthington**

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## **OVERVIEW**

Between 1998 and 2006, Southwest Philadelphia has been home to large numbers of families fleeing civil conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. During those conflict years, schools in the receiving neighborhoods might have had one hundred or more students added to their rolls, with very little preparation or knowledge of these incoming students' backgrounds. Even teachers, for the most part, were unaware that both Liberia and Sierra Leone were originally colonized by freed slaves. Most either fought for the British during the American Revolution or were sent to Liberia under the auspices of the American Colonization Society. Just as many freedmen and women chose to stay here, others chose to return to Africa to seek a better life there. Even today, most African Americans are unfamiliar with this history and also with the racial politics of the era.

During the last twenty years of the twentieth century, war came to Liberia, fueled by years of deeply held beliefs and divisions among the different ethnic groups, all of which came about when freedmen settled on tracts of land there and interacted with the indigenous people. Many of the descendents of these freedmen, these founding families, returned to the United States during the latter part of the twentieth century. Today, some go back and forth, as Liberia is now in the rebuilding process.

My interest in pursuing this unit is to go back to 1869 and find out why Africans who were born in America and had lived here for at least a few generations chose to pack up and leave, only start life over in a new country, when the War between the States had ended, and they now could be free to embrace "Life, liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness"--or were they????

I write this unit for grades 7-9. Because textbooks differ widely from generation to generation, and even from state to state, in what information is presented, how much of a topic is presented, and how that information is presented, I have provided enough source material information for teachers to use. Due to rich primary and secondary sources, students will be able to ascertain for themselves where truth and social justice appear. For teachers teaching for change, this can be a jumping off point when examining how racial politics forms the underlying basis for how life is lived in the United States.

This unit spans both World and American History. As students now must know, "African History is World History. African American History is American History."

## **OBJECTIVES OF THIS UNIT:**

**Students will be able to:**

Analyze the economic, social and political factors/climate that were impacting American citizens and newly freed slaves.

Analyze primary and secondary sources relating to life in the antebellum South, Reconstruction, and after the Civil War.

Argue for or against leaving the United States for good, and immigrating to Liberia.

Determine what supplies one would need to start a new life thousands of miles away.

Work in a group to “load” the “ship” many will sail on when trying to start a colony in another country.

Read critically the selected text.

Write a position paper supporting a decision to emigrate or not.

Listen to a recorded interview and write a paper describing what life would be like growing up in Liberia during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century compared to growing up in the United States at the same time.

This unit is aligned with the Common Core

**BACKGROUND CONTENT**

The year is 1865. The United States has just come through a war, which claimed over 600,000 lives- more lives than any other war in the history of the United States. Four million slaves have just been freed and are now looking to participate in full citizenship. Andrew Johnson is President, and lucky enough to have missed being assassinated along with Lincoln (Ulysses S. Grant and then Secretary of State William Seward also escaped this fate). The question looms before him: “What now of the defeated Confederate States?”

Prior to the conclusion of this war, the slaves, ignorant as they were of newspapers, etc., had nonetheless kept themselves informed of the goings on of the Civil War. For example, late night discussions among the slaves evidenced to a young Booker T. Washington that they did understand the situation. They were not “dumb,” but actively praying for freedom via Lincoln’s armies, and whispering news amongst themselves through the “grapevine telegraph”. Booker T. Washington remembered his own mother praying fervently for Lincoln’s success. The plantation slaves “Throughout the South kept in close touch with the movement” as soon as Garrison and other abolitionists started “agitating for freedom” (1).

So, following Lincoln’s assassination, Andrew Johnson was sworn in as the nation’s seventeenth president. His background was one of a “self made man”. Formal schooling was not in his resume, so to speak. Bright of mind, he was able to learn to read with the help of others who saw in him an earnestness and desire to learn. His wife even read to him while he tailored at night, and modeled language fluency, which he was later able to apply during his public speaking.

Johnson was a “Jacksonian Democrat”, identifying with the “interests of the working class to improve their condition and to raise them from the position to which the aristocrats had doomed them” (2). Interestingly enough, in Pennsylvania, where slavery did not end until 1847, Whites feared that manumitting their slaves would have negative consequences. Many Whites felt that “blacks were not prepared for freedom, and if left

to their own devices would become indolent and lazy and bring crime and agitation to the city” (3). Therefore, it was better to keep them bound.

While in Greenville, Tennessee, Johnson had seen that the aristocracy of his town, especially those supported by slave labor, despised the White man who maintained himself and family by his own exertions (It appears that it was the act of slaveholding that turned a man indolent and lazy).

And during Congressional debates, should a sneer be directed to either himself or the laboring class, Johnson was known to have likened himself to Adam, “as a tailor who sewed fig leaves, and Jesus, the son of a carpenter.” In the biographical introduction of his book, “Speeches of Andrew Johnson, President of the United States”, Frank Moore posits that Johnson “cordially hated aristocracy and he had decided objections to gentlemen reared in affluence and idleness arrogating to themselves the right to all the knowledge in the world. When Jefferson Davis superciliously asked him, ‘What do you mean by the laboring classes?’ Andrew Johnson answered, ‘Those who earn their bread by the sweat of their face, and not by fatiguing their ingenuity.’”(4)

Mr. Johnson, who had worked himself up the ladder to take positions in government without the benefit of bound labor (himself having been apprenticed at an early age) believed in the sovereignty of the people. He believed that the membership of the Lower House of Congress was next in power to the people, that the people had a right to be heard on the floor of the Congress, that legislation was for the many, not for the chosen few, and for the good of the whole country, not just for one party. To my ears, that doesn’t sound so very different from what we believe as Americans today. So back to my question, what is to be done with the defeated Confederate States and how is this going to impact the freedom of those four million freed slaves? What will freedom mean to them and what will it mean to all Americans?

What freedom did NOT mean was automatic citizenship for Blacks, newly freed or otherwise. Dating back to the Founding Era, in the Early Republic, freedom was directly tied to property. The American ideal of freedom was the yeoman farmer, who owns his own land, works his own labor and enjoys the fruit of his labor. Not so for the freedmen. When they were freed (some by the Confiscation Acts, the Emancipation Proclamation, and then all by the Thirteenth Amendment), too many were landless, without one cent or one roof to call their own. However, they understood freedom to mean industry, not laziness. They wanted to prove that they could work without the lash, and they wanted to work for their own profit. But land was the central issue. The importance of land, the dignity of owning land, was not available to them. The way people perceived each other was based on being the “right” kind of person. According to Eric Foner, it was believed that only certain kinds of people were fully capable of enjoying the rights and benefits that freedom bestowed. In eighteenth century America, this idea of freedom, of liberty, rested on one general idea, the idea of self-direction, self-government. Economic independence was a prerequisite to political independence. Therefore, it was deemed that only those who owned land were able to control their own destiny and therefore would not be under the influence of those who might try to buy their loyalties (5). This is what Blacks were trying to exhibit--Jeffersonian ideas of freedom that were intimately tied to ownership of land (6).

Look back: Years before Emancipation, the international slave trade had ended. That was in 1808. However, slaves were still being smuggled in as late as the 1850’s

from the West Indies into ports of the Lower South, like Charleston (7). Then, Britain abolished their slave trade in 1834, which was then immediately followed by a system of apprenticeship, one that served to prolong bound servitude. Then that finally ended in Britain in 1840. Slavery would not be abolished in America until twenty-five years later – too profitable. In the North, slavery was pretty much dead, but not the South. Cotton was King and everybody had their hands in it--wealthy slave owners, bankers, shipping industry, merchants, textile mills, handlers, and transporters of goods, to name a few.

This is the benefit of the Cotton gin. So, large-scale farming increased. Slave labor intensified. (But only those who can afford a slave get one). Lands are opening in the West and visions of dollar signs are dancing in the heads of the Planter Class, (and all those aspiring to join that group). Those poor farmers who are living in two room cabins can't afford slaves, so they can't compete on the market. The "Gin" does not benefit them. The U.S. national economy sports 50%-60% of American exports in cotton and the South is the largest producer in the world.

The Domestic Slave Trade flourishes, creating a "Black Belt" in Virginia as the soil is exhausted. So they move away from reliance on agriculture and slaves are bred for the market. They are moved from Alexandria, Virginia to Natchez, Mississippi, which was a huge depot. Virginia becomes the slave breeding capitol of the country. By the 1820's there are about 1.5 million slaves throughout the country. By the eve of the Civil War, 4 million (8).

W. E. B. Du Bois writes that the "Negro had not been silent. He had been writing petitions, making speeches, parading with returned soldiers, reciting his adventures as slave and freeman. If he had to work, he had to have land and tools. If his labor was in reality to be free labor, he had to have legal freedom and civil rights. His ignorance could only be removed by the very education which the law of the South had long denied him and the custom of the North had made exceedingly difficult". However, after emancipation, the South had hoped from the first to abolish slavery in name only. (9)

Now Johnson, being a virulent hater of the aristocracy to the point of fanatical, put forth every public act for the "advancement of the power, prosperity and liberty of the masses at the expense of entrenched privilege fueled by a hatred born of envy and ambition" (10). His vision of Democracy was such that he wrote that "...he would gladly lay down his life if he could so engraft democracy into our general government that it would be permanent" (11). Grand idea indeed, but he could not include *Negroes* in any conceivable democracy. He tried to but he was born and grew up a poor white, "steeped in the limitations, prejudices and ambitions of his social class, he could not; and this was the key to his career"(12).

Johnson had only *white* men in mind when he asked for southern plantations to be divided and land opened in the West. *These* men would become either rich or richer. But nothing of the sort for Negroes. When he was asked if he favored emancipation in Nashville, Johnson responded that he was all for setting Negroes free, but "this is a white man's government. And if the two races couldn't get along, then "arrangements would have to be made to colonize the Blacks" (13). This was in January 1864. Since by definition, political freedom is the "liberty to work and at the same time enjoy the product's of one's labor" (13), how was this idea to apply to the freedmen if all of the benefits of suffrage, liberty and land were not extended to them? Even President Lincoln was "unable for a long time to conceive of free, poor, black citizens as voters in the

United States” (14). And this was felt even though Lincoln had come to know Negroes personally, had praised them generously as soldiers and suggested that they be admitted to the ballot... but “Johnson could never regard Negroes as men”(14). Johnson’s fight was directed at the slave masters whom he considered traitorous. ”Negro equality indeed!..... ‘Damn the Negroes’” (Johnson) (15).

Prior to the close of the war, thousands of freed slaves came across Union lines seeking help. In Virginia, they were considered contraband of war and put to work. But in Missouri, they were declared free under martial law, which was then countermanded and the order given that if the owners should come looking for them, they should be returned. This was difficult to enforce because some of them declared themselves free, some showed that their masters had deserted them and some had been “captured with forts and plantations.” (16) They had nothing- were in a state of destitution “too appalling for belief and the situation daily grew worse rather than better.”(17) They arrived daily, needing to be fed and sheltered. A crisis of national proportions loomed. These ex-slaves, for the most part had never held gainful employment and so had no idea how to spend a paycheck, if they were able to get work, and then, if they could work, get *paid* for it. “In Washington the military governor opened confiscated estates to the cultivation of the fugitives. The government and benevolent societies furnished the means of cultivation. And so the Negro turned again slowly to work” (18). This problem did not exist only for Blacks. Throughout the South, the need was so great that it threatened to overwhelm the resources of the federal government. White farms had been destroyed. There were no jobs. Many Whites were ruined.

The private groups and societies that provided aid early on had taken on much of the relief work, feeding, clothing, counseling and providing education to freed people *and poor whites*. Many were black soldiers in schools established by these private charities in the occupied South...medical needs and a thirst for education brought freedmen of all ages flocking “to these hospitals, schools and welfare centers”(19). Many Whites thought this was absurd. But Blacks saw learning as a symbol of freedom. There were other symbols of freedom too – the ability to own their own labor, to decide whether or not they *wanted* to work at certain occupations. Work that was considered “slave work” like cotton was not high on the list of desirable occupations. For the first time in their lives they owned their bodies, their families, *their children*. What a feeling that must have been – to be able to freely love and be attached to your family without the fear that they would be taken from you and sold away. There were instances where husbands for the first time exercised their ability to be men, heads of their families, and withdrew their wives from the fields of laboring for Whites. Their decisions to dress a certain way, adorning their bodies with “respectable clothing,” brought scorn and ridicule from resistant and hostile Whites. They were often caricatured in the works of Edward Clay’s “Slices of Life” series, which appeared in a Philadelphia weekly periodical. Still, great numbers of blacks have pulled themselves upwards, as evidenced today, when many have moved into “solidly working and middle classes-after centuries of slavery and legal segregation...having penetrated the screen of racial prejudice” (20).

It’s difficult to imagine what that must have been like for those ex-slaves because today Whites find themselves “earning their livings increasingly in circumstances in which persons of other races hold positions of approximate, equal, or, increasingly, of higher status”(21). It’s no longer a workforce owned and controlled by Whites. Blacks as

well as others have taken control of their own agencies. But that was not the case in the nineteenth century.

And so, Dear Reader, Freedmen's Aid societies of different names sprang up all through the South. There was the National Freedman's Relief Association, the American Missionary Association, the American Freedmen's Union, the Western Freedmen's Aid Commission, all counted among fifty or more organizations, which sent clothes, schoolbooks, money and teachers to the South (22). The famous Port Royal Experiment was one of these. In November 1861, planters fled ahead of the occupying federal military, which took control of and occupied the islands. As a result, "ten thousand slaves on 195 plantations were suddenly free" (23).

To reiterate, most Black people had no confusion as to what freedom meant. They were very clear that it definitely meant that immediately they were freed from the places where they had been held in slavery. (Their former masters were lamenting that they had "deserted them" at a time when they were most needed to work for them, that they weren't "loyal"). White fears increased due to the sheer numbers of blacks wandering the roads. In reality, most of these former slaves were not vagabonds, shiftless and idle; they were searching for their families, previously sold away from them. Some walked hundreds of miles on the strength of a rumor, hoping to locate their loved ones (24). But then, they had been so restricted in their movements that to just walk up and down a road freely was in itself an assertion of freedom.

And remember that freedom for the freedmen was also tied very tightly to land. *They* understood this. So did Whites. But not all. Many Whites in power felt that if the freedmen were not given the basics, then their freedom was meaningless. Thaddeus Stevens was one of those who advocated for their cause in the House of Representatives. He introduced a bill which would distribute forty acres of confiscated land to the ex slaves. However, most members of the House stood in opposition to the giving, selling, or even renting of land to Blacks. Southern opposition was so strong that Congress acquiesced. Any private White citizen who would dare to go against this would find himself in grave personal danger, so strong was the "feeling against any ownership of the soil by Negroes" and any White who dared go against this was deemed "unpatriotic and unworthy of a good citizen." (25)

Even the President, Andrew Johnson, resisted the idea of land ownership by Blacks. The interesting thing here is: at one time Johnson was not as hard-nosed against Blacks (which is why Sumner thought that he could approach him and have some measures passed that would benefit the freedmen). Charles Sumner wanted "justice to the colored race" (26) and questioned his colleague Stanton concerning a draft on his Reconstruction Plan by posing this inquiry: "Whether any provision was made for enfranchising the colored men," because unless "the black man is given the right to vote his freedom is a mockery." Sumner further insisted that the black man's right to vote was "the essential- the great essential." (27) Sumner believed that Johnson stood for real emancipation and Negro suffrage, but Thaddeus Stevens grew alarmed as *he* began to see some disturbing developments. There was an Anti-Abolitionist Whig, a Pro-Slavery Democrat, and a liberal devotee of industry in the cabinet Johnson inherited from Lincoln. It didn't last long, "just a little over a year, and three of its members, Dennison, Harlan and Speed, resigned, being unwilling to oppose Congress" (28). W. E. B. Du Bois thought that Seward performed some kind of magical feat and, "entered into him" (29),

because Johnson suddenly changed, Johnson began to see himself as the “restorer of national unity and the benefactor and almsgiver to those very elements in the South which had formerly despised him.”(30) He had fallen prey to the advice and urgings of Seward and issued a Proclamation of Amnesty, which contained very little if any of his own engineering, but definitely showed Mr. Seward’s influence. So, Johnson’s liberalism, which had earlier put Sumner at ease, went the way of all flesh –Kapat! This was during the last ten days of May when Southern leaders were full of flatteries for Johnson, a sheltering of him (after he had made a drunken fool of himself when he took the Oath of Office for Vice-President) and as a result, ? voila ! A change of mind!

The Thirteenth Amendment passed the House in January of 1865 and abolished slavery and involuntary servitude in the nation *except as punishment for a crime*. This legal loophole allowed for ex-slaves to be incarcerated under Vagrancy Laws (Black Codes). The wording is such that Blacks soon become targets by law enforcement. Their movements are extremely curtailed and many are little better off than when enslaved, as seen in this example of Section 5, Mississippi Black Codes which states: “Every freedman, freed negro or mulatto, shall on the second Monday of January, one thousand eight hundred and sixty six, and annually thereafter, have a lawful home or employment, and shall have written evidence thereof as follows, to wit: if living in any incorporated city, town or village, a license from that mayor thereof and if living outside of an incorporated city, town or village, from the member of the board of police of his beat, authorizing him or her to do irregular and job work; or a written contract, as provided in Section 6 of this act; which license may be revoked for cause at any time by the authority granting the same.”(31) The Fourteenth Amendment passed three years later, in 1868. It grants citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof. It also requires each state to provide all persons the equal protection of the laws, making the Black Codes unconstitutional. But even after they are made unconstitutional, the White South continues to use laws to hold back Blacks.

Now, the freedmen and women weren’t sitting on their hands waiting for the government to do *everything* for them. Some *did* want to enjoy some leisure time as they had been worked so hard all their lives (remember that this was one way of expressing that one is free). And many were actively pursuing ways and means of caring for themselves and their families. Some became tenant farmers who participated in household economies and production (which increased their own resources, so desperately needed for the economic survival of their families).(32) *This* time they were working for themselves (which in turn deprived White landowners of their labor) . Then come new systems of controlling the ex-slaves’ labor – sharecropping, peonage, convict leasing...

And so the President pardons the Confederates, the lands revert to the former slave masters, the Black Codes are enacted, Reconstruction is over in a mere twelve years, the Klan forms, and Jim Crow rides at night.

Dear Readers, there had long been talk of emigration for freed men and thousands had listened and gone. Since 1816, the American Colonization Society had been instrumental in sending Africans back to Africa. The conversations (and arguments) around emigration had been held amongst Africans even before slavery had ended, as men and women began to look at what options they had here in the United States and

wondered if they could *ever* get a fair shake in America. This however was not an idea to emancipate *slaves* and send *them* back. This was for *Free People of Color*. The idea was for them to leave these shores and go to Canada, Haiti or Liberia, maybe even to South America to settle into a new life. (Sierra Leone had already been settled by Blacks who took Britain's offer during the Revolutionary War).

Now that the Civil war is over and the slaves have been freed, some four millions of them, the "Back to Africa Plan" comes into focus for this unit. With the Klan forming in 1868, life for the ex-slaves became even more precarious and the law could not/did not/would not protect them, for even if their rights were violated, the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment was worded such that it did not protect them from the acts of *private individuals*.

The ideas that people had held through the centuries were not so easily eradicated – war goals or not. In Thomas Jefferson's "Notes on the State of Virginia", written in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Jefferson reveals that he doesn't believe that Black and white populations can live together *here* on an equal basis. Jefferson felt that Whites held deep rooted prejudices against Blacks and that the Blacks also had "ten thousand" recollections of the injuries that they had sustained (33). So now what's on America's plate? The Civil War has ended. The Confederacy has been defeated. The rebel states must be allowed back into the Union. Four million slaves are free and looking to become participate in the benefits of liberty. How? What are the options? Let's take a closer look at Liberia and this little town called Arthington.

"All hail Liberia hail!  
This glorious land of liberty shall long be ours  
Though new her name green be her fame  
And mighty be her powers  
In joy and gladness with our hearts united  
We'll shout the freedom of a race *benighted*  
Long live Liberia, happy land  
A home of glorious liberty  
By God's command"

(From the Official National Anthem of Liberia, 1847, written by the Daniel Bashiel Warner, Third President of Liberia).

Arthington is located on the banks of the St. Paul River in Liberia. It is a small country that faces the Atlantic Ocean on the West Coast of Africa. Liberia is lush - rich in evergreen growth and mangrove swamps, and dense rainfall which emits high humidity in the wet season. The dreaded Anopheles mosquito (which one can hear buzzing) has plenty of standing swampy water in which to reproduce. Liberia is home to elephants, leopards, pygmy hippos, monkeys, apes, crocodiles and snakes, to name a few. Sloths, chameleons, ants, and species of lizards also abound. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the native people kept sheep, goats, swine and chickens, but no plow animals. Even the colonial people had few of these due to the Tsetse Fly's Sleeping Sickness affecting those animals. This dense tangle of growth and unending climate cycle made for very difficult conditions for building roads and clearing land for farming. It must have been a tug of war with Nature Herself for the emigrants, who were used to changing seasons - winter spring, summer and fall. The wet season lasted from May to November and incessantly

drenched the land (and causing flooding) with occasional dry days – the “middle dries” in late July. Although it was cooler during the dry season, the mosquito was most active during this time. The hottest time was in this season where one could pass away from the lethal hazy dust clouds of the Harmattan Wind. Liberia is located in the Torrid Zone.

These are the conditions settlers faced when they constructed their homes and communities in Liberia. Indigenous people were already there, working out relationships with the land, when the settlers arrived.

Liberia was, and is, home to sixteen major ethnic groups and sixteen languages. But due to settler influence, English is now the official language of the country. However, depending on the speaker, he or she may be speaking what’s known as “Liberian English” (now classified as one of the World Englishes). The ethnic groups are: Bassa, Grebo, Vai, Dei, Dahn, Kru, Mandingo, Kpelle, Lorma, Krahn, Gio, Gola Kissi, Mende, and Gbandi; and the Americo-Liberians also known as the “Congo People.” All of these groups are distinct, having their own customs/mores, dances, etc., and as aforementioned, languages. Our group, North Carolinians, who later became known as “settlers, Congo People or Americo-Liberians,” had begun arriving in the 1820’s and put up little towns which were reminiscent of the rural American South. No matter what the hardships were that faced African Americans, many stuck it out, believing that this was still their best chance to live as they wished. And so they kept leaving America to seek their fortunes. Even as the hope of liberty beat in the hearts of others, these people said “No” to the American Dream.

Arthington is named for an Englishman and philanthropist, a Mister Robert Arthington, who donated \$5000.00 to the little settlement for the purposes of helping former slaves to immigrate to Liberia (and for increasing access to Liberia’s interior). According to the “Arthington Reconstruction and Development Association’s 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention, 2011 Programme,” held in Columbia, Maryland, Mister Leeds gave this money to the Arthington Company of Bertie County, North Carolina. There were fifty emigrants, 36 from Bertie County, eight from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, four from Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania, and two hailed from our City of Brotherly Love, Philadelphia. Known as the Alonzo Hoggard Company, they sailed to Liberia on the vessel, the *Golgonda*. The year was 1869--four years after the close of the Civil War, *after* the Thirteenth Amendment, *after* Reconstruction had begun and *after* Freedom came even to the farthest plantation.

The Askie (Askew), Hoggard, Roulhac, Outlaw and Branch families were the Founding Families of Arthington as they were the first to emigrate there. They got the natives to agree to allow them to claim the land the old fashioned way - “first with beads, liquor and mirrors,” which the people accepted, but they refused to part with the land. So the “Founding Families” left and came back the next day with an offer the natives couldn’t refuse: “cannon and ramrods, shooting the first cannon which frightened the indigenous people, and they gave in and peace was reached.”(34)

The majority of the new arrivals came from North Carolina. Now, they did not go to a place that was unfamiliar to them. They had either read reports from earlier settlers or had heard of their experiences. Given the accounts of the conditions of these previous settlers who had succumbed to sickness and death, each family made some tough life choices. Haiti had also been a proposed site for emigration as were South America and some states/territories in the West of the United States. One group who had traveled to

Haiti was afflicted with measles while at sea (twenty five of them) and drank water on board that was “extremely bad, both as to taste and smell.” They expected to farm and to have “comfortable homes set up for them” in Haiti. They were provided with four months rations at the government’s expense to facilitate their acclimation. Their agents, satisfied that they would be “well provided for in their new homeland,” left and returned to North Carolina. The settlers continued to fare badly, and that was the first and last expedition that the Quakers would sponsor to Haiti (35).

Why did so many freedmen consider moving overseas, rather than to the northern states that had fought against the Confederacy? Sadly, many were far from welcoming toward newly freed Black Americans. Prior to the Civil War, the western states of Ohio and Illinois also adopted Black Laws. Those laws were specifically designed to halt Black immigration into their states. Indiana’s Black population would increase 300 percent twelve years later, so the state required any Blacks who were migrating there to post a \$500.00 “surety against indigence and bad behavior.” Commission of a crime or a misdemeanor would cause forfeiture of said monies (36). So these states and many others in the north were not really a consideration for emigration for most southern Blacks.

Many African Americans left American shores literate, possibly due to them being under Quaker tutelage; but their literacy has mostly been underreported, due either to African Americans being unwilling to implicate the Quakers in the breaking of literacy laws against Blacks or to “incriminate themselves by acknowledging their level of education in a cultural atmosphere that was generally hostile to African American literacy.”(37)

Each expedition of immigrants that went to Liberia lost emigrants to malaria. Seventeen victims in one group from North Carolina traveling to Liberia succumbed to the disease. They were among those who “were sent from Monrovia to Caldwell on the Saint Paul River.” Every family suffered at least one loss (38).

The pattern of death was age-related: the very young and the old. (One expedition, the *Nautilus*, was a death ship, losing a full 25% to terminal malaria. The culprit? The Anopheles Mosquito. This was higher death rate than the usual 20% of *all* African Americans suffered by other expeditions between 1820 and 1843. This one ship alone had the highest death rate, higher than even the *Elizabeth*, which took 19%). It appears that the very young and the elderly’s immune systems were either not yet well developed or were in a state of aging deterioration. This pattern was common among *all* African Americans immigrating to Liberia. Those who moved into the “riverside settlements of Millsburg and Caldwell, or stayed in Monrovia, died in comparable percentages.”(39)

The American Colonization Society made no mention of the death trap the North Carolinians were caught in. And the Quakers began to worry that emigrants were being sent out too quickly (this even as they were outfitting the *Nautilus*). Eventually, the sad news about the *Nautilus* and colonization life did begin to trickle back home and enthusiasm waned in North Carolina for a generation. Interesting to note that there was a group of mulattos also wishing to go to Africa. However, they wanted land *all to themselves* and did not wish to live with Negroes. Although I don’t believe that they ever got their wish, mulattos *would* come to dominate the political scene in Liberia. “Differences in social status, education, occupational training and complexion had

spawned color distinctions and prejudices in the United States among people of African descent which were transferred and played out in various ways in Liberia.”(40)

So the Hoggard Company found a suitable spot and they settled. Each emigrant was given “17 acres of land, two for erecting dwelling facilities and fifteen for farming.”(41)

The area they chose to live has a relatively high elevation with beautiful scenery. This was good coffee growing country and the settlers were to grow coffee, sugar cane, ginger and cotton. The St. Paul River runs beside it and provided a means of transportation. This area was not as prone to malarial conditions as Monrovia and its immediate surrounding settlements.

In other areas where settlers had previously chosen to settle, folks didn’t fare too well. Thousands had gone over and thousands had died while trying to make new lives for themselves in what was a new land for them. Don’t forget now that Africa is not a country but a continent. So, just because your ancestors hailed from Africa didn’t mean that you hailed from *that* particular *region* in Africa.

This resettling of people meant that they were coming into area where different groups were already living in villages and had forged longstanding ties and histories to those areas and lands. This was a replay of what the British found with American Indians when they arrived on *these* shores. But technology usually always wins the land claim. Anyway, according to reports from Martin Delany, who went to Liberia in 1859 and traveled the region for nine months, Liberia has two seasons, one wet and one dry.

The Wet Season, known today as the Rainy Season, lasts from May through November, much to the dismay of the settlers who were wholly unprepared for the amount of rain that would fall. Their homes were also unprepared. The Dry season was the opposite, seldom raining at all and the sun ”being directly over their heads, pours down on them the rays of his heat without stint”(42).

The water tasted foul coming from the wells and so the people stored it in earthen jars in the shade in order to cool it a bit; but it never did compare to the water that people were used to back home in the States. Delany found the land swampy with Mangroves and Dragon’s Blood bushes and a tide that over-washes the land twice a day. There is left “the most foul and sickening miasma conceivable,” and Delany attributed the resulting effluvia with being the cause of so much sickness befalling the settlers. The land was fertile (42). Camwood, Rosewood, Gum and Wismore tress grew, but not in great numbers, so as to be inconsequential. Areas near the Kong Mountains hinted at better living conditions, but they were inaccessible to the settlers due to the rivers being un-navigable. But even roads would not suffice because of the rapid growth of the bush, which would require monthly clearing. And besides, that part of the country did not belong to Liberia.

Martin Delany found no “plow” animals in the country, essential to successful farming. And he reported that the indigenous people grew cassada (today we call it cassava) and rice. Delany found this to be clammy and tasteless and said that the “settlers became dependent on the naked natives for their rice and cassada.”(43) Personally I can list many types and varieties of native foods, and so I find it interesting that Delany mentions only two types of food (both starches) that were shared with the settlers. Could

it be that they did not *want* to give them all of their information? Was the relationship with the indigenous people such that they withheld the rest of the foodstuffs in an effort to almost guarantee the settlements would not survive? Well Dear Reader, here are some of the foods that I personally have eaten and still eat almost daily. My husband is Liberian and I know that certain tribes specialize in certain dishes-all delectable. Here is a sampling: Fried Plantain, Potato Greens (the tops of the sweet potato that we throw out here), absolutely delicious and nutritious. Serve with rice. Palm Butter, a rich sauce made from the nuts of the palm trees, very oily and delicious. Serve with rice or Fufu (cassava root). Cassava Leaf, This is the part of the "cassada" Delany didn't taste --too bad for him. Deep green, it's the leafy part of that "tasteless root" he described in his letters back to the States. Strongly flavored and served with either rice or Fufu. These sauces are called soup and all contain a variety of meats as well as dried fish and stockfish and pepper or "Grains of Paradise". Americans would call these dishes casseroles, stews or one-pot meals. They are filling, very tasty, and HOT. These are just some of the foods Liberians eat. You too can eat them today, at restaurants that feature Liberian food. Also try, Ginger Juice and Bissop. Oh Dear Reader, there have *always* been plenty of foods that were prepared in Liberia by the native people. Dr. Delany didn't *know* about them. He did however report that the fruits were plentiful- "plantain, banana, sour-sop, sweet sop, orange, lemon, pineapple, tamarind, cocoa nut, etc."(44) But, I digress. Allow me to call your attention to the question at hand, if that's all the foodstuffs the native peoples had to eat, then how possibly could they have survived, and increased? Many settlers were visibly starving, yet the native people did not exhibit signs of starvation to the good doctor. His letters back to the States gave no hope to perspective emigrants of anything but degradation, horrible living conditions, starvation, reinstitution of a slave system by the settlers on the indigenous populations, sickness and disease.

As for sickness and disease, anyone traveling to tropical countries today *must* get the required inoculations prior to traveling. However, back in the 1800's when medicine was not as highly developed a practice, people did not take these precautions. I doubt they even knew of the "Germ Theory". Therefore of the 27,000 emigrants sent to Liberia between 1820 and the time of Dr. Delany's writing in 1855 only 5,000 remained alive. He attributed this decline to the "unhealthfulness of the climate, the extreme heat of the sun and continual decay of the vegetable matter."(45)

Settlers did face many diseases, including the Fever, almost inescapable, sending a man into extreme suffering; Craw Craw, in which the flesh becomes a mass of corruption and turns people into walking carrions; Jiggers, tiny little insects that burrow beneath the skin, lay eggs in your flesh and create ulcers which house the developing critters; and malaria where a person just sleeps away.(46) All in all, there were some people who decided that this wasn't the life for them and wanted to return to the States but were prevented from leaving by those inside Liberia who were in power. "It is the part of the Society to send emigrants there and the part of the government to keep them there when sent. One statute law forbade all captains, owners, and agents of vessels, from taking away any individual out of that Republic under a penalty of five hundred dollars, without a passport obtained from the Secretary of State."(47) If you wanted to leave Liberia, you had to give ten days notice of your intentions, and provided no one objected to your going, *then* you made your application to the aforementioned Secretary and he

had to believe that you planned to return to Liberia or you would be denied your passage (48).

ACS never reported the hardships that the emigrants suffered and they suppressed any bad news coming out of the settlements.(49) Mr. Hoggard, who fared very well by comparison to many others, was the example that the ACS used to show what one could make of himself in Liberia. But it was Alonzo Hoggard's *own initiative and vision* that made him successful. Conversely, there was resistance to Blacks emigrating from America to Liberia - "formidable white hostility. Some of the opposition was political; white (and black) Republican officials were dependent upon African American voters and thus did not desire a decline in their numbers. Others, especially planters and merchants, wished to see no siphoning off of black laborers and customers from whom they largely derived their income."(50)

The political system in Liberia was patterned after that in the United States. The citizens engaged in making treaties, legislation, trade, etc. The United States continued to interface with the little republic from its inception, at least throughout the time period in which we are focused in this unit. The work of Dr. Elwood Dunn, a Liberian scholar who compiled a massive three volumes work titled: "THE ANNUAL MESSAGES OF THE PRESIDENTS OF LIBERIA 1848-2010," presented the presidential addresses to Liberia's National Legislature. The reading of these speeches reveals the types of assistance and gifts that Liberia received from not only the United States, but from countries in Europe as well. For instance, in April, 1856, "The Hon. H.H. Roberts, commissioned charge de affairs of this (Liberia) government, accredited near the court of His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of France; and having been duly recognized by that magnanimous nation, was enabled through his efficient ministry, to make such representations of the character, object, and claims of this infant Republic, as could not fail to make a true and favorable impression...The special duties with which our minister was charged, were to exchange ratifications of the French Treaty; to procure of the French government the first of the promised small vessel of war, and to adjust and settle the claims of our Consul General in Paris...Through the kindness of Mr. Woermann of Hamburg, the thousand uniforms presented by the French government have been shipped for this city, and are daily expected"(51). By 1868, Liberia had a postal service, had engendered "Foreign Sympathetic Interest...and has the sincere aspirations, for her prosperity and success, of the best men and wisest nations of the earth."(52)

Interesting was a claim brought about by an English Company, the Company of African Merchants, which attempted to make a transaction with the native peoples for lots of land in the town of Robertsport, owing to improvements of such thereon. President Payne stated in his Address that "The assertion of the Company that their agent made a payment on these lots to the natives could not be admitted by this government, however true it might be. The laws of Liberia prohibit even its citizens from such transactions with the aborigines, and to allow foreign subjects the privilege would be most dangerous, and cause endless confusion".(53) This same President recommended compulsory education for the *whole* country. He also counted not less than 600,000 aborigines and asked of the Liberian citizens "a patriotic and sagacious consideration of a plan ameliorative of the circumstances of our aboriginal population."(54) The Presidents since the founding of the country through to the time frame for our purpose were as follows:

1st President: Joseph Jenkins Roberts, a Founding Father, freeborn “received a liberal education in Virginia” (54); came from Norfolk Virginia. He served from 1848-1856 and again from 1872-1876. Arrived in Liberia in 1829.

2<sup>nd</sup> President: Stephen Allen Benson, freeborn from Baltimore Maryland. He came to Liberia in 1822 with his parents. He received his schooling from the American Colonization Society.

3<sup>rd</sup> President: Daniel Bashiel Warner, served from 1864-1868. He came with his parents to Liberia in 1823. His father home schooled him.

4<sup>th</sup> President: James Spriggs Payne, served from 1868-1870, and again from 1876-1878. He was born in Richmond Virginia and came with his parents to Liberia in 1829. He received his education in Monrovia. He was a Methodist minister who was formally ordained in the United States in 1840. He wrote, “A Prize Essay on Political Economy, As Adapted to the Republic of Liberia.” He was impeached in December 1877 by the House of Representatives, but he was not removed from office. He then returned to his church work following his Presidency. He was in office when the *Golganda* sailed into Liberia and Mr. Ogburn helped found Arthington.

5<sup>th</sup> President: Edward James Roye, served from 1870-1871. Was freeborn. From Newark, Ohio, educated in the same and also Ohio University. He was already a successful businessman before he arrived in Liberia in 1844. He continued his business activities after emigrating before he entered politics. Prior to his Presidency, he was appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court but was overthrown “in a civilian coup’d etat on October 26, 1871.”(55)

6<sup>th</sup> President: James Skivring Smith served from November 1871- January, 1872. A native of South Carolina, he came to Liberia with his parents in 1832. He graduated from the Berkshire medical Institute in Pittsfield Massachusetts in 1848. He practiced medicine in Grand Bassa County.

To have Presidents serving for such short periods of time as opposed to the four years terms that Americans are accustomed to might have been a bit unnerving for the families we are studying in this unit. But look at what has been laid out before them: the ability of Black Men to govern themselves, make laws and treaties, live self-determined lives, assert their freedom as they wished, own land and enjoy the fruits of their own labors. Would they ever be able to live this life in America?

So Alonzo Hoggard, great grandfather to my adopted grandmother, Mrs. Parthenia Askie (Grand Grand), arrived in Monrovia in 1869, not quite a week before Christmas. It was the dry season, (a time when most Liberians in the States today who are able, will go home to visit). There was no place for the families to live in Arthington as houses had to be built. So the men went ahead to the proposed site and built dwellings from December till May. This was a hardship, being separated from their families for so long a time. But by the spring of 1870, they were able to move into their new homes. Mr. Hoggard did well in Liberia by comparison to his life in Bertie County, North Carolina. He built a log cabin, 13x15 feet and grew “rice, potatoes, corn, peas, cucumbers, mustard greens, and ginger, with plans for a cotton crop the next year.” Shortly thereafter, he grew coffee and planned to ship it back to the States along with cotton and ginger. Mr. Hoggard appears to have been an industrious man who didn’t like laziness in other men. He “helped raise a Baptist church and was grateful to be out of Bertie County and in Africa.”(56) However, he had spent most of his life in America and so could not

completely shed his “American-ness” as that indeed was his early socialization as to how the world works. He too felt that the indigenous people needed to be “Christianized and civilized.” By the time he died at age 60 in June of 1880, he was eulogized as “ the father and leader of this place.”(57)

Not everyone had such a happy life, notably some single women who had no men to help them and so they “got along badly.”(58) And there wasn’t much natural increase in Arthington. Its chief export, coffee, suffered continually falling prices, coupled with constantly battling the environment and the “dearth of beasts of burden, farm implements, readily accessible transportation networks and capital, and a slowing trickle of new emigrants” (59). These conditions all spelled an uncertain future for the colony. Although Arthington was not as badly off as its neighbor Brewerville, sickness and malaria still made their home right alongside the residents.

Without new emigrants coming in (none for over ten years), the population, which consisted mainly of North and South Carolinians stood at only 293. The beautiful little town with its dipping valleys and coffee trees was dying. For the whole country of Liberia, emigrant arrivals had slowed significantly. Of the sixteen thousand African Americans who had left America to build new lives as Free MEN and WOMEN in Liberia during the nineteenth century, only about twelve thousand remained.(60)

My research stops here as I have given you enough to think about when it comes to how American racial politics impacts every one of us, and has since America was British North America. But we now know that there *was* such a place, where a freed slave could go and design his own destiny, own himself and his labor and enjoy the benefits of liberty. However or whatever the little town did to survive proved successful until civil war came in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century in the form of Samuel K. Doe. By then it had grown to 18 towns, all under the name of Arthington.

## **THE LESSONS**

### **LESSON ONE: SHOULD WE OR SHOULDN’T WE?**

Objectives:

Working in groups, students will be able to: Identify and discuss the push/pull factors influencing African Americans in the immediate antebellum period and during the four years immediately following the Civil War by examining these documents: Fugitive Slave Law 1857, Kansas-Nebraska Act, and the *Dred Scott* Decision. Teacher will then present the students with an array of the following:

Visuals, speeches from President Andrew Johnson, National Addresses of Liberian presidents prior to 1865, documents of town meetings held in the churches concerning emigration to Liberia, letters from Martin Delany and opposing accounts of life in Liberia from Rev. Samuel Williams (who spent four years in Liberia).

Go to the website: HarpWeek.org and pull up these documents:

“We Accept the Situation”

“Whipping a Negro Girl in North Carolina”

“This a republican Form of Government”

“Slavery is dead(?)

“Rebel Atrocities”, May 21, 1864

“The Massacre in new Orleans”, Aug. 18, 1866

“Hanging of Amy Spain”, Sept. 30, 1865

“The Black Laws”, Feb. 11, 1865

“The modern Medea-the story of Margaret Garner, a slave they would not have to endure slavery, lying dead on the floor and four men who pursued her”, May 18, 1867.

All of these (and more) were printed by “Harper’s Weekly” during the 1800s.

Some of these are simply visuals, while others are editorials. You be the judge as to which of these documents you want your students to work with.

Students will then come to a conclusion as a group and “cast “ their votes as to whether or not they will take a chance on making a life of their own choosing in Liberia or stay here.

**Guiding questions to lead the discussion:**

What were the causes/events that were pushing the people to consider leaving the land of their birth?

How did these events affect people’s lives and their communities? Were any of the effects intended? Were there any unintended consequences?

Who was supporting this move? Who was not? Why?

How did the worldview of Southern Whites affect their choices and actions towards Blacks? Did they all hold this worldview? What about Whites in the North? How did their worldview affect their choices and actions towards Blacks? Did everyone in these groups hold this worldview?

**To Be Considered:**

What can we learn from the past?

What has changed and what has remained the same?

What skills and knowledge would people need to have in order to succeed in this new land?

Students will then do an activity called, “What’s on Your Plate?” and “ESP” the issues one might face in making such a decision (see Appendix).

Write a position statement arguing for emigrating or staying in the United States.

**LESSON TWO: SHIP AHOY MATEY!**

Working in their groups, students will now prepare to set sail for Liberia. They will decide what supplies they will need to load onto their ship, where they will settle and what they will need to have on hand to supply their needs once they arrive until a supply ship can be sent six months after their arrival. Some suggested supplies and their costs are found in the appendix. Allow two class periods for students to “shop” for supplies and “load” their ships.

**LESSON THREE: OH WHERE, OH WHERE CAN OUR LITTLE TOWN BE?**

Photocopy the map of Liberia (see Appendix). This is the map that students will use to identify where their settlements will be. They must also take into consideration where there are already existing settlements, and what spaces are already inhabited by indigenous people.

Working in their groups, students will use GoogleEarth to survey the land historically and decide what a good location would be to settle themselves. If GoogleEarth is not available, use a map of Liberia from the Library of Congress website, (see Bibliography). Teachers will then present the students with information concerning the particular climate /weather of the various parts of the country, available crops for growing, suitable land for husbandry, data on insects and infestation, probability, diseases and acclimation. I addressed these issues in the body of the text background of this unit. More information can be found on the web. Given this information, students will examine all available options, discuss those options and mark their chosen site on the map. They will then justify why they chose this site and also explain what they would do in case of any land disputes with the indigenous people.

#### **LESSON FOUR: IN THEIR OWN VOICES**

Students will listen to an audio recording of Mrs. Parthenia Askie , aged 99 years, whose father was an original emigrant and Founder of Arthington ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=fKEOOpDom3c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fKEOOpDom3c)) . Mrs. Askie grew up in Arthington.

Prior to students hearing Mrs. Askie speak, ask them to write down their ideas of what life might have been like in the U.S. for a little girl growing up in the early 1900's. Then ask them to write what they think life was like for a little girl growing up in Liberia during the same time frame.

Play the recording and ask them to identify any misconceptions they wrote then ask them to redline anything that they were unable to clarify. This could form the basis for a research paper to be titled, "Growing Up Liberian in the 1900's"

You can tweak this by using the students' hometowns, or native countries, if not born here. This will help them to make connections. You can also make them aware that life would be different for many little girls depending on their race or ethnicity but their experiences are all valid.

#### **END NOTES**

1. Booker T. Washington, "A Slave Among Slaves," *Up from Slavery: An Autobiography*, <http://www.bartleby.com/1004/1.html>.
2. Moore, Frank, *Speeches of Andrew Johnson*, p. vii
3. Dunbar, Erica, *A fragile freedom*
4. Moore, Frank, *Speeches of Andrew Johnson*, p. xii
5. Foner, Eric
6. Teaching American History class notes with seminar leader, Dr. Randall Miller, Spring, 2012
7. Teaching American History class notes with seminar leader, Dr. Erica Dunbar, Winter, 2012
8. Ibid
9. Du Bois, W.E.B., *Black Reconstruction*, pp. 238-39
10. Ibid. p. 241.
11. Ibid
12. Ibid. p. 242.

13. Ibid. p. 244.
14. Ibid. p. 248.
15. Ibid. p. 246.
16. Du Bois, *Souls of Black Folk*, p. 17.
17. Ibid. p. 19.
18. Ibid
19. Horton and Horton, *Hard road to freedom*, p. 36.
20. Edsall and Edsall, *Chain reaction*, p. 234.
21. Ibid
22. Horton and Horton, *Hard road to freedom*, p. 36.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid. p. 37.
25. Ibid. p. 39.
26. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, p. 249.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid. p. 252
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid. p. 253.
31. Williams, *A constant struggle*, p. 45.
32. Ibid. p. 112.
33. Moses, *Liberian dreams*, p. 9 xv.
34. Clegg, *The price of liberty*, pp. 79-80.
35. Ibid. pp.51-52.
36. Ibid. p.58.
37. Ibid. p. 62.
38. Ibid. p. 64.
39. Ibid. pp. 68-69.
40. Ibid. p. 244.
41. Ibid. p. 7.
42. Moses, *Liberian dreams*, p. 94.
43. Ibid. p.95.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid. p.96.
46. Ibid
47. Ibid. p.97.
48. Ibid. pp. 97-98.
49. Clegg, *The price of liberty*, p. 265
50. Ibid. pp. 259-60.
51. Dunn, *Annual messages of the presidents*, p. 107.
52. Ibid. p. 207.
53. Ibid. p. 210.
54. Ibid. p. 214.
55. Ibid. p.11.
56. Ibid. p. 260.
57. Ibid. p. 262.
58. Ibid.

59. Ibid. p.266.

60. Ibid. p. 59.

## **APPENDIX**

### **LEARNING STRATEGIES:**

#### **WHAT'S ITS ESP?**

This can be done with any document or visual. **ESP** stands for economic, social and political effects or impact of a document on a population, person or time. **For instance: What was the ESP of the Dred Scott decision on African Americans during: the late 19<sup>th</sup> century?** There is also a fourth effect or impact should you choose to add it, and that is cultural impacts/effects.

#### **WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE?**

**Sample question: What was on President Lincoln's plate on the eve of the Civil War?**

Get sectional disposable plates – one per student or group.

Using little headings for ESP (see above), label each section-one for economic, one for social, one for political. Photocopy the text (for each student). This can be from any source that will support what the students are studying. I have provided a variety of reading materials from which you may choose. As students read through the text you assign, have them to cut out the sentences that fit into each appropriate section and glue them into the ESP sections on their plates. When complete, ask students to pass their plates around the classroom to discover what was on a particular person or groups plate. You may also do this activity using only visuals and have the students construct the story that supports each visual.

### **DOCUMENT ANALYSIS WORKSHEETS**

These are available to download and print out from [www.nara.gov](http://www.nara.gov). They are excellent guiding analysis worksheets that will guide the students through examining various primary and secondary source documents from written to political cartoon and beyond.

I am writing this for grades 7-9. My classes consist of students from the United States, Africa and the Caribbean. For African American students, the connections to Africa have for the most part been lost. They cannot imagine why anyone would want to live in such a “poor place”. This is partly because the media has done such a fine job presenting Africa as a place of constant strife, poverty and ignorance. My students are not familiar with the history of many Blacks who left *here* because they saw no opportunity to not only be free but to fully participate in the processes that shape their lives and the lives of their future generations.

Here is a way that students can see that for well over one hundred years Black Folk have been migrating from America to Africa. I want them to examine the factors that drove people away from a country that is perceived to be the best country in the world in which to live and work, to a different place, a place where they felt that in order

to enjoy the benefits of liberty, they had to leave America. My students will analyze the politics/laws of the time, which provided a backdrop against the dreams of citizenship and the rights conferred on the freed slaves, and the freemen and freewomen of the time. I want them to examine just how fragile freedom was, and how easily one could be manumitted and then immediately indentured, thereby prolonging the period of servitude. I want my students to be able to draw comparisons to their lives and the political backdrop of today with the lives of the Arthington families, and the political backdrop at the conclusion of the Civil War.

I plan to use primary and secondary sources such as photographs, presidential speeches, debates, maps, and interviews with family members whose fathers left America and landed on African soil to found a town called Arthington. I am also requesting sources from the Charles Blockson Library and the National Archives, as both have records relating to that time when Blacks were still immigrating to Liberia. The students will read excerpts from selected texts from writers such as Frederick Douglas, Harriet Jacobs, W.E.B. Du Bois and accounts from Liberians, and laws enforced here in order to understand how the legal and racial climate was impacting African Americans and Whites; and they will also analyze the politics of the time to be able to understand how those dynamics caused people of African descent to determine that living here was dangerous, and true freedom would never be theirs. I also have film with archival footage from PBS and a documentary by Mrs. Nathaniel Barnes, wife of Ambassador Nathaniel Barnes, showing the cultural impact of the settlers on Liberia. My unit will take two weeks if taught in its entirety. However, I will design it so that it can be “unpacked” and teachers can take from it that which will fit their classroom needs.

While writing this unit, I was blessed to have the ears of Mr. Sayku Kromah, Senior Liberian Diplomat 1981-1997, and Macleod Darpoh, Former Minister of Commerce and Transport of Liberia. Mr. Kromah is indigenous and Madam Darpoh is a descendant of one of the Founding Families. Their input was critical to me as they both have different perspectives, which I needed in order to write this unit in an appropriate manner. While I am presenting my research, I also must remember that I’m writing about real people and their family members.

## **ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Using “Bibme.org”

Askie, Parthenia. Tape recording interview. 7 Apr. 2012.  
<[www.youtube.com/watch?v=fKEOOpDom3c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fKEOOpDom3c)>.

When I met "Grand Grand", I was amazed at how sharp her mind is. She can recall her life as a young girl growing up in Arthington, Liberia almost one hundred years ago with ease. A humble woman, she made me promise not to leave out any of the other founding families names who traveled with her father, Alonzo Hoggard, to start the settlement of which I write. Even today, as she sat at her dining room table, she looked at her great-great grandchildren and told which one is in the ninth grade, which one is graduating from high school, where they're going and so on and so forth. I was happy to be able to interview her, as she is a treasure trove of history

Clegg, Claude Andrew. *The price of liberty: African Americans and the making of Liberia*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004. Print.

This is the book that gave me the information that I needed to write about the freed persons traveling to Liberia, the conditions they faced aboard ship, and what they were able to do when they got there. This book is a must have for anyone trying to locate information about the early days of nation building in Liberia.

"Colonization." *inmotion*. The *Schomburg*, n.d. Web. 9 June 2012. <inmotionaame.org>.

This website can be accessed by everyone without having to use a password. Excellent for a whole class activity. The Liberian migrations are more background information, as we are focused on one particular migration. Provides more resources for your class in creating a "whole picture".

Du Bois, W. E. B. *Black reconstruction: an essay toward a history of the part which black folk played in the attempt to reconstruct democracy in America, 1860-1880*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1935. Print.

This is the book that gave me much of the racial-political-historical background that I used for this unit. Dr. Du Bois is such an eloquent writer that he makes you feel as if he's talking to you instead of you having to "plow through" his work. I thoroughly enjoyed using this book as one of my sources

Dunbar, Erica Armstrong. *A fragile freedom: African American women and emancipation in the antebellum city*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008. Print.

Dr. Dunbar focuses on women, who are often forgotten in the history books. Yet the roles they played cannot be overlooked. She doesn't just present them as historical figures. She gets "into their business" and tells it. I gained a real appreciation for them because I was reading about "whole people." I highly recommend her book.

Dunn, D. Elwood. *The annual messages of the presidents of Liberia 1848-2010: state of the nation addresses to the National Legislature: from Joseph Jenkins Roberts to Ellen Johnson Sirleaf*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011. Print.

This is a massive three-volume work, researched by Dr. Dunn, with whom I have had the pleasure to speak. Through the Presidential speeches I was able to form a picture of the political climate in Liberia. The speeches are eloquent. I also noticed the length of time each president served, which was quite surprising to me. If you're looking to see how other countries viewed Liberia, and how it was progressing internally as a nation, this is one way to do it.

Edsall, Thomas Byrne, and Mary D. Edsall. *Chain reaction: the impact of race, rights, and taxes on American politics*. New York: Norton, 1991. Print.

This is one of those "WOW" books that when you read it you need to have a highlighter ready. Breaks down how the reactions from different groups of people occur when the issues of "rights" come into play, and why certain groups feel a backlash from other groups as a result of governmental policies.

Foner, Eric. *The story of American freedom*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1998. Print.

This is the book that fully explains the ideas of how freedom was constructed in America. Dr. Foner delves into the "engine" that drove just who could and could not enjoy the benefits of liberty.

Horton, James Oliver, and Lois E. Horton. *Hard road to freedom: the story of African America*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2001. Print.

Excellent. Very interesting to read and chock full of material that you might want to assign as reading for students even beyond just reading for this unit.

Johnson, Andrew, and Frank Moore. *Speeches of Andrew Johnson, President of the United States*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1865. Print.

This book was written during the time period I am using to write this unit. I used it for much of my background information on this president. I found it to be insightful and allowed me to present President Johnson as a whole person instead of just a "Dastardly Racist President."

McLain, Rev. W. "Library of Congress Home." *Map Collections-Liberia*. Version G8880 1845 C6 ACS4. E.Weber & Co., 1 Jan. 1845. Web. 8 June 2012. <<http://www.loc.gov>>.

The Library of Congress has a number of maps of Liberia. The section you should employ is "American Memory" You may be able to print this out and distribute to your students or use your LED projector.

Moses, Wilson Jeremiah. *Liberian dreams: back-to-Africa narratives from the 1850s*. University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998. Print.

This book is a compilation of narratives/letters and essays written by free men including Dr. Martin Delany, who traveled to Liberia during the time of colonization. Dr. Delany's views of the colonial experience there are rather dismal. However, there are counter claims showing different perspectives on Liberia presented in the book. All in all, it makes for a very interesting read.

Washington, Booker T. *Up from Slavery: An Autobiography*. New York: Doubleday. Print 1901. Online Bartleby.com 2000. < <http://www.bartleby.com/1004/1.html>>.

The classic memoir of late 19<sup>th</sup> century America's most prominent, if controversial, African American leader, now easily accessible online.

Williams, Yohuru R.. *A constant struggle: African-American history, 1865-present*. 2nd ed. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Pub. Co., 2005. Print.

This book is an excellent resource. It is one of my "go to" books when I am looking for primary source documents relating to African Americans and the struggle for civil rights starting with the year 1865.

Williams, Yohuru R.. *Teaching U.S. history beyond the textbook: six investigative strategies grades 5-12*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2009. Print.

Wow! What can I say here? These strategies turn the kids into history "detectives" and really grabs them and makes them want to go out and "solve" the case.