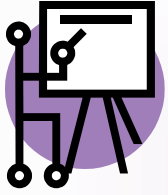


Africana Studies



Lecture Series Spring 2007

presents

John W. Grant

Assistant Professor, Africana Studies

“Not Un-African American: The Monrovia Black Community”

Blacks who supported Liberian emigration in the nineteenth century were often portrayed as persons who made the wise choice for “freedom and health,” while those who opposed it were caricatured as lovers of the poverty and social death [1] that whites offered them in the United States. Black opponents of emigration were encouraged to stay and “keep their rented cellars, and earn their twenty-five cents a day, at the wheel barrow, in the commercial towns of America...,” while “the industrious and virtuous that can point to independence and plenty, and happiness ” were encouraged to come to Liberia. [2] The actual circumstances that most early emigrants faced often contradicted this neat dichotomy. Blacks who emigrated were afforded more freedoms than those who chose to remain in the U.S. However, their capacity to exercise these freedoms could be severely limited by their low level of immunoresistance to local diseases, formal education, and access to investment capital. It would therefore be incorrect to assume that Liberian emigration equaled freedom, good health, and happiness, while staying in the U.S. was commensurate with poverty and social death. The choice to emigrate often resulted in the physical death of scores of emigrants, who had been eager to leave the social death America offered them behind. How this and other issues figured into the political and economic development of Monrovia, Liberia, will be the subject of this paper.

Wednesday, March 28, 2007

12:00 - 1:50 PM

Modern Languages room 210

ALL STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND
Free & Open to the Public

Please call 621-5664 for additional information.