

Freedom, Colorism, and Race and Place in the American South

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“Just look Olivie, how brazen this one is, she said to her sister who was as startled as Rosette.” And just look at what she’s wearing. It’s gold! Blacks are not allowed to wear gold in public”.....Isabelle Allende, *Island Beneath the Sea*

Overview/Rationale

This past summer I visited New Orleans. I had heard about it all my life- the music, the food, the culture. I thought would be so different from anything I had ever experienced in Philadelphia. But as I walked through the city, I began to feel a certain kinship with it. My mother’s family is from Alabama, also in the Lower South, with close friends from Mobile, and as a child I was privy to listen to such colorful conversations, while snapping beans for dinner, or watching Gran-Ma make chicory coffee- Luzianne, to be exact. I made my connections with the South from these little everyday things that was the way we lived. I also heard cautions about choosing a mate – early on.

And I so scandalized them when I went off to a university in New York as a “Colored Girl” and returned to them a “Black Girl” shouting Black Power slogans. My poor mother! In this, I had completely rejected her way of life, which was hard enough to maintain “up North”. And she, like my aunts, always wanted to “go back home”, but never made it back. I did not understand many of her reactions-until I went south.

Many of my students also have family still in the South, and they regularly return to them during the summer. In casual conversation, they often speak about the way of life in their own families there. But we have a sort of unwritten law that says we will never talk about certain things-things that are painful, but tend to crop up every now and then-Color. We can talk about race because we have all felt its’ impact, but we don’t talk about the ways our skins place us in society.

Kids are well aware of the differing hues and shades we come in. Those born in families with no southern ties are often not aware of this thing known today as Colorism, as are those who are not African American. But there is a large body of research that shows that

Colorism, along with racism, is practiced in other societies and countries as well, with the lighter skin tones associated with wealth and position, (China, Brazil, parts of the Caribbean, for example), and salary differential. Immigrant populations here in Philadelphia, migrating from some countries in Africa, are selling bleaching agents, carcinogenic, for sure to younger and younger women in an effort to become “radiant”.

I have run into some of my former students whom I did not recognize because of this. That’s how much their appearance has changed. They are all aware of the potential risks they are facing, but the drive to be “other than the other” is so strong that they are willing to take the risk. They have told me that they do it for “better jobs, better selection of mates, better social connections” and as I previously stated, that they want to become, “more radiant”.

With that in mind, I am going to begin this unit with a group of people in the Deep South who were for the most part, free before Emancipation, free before they suddenly found themselves citizens of these United States, the Gens d’ Couleur Libre, The Free people of Color.

How did they organize themselves as a society apart from Whites against the backdrop of Emancipation, the passing of the Freedom Amendments, and Jim Crow? What role did caste and class play in their lives? Were they defined by *two* sets of standards, one their own and one by the larger, dominant society of Southern Whites?

I opened this with a line from the historical novel, “Island Beneath the Sea”, to illustrate that there were laws written in New Orleans that controlled Free Women of Color, and their daily lives so intimately that they could not even dress their hair with jewels, or wear perfume in public. *And these people were free!*
Why should students care?

Students should know that there was a time when America, for African Americans, was not all Black slaves and White masters. Very few of them know that there were Free Black populations living in close proximity to enslaved Black people, that not every one was poor and downtrodden, but that there were actually well educated, well positioned *Coloured* people right here in the United States *during the time of slavery*.

I want them to know how freedom, emancipation and Reconstruction for the many affected those smaller populations who were already free (but not as free as Whites) They should know how Colorism and Racism served to separate people from one another both interracially and *intra*racially.

Issues of State’s Rights (Tenth Amendment) versus Federal law, and the rights of citizens are interwoven throughout this unit. The students will examine the Gens d’ Couleur Libre, the enslaved Blacks, and the social, economic and political climate, surrounding and affecting them both, thereby helping to shape their existences in the American South, with ramifications for today.

It is my hope that studying this unit will add another layer to the story of African Americans in these United States.

Objectives

My students will:

Close-read and analyze documents such as the Emancipation Proclamation, the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments, state laws on Race and yes, Color, the Homer Plessy case records and documents from government officials during the Civil War and Reconstruction They will view and analyze selected sections of film and read selected text from historical fiction. Finally, they will conceptualize the lives of self-selected persons living at that time and create posters depicting the economic, social and political climate that these people were living in.

This unit will take three weeks. The background information may be used as a text resource. The films should be viewed by the teacher, who should then select what is appropriate for the students (as some scenes are graphic). Taking out those parts will not diminish the delivery of the lesson.

Pa. State Common Core Standards

CC 8.5.6-8A : Students will: cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources

CC 8.5.6-8B : Integrate visual information (e.g. in charts, graphs, videos or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

CC.8.5.6-8 F: Distinguish among fact, opinion and reasoned judgment in a text

Background

ONE

“ ...and each year the abolition forces grow more powerful in the North. As a result, more restrictions are placed against the Gens de Couleur Libre, more laws against us,” Ann Rice, ”The Feast of All Saints”

Once upon a time, and not so far away, on a June afternoon, in 1892. a Free Man of Color named Homer Plessy boarded the car for Whites at the Press Street Railroad Depot in New Orleans, Louisiana. Holding a first class ticket to Covington, Louisiana some thirty miles away, he took a seat, and then, although he looked White, announced that he was “Colored”. Mr. Plessy then refused to sit in the car reserved for Non Whites as directed by the conductor. He was subsequently dragged off the car and arrested. With that one act, Homer Plessy had become a criminal, for he had broken the Separate Car Law instituted in his state in 1890 which stated that all railroad companies carrying passengers in their coaches in their state, shall provide equal but separate accommodations for the White and Colored races. No person or persons shall be permitted to occupy seats in coaches other than the ones assigned to them on account of the race to which they belong.

Actually, Homer had never intended to go to Covington. This was a deliberate attempt to overturn a racist law in his home state by testing the constitutionality through the courts. The Civil Rights Act of 1875 had been struck down in 1883 and victims of racial discrimination were directed to seek relief from the states-not from the Federal Government.

You see Homer Plessy was an activist who belonged to a group of Creole Men who had formed The Citizens Committee to Test the Constitutionality of the Separate Car Law. The committee, formed in 1891, raised funds and hired Albion Tourgee, a Radical Republican, as their lawyer. They also hired a detective to ensure that this test case would work, (and also to detain Plessy until the police arrived). The conductor and the railroad were sympathetic because of the added expense and trouble that was incurred in order to enforce this statute. (1) (However, if you were attending to the children of the other race, (White), you would be exempted from the law (2)

The Louisiana Supreme Court decided that the law was unconstitutional as it applied to interstate travel, so the committee then decided to try a test case to see if it applied to *intrastate* travel. This is where Homer Plessy entered the scenario.

TWO

The Creoles, of which Homer Plessy was a part, were a group of people who are a mixture of French, Spanish and African (and possibly some Indian). They comprised the Gens d'Couleur or Free People of Color. Some were born unfree, most were not, but they occupied a particular place in Louisiana society, a place of privilege. "They belonged to a community that had originated and thrived in Louisiana long before the United States ever purchased that territory from France in 1803". (3) Some had fled St. Domingue during the slave uprising, arriving on these shores in the late seventeen hundreds.

This was a group of people who were by and large well educated, prosperous, "High Society", and closed off from other Blacks, and Whites. They had their own customs, language and ways, (even today, when you travel to New Orleans, you can still hear their dialect of French spoken on the street, and you can feel their influence, particularly in the French Quarters)(4).

They were Catholic by faith and many attended St. Augustine Catholic Church. (5)

Mobile Alabama, just two states over, was also home to a Creole population. People of Color had been present there during the founding of the city, more than fifteen years before the arrival of the first African slaves in 1721. (In fact, early on Africans had accompanied the explorers as they were exploring the New World). Although their "numbers were always small, they were looked upon with distrust by Whites, who considered them a dangerous example in a slave society".(6) The presence of these free Blacks in Mobile caused slave owners to minimize contact between the two groups as much as possible.

Even though they minimized their interactions as much as they could, the Alabama government and planters themselves, provided various ways that slaves could gain their freedom. In 1819, slaves could do this through the Alabama Legislature, which permitted manumission through its constitution. Or, their masters could allow them to purchase themselves with profit earned from selling produce from their garden plots, or with money they earned from being hired out. Sometimes they were freed by the owner's death. And sometimes the owners provided for them with annual stipends and the right to occupy certain lands in perpetuity and the request that they be allowed to live as though free. Such was the case of Durant Hatch, who did not free his slave Jacob, but settled him on a portion of his land and directed his executor to allow him to "enjoy his own time under direction, control and protection of my executors" (7) But with Nat Turner's rebellion there was a decrease in manumissions. And by 1860, The Alabama Legislature prohibited manumission altogether.

As in Louisiana, some free Blacks owned slaves. Interestingly enough, in Mobile, once you left the city area and traveled to the "isolated rural areas, White and Black lives were frequently melded in family-like intensity"(8)

These Free People of Color became a "buffer" group, a bridge between Whites and Blacks, with the Catholic Church being the primary registrar. They formed the Creole Fire Company in 1819 and later fought on the side of the Confederacy by an act of legislation in 1862, when they were ordered to go to war, by an "act authorizing the enrollment of the Creoles of Mobile. This act authorized the enrollment of all male "Creoles of Color" between the ages of eighteen and fifty to defend Mobile and the county. On April 8, 1865, they were renamed the Native Guard. They performed military guard duty along with their original task of fighting fires. Some of its members left Mobile to fight with other Confederate soldiers. Those surrendered at Citronelle on May 4, 1865.

They too looked down on their darker skinned brethren and many despised the negative stigma that was associated with being of African descent. "The free Negro population of the Gulf Region was almost entirely the product of extra marital unions between White men and African/ African Descent women. Although the children of these mixed racial unions followed the status of the mother, a liberal manumission policy encouraged masters to free their racially mixed mistresses and their light skinned children.

In the Deep South, less than one percent of the African descent population was classified as free in 1860. (9) They were an elite group-wealthy, and owned slaves. By 1830, almost 4,000 of them (some who had been slaves themselves) owned 13,000 slaves. And then, some bought slaves related to themselves as a form of protection. Others simply wanted to expand their own fortunes. (10)

This group seemed to possess some political power due to the Louisiana Treaty Purchase of 1803.

The Creoles of Mobile were also known as the "Treaty Population" because the Adams-Onis Treaty that transferred West Florida to the United States guaranteed them the rights

of citizens of the United States. They had Constitutional rights! They received special privileges denied to Freedmen.

“In the 1830’s when Alabama barred free African Americans from attending school, the Alabama Legislature granted Free Colored Creoles in Mobile the right to create their own separate school system. Moreover, the Mobile Diocese created the Cathedral Creole School and the Creole schools located at St. Patrick’s Church. This was all due to the Adam’s Onis Treaty-full citizenship rights and educational advantages for mixed race and Creole people. (11) And like their counterparts in Louisiana, they could own slaves, enjoy property and inheritance rights, but *they* could vote.(12)

However, they were never granted *full* citizenship rights in the United States Constitution. They too were segregated, and bit by bit, lost whatever rights they originally were granted. (13). Interesting enough, as some of them were passing into White society as White, some Whites were passing into Colored society as Persons of Color or Creole, in order to live with or marry people of African Descent. (14)

On the eve of Radical Reconstruction, years before Homer Plessy, Mobile Creoles had already challenged segregation on horse drawn street cars. By 1874 when White Democrats and other former supporters regained control of the state, racial segregation was written into many of the state and local laws of the land, and by the 1890’s, Black Reconstruction had spiraled downward.(15)

THREE

“Elisabeth brought the baby up close to Suzette’s face and placed her in Suzette’s trembling arms. Suzette saw the thick cord of life that connected her to a girl –child. “What’s wrong with her”? Suzette could hear the hysteria in her own voice. The baby was gray. “Don’t worry” Elizabeth said. “The color will turn. We just don’t know what direction yet.”Lalita Tademy, Cane River

In neither Mobile nor Louisiana did Creoles identify themselves as Black, Negro or White. In Louisiana they identified as: Octoroons, (seven eighths White), Quadroons, (three fourths White), Mulattoes, (one half White), Griffes (a child born of a mulatto and a Black), High Yellows, and Fancy Yellows, all referring to how much White ancestry is in one’s bloodline. They considered themselves socially superior to dark-skin Blacks.

There was the practice of Colorism, a form of discrimination that dates back to the colonial era, that also played a role in where you may be placed visually in a society based on your physical appearance by those who did not know you. Therefore, pedigrees were important, (and still are). It was often impossible to tell who belonged to what race, and doctors often altered birth certificates to suit a family’s request. (16).

This might prove to be problematic for later generations. For example; in *Jane Doe v. Louisiana*, 479 So. 2d 369 (La. Ct.App.1985),1977, Suzy Guillory Phipps needed a birth certificate in order to apply for her passport. She had lived all of her life as White. That

day, the Clerk of the New Orleans Division of Vital Records informed her that she was indeed, Colored. She was 43 years old. She was quite shocked. So she and other family members filed suit to have the racial designation of their parents changed, as there must have been some mistake on the part of Louisiana. She was unsuccessful.

The court stated that they had failed to prove their parent's racial designations were incorrect. It turns out that their great-great-great-great grandmother was a Black slave, and under Louisiana State Law, that defined as Black "anyone with a traceable amount of Black ancestry". Both the Louisiana and the United States Supreme Court refused to hear the case on appeal.(17) Had they been born just a little over one hundred years before, they would have been enslaved too, since slavery was an inheritable condition, passed from the mother to her children. Me thinks, that with that one document, they lost their "pedigree". And no matter how White, the male in that family *appeared* to be, no Gens d' Couleur would marry their daughters to an enslaved man.

FOUR

"...she hired instructors for singing and dancing ; the girls practiced walking with cups of water on their heads to improve posture, she taught them to comb their hair and paint their faces.....she also designed a wardrobe for each one according to her figure and color, and Madame Adele and her helpers produced the dresses. Dr. Palarmientier suggested that the girls should also have subjects for conversation." Isabel Allende, "Island Beneath the Sea".

The Gens d' Couleur in Louisiana had plans for their daughters! One of the most anticipated was the Octoroon or Quadroon Ball. There were four or five of those each week. This was where liaisons were made and deals struck to the satisfaction of the Planters and the matrons of the young women of the Gens d' Couleur. Essentially, the young women would be outfitted in the finest clothing the family could afford. They were then taken to the ball where the sons of wealthy planters could peruse them.

These young women were educated, refined, usually spoke French, had impeccable manners and social graces. If one young woman struck a young man's fancy, the negotiation with the girl's mother, grandmother or aunt would begin. The young man himself never approached the young woman with an offer. That was left to the girl's matrons and his father to work out.

The purpose of these balls was to secure a certain standard of living for the girl through the placement of one's daughter with a suitable planter's son. Known as Placage, the agreed upon arrangement would give the girl her own cottage or house outfitted as she would like. Any children from the arrangement were to be, it was hoped, guaranteed an education, usually in France, and the girl and her children were to live a comfortable life. She would be, as my mother would say, a "Kept Woman".

Not all of them were free women of color. Sometimes enslaved women were bought or inherited by the White male. And then there were those financial payments to the girl's

parent, a sort of “negotiating expense, if you will. This was the system of Placage. The Placee (the girl), was never to interfere with the son’s true White family. Never. She and her children were to remain anonymous to the man’s wife and their children. The children were usually not mentioned as heirs in his will (unless the local and state law permitted), but often the father of these children would make arrangements for the Placee and their children in a separate agreement with an attorney. The wife would not be informed, and the Colored children would not stand to inherit any of the estate. Sometimes these “arrangements” lasted with real love and affection. Often they didn’t.

Women, White, Black, or Colored, were not citizens of the United States in the sense that men were. They could not vote, were restricted by what they could say and do publicly, could not control their own finances, (their fathers, husbands or brothers would act on their behalf). They had to be provided for. So these “arrangements” virtually insured that the girl of color would be well placed (for as long as the union lasted). However, their life choices were severely limited.

Some did marry other mixed race men. But that wasn’t the norm. If the girl should lose the financial standing she had enjoyed as a Placee, and would have to support herself, her choices were few. She could open a brothel, (some did). She could be a hairdresser, (Marie Laveau was one) She could become a dressmaker or a milliner. But she most likely would not have to work at occupations she and her family found demeaning.

Since the Femmes de Couleur did not identify with slave women, this system served to keep her elevated above other Blacks who were not part of that society. It also served to (almost) guarantee a brighter future for the children resulting from such unions, an education being one of the most valuable benefits.

These Placage arrangements were a common occurrence in New Orleans. The now “Bourbon Orleans Hotel” is the earliest venue for the Quadroon Balls. These highly educated, socially refined quadroons were prohibited from marrying White men and were unlikely to find Black men of their status (18)

White women resented these mistresses for they had the power to destabilize white marriages and families. And so there was backlash. One law that was passed “prohibited mixed race women from wearing jewels and head dresses with plumes. This law decreed that they must wear head scarves, called tignons, on their heads when they were out in public” (19) Well, that only made them more attractive and exotic to the male population. Imagine untying that hair!

For the Gens De Couleur, the males, well, they had more employment opportunities, working in various occupations. But they were not guaranteed to be treated with respect by White Creoles. Sometimes they were treated with contempt. This caused some of them to leave the United States and move to France where they formed their own community there. (20) But life in Louisiana and Mobile was a three- tiered society with Whites at the top, slaves at the bottom and the Gens d’ Couleur neither.

The Emancipation Proclamation freed "...all persons held as slaves within any state or designated part of a state the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States shall be then, thenceforward and forever free" on January 1, 1863. However it specifically exempted slaveholders, including the slave holding Gens d' Couleur in thirteen parishes in Louisiana, St. Bernard, Palquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, Terre Bonne, La Fourche, St. Mary, St. Martin and Orleans, including the city of New Orleans. Two years later, the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery throughout the land. At that point *all* are free.

So, the Gens D'Couleur lost their slaves. The Black Codes are enacted for all Non Whites. That three-tiered society is no more, and states begin defining who is a Negro, Colored or White. If you're going to pigeon-hole people, deny them access to resources and rights, then you have to first identify just who they are.

Florida's law states:, " The words "Negro", "colored", colored persons. "mulatto", or "persons of color", when applied to persons, include every person having one eighth or more of African or Negro blood ". Alabama's law states, " 41-808. Person of Negro race defined:...any person who has in his or her veins any Negro blood whatever, (Acts 1911,No. 320, Sec. 3, p.295. I have read the laws of eleven southern states, which define by law, just what a person is for the *purpose of upholding their state constitutions*. Louisiana gives no statutory definition, however in Lee vs. New Orleans Great Northern R. Co. (1910), 125 La. 236,239,51 So. 182 defines "colored persons" as "all persons with any appreciable mixture of Negro blood.(6)

Life for the Gens D' Couleur is now "in Black and White". The Free People of Color (who were already free at the time of Emancipation), found themselves stripped of their rights. Their world closed in on them bit by bit. Although the Black Codes existed in every parish, they were most vigorously enforced in the northern and eastern parishes. "Prior to the Civil War, New Orleans was relatively hospitable to Creoles of Color and even some Blacks. The Codes, designed to govern Black behavior in public, was actually more liberal than British and American customs. In fact, Blacks had more rights than their counterparts in any other city on the American continent, even those up North. Those freedoms included their business and social interactions not even found in any other part of the state.

So, Black life flourished in New Orleans, and the focal point for them was the Place Congo, later Congo Square, today called Louis Armstrong Park" (22) But by 1877, race relations were on a downhill spiral.

Creoles of Color had never identified with their darker, enslaved brethren or the freed slaves. In fact, many of them had long held a disdain for the freed slaves and spoke French whenever they were around to distinguish themselves from them. (23) The Gens D' Couleur for most, were not born into slavery (although that "one" part of the "1/8" Octoroon's grandma, generations back probably *had been* enslaved, since Africans were not lining up for a cruise ship to America) and so what freedom they had previously enjoyed is now under threat, even though it had not been a "complete freedom" to begin

with. They have always had to contend with the laws and restrictions placed upon them by the larger White society.

FIVE

“Everything from pirate’s booty to extravagant Parisian items was sold there, and every day except Sunday slaves were auctioned off to supply demand: between twenty and thirty thousand a year just to keep the number stable, for they did not live very long”.....Isabel Allende, Part One on Saint Domingue, Island Beneath the Sea

Let’s look briefly at Louisiana before She became part of the United States. In the 17th century French explorers and settlers moved into the Louisiana Territories. There they were a dominant force. Even when they ceded Louisiana to Spain, their language and customs persisted. Haiti, then known as St. Domingue was also a French colony. But when the Africans under Desalines rose up against their slave masters, thousands of Whites fled the island and arrived on these shores with their slaves. Among them were free mulattoes who also owned slaves. At that time St. Domingue had over 450,000 Black slaves, 40,000 to 45,000 Whites and 32,000 Gens De Couleur Libres. These people were neither White, nor were they slaves.(24) When Toussaint L’ouverture took control of the colony, many more fled the island (he did invite them back).

Some went to Louisiana, others went to Cuba and then came to Louisiana when the United States purchased the territory in the early 1800’s, where along with the refugees from St. Domingue, doubled the 1791 population in New Orleans. They didn’t all stay in New Orleans though, some went to the outlying towns or parishes and some went north, up the Mississippi waterway. (There are also completely European or White Creoles, people of Spanish ancestry and French ancestry who are not racially mixed. This was a move to separate themselves from the Anglo-Americans who moved into the area after the Louisiana Purchase).

New Orleans boasted at least a dozen flourishing slave auctions. It was a slave auction center! (As a child, I remember an old saying that still persisted years after Freedom, “Keep that up and you’ll be sold down the river”, meaning, a slaves worst nightmare- to be sold into New Orleans to “work sugar”).

In trying to protect its “status as the slave auction center of the Western Hemisphere, Louisiana seceded from the United States in 1861. That lasted one year. In 1862, the Union Army took control of the city of New Orleans and remained in occupation there for the next fifteen years.

By the 1880’s, there were over a quarter of a million Blacks, freed slaves and their descendents calling New Orleans home. They were looked down on by Whites, Octoroons, Creoles, anybody with a lighter skin tone. (25) These folks had no pedigrees. They were often poor, illiterate, uneducated and had practically no documentation of their past, no ancestry to which to cling. If they showed up in any record at all, it was as chattel, on bills of sale, and usually just their first names, for they often took their

owners' last names if they had one. There were just too many generations between themselves and Africa, so they didn't even have that history.

Many Creoles are descended from the French colonials who fled the colony. They brought with them their culture and life ways, which they had become used to in St. Domingue. They lived as free people.

SIX

Louisiana Free People of Color had always sought to assert themselves. Although they had to identify themselves as f.m.c. or f.w.c. (Free Men/Women of Color) on all legal documents. They could own slaves. They could hold real estate. They could be recognized in court. But they could not marry Whites and they could not vote. From 1865 onward, the world as they knew it was steadily disappearing, as they found themselves living under the Black Codes (Code Noir).

As of 1896, more than thirty years after Emancipation, the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments, and Reconstruction, just having grand time on a Saturday afternoon with the family attending the circus was problematic. "Not less than two.... with individual ticket sellers, and not less than two entrances to the said performance, with individual ticket takers and receivers, and in the case of outside or tent performances, the said ticket offices shall not be less than twenty-five feet apart (26). Even the blind were to be handled separately. (27) That's a lot of measuring and jumping through hoops to keep folks apart.

So, although they do not identify themselves as African or Black, they are viewed by the larger White society as Non White and therefore under the same restrictions as any other Black person. So what is freedom to them? Does it mean the same thing as it means to the newly freed man who came from the condition of slavery? Do the slave owning Gens d' Couleur, who have lost their slaves, see freedom for the emancipated slave in the same way he sees it for himself? More to the point, as the enslaved Blacks gain their freedom, moving up from the bottom, do the Gens d' Couleur see themselves moving *downward*, eventually meeting Blacks at the same level?

SEVEN

"No more auction block for me. No more. No more. No more auction block for me. Many thousand gone. No more driver's lash for me. No more. No more. No more driver's lash for me. Many thousand gone." Negro folk song

So we begin to see that freedom means very different things to different groups of people. For freed slaves, it meant that they could now own themselves and their labor. When the war ended, many former slaves believed that they had a right to the land. After all, they were clear that the proceeds from the selling of their families, "...our wives, our children, our husbands has been sold over and over again to purchase the lands... and didn't we

clear de land and raise de crops?An den didn't them large cities in the North grow up on de cotton and de sugars and de rice that we made?" Bayley Wyat, Virginia (28)
Because Emancipation in the Union – Occupied South turned everything on its head; did away with familiar ways of living and working, most people, former slaves, former slave holders, and those already free, did not know what to expect. For while slavery had been abolished, no one knew what social, economic and political systems would replace it. As each group struggled with new ideas about themselves, some harsh realities began to emerge.

The newly freed were for the most part landless and without resources. That did not stop them from wanting to base their freedom on a foundation of economic independence. But they had nothing- no money- no education, no place to live-only their ability to work and their knowledge of the land. Former slave holders wanted to regain control of those whom they once owned. Then Northerners arrived determined to make the South into a Northern "Mini Me", if you will.

First on the agenda was to address the most pressing needs- "to provide subsistence and employment to former slaves who were not needed by the army-women, children, and the old or disabled-and thereby reduce expenditures for relief.....and hope to restore production of cotton, sugar and other valuable commodities, which would yield revenue for the Union's depleted treasury." (29)

Many planters remained on their plantations in the sugar growing regions of Louisiana after the federal occupation, asserting their loyalty to the Union. They demanded that the federal government protect their property by upholding their right to hold their slaves. The slaves ran away to freedom. In Southern Louisiana, that was usually the only way they could be free."

By the fall of 1862, thousands had fled to New Orleans and the army camps on its outskirts. Their escape enraged planters who needed workers for the forthcoming harvest."(30) General Benjamin F. Butler worked out an agreement with planters whereby the military would provide laborers from among the runaways but the planters must pay them wages, and they were prohibited from administering corporal punishment. Only the Union military would issue discipline. Of course, this was a new way of dealing with former slaves for the planters, who now had realized that things would never be the same again.

The agreement was put in writing and clearly spelled out the provisions, the rights of all parties: able-bodied males would be paid ten dollars per month with three going toward necessary clothing; women and each child ten years to sixteen years old would also be paid. Planters would provide proper and suitable food along with any medical expenses (in case of sickness); planters had to provide for all persons incapacitated by sickness or age.

The laborers were to work ten hours per day with twenty six days of ten hours each was to be considered a month's labor, except December, which was twenty days. The

overseer was charged with keeping a true and exact account. If he should cause any inaccuracy *he* would forfeit one month's pay to the person so wronged. (31) But, the former slaves in Southern Louisiana expected more from freedom than wage labor under close supervision. They wanted to farm for themselves, on land, and not under anyone's supervision. They wanted independence from White control.

Here is an example of freed men's autonomy in a place called Davis Bend Mississippi: General Ulysses S. Grant had a vision of Negroes working for and by themselves without White oversight. There was an eleven thousand acre cotton plantation that had belonged to Jefferson Davis and his brother Joseph. "Here, rather than being forced to work for White owners, the emancipated slaves saw the land divided among them, to be worked collectively by self-selected groups. By 1864, three thousand former slaves were laboring at Davis Bend; the following year, with the price of cotton having risen to unprecedented heights because of war, they earned a profit of \$160,000. " They also elected their own judges and sheriffs. (32)

Emancipated slaves living and tilling the soil on Major Potts Plantation Parish Terre Bonne La. wrote a letter to Captain Hoyt explaining that they had been directed to go and cultivate that land, "and do something for ourselves until the government could do something for us and gave us orders for all the stray mules belonging to the plantation to be brought in so that we could work the land and we understood that *we were to be protected in our labor.....* Now a Mr. Wright comes to the plantation with Authority from the Government to work it and claims the result of our labor-We have had to struggle hard to get along and we feel it hard now that we have succeeded in making ourselves in a measure independent, to have to turn it all over to someone else". This group was successful in keeping control of the land and it's bounty, and they did it *by themselves, for themselves, and with themselves*. No White man was there to "oversee" or direct their work. In fact, they realized larger returns than they would have had there been.(33)

When the Union army arrived, many planters fled taking their most valuable slaves with them and left behind the old, the sick, and the crippled, those who in their eyes were of little or no value anymore. However, even these abandoned slaves proved themselves beyond what those planters gave them credit for. They had cultivated "small parcels of ground, and made Sufficient Corn and vegetables to Supply them; they have Some Cane....These Negroes have succeeded beyond rebel Expectations in living without the assistance of White men".....H. Styles, New Orleans, La. August 18th, 1863 (34)

Sadly though, when the lands in the South reverted to the former owners, the Confederates, freed people by the thousands, were displaced from lands they had settled believing that they now belonged to them- their forty acres and a mule, so to speak. Even Davis Bend was lost to them because Jefferson Davis waged a legal battle to regain that land after his brother's passing (against his brother's wishes). He eventually won and that was the end of that dream for the freed men.

In the end, only a small number of former slaves were able to receive or retain their land.

My own grandfather was one of them. He managed to keep two hundred acres in Alabama with five fruit orchards on it-apples, figs, peaches, plums and cherries. In Louisiana, where slaves held by slaveholders in those parishes that remained loyal to the Union, slaves took matters into their own hands. At times they were helped along by the presence of abolitionist officers such as, Gen. Phelps and Gen. Neal Dow, who issued free papers to slaves who had been expelled from their plantations for defying their owners. Sugar planters were enraged and wrote letters to the military governor, Gen George F. Shepley pleading their case. (35)

There were cases of freed slaves who traveled into the wrong territory on their way North. Caught in a state where slavery was still intact, they were sold and re-enslaved. Even freed people carrying protection papers from high ranking military officers were stopped at the Ohio River were at risk. They were deemed fugitive slaves and sold to new owners when no one answered the advertisements calling for their masters. They had escaped slavery in the Confederacy only to be re-enslaved in the Union (36)

Freed slaves resisted their former slave holders trying to get them back on the plantations and in some instances, violently. Fannie Bisland, the wife of a secessionist planter in Southern Louisiana was a party to one such episode”There is no disposition among my house servants to return, they have taken a house near Houma and of course so long as the can live in that way they are not going to return to me. None of the people in the quarter are willing to work for me either, indeed before this reaches you, you will probably hear of the rebellion on the place about Mr. Grey’s (the overseer) coming there.” Later in the letter she implores her mother to” get a good old negro woman for a cook.”(37)

They left the plantations and fields where they had labored for others, withdrawing with them their wives and children too. There was a great deal of household production whereby, the slaves could supplement the family’s income This caused former slave masters great consternation because they could not force them back. And if they did get them to work, the planters complained about the worker’s “insubordination” and having now to sign labor contracts for work they used to get for free. Planters complained that they spent more time on tending their own garden plots than laboring for them in the cotton fields. Some of the income earned from household production was pooled and the freed people were able to build their own schools and churches.

Freed people had accumulated resentments of slavery that sometimes played out in the exercising of their freedom. Some ransacked the homes of their former masters, as in the case of Chicora Wood, the plantation home of one of South Carolina’s wealthiest planters. “The conduct of Negroes in robbing our house, store room, meat house, etc. and refusing to restore anything.....shows you that they think it right to steal from us, to spoil us as the Israelites did the Egyptians” (38)

In January, 1865 Louisiana’s Free Black Community stepped onto the political stage as the Equal Rights League, which represented the free black leaders of New Orleans. “They viewed the Union occupation as a golden opportunity to press for equality before

the law and a role in government for themselves”(39) They joined together with the larger group of ex-slaves and held a mass meeting to demand Black suffrage. This was the first time the two groups had come together to act in a common body for a common cause.

So all of these groups have their own ideas of what freedom is and how it will affect themselves and others. But what was it like to be free in a hostile environment?

As I said before, Free People of Color had always sought to assert themselves, They had already been free for generations (to an extent) but *they wanted their freedom to mean something*. They had always been living a sort of “Parallel Existence” to Whites, living in the margins. And they, like other Blacks, had their “Place”. (The Black Codes were not new. They dated back to the seventeen hundreds, the purpose of which was to regulate and restrict the movements of *slaves*). By 1865, Louisiana legislature began vigorously implementing those codes, which limited *Black life* in the 1860’s and 1870’s. So this group loses ground during Reconstruction as the fortunes of *all* the city’s Blacks declined. So traumatic this was to them that some left and went to South America.

Jim Crow Legislation spread throughout the South. Aimed at voter registration, it reduced the numbers of ninety five percent in 1897, to one percent by 1901. With the Plessy case ruling, a local matter spread statewide and then went national. “Separate but Equal” was never equal in any shape, form or fashion. But separate was indeed Separate, and went “from railroad cars to schools, employment, every public space and transaction imaginable(40) “ Books shall not be interchangeable between the White and Colored schools but shall continue to be used by the race first using them. “No person shall require any White female to nurse in wards and rooms in which Negro men are placed. Any person printing, publishing or circulating written matter urging for public acceptance of social equality between Whites and Negroes is subject to imprisonment”....MISSISSIPPI Laws Governing the Conduct of Nonwhites and other Minorities”

To step out of one’s place could prove to be very dangerous indeed. For instance, lynching. In the book, ”No Sanctuary”,all over the South Black folks learned early on of their “Place”. In the words of a White Mississippian, “A White man ain’t a going to be able to live in this country if we let N----- start getting biggity”. (41) Sometimes Blacks were lynched for no other reason than to bring down a Black person who had achieved a measure of economic success. It was evidence of Black success, of Black assertion and advancement that fueled White fear. Although seldom cited as the reason for mob violence, the assumption persisted that an occasional lynching for whatever reason served a useful purpose, that periodically it became necessary to remind a new generation of Blacks of their place in Southern Society”(42)

“From 1865-1872, hundreds of colored men and women were mercilessly murdered and the almost invariable reason assigned was that they had met their death by being alleged participants in an insurrection or riot..... during Reconstruction, the negro was given the right of franchise and theoretically at least, his ballot became his invaluable emblem of

citizenship”(43) While this was a dream realized, it soon turned into a nightmare as the government was unable to protect the new citizens. Harper’s Weekly ran political cartoons that depicted three Whites of different backgrounds but united in the idea that “This is a White Man’s Government” and “One Less Vote” showing a lone Black man on the ground, shot, but reaching for the ballot box. Extra legal activities, the Klan, the Regulators and mob violence massacred defenseless negroes. “The government made the Negro a citizen, gave him the right to vote and then denied him the protection that should have protected that right.” (44)

I cannot imagine what life must have felt like to find yourself being unable to go where you used to go, do what you used to do as far back as you can remember, and then live in constant fear for your life or the lives of your family, which could be taken at the whim of another for a trifle. I find this very frightening *because I am the other*.

You see, Dear Reader, as long as Negroes were property, enslaved, Whites had a vested interest in his very flesh. He was “kept subservient and submissive. But once freed, “a new system of intimidation came into vogue: the Negro was not only whipped and scourged, he was killed.”(45)

Much of this information won’t be found in classroom history texts, as most of them tend to only mention this extra legal practice in a few sentences, at most a paragraph. But know that citizens of these United States were murdered without Due Process, without fair trials, without the benefit of an attorney, or a fair and impartial jury, by mobs of angry White citizens practicing Mob Rule.

Lawless mobs had their way in more than one town or city, Rosewood, Florida, burned; its citizens, murdered, lynched, brutalized *in the presence of the law* over a lie told by a White female resident of the next town over, that she had been assaulted by a Black man. The violence lasted three days as negroes were hunted, found and “taken care of”. The woman lied to cover up her own behaviors. In 1993 the state of Florida paid their remaining descendants a little over three thousand dollars each in restitution. Nothing remains of that little town in the Deep South, but a marker that tells that it was once there.

New Orleans 1892, three days of mob violence swept through the city, beating, burning, shooting, any colored man or woman who got caught up in its path. Property was destroyed. This, Dear Readers, was over two colored men, who were the victims of an unprovoked assault at the hands of two New Orleans police officers. One of the colored men was armed and fought back. The chase was on. But the community suffered greatly.

Now, there was not a colored man in New Orleans (or anywhere else in the South for that matter) who didn’t know that, “even to save your life, do not raise your hand against a White man” (46) One of the “perpetrators” was caught. The crowd called, “Lynch him. Kill him.” One shouted, “I am the Mayor of Kenner and I have come down to New Orleans tonight to assist you in teaching the Blacks a lesson.the only way you can teach these N*****s a lesson and *put them in their place*, is to go out and lynch a few of them as an object lesson. String up a few of them and they won’t trouble you no more.

That is the only thing to do—kill them, string them up, lynch them. I will lead you if you will but follow. On to the Parish Prison and lynch Pierce” (47) This was the year Plessy refused to ride in the “Colored Car.”

EIGHT

A little less than thirty years earlier, the Colored Citizens of New Orleans had held a mass meeting at Economy Hall. There they drafted a series of resolutions, which they sent to General Hurlbut of the Union Army. One of their issues was a one dollar poll tax that was being levied on them “to help defray the cost of military supervision of plantation labor and relief of destitute freed people. . . . \$1 from colored persons not on plantations, so that the active labor of this race may contribute to the support of their own helpless and disabled.” (48) (Remember, they thought themselves superior to the freed slaves, did not think of them as “their own”, and were against being lumped in with them and taxed to help with their support).

Gen. Hurlbut replied to their petition that if they “instead of assembling in Mass meetings and wasting time in high sounding resolutions devote themselves to assisting in the physical and moral improvement of the Freedmen they would do some practical good”. He told them that they did not in any respect represent the “Emancipated Freedmen of Louisiana ”but were in fact the Free Colored People of New Orleans, free by the Old Laws of the state, and some at least in the old system themselves slave holders.

He called to their attention the fact there was “always and is now a bitterness of feeling”, and told them that they were “striving for social equality while the slaves wanted personal freedom.” The general then went on to explain to them the differences between themselves and the slaves, and to caution them about knowingly “inserting baseless resolutions” for publication. (49)

He ended the correspondence by writing that he considered their “proposal of a mixed Tribunal of arbitration impractical and therefore declined to establish it” (50).

I started this conversation with the Plessy case. Prior to the change in the law, they had ridden the trains without harassment. They therefore resented that they were now relegated to the Colored Car. It wasn’t just the *idea* of it all. For them, this new law must have been another slap in the face of Free People who were trying to exercise the benefits of liberty, made at *their expense* . While the Court found no discernable difference in the quality of the car itself, other facilities designed for Blacks were of a much poorer condition such as restrooms, etc. The Court further rejected the view that, “the Louisiana law implied any inferiority of Blacks in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment” (51)

Homer Plessy wasn’t the first Colored man to attempt this. In February of 1892, Daniel Desdunes, also an Octoroon, boarded a train going to Mobile Alabama. The car reserved for Whites. He took a seat, and promptly announced that he was Colored and was arrested for violating state law. The difference here is that Plessy was traveling *intrastate*

and Desdunes was traveling *interstate*. The Louisiana Supreme Court dismissed the case because Congress regulates interstate transportation. Therefore, only Plessy's case could be heard by the Supreme Court. But it wasn't heard until 1896.

It was hoped that the delay might rally public sentiment for Plessy. But that was not to be the case, for the Louisiana law mandating racial segregation in public conveyances was only one of the many discriminatory instances of legalized racial discrimination against Black people in southern states that were enacted after the federal government abandoned its post Civil War policies designed to protect the rights of the newly freed slaves.

Two years after the Supreme Court handed down its decision, Louisiana "passed one of the first laws officially stripping blacks of the right to register to vote. In essence, everything that could be segregated in Louisiana was. Public facilities for adults, including restaurants, hotels, night clubs, and cemeteries, were strictly segregated, as were public facilities for children such as amusement parks, playgrounds and schools.

By 1900, the line separating Whites and Blacks had become deeply etched in Louisiana's culture.....Even in New Orleans, tolerant if not if not friendly, interactions between Whites and African Americans all but disappeared" (52)

"Against formidable odds, they (African Americans) persevered and learned to help themselves. Excluded from the white world, they created the institutions and shaped the culture that would provide the inner resources necessary for survival"Allen, Litwack, et al., "Without Sanctuary"

Lessons

Lesson 1: Crime Scene Investigation

Resources for this lesson: appear as websites immediately following each image

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- analyze images of persons and scenes and using inferences and draw conclusions based on the "evidence".
- Apply their findings to provide a framework and point of reference for selected text

Teacher: select five powerful images related to the content of this unit. (I have provided some for you or you may use others of your choosing). Project each image onto the screen. Cover any identifying information. Ask spiraling questions taking students from what they can actually see (and touch) and moving to what they can interpret.

Image One: "White and Colored Slaves" by C.C. Leigh (1854)

<http://www.merrycoz.org>

Questions:

-What do you see? (only things that they can touch)-How many adults are shown? How many children? How are they dressed?-Why do you think they are being pictured? Who do you think they are?

Image Two: "Riot in New Orleans"

Questions:

-How many images do you see?-Examine each image individually. -What do you see in this image? -What are the people doing here? -What feelings might these people be experiencing? -Would people need to act that way today?

Image Three: "Radical Violence"

Questions:

-What do you see here? -What are the people doing?
-What feelings might these people be experiencing? -Why do you think they are doing this?
-What is the purpose of the horse and buggy?-Do you think that this is legal? -Do you think that there was a trial?

http://instruct.westvalley.edu/kelly/Distance_Learning/History_17B Lecture

Image Four: "Negro Expulsion From Railway Car"

Questions:

What do you see here? -How are the people dressed? -What are the people doing? What feelings might they be feeling? -Who else does this remind you of?- Where do you think this scene takes place?

www.harpweek.com

Image Five: "This is a White Man's Government"

Questions:

What do you see here? -What are the people doing? -How are they dressed?- What are the objects in their hands?- Who do you think these people are? -What is the significance of the man on the ground?

www.harpweek.com

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Teacher: pass out copies of State Laws on Race and Color (see Bibliography). Group students in pairs. Using a compare and contrast graphic organizer, direct students to select four states and document those state's definition of who is negro, mulatto, etc. on one side of their organizer. Then students should select four different states for the other side of the organizer and document who is a negro, mulatto, etc. Students should then compare each state's laws as regards to restrictions placed upon Negroes from state to state. Students should be able to see how the restrictions placed on the movements of persons varied from state to state, and how the definition of who people are could change according to the law of each individual state.

Lesson 2: "Call My Lawyer" , Plessy v. Ferguson 163U.S. 537 (1896)

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- close-read and analyze documents relating to the Supreme Court case of Plessy v. Ferguson
- adopt a position in favor of or against Homer Plessy's claims
- write a statement paper in support of or against the Supreme Court's decision

Resources for this lesson for each student:

<http://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/163/537/case.html>

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=52>

Copies of Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments

Copy of the Separate Car Law

Photocopy of the background information text from this unit.

“Thinking Like A Historian Template”

Teacher: Place students into groups of three. Tell them that in this lesson, they will take on the role of lawyers. Photocopy and distribute the documents and text to the class.

Have students read the Justia Case Summary from the resource listed above.

After reading, ask students to “fact find” the answers to these questions:

1. When did Plessy allegedly break the Separate Car Law?
2. Was there an attempt to overturn the law in New Orleans prior to Plessy? Who made the attempt? When?
3. What was the outcome of that case? (For this check the background information I have provided you and make available to the students).
4. When was Plessy's case argued?
5. Why did it take four years for the case to be decided? What changes in the social/political climate had occurred or were occurring in New Orleans during that time (1896)?
6. What was the difference between Desdunes' and Plessy's cases ?
7. According to the law, what were the responsibilities of the East Louisiana Rail Road Company? What were the responsibilities of the officer of the passenger train? Finally, what were the responsibilities of the passengers?
8. What were the consequences of not following this law?
9. Was Plessy a United States citizen?
10. What was the state law on race and color as pertains to Louisiana in 1896?
11. Was the carrier authorized to distinguish between citizens according to their race?
12. Why does Plessy believe his constitutional rights were violated?
13. Why does Plessy use the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments in his appeal?

Try The Case

Students will now “argue” the case for or against Plessy, based on the conclusions they have reached with their group. Students do not have to agree. Some may dissent.

However, they must state their position and justify it citing evidence from the documents.

Finally, pass out the decision and the dissenting opinion of the actual case. Students should compare what they did with the actual outcome.

Lesson Three: Thinking Like A Historian

Resource for this lesson: www.wisconsinhistory.org/ThinkingLikeAHistorian/

Objectives: Using the Thinking Like A Historian Template, students will view and analyze the film “The Feast of All Saints” (teacher views beforehand and deletes the three scenes inappropriate for students)

- After viewing, ask students to select one of five columns of questions on the template, Cause and Effect; Change and Continuity; Turning Points; Using the Past; and Through Their Eyes. Students are then to apply the questions to the Gens D’ Couleur as depicted in the film.
- When they have completed their questions, hold a whole class discussion by sharing out their answers and explanations.

Lesson Four: Conceptualizing the Past

Resources for this lesson: Internet, printer, glue, markers, poster boards

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- depict the economic, social and political impacts that were influencing and impacting the lives of selected persons during the 19th century through the use of primary sources. In other words, all that was going on at the time this person was alive.
- Select an historical figure and “conceptualize” his/her life in relation to the economic, social and political climate during his/her lifetime.

Students will choose one of the following persons: Ida B. Wells, Homer Plessy, Marie Therese Metoyer, Frederick Douglas, W.E.B. DuBois, Booker T. Washington, Zora Neale Hurston, Madam C.J. Walker, George Washington Carver, Duke Ellington, Jack Johnson, Louis Armstrong, Caesar Antoine, Bryant Gumbel, Suzanne Malveaux, Fats Domino

Students will work in groups of four.

Student One: Using the computer or other form of media, locate one image of the selected person and the attending biography. Rewrite the biography in own words.

Student Two: locate FIVE images depicting the **social** climate at the time of that person’s life.

Student three: locate FIVE images depicting the **political/legal** climate at the time of that person’s life.

Student four: locate FIVE images depicting the **economic** climate at the time of that person’s life.

(The students will meet to decide who gets what role).

The "Biographer" will inform the students of the dates, times and places where the person was born, lived, etc. so that the students will know where to begin locating the images. When all of the images are collected, the Biographer will place the person's image in the center of the poster board. The other students will then place their images around the subject's image. The subject only appears in the one image in the center of the board. Every other image is depicting what was going on during that person's life - images of events, documents, newspaper accounts, etc. Students will caption their images. Finally, the biography should be attached to the bottom of the board and hang from it.

Annotated Bibliography

"Placage/placee - an Investigation." *Russell Guerin*. N.p., n.d. Web. 21 May 2013.
<<http://www.russguerin.com>>.

Wonderful resource on Placage and Placees

Allen, James. *Without sanctuary: lynching photography in America*. Santa Fe, N.M.: Twin Palms, 2000. Print.

Very graphic. Hard truth. Not for the faint of heart, but a reality that African Americans had to live under, a reality that Emmett Till did not understand

Allende, Isabel, and Margaret Sayers Peden. *Island beneath the sea: a novel*. New York: Harper, 2010. Print.

Ms. Allende has done her homework! This is the third book that I read about the Creoles of Louisiana. It begins in Saint Domingue and ends in Louisiana. Powerful writing. I believe I want to reread it. Just for pleasure!

Barnett, Ida B.. *On lynchings*. Amherst, N.Y.: Humanity Books, 2002. Print.

Ida B. Wells uncovered the truth behind the real reasons African American men were being lynched in the United States and campaigned against it. This book puts the truth in perspective of life for African American males (and some women) during the late 19th and well into the twentieth centuries.

Bergreen, Laurence. *Louis Armstrong: an extravagant life*. New York: Broadway Books, 1997. Print.

Good background information surrounding the childhood of Louis Armstrong, who was born on the "wrong side of the tracks in New Orleans. Helps to put things in perspective.

Berlin, Ira. *Free at last: a documentary history of slavery, freedom, and the Civil War*.

New York: The New Press, 1992. Print.

Very informative. This is not a "dull" read, especially when telling how those who were enslaved took matters into their own hands when the Union Army arrived in Louisiana.

"Encyclopedia of Louisiana History, Culture and Community - KnowLA." *Encyclopedia of Louisiana History, Culture and Community - KnowLA*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 May 2013. <<http://www.knowla.org>>.

Wonderful resource on Louisiana

Foner, Eric, and Joshua Brown. *Forever free: the story of emancipation and Reconstruction*. New York: Knopf, 2005. Print.

Eric Foner is the definitive historian on Reconstruction. This is an easy read-highly interesting account of what freedom and equality meant to different groups of people at the end of the Civil War

Micheletti, Ellen . "The Free Black Men and Women of New Orleans and the Placage System." *All About Romance*. N.p., n.d. Web. 1 Mar. 2013. <www.likesbooks.com>.

Wonderful resource on Placage and Placees

Rice, Anne. *The feast of All Saints*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979. Print.

This is the book that started me to delving deeper into the history of the Gens D' Couleur in New Orleans. Having traveled there during the summer of 2012, I found the city to be fascinating and the French Quarter even more so. The film of the same name supports the book and vice versa.

"Separate but Not Equal, Plessy v. Ferguson." *The Pursuit of Justice*. N.p., n.d. Web. 1 Mar. 2013. < www.annenbergclassroom.org>.

Wonderful resource on Plessy case

Tademy, Lalita. *Cane River*. New York: Warner Books, 2001. Print.

This was the second book I read about the Creoles of Louisiana. I hated when I came to the end. However, when I went to St. Augustine Church in the French Quarter in New Orleans, I saw the people whom Ms. Tademy wrote about. This is her family's history and it's an interesting one indeed.

The Feast of all saints. Dir. Peter McIntosh. Perf. James Earl Jones, Ben Vereen, Victoria Rowe. Showtime Entertainment, 2003. Film.

Excellent film. Viewing this rounded out my experience with the novel and gave me a frame of reference and a sense of "time and place." Good to use with students except for three scenes which are not suitable for them. Therefore, some editing is in order.

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

If you need primary source documents on African American History during this time period, then this is the book for you. Meticulously researched and compiled, Dr. Williams has produced a gem.

MLA formatting by BibMe.org.

End Notes

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www.annenberghclassroom.org
- (3) Ibid
- (4) Personal observation by author
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- (8) Ibid
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<http://www.nytimes.com/books/first/b.bergeen-armstrong.html>
- (17) Jones, Trina, "Shades of Brown: the Law of Skin Color", Duke Law Journal, Vol. 49 : 1487
- (18) Black History-New Orleans, Placage-Universal-Writer's blog
- (19) Micheletti, "The Free Men and Women of New Orleans and the Placage System"
- (20) Ibid
- (21) Williams, Yohuru, "A Constant Struggle", p. State Laws on Race and Color, p.165

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- (27) Ibid
- (28) Foner, Eric, "Forever Free", p.91
- (29) Berlin, Fields, Miller, Reidy and Rowland, "Free At Last, A Documentary History of Slavery, Freedom and the Civil War", p.242
- (30) Ibid, p.251
- (31) Ibid, p.253
- (32) Foner, Eric, "Forever Free", p.80
- (33) Berlin, Fields, Miller Reidy and Rowland, "Free At Last", p. 258-59
- (34) Ibid, 110-11
- (35) Ibid, p.71
- (36) Ibid, p.104
- (37) Ibid, p.287
- (38) Foner, Eric, "Forever Free", p.65
- (39) Ibid, p. 62
- (40) Bergeen, "Louis Armstrong, An Extravagant Life", Chapter One
- (41) Allen James, et al, "Without Sanctuary", p. 27
- (42) Ibid, p.30
- (43) Wells- Barnett, Ida, "On Lynchings", p.59
- (44) Ibid
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- (46) Wells-Barnett, Ida, "On Lynchings", p.161
- (47) Ibid, p.165
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- (51) www.knowla.org
- (52) Berlin, Fields, Miller, Reidy, and Rowland, "Free at Last" p.320-321
- (53) Williams, "A Constant Struggle" pp164-165
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