On August 30, 1824, Peter Williams Jr., an esteemed leader in New York City's Black community stood before a group of Black migrants as they prepared to embark on a powerful journey; an exodus from the United States, their land of birth, to Haiti, a new land of hope. "You are going to a good country," he exclaimed, "where a dark complexion will be no disadvantage; where you will enjoy true freedom...." For Williams and his supporters, this was a momentous occasion, when the first "pioneers" set sail from the United States destined for a new homeland where they believed they would find liberty, justice, equality, and citizenship - not only for themselves, but for their children and the entire race. As Williams bade them farewell, he concluded: "Go to that highly favored, and as yet only land, where the sons of Africa appear as a civilized, well ordered, and flourishing nation. Go, remembering that the happiness of millions of the present and future generations depends upon your prosperity...."

As Williams' closing remarks revealed, many African Americans in the early nineteenth century viewed Haiti as a beacon of hope; a land full of vitality and potential where people of African descent could build a new republic, free from the bonds of slavery and racism. Enthusiasm about the budding nation was particularly strong among free Black Northerners, who were inspired by Haiti's status as an independent Black republic. Their excitement grew in the 1820s after the country's political leaders began espousing early notions of Pan-Africanism; the Haitian government openly promoted racial solidarity, and urged African Americans to migrate to Haiti where they could help create a powerful, autonomous Black nation. As the exodus from New York City demonstrated, the Haitian emigration movement blossomed during this era and thousands of African Americans fled the US.

However, the early Haitian emigration movement was short lived, and its demise marked a trend away from Pan-Africanism and emigration among African Americans. In the wake of internal political and economic discord in the new island nation, excitement about Haitian emigration waned toward the end of the decade. By 1830, the Black leadership essentially abandoned emigration
and colonization schemes, resolving, instead, to fight for justice and equality in the United States. Yet while most scholars end this story at this moment—the Black leadership's decision to focus their energies on the fight for abolition and American citizenship—it is certainly not the end of this important tale. Ultimately, although the reality of Haiti proved somewhat disappointing, Haiti's image as an independent Black nation was still powerfully important to America's free Black population in subsequent decades.

Indeed, despite the decline of the early Haitian emigration movement, Black leaders remained determined to protect Haiti's freedom, and fought to assert its legitimacy in the international political arena. This became a particularly contentious issue after 1825, because although France finally acknowledged Haitian independence, the United States stubbornly refused to extend diplomatic recognition to the new Black republic. The US government's denial of Haiti's autonomy, and its existence as an independent nation, was particularly frustrating to the Black leadership because they clearly understood that such a policy smacked of racism, upheld the system of slavery, and was a decided concession to the pro-slavery South. As a result, from the late 1830s through the 1850s, Black activists consistently pressured the United States Congress to recognize Haitian independence.

Moreover, by the late 1850s, Black activists renewed their support for independent Haiti by re-invigorating the emigration movement. Prominent leaders such as James Theodore Holly, Henry Highland Garnet, and Frederick Douglass openly encouraged African Americans to relocate to Haiti, and aid in the process of building a free Black nation. This movement had substantial support until shortly after the outbreak of the Civil War, when many activists refocused their attention on the domestic front in hopes that the war might finally bring an end to slavery. Ultimately, this era was a time of hope for Black activists; they witnessed the demise of slavery, and the US government finally extended diplomatic recognition to Haiti. Even so, the United States government's discriminatory policies toward Haiti in the early nineteenth century created an unfortunate legacy for the Black republic's political and economic viability throughout the decades that followed; a pattern that painfully mirrored the United States' policies toward the African American community within its own borders.

In 1804, Jean-Jacques Dessalines announced the formation of Haiti, the first Black republic in the Western Hemisphere, and officially declared their independence from France. This event was profoundly important to African Americans in the United States, and ultimately had both symbolic and tangible ramifications for the Black freedom struggle in the antebellum era. Yet unlike the South, where the influence of the Haitian Revolution was more immediately felt in the form of rebellions, the response in the North was slower and more gradual. By 1816, however, Haiti played a critical role in Northern Black political discourse. Plagued by violence, racism, injustice, poverty, the denial of citizenship, and a tenuous social status, many newly emancipated African Americans wondered if "freedom" was an illusion and grew increasingly doubtful about their future in the United States. By contrast, Haiti represented the culmination of Black political autonomy. During the revolution, enslaved people had thrown off their shackles and declared their right to self-determination. Once Haiti became an independent nation, it appeared to be the ultimate manifestation of what Black activists hoped to achieve. Thus, Black Northerners who feared that they would never receive equality and citizenship in the United States cast their vision to Haiti and eventually formed an emigration movement.

Significantly, the growing enthusiasm about the notion of Black migration to Haiti was not one-sided. From the nation's founding, Haitian leaders actively worked to attract Black migrants from the United States to their burgeoning country. Haiti's first president, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, vigorously recruited African Americans and even offered American ship captains forty dollars for every African American they brought to Haiti. Henri Christophe and Alexandre Pétion, who began in 1807 ruled Northern and Southern Haiti respectively, also sought to mold Haiti into a potential destination for African Americans. When Pétion drafted his Constitution in 1816, he included a special clause that granted citizenship to all descendants of Africa who lived in Haiti for one year; a strategy that would have certainly appealed to many African Americans. Although such inducements did not immediately produce a large Black migration to Haiti, their efforts revealed that Haitian leaders felt an emigration movement could be mutually beneficial; Haiti would gain from an influx in population, especially skilled laborers and sailors, and African Americans could find refuge from American racism and obtain citizenship in a new home.

In the latter portion of 1816, the Haitian emigration movement slowly took shape when activist Prince Saunders began extolling the virtues of the Haitian republic in the Black community. Saunders, a teacher at the African School in Boston, first traveled to Haiti in 1815 after British abolitionist William Wilberforce encouraged him to help establish schools there. Shortly after his arrival, Henri Christophe, the ruler of Northern Haiti, appointed Saunders as the Minister of Education and, over the next few years, Saunders recruited teachers and worked to enhance Haiti's educational system. Inspired by his interaction with Christophe and the positive developments he witnessed within the Haitian republic, Saunders soon became an avid supporter of Haitian emigration. In an effort to spark a movement, Prince Saunders published his reflections on Haiti in a pamphlet widely known as the Haiti Papers, a document he hoped would effectively promote emigration among African Americans.

Armed with his printed evidence of Haiti's success, Saunders set out on a speaking tour in Northern Black communities. In 1818, Saunders unveiled his plans for Haitian emigration at two important gatherings in Philadelphia; a meeting of the Augustine Society, the leading Black men's organization in the city, and the American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery. His message was well received in both gatherings and, subsequently, he traveled to
New York, Boston, Baltimore, and throughout the North, advocating for Haitian emigration. His efforts were quite successful. Haitian Emigration Societies began to appear in many Northern cities: first in New York in 1818, and then in Philadelphia six years later. Despite Saunders’ dedication, however, there was only a small trickle of emigration over the next few years, and it appeared that the movement had hit a standstill.

Yet in the early 1820s, a series of important developments emerged that dramatically accelerated Black migration to Haiti. Following the deaths of both Henri Christophe and Alexandre Pétion, a new leader, Jean Pierre Boyer, assumed control of Haiti. Boyer’s presidency was an important turning point because he successfully unified the Haitian republic under his rule and, in 1822, gained control over the entire island of Hispaniola. As Haiti solidified and stabilized during Boyer’s regime (at least in the early years), the nation began to attract African Americans’ interest and attention. Although a few of Boyer’s predecessors had encouraged Black emigration, Boyer was the first to successfully implement a program that resulted in a full-scale migration of African Americans to the island nation.

President Boyer endorsed emigration because he hoped that Black migration would simultaneously bolster the Haitian economy and improve relations between Haiti and the United States. Immediately following the Haitian Revolution, the US government had terminated all relations—commercial and diplomatic—with the new republic. Although the US eventually re-established trade relations, the government patently refused to recognize Haiti diplomatically. Boyer believed that if Black Americans began to migrate, the US government might feel compelled to extend diplomatic relations in order to facilitate the emigration movement. What he did not realize, however, was that the US government’s tenacity regarding their non-recognition policy would not be so easily broken.

Regardless, Boyer was initially enthusiastic about Black immigration and began developing an attractive plan in which he wisely implemented two effective strategies; he articulated a political philosophy that resonated with Black leaders, and created a proposal that addressed their most fundamental needs. Although Boyer would later come under crushing criticism for his controversial policies and inept leadership, which eventually caused him to resign and flee Haiti in 1843, he earned widespread support among Blacks in the United States during the mid-1820s. His popularity rested, in part, on the fact that he espoused strong Pan-African leanings. He emphasized that all people of African descent would find brotherhood, equality, and citizenship in Haiti, and lamented the harsh and humiliating conditions that his fellow “descendants of the Africans” experienced in the United States. Even more, he expressed a desire to assist his “brethren” in America who were struggling under racial oppression. As Boyer explained, he had a natural “sympathy” for those of “African blood” and yearned to give them refuge in Haiti: “my heart and my arms have been open to greet, in this land of true liberty, those men upon whom a fatal destiny rests in a manner so cruel.”

For Black leaders in the United States, who were desperately seeking an asylum for their people, Boyer’s Pan-African rhetoric would certainly have held tremendous appeal. Even more appealing, however, were the financial inducements that Boyer designed to encourage emigration.

In June of 1824, Boyer dispatched a representative, Jonathas Granville, to travel throughout the United States and unveil his proposal for Haitian emigration: the Haitian government agreed to pay their travel expenses, provide fertile land, tools, schooling and, most importantly, full citizenship. Boyer declared, “Those who come, being children of Africa, shall be Haytians as soon as they put their feet upon the soil of Hayti.” Jonathas Granville was well received in the United States, and was greeted as a celebrity throughout the North. Although his feelings about America were less enthusiastic, particularly because he was outraged by the severity of American racism, he still toiled diligently in the US and worked hard to recruit potential emigrants. He continued to espouse early Pan-African rhetoric, emphasizing in particular the notions that Haiti would serve as a true home to people of African descent and would offer them freedom, equality, and citizenship.

Granville’s message was so convincing that he won the endorsement of African Americans throughout the North during the summer of 1824. In Philadelphia, Haitian emigration enjoyed widespread support, even among well-respected activists such as James Forten and Bishop Richard Allen, the leader of the African Methodist Church. After Allen began corresponding with President Boyer and Haitian Secretary General Joseph Balthazar Inginac, he started recruiting migrants, and eventually both Allen and James Forten formed the Philadelphia Haitian Emigration Society’s leadership. Allen even sent one of his sons, John, to Haiti to assess the movement’s progress and provide reports about its success. By early 1825, the Haitian Emigration Society published a pamphlet urging free Blacks to consider Haiti as an option since they would never achieve full equality in the United States: “We are your brethren in colour and degradation; and it gives us a peculiar delight to assist a brother to leave a country, where it is too certain the coloured man will never enjoy his rights.”

Granville enjoyed similar success in New York City, where activists excitedly endorsed Boyer’s plan. Not long after Granville’s visit, Peter Williams, Jr. departed for Haiti to investigate the conditions on behalf of his community and apparently returned with a positive report, because his visit ultimately led to an exodus from New York City. As mentioned earlier, Peter Williams, Jr. presided over the departure and delivered an inspiring message of hope for the migrants as they fled the United States; a country Williams described as their “house of bondage.” Black Baltimoreans also embraced Granville’s message, and formed an emigration society shortly thereafter. At a community meeting in July of 1824, they voted to “use all honourable means to procure a speedy and effectual emigration of the free people of colour.” Even Black leaders in Richmond, Virginia responded warmly to the blossoming republic of Haiti, and passed a
resolution expressing thanks and gratitude to Haiti and President Boyer for providing an "asylum" where Black people could find true liberty. Within the first six months after Granville's journey through the North, between 4,000 and 5,000 African Americans departed for Haiti, and thousands more soon followed.

Although free Blacks endorsed Haitian emigration with fervor, American newspapers expressed a wide range of opinion about the movement. The National Advocate, for example, praised the notion of Haitian emigration on the grounds that the government, climate, and social environment would be more conducive for the Black population than the United States. But the editor also worried about the long-term effects of encouraging the growth of a Black republic in close proximity to the United States. Moreover, he suggested that the departure of "respectable" Black people could have a deleterious effect on the United States, since the "worst part" of the Black community would likely be left behind. Other papers, however, simply took note of the number of migrants who departed from American shores and predicted that the emigration movement would be highly successful. In August of 1824, the Maryland Gazette announced there were hundreds of eager emigrants waiting for the opportunity to make the journey and imagined that Haiti would soon swell with vast numbers of African American migrants. "President Boyer is likely to people his vast domains in a short time." In other cases, they marveled at the ready response among African Americans, and likewise predicted that there would be a mass exodus of Black people from the US. "Considering the short time for preparation ... the number of respectable emigrants that with so much alacrity have embraced the liberal offers of President Boyer is extremely flattering, and there is every reason to believe that thousands will avail themselves of the earliest opportunity to follow their friends and brethren to the land of promise."

In many ways, American newspapers were correct about the numbers of African Americans who "availed" themselves of the emigration plan – at least initially. Boyer's plan was irresistible to many in the Black community and over the next few years, the Haitian government subsidized the transportation of over 6,000 free Blacks from the Northern US to Haiti. By the end of the 1820s, an estimated 13,000 African Americans had migrated to Haiti. Initial reports seemed favorable; statements sent back to the US spoke highly of the reception they received, and indicated that the settlers were thriving in their new surroundings. One report, for example, indicated that Secretary General Inginac had greeted new arrivals with excitement and a statement of Pan-African solidarity: "because the common blood of GREAT AFRICA makes unbreakable ties, all blacks are brothers regardless of language and religious distinctions." However, transplanted African Americans soon found themselves confronting major problems. Despite Inginac's enthusiasm for racial solidarity, African Americans were culturally distinct from their Haitian brethren in a number of important ways, and they particularly struggled with language barriers and religious differences. The settlers also quickly became frustrated by the process of land distribution, and many suspected that they had been duped. Apprehensive that the government did not intend to deliver on their promise of land, settlers worried that they would be permanent laborers rather than independent landowners.

In the face of these problems and obstacles, emigration to Haiti slowed and, in fact, there was a sizable "reverse migration" of African Americans returning to the United States. Black activist James McCune Smith reported, for example, that Peter Williams, Jr. had been compelled to return to Haiti and negotiate the release of their "disappointed, distressed, and dissatisfied brethren." In fact, in 1825, Haiti's secretary general stated that he believed nearly one-third of the original settlers had returned. Amidst growing disillusionment, there was another blow to the Haitian project. Perhaps partly in response to this reverse migration, Secretary General Inginac announced in May of 1825 that the government would no longer subsidize the cost of bringing African Americans to the island. The government insisted that their decision was prompted by the immigrants' poor attitude and performance, a belief that was echoed by a few Black migrants such as Benjamin Hughes. Hughes, the minister of Philadelphia's First African Presbyterian Church, had immigrated to Haiti in 1824 and maintained that many African Americans had overly romantic notions about what they would encounter upon their arrival in Haiti. In particular, he suggested that migrants expected the Haitian government to provide for all of their needs, and were unprepared to perform agricultural labor.

Clearly, the Haitian emigration movement was slowly unraveling. Even so, Haiti's political destiny still figured prominently in the minds of African Americans, particularly after the summer of 1825, when the French government finally agreed to recognize Haitian independence. Celebrations occurred in Black communities across the United States, as Black activists delighted in the vision of a free and fully autonomous Black republic. At a gathering of Black Baltimoreans, abolitionist William Watkins revealed in the country's success: "Of all that has hitherto been done in favor of the descendants of Africa, I recollect nothing so fraught with momentous importance ... as the recent acknowledgment of Haytien Independence, by one of the European Powers, under whom the African population of that island has long groaned in the more abject bondage. The joy which swells in our bosoms is incommunicable." Yet over the next two years, Black leaders began to express serious reservations about the Haitian project.

In part, waning enthusiasm for Haitian emigration was due to Haiti's internal problems. Not only did the government revoke the inducement plan, but Boyer instituted rather controversial taxation plans; a decision which caused severe economic distress and political upheaval. As one emigrant noted, "Ruins stare every body in the face ... should this policy of the government be continued, we shall have to leave the Island." Perhaps most disappointing, however, was Boyer's decision to pay 150 million francs to France to secure Haitian independence, since his actions seemed to negate the armed struggle against slavery and caused
major financial problems in the fledgling country. *Freedom's Journal* editor John Russwurm expressed his frustration with the "very questionable character of the late transaction with France" and maintained that Boyer's choice had dishonored the Haitian republic.27

In addition, there was ongoing concern about the US government's refusal to recognize Haiti's independence. In 1827, *Freedom's Journal* reprinted an article which lamented the fact that Haiti still "seems to hold its independence by a somewhat doubtful tenure." Perhaps in response to US policy toward Haiti, the Haitian government determined that they would no longer unreservedly welcome Americans into their country. *Freedom's Journal* reported in 1828 that Americans would thereafter be required to announce their presence in Haiti, or face considerable fines. "Those arriving must make a declaration of their arrival before a justice of the peace, stating their intention either to sojourn in the country, or merely to pass through it; and also what profession they intend to exercise."28 As a result of tense relations between the US and Haiti, there was little agreement on how African Americans should relate to the Haitian republic in the post-independence era.

Thus, by the end of the 1820s, Haitian emigration was unreservedly deemed a failure. Reports in 1829 revealed that many of the remaining migrants were frustrated and disappointed. One traveler who visited extensively with a group of immigrants indicated that they were "generally, unpleasantly situated, and very much dissatisfied. They complained to me that the proprietors of the lands for whom they had laboured, for two years and a half, had entirely disappointed them ... and said they had rather be slaves in North Carolina, than to remain there under the treatment they had received since their arrival." He also argued that given the cultural differences between Haitians and African Americans, no further consideration should be given to emigration schemes: "From my short acquaintance with the Haytiens, and my observing their dispositions towards our American blacks amongst them, I am not disposed to encourage any free people of colour to go from the United States to settle in Hayti."29 By 1829, John Russwurm revealed that endorsement of Haitian emigration had practically disappeared due to "unfavourable reports of those who have returned."29

However, the decline in support for Haitian emigration was not simply due to Haiti's internal problems, or the United States' complicated policies toward the burgeoning republic—it also reflected larger trends among Northern Black activists who began to publicly distance themselves from emigrationist sentiment, especially after 1830. In an effort to bolster the movement for abolition and American citizenship, most Black activists turned away from emigration and Pan-Africanism and asserted their rights as Americans.30 Yet despite their rejection of emigration, Black leaders remained in solidarity with the notion of Haiti as a free and autonomous island nation. In 1837, the *Colored American* newspaper printed a letter from an emigrant in Port-au-Prince that celebrated Haiti's progress and potential in order to inspire feelings of pride within the Black community. The article emphasized the growth of political and social institutions and reminded readers that even though Haiti was an independent country governed by Black people, it was recognized throughout Europe as a free country. "The noble minded Haytiens, having met all the conditions of, and achieved their own independence, - stand forth on solid basis, in all the glory of an INDEPENDENT NATION, and are acknowledged as such, by the leading Courts of Europe." In the following year, the *Colored American* again rejoiced in Haiti's accomplishments noting, in particular, the republic's increasing success in building their infrastructure including commerce and agricultural development, as well as the creation of schools, roads, and other institutions. The editor concluded that the government was moving swiftly toward its goals, and prophesied that the country would soon develop all of its "natural power and wealth."31

As the 1830s progressed, however, Black activists became increasingly frustrated with Haiti's position in the international political scene. In particular, they were enraged by the US government's obstinate refusal to recognize Haiti's existence as an independent republic. Like most European nations, the United States elected not to extend diplomatic relations to Haiti during the immediate aftermath of the Haitian Revolution. But while France finally agreed to acknowledge Haitian independence in 1825, the United States, driven by Southern politicians' panic and insurrection, continued its policy of non-recognition. In the wake of various slave revolts in the US, Southerners worried that recognizing Haiti would be a tacit endorsement of slave rebellion and therefore ferociously opposed the idea of establishing formal diplomatic relations with the Black republic.32 By the late 1830s, however, Black leaders' opposition to the government's stance was mounting.

In fact, Black activists' strong endorsement of Haitian independence remained consistent throughout the antebellum era. Theirs was a position deeply connected to the Black freedom struggle in the United States, since the US' denial of Haiti not only threatened the notion of Black autonomy, but it also bolstered the South's mission to strengthen slavery. As a result, in 1837, Charles Ray, editor of the *Colored American*, expressed his frustration about the government's policy toward Haiti in the pages of his own newspaper. "In most other countries we have ministers, or at least consuls, to watch over the interests of our merchants; but to send a minister or consul to St. Domingo, would be so revolting to the feelings of our Southern brethren, that they would probably threaten to dissolve the Union...." In 1838, he issued another editorial emphasizing the importance of Haitian independence, and pleading with Black activists to pressure the US government to honor their status as a legitimate nation.

Haiti must be acknowledged, and an honorable consular relation established ... Every patriotic and philanthropic citizen should petition Congress for the recognition of Haitian independence. If it is important that we should have amicable relations and interchange national courtesies with
any nation, it is so in regard to Haiti, a country that has won its freedom and independence and established them against the world.

The following year, the paper made a similar appeal focused on the need for Northern politicians to recognize Haiti's autonomy. As Ray explained, "It is our interest to acknowledge Haytian independence... If our northern representatives refuse to acknowledge Haytian independence, they will in these matters... be submissive to the very whims of their southern task masters".36

Beyond the issue of Southern racism, Ray also argued that the United States' position was completely unjustified since Haiti had been independent for more than thirty years, they had established themselves as a democratic republic, and the US profited tremendously from their trade relationship with Haiti.

... we cannot but notice the unaccountable policy of our Government, towards Hayti. We are generally foremost in the acknowledgment of every Republic... But here is a Republic of more than thirty years standing, which has maintained its independence, without invasion or insurrection. Their Constitution and laws, are modeled after our own - yet we have, at one Session after another, of our National Legislature, taxed our wits, for excuses not to acknowledge Hayti; until they having removed them all, we stand forth in the eyes of the world, without an apology for withholding this act of justice, from a neighbouring nation, and one with which we hold a commercial intercourse annually, amounting to several millions, and greater than most other foreign powers.

The financial issue, in particular, remained a point of contestation within the Black leadership, since they clearly found the United States' policy hypocritical in that regard: how could the US justify strong trade relations, while simultaneously denying diplomatic recognition? Moreover, after the Haitian government imposed taxes on all commercial interactions with countries that refused to acknowledge them, the US position began to border on the absurd. "It is our interest to acknowledge Haytian independence, because... we actually pay one hundred and one thousand dollars per annum, rather than acknowledge her to be... what she is without our acknowledgment - an independent power."37

Significantly, the Colored American newspaper used a third strategy to highlight the contradiction of the United States' policy. Ray argued that the government was, in fact, obligated to honor Haitian independence because the US had won its own independence during the Revolutionary War only due to the participation of soldiers from Saint Domingue.

But there is another and a stronger reason why we should be foremost in recognizing Haytian independence - a reason which Hayti is too proud to urge, we too republican to remember - to which southern chivalry must yield, or acknowledge itself recreant to its own code of honor - a reason which goes home with tenfold force to the south, a great portion of which almost owes its very being, as a portion of the Union, to Haytian succor in an hour of peril. In our late war with Great Britain, it will be remembered that the most glorious event was the battle of New Orleans, on January 8th, 1815.... In that action, 200 men or nearly ONE-SEVENTH PART OF THE TROOPS ENGAGED, WERE VOLUNTEERS FROM ST. DOMINGO! And these men, in Gen. Jackson's own words - "manifested great bravery" in the action.38

Despite the obvious logic in the Black leadership's argument, the US government remained stubbornly determined to uphold their position toward the Haitian republic. In an ongoing concession to the South and the law of Southern slavery, the US persisted in their nonsensical arrangement with Haiti; they continued to participate in commercial endeavors, but turned a blind eye toward the republic in all diplomatic matters.

As a result, by the end of the 1830s, as Black activists and White abolitionists grew increasingly frustrated with governmental policy at home and abroad, they bombarded Congress with petitions demanding Haiti's recognition. In fact, between 1838 and 1839, Congress received more than 200 petitions in favor of Haitian independence.39 While petitioning was a form of political activism that Black leaders had used since the colonial era, it was a particularly strategic method in this case because it simultaneously achieved two goals. Not only did it force Congress to address the issue of Haiti, it also placed the issue of slavery on the Congressional agenda at a time when there was a "gag rule" in effect against all anti-slavery petitions.40 Southern politicians actually saw right through this attempted ruse, and responded angrily to this movement. Hugh Swinton Legare of South Carolina argued, for example, that such petitions were equal to declarations of war on the South: "They are treason. Yes, sir, I pronounce the authors of such things traitors - traitors not to their country only, but to the whole human race."41

Southern opposition to Haiti increased when Congressman (and former President) John Quincy Adams petitioned Congress to recognize Haiti. Although Adams had not extended diplomatic relations to Haiti during his reign as President, in 1839 he was finally willing to concede his earlier views. In so doing, however, Adams suffered severe attacks from his colleagues. Following Adams' presentation of his petition, Congressman Henry A. Wise of Virginia "rose in reply." Wise vehemently attacked the proposal, arguing that it was "part of the abolition scheme," and was tantamount to recognizing "an insurrectionary republic on our Southern coast."42 A lengthy battle ensued, in which Southern slaveholders successfully fought off abolitionists' efforts to force Congress to recognize Haiti. As a result, as the decade of the 1840s dawned, Jean Pierre Boyer and his fledgling republic remained diplomatically isolated from the United States.

Perhaps due to their frustrating defeat in the halls of Congress, abolitionists were comparatively silent about Haiti in the 1840s. Yet Black activists did their best to keep Haiti's interests in the public discourse. In 1841, for example, James McCune Smith — abolitionist, suffragist, and physician — delivered a compelling
speech about Haiti, in which he presented his own historical timeline, documenting the events of the Haitian Revolution. In some ways, it was a romantic praise-song of the revolution; but mostly, it was a subtle critique of the ways in which the Haitian republic was effectively manifesting democratic principles and the United States was not. In his conclusion, Smith suggested that Americans had something to learn from the Haitian example: “far from being scenes of indiscriminate massacre from which we should turn our eyes in horror, these revolutions constitute an epoch worthy of the anxious study of every American citizen.” Unfortunately, Smith’s argument became more difficult to make in the years that followed. Beginning in 1843, there were a series of military coups in Haiti. President Boyer was driven into exile, and over the next several years there were numerous short-lived presidencies culminating in the election of Faustin Elie Soulouque in 1847.

Once the political turmoil temporarily stabilized, Black activists began, again, to lodge their complaints about the US government’s policy towards Haiti. As in previous years, critics clearly identified the link between Southern slaveholders’ political power and the persistence of racism, both of which determined US relations with Haiti. In 1849, abolitionist and newspaper editor Samuel Ringgold Ward attacked the government for its blatantly racist policies.

Now one of the “customs” of our Government is to refuse to acknowledge the independence of a Republic, the majority of whose citizens are black men, lest such an acknowledgement should offend negro haters in Washington by introducing a black minister into the society of the Capitol. This is the reason why our Government has not recognized the independence of Hayti, a Republic half a century old. A Republic, too, that has done more to prove its capacity for self government … than the United States.42

Similarly, Frederick Douglass unabashedly blamed slaveholders, the system of slavery, and racism for the government’s tenacious refusal to establish diplomatic relations with Haiti: “Our Government, under the influence of the violent slaveholders, has stubbornly refused to recognize Haiti, and thus severely injured the flourishing commerce we once carried on with that Republic … This is really too contemptible for a Government that has any pretensions to common intelligence. It is paying rather too much to gratify the colorphobia of a few fanatics.” Just several months later, in a stunning critique of the “Slave Power,” the Southern political machine, Douglass again vented his frustration with the Haitian situation. “With the meanness, as well as the insolence of tyranny, it [the Slave Power] has compelled the federal government to abstain from acknowledging the neighbor republic of Haiti, where slaves have become freemen, and established an independent nation.”43

While Black activists continued to lambast the US government’s non-recognition of Haiti, and contrasted free democratic Haiti with the tyrannical slaveocracy in the southern United States, this argument became more difficult to make, as Faustin Soulouque’s rule became increasingly despotic. Late in 1849, President Soulouque was named Emperor Faustin I, and was officially crowned in 1852. This was not simply a change in name. The decision to embrace the title of emperor was a reflection of the fact that the Haitian government was moving away from its democratic republican values toward the vision of an empire. Faustin I emphasized class hierarchy, created a secret police and a personal army to destroy its opponents, and the government became more imperialistic in its foreign relations. Most notably, Faustin I launched a series of attacks against Santo Domingo, which had gained its independence in 1844. In the face of such disturbing political trends, Black activists found it difficult, although not impossible, to criticize American policy. In 1850, Frederick Douglass publicly blamed the US government for the political problems in Haiti. In his view, Faustin only turned to despotism because the US and other nations refused to acknowledge Haitian independence.

What has our Government done in the Case of Haiti? It has scouted, with the most provoking contempt, any act, looking to welcome the Black Republic into the sisterhood of nations, until at length, that Republic, disgusted with the very name of Republicanism, abandoned all show of it; and put on the robes of Imperialism, finding as she has found, far more justice, honor, and magnanimity among European despots, than she has been able to find among American Democrats.44

In this clever reflection, Douglass not only distanced himself from Faustin’s policies, but diverted attention away from Haiti’s internal problems onto the failure of America’s foreign policy.

Fortunately, Haiti’s diplomatic case finally received some additional support in 1852. Despite Faustin I’s controversial policies, a group of White Boston merchants petitioned Congress to recognize Haiti.45 Although the businessmen’s actions were driven solely by their commercial interests and financial investments in Haiti, rather than anti-slavery principles, Black activists and their White abolitionist allies seized upon this development as an opportunity to advance their cause. The abolitionist newspaper the Liberator published a series of articles about the merchants’ petition, including a statement from the New York Evangelist that bemoaned the persistence of racism in American society. The author predicted that the Haitian petition would be denied and racism would ultimately prevail, simply because American society was not yet ready for change. “Will the petition of the Boston merchants prevail? We doubt it; the Haytiens are guilty of black skins — They are good customers; they have shown their right to a place among the nations by achieving their independence; they are recognized by everybody else — but they are black, that will doom them to our neglect forever.”46 In the end, the New York Evangelist was correct. The petition was denied, and nearly a decade would pass before the United States finally recognized Haiti.

Regardless of such setbacks, anti-slavery advocates continued to press the issue of Haiti’s diplomatic status. In 1855, both Frederick Douglass and Senator Charles Sumner delivered searing critiques of the US government’s non-recognition policy, both blaming (as their predecessors had) the “Slave Power”
and racial discrimination for Haiti’s position as a diplomatic outcast. Frederick Douglass stated that the US government possessed a “Negro-hating disposition” that caused it to display “ungenerous, dishonorable and despicable conduct” in its relations with Haiti. In particular, he pointed to the hypocrisy of the United States’ booming commercial relations with Haiti that existed alongside the government’s refusal to “acknowledge their independence, and bid them an honorable welcome to the family of nations.” Similarly, Charles Sumner blamed “The Slave Oligarchy,” which he argued had forced the government to “abstain from acknowledging the neighbor republic of Haiti, where slaves have become freemen and established an independent nation.”

It was, perhaps, largely due to these very issues—the “Slave Power” and the tenacity of American racism—that by the 1850s some Black leaders demonstrated their support for Haiti, and their frustration with the United States by revisiting the emigration movement. Early in the decade there were rumblings of support for Haitian emigration. In 1853, Boston shipping tycoon Benjamin Cutler Clark advocated for emigration in a publication entitled “Plea for Haiti,” and in the same year Black activist James Theodore Holly made a brief endorsement for emigration at a national convention. Holly continued to push the notion of Haitian emigration at the 1854 National Emigration Convention, which activist Martin Delany organized in Cleveland. Even so, the gathering concluded without a clear consensus among the delegates about their position toward Haiti. Instead, the Convention’s National Board of Commissioners imbued Holly with the power to assess conditions in Haiti and determine the feasibility of a large-scale migration.

Thus, in 1855, Holly departed for Haiti and during his visit was afforded the opportunity to meet with Faustin I. Holly presented the Haitian government with a detailed plan for emigration, including requests for land, citizenship, religious freedom, exemption from military service, and a series of other financial inducements. Unfortunately, however, the emperor was reluctant to agree to all of the terms, and instead provided a vague, obligatory statement in which he simply noted that the Haitian government would always be receptive to African American migrants. Despite Faustin I’s less than enthusiastic response, Holly continued to champion the virtues of Haitian emigration upon his return to the United States.

For the next two years, Holly attempted to seek support—both financial and political—for his endeavor. Yet it was not until 1857 that his movement began to garner support. In that year, he published a pamphlet about the Haitian Revolution and the benefits of emigration in which he argued that African Americans in the US should unite with the people of Haiti to create a powerful demonstration of Black Nationalism.

Our brethren of Hayti, who stand in the vanguard of the race, have already made a name, and a fame for us, that is as imperishable as the world’s history…. It becomes then an important question for the negro race in America … to contribute to the continued advancement of this negro nationality of the New World until its glory and renown shall overspread the whole earth, and redeem and regenerate by its influence in the future, the benighted Fatherland of the race in Africa.

To further advocate Haitian emigration, members of the Cleveland Convention created a printing company in 1857 and published the African-American Repository, edited by seasoned activist James Whitfield, to generate funds and support. By 1858, Holly was traveling extensively throughout the North promoting the movement. On at least one occasion, he reported that several thousand people were already preparing to depart. Moreover, his efforts apparently garnered the attention of Faustin I’s government because the emperor sent a representative, Colonel Emile Deundres, to encourage African American emigration from various locations including New Orleans and Missouri.

Yet before Faustin I’s plans were able to fully materialize, a monumental event occurred within the Haitian government. In January of 1859, Emperor Faustin I was deposed by a military coup d’état, Fabre Geffrard led a successful revolt against the Haitian leadership, ousted Faustin I, and re-established a republican government. Within days, Faustin I’s removal was celebrated in the abolitionist newspaper National Era, and American newspapers watched the developments over the next several months with keen interest. The New York Times, for example, initially expressed reservations about the viability of Geffrard’s new government, implying in veiled language that Americans should not have high expectations about the potential of any Black-led government: “to look for a stable Republican government in that part of the Island, would be to anticipate more from its peculiar inhabitants than experience has taught us to expect from other republics of mixed white and African races, and certainly more than we are prepared to hope for from such a population as that of Hayti.”

Just a few months later, however, the New York Times was decidedly more supportive. The editor highlighted the Haitian population’s widespread enthusiasm about Geffrard, and lauded the new government for its efforts to repair the damage that Faustin I’s regime had done to Haiti’s economy and infrastructure. Moreover, the article claimed that there had never been a “better commencement” to a new government and predicted that Haiti would “thrive under President Geffrard’s rule.” Perhaps the newspaper’s change of heart was motivated by Geffrard’s emigration program. In the spring of 1859, President Geffrard unveiled an incentive program that was nearly identical to President Boyer’s plan nearly thirty years prior, in which he agreed to provide land, citizenship, education, financial inducements, and travel stipends to American Blacks willing to relocate to Haiti. The New York Times marveled at the program, and repeatedly expressed bewilderment about why African Americans would choose to stay in the United States if Haiti was a viable option. Why, one article posed, would Black people remain “obstinately averse to emigration,” when they are treated as an “inferior caste in the Free as well as the Slave States?”

Despite
the persistence of slavery, racism, and injustice, the paper maintained, African Americans "mysteriously clung to the United States "with most tenacious attachments." Clearly, the editor argued, free Blacks should avail themselves of Geffrard's offer and escape to a country where they could find relief from the "prejudice which crushes him here."85

Throughout the summer of 1859, American newspapers such as the Daily National Intelligencer expressed enthusiasm for Geffrard's government and the prospect of Haitian emigration. In September, the New York Times dedicated an entire column to a discussion of the advancement under Geffrard's leadership including political restructuring and educational reform. The Times also reprinted a lengthy document, which one of Geffrard's representatives had issued, entitled "Call for Emigration." The call highlighted the emigration plan's main stipulations, all of which addressed the main concerns that emanated from within the Black community. Geffrard emphasized Haiti's rich natural resources, and offered financial incentives (including free transportation and lodging), religious freedom, education, and exemption from military service. Perhaps most significantly, however, his message echoed the early Pan-African sentiment that Boyer had articulated in the 1820s. He stated his sincere desire to help African Americans escape the bonds of slavery and racism, and provide them with equality and citizenship. In Geffrard's view, their common "African blood" linked free Blacks and Haitians in a common destiny and he sought to provide a home for all "members of the African race," where they could find refuge from persecution and enjoy all their "civil and political rights."86

There is no way to unequivocally determine why the New York Times supported Geffrard and his emigration scheme. Were they inspired by benevolence, or were they hoping to rid the United States of its free Black population? Regardless, even if the editors of American newspapers such as the New York Times had ulterior motives, it did not prevent many Black activists from endorsing emigration themselves. In fact, Black newspapers also became an important outlet for the articulation of emigrationist thought. Inspired by Geffrard's plan, James Holly reinvigorated his movement in the pages of the Anglo-African Magazine in late 1859. Holly created a seven-part series entitled Thoughts on Haiti, in which he articulated his vision regarding the benefits of a full-scale migration of African Americans to Haiti.

As in his previous publications, Holly emphasized the importance of creating a Black nation "capable of commanding the respect of all the nations of the earth." For Holly, of course, Haiti was the ideal location to build the "strong, powerful, enlightened and progressive" republic he envisioned, and urged free Blacks to participate in this exciting project. Black Americans would play a critical role in this process according to Holly, because he believed "a successful emigration of colored people from this country to Haiti will exert a reflex influence on the condition of the slaves in this country, and on the destiny of the negro race throughout the world, that shall secure in the speediest manner, their ultimate disenfranchisement and complete political regeneration." In his view, regenerating Haiti would not only prove beneficial to the Haitian people, but would liberate all African people. It would decisively silence notions of Black inferiority, and ultimately be powerful enough to "not only uproot American slavery, but also overthrow African slavery and the slave-trade throughout the world."87

Holly's empowering vision of Haitian emigration was, indeed, tempting to many activists during this era, and the movement attracted several additional spokesmen. The first supporter was a rather unlikely candidate, White British abolitionist James Redpath. In January of 1859, Redpath visited Haiti to investigate the governmental structure and general conditions in the country. He traveled through Haiti for two months, during which time he witnessed the collapse of Faustin I's regime and the rise of Geffrard's government. Impressed with Haiti's potential, and the country's new leader, Redpath was converted to the cause of Haitian emigration. In his view, such an arrangement would be mutually beneficial; African Americans could escape slavery and racism in the United States, and Haiti would profit from the arrival of skilled, educated workers who were committed to nation-building. Redpath soon arrived in the US with the goal of sparking an emigration movement. To his surprise, the Haitian emigration movement had already begun but he immediately found ways to contribute.88

With President Geffrard's support, Redpath published a Guide to Haiti, which provided a detailed overview of Haiti's history, geography, topography, and climate. More importantly, however, the second half of the book offered information about Haiti's Constitution, its governmental structure, and issued a bold call for African Americans and all people of African descent to immigrate to Haiti to build a strong Black republic. Like Jean Pierre Boyer had done in the 1820s, Geffrard framed his appeal in early Pan-African rhetoric.

Haiti is the common country of the black race. Our ancestors, in taking possession of it, were careful to announce in the Constitution ... that all the descendants of Africans, and of the inhabitants of the West Indies, belong by right to the Haitian family. The idea was grand and generous. Listen, then, all ye negroes and mulattoes who, in the vast Continent of America, suffer from the prejudice of caste. The Republic calls you; she invites you to bring to her your arms and your minds. The regenerating work that she undertakes interests all colored people and their descendants, no matter what their origin, or where their place of birth.89

However, Geffrard's support for the emigration movement was not only in word; he provided Redpath with a $20,000 grant to open a Haitian Bureau of Emigration in Boston, which was officially operational by late 1860.90

Not surprisingly, the Bureau of Emigration's first agent was none other than James Theodore Holly. After receiving his official appointment in November of 1860, Holly recruited migrants in Philadelphia, New Jersey, and New Haven, before permanently settling in Haiti himself.91 Although Holly's departure from
the US left a hole in the Bureau of Emigration’s leadership, other renowned Black activists soon replaced him. In October of 1860, Henry Highland Garnet met James Redpath in New York City, and helped him organize a series of lectures advocating for emigration. By year’s end, Garnet joined the Haitian Emigration Bureau as did William J. Watkins, activist and son of abolitionist William Watkins, and H. Ford Douglass, an abolitionist and former slave. Together, these men worked diligently over the next few years to promote the cause of the Haitian republic and the vision of emigration. Within the space of one year, their efforts proved highly successful. Not only did African Americans migrate to Haiti under the auspices of the Haitian Emigration Bureau, but many developed their own initiatives. For example Joseph Bustill, a teacher and abolitionist in Pennsylvania, recruited potential emigrants on his own, and even formed a settlement organization called the “Geffrard Industrial Regiment.” Likewise, James Duffin, an activist from western New York, began recruiting migrants in upstate New York, some of whom immigrated to Haiti and joined a settlement of African Americans in St. Marc.

By the end of 1861, approximately 3,000 African Americans had departed for Haiti from various regions throughout the United States. American newspapers closely monitored their exodus from city seaports, and regularly published appeals from James Redpath that celebrated the emigration movement and encouraged more African Americans to participate. The New York Tribune reported that “the Haytien movement is vigorously pushed, and is daily increasing in favor with the class whom it is exclusively designed to benefit.” Even newspapers in relatively obscure locations, such as Bangor, Maine; Chillicothe, Ohio; and Lowell, Massachusetts promoted emigration and rejoiced in its progress. As a result, in October of 1861, the Daily National Intelligencer boldly declared: “The Haytien emigration movement is a success.”

However, many in the Black community vehemently disagreed. There was considerable hostility within the Black leadership toward the notion of emigration, particularly after the Civil War erupted. Early in 1861, Black activists began expressing their frustration with the Haitian emigration scheme. George Downing denounced the movement on the grounds that it was attempting to “create in the minds of the colored people the impression that they cannot be anything in this country.” Likewise, James McCune Smith issued a passionate plea for Henry Highland Garnet to reconsider the ramifications of his decision. He criticized Garnet for abandoning the struggle for Black equality in the United States, citing a pledge they made to each other as young boys that they would unceasingly agitate until the battle for freedom and justice had been won. “Shake yourself free from these migrating phantoms, and join us with your might and main. You belong to us, and we want your whole soul.” In addition, Smith pointed out that since a similar plan had failed in the 1820s, Black Americans should not be unceremoniously “dumped on the shores of Hayti,” especially because, in his view, it was obvious that Black people wanted to remain in the United States and fight for abolition and citizenship: “our people want to stay, and will stay, at home; we are in for the fight, and will fight it out here.”

Perhaps the most powerful voice opposing Haitian emigration was Frederick Douglass, even though he briefly contemplated emigration. In the spring of 1861, Douglass toyed with the notion of Haitian emigration, despite his previously strong anti-emigrationist views. Apparently Douglass had grown despondent about political setbacks in the 1850s, particularly the Fugitive Slave Act and the Dred Scott decision, and had arrived at the painful conclusion that free Blacks might need to consider opportunities elsewhere. In the pages of his paper, Douglass declared that “the inducements offered to the colored man to remain here are few, feeble, and very uncertain.” As a result, in March of 1861, Frederick Douglass agreed to accompany Theodore Holly on a mission to investigate conditions in Haiti. Douglass sadly admitted, “We can raise no objection to the present movement towards Hayti.... We can no longer throw our little influence against a measure which may prove highly advantageous to many families, and of much service to the Haytian Republic.” James McCune Smith, of course, attacked Douglass for his endorsement of emigration, sarcastically stating, “Frederick Douglass’s eyes appear dazzled with the mahogany splendor of the Boston [Haitian Emigration] bureau.”

Despite Smith’s criticism, however, Douglass became so enamored with the notion that he planned to visit Haiti to help plan a potential exodus of voluntary migrants. As he explained, “We propose to act in view of the settled fact that many of them [African Americans] are already resolved to look for homes beyond the boundaries of the United States, and that most of their minds are turned towards Haiti.” Yet, in a powerful stroke of fate, Douglass never made the journey to Haiti; before they had a chance to embark, shots were fired at Fort Sumter and the Civil War commenced. The war prompted Douglass and many other Black leaders to relinquish their emigration schemes and refocus attention on the United States, in hopes that slavery might be vanquished and the battle for suffrage might eventually succeed. As Douglass explained, “This is no time for us to leave the country,.... We shall stay here and watch the current of events, and serve the cause of freedom and mankind.” In July of 1861, Frederick Douglass simply declared bluntly and unequivocally: “I am not an Emigrationist.”

In many ways, Frederick Douglass’ ideological shift reflects the predominant pattern among Black leaders; even those who initially endorsed Haitian emigration soon became consumed with the possible demise of slavery following the outbreak of the Civil War, and quickly shifted their attention back to the domestic scene. Moreover, anti-emigrationist sentiment was also bolstered by increasing reports about similar problems that had plagued the movement in the 1820s. Emigrants sent messages back to the United States about poor conditions, flawed land distribution programs, and conflict between Black settlers and Haitians — especially linguistic and religious differences. For example, Joseph Bustill’s “Geffrard Industrial Regiment” disbanded after receiving “gloomy
reports" about conditions in Haiti. As they observed the growing reverse migration back to the US, most of the potential migrants in his group became uneasy and eventually withdrew from the plans. Likewise, the attempt to create a Black settlement on Ile A'Vache, an island off the coast of Haiti, also ended in utter failure in 1863. Therefore, as in previous decades, the enthusiasm for emigration eventually disappeared.

Finally, more than a year after the Civil War commenced, the Haitian emigration movement reached a definitive end. Even staunch emigrationists had a change of heart. Although Henry Highland Garnet initially continued to support the Haitian project, he reunited with his childhood friends James McCune Smith and George Downing in May of 1862, and declared that the abolition of slavery must be the Black community's primary focus. Moreover, by 1864, Garnet was actively recruiting Black soldiers to fight with the Union. Likewise, James Monroe Whitfield, the editor of the pro-emigration newspaper, the Afric-American Repository, also recanted his earlier endorsement for emigration in 1862. Although he previously claimed that Black American patriots were "fools," Whitfield pleaded with free Black men to enlist in the military so the Union could have "the greatest and most valiant army the world ever saw." Founding members of the Haitian Emigration Bureau, such as James Redpath and H. Ford Douglass, also severed their relationships with the movement; Douglass enlisted in the Union army, and Redpath became a military correspondent. As a result, by the end of 1862, it was clear that most activists had abandoned the Haitian emigration project and were refocusing their energy on fighting slavery in the United States.

Ironically, however, the year 1862 also signaled the dawn of new hope for the Haitian people. At long last, the United States government finally agreed to recognize Haiti's independence and extend official diplomatic relations. Once the South seceded from the Union, there was no longer any compelling reason for the US to ignore Haiti's existence. Moreover, in late 1861, President Lincoln received communication from the government's commercial agent in Port-au-Prince that the American economy would suffer if the Union continued to deny Haiti's independence. As he explained, the government's non-recognition policy was "altogether disastrous to the interests of our commerce, & almost destroys the political influence of our government & its commercial agents." As a result, in December of 1861, Lincoln concluded that they should reconsider their position. In a statement to Congress he wrote, "If any good reason exists why we should persevere longer in withholding our recognition of the independence and sovereignty of Hayti ... I am unable to discern it."

Despite his initial support for the notion of recognizing Haitian independence, Lincoln and the Union government did not take immediate action. On the contrary, the issue dragged on for nearly a year until it finally came before Congress. Senator Charles Sumner, who had criticized the government's policy toward Haiti in 1855, strongly advocated on behalf of the measure, arguing that acknowledging Haiti would be an important step in destroying the vestiges of slavery. Not surprisingly, there was significant opposition to the bill, but in June of 1862 President Lincoln finally enacted the law recognizing Haiti and appointed the first Haitian commissioner. The Liberator newspaper celebrated the decision, declaring, "It means that this Government henceforth recognizes Blacks as citizens, capable of a National life; not as chattels who have no rights which white men are bound to respect."

However the Liberator might have been a bit too hasty in declaring victory. In the United States, of course, racism and the legacy of slavery proved more difficult to destroy than Black activists and their White supporters might have hoped. Moreover, the complex relationship between African Americans, Haiti, and the United States government persisted for more than a century. Even though the Civil War brought a legal end to slavery, African Americans still had to fight throughout the twentieth century to have their humanity and citizenship officially honored. Similarly, although the US finally recognized Haitian independence, most Americans remained unwilling to fully recognize the humanity and equality of Haiti and its people. In a poignant twist, these struggles were often intertwined and persist well into the twenty-first century.

Notes
1 The author would like to thank Dr. Kevin Meehan, Director of the Haitian Studies Project at the University of Central Florida, for his extremely insightful comments. My research has benefited tremendously from his suggestions and feedback; I will be eternally grateful.
2 Haitian Emigration Society, Address of the Board of Managers, 3. Throughout this chapter, the reader will notice that "Haiti" is spelled in various ways. In the nineteenth century, Americans used numerous different spellings, resulting in the appearance of terms such as "Hayti," "Haytien," "Haitian," and even "Haitien." In order to retain historical accuracy, the original spellings in these documents remain.
4 Horton and Horton, In Hope of Liberty, 193.
5 Winch, Gentlemen of Color, 211. Ironically, Henri Christophe was not pleased with Saunders' decision to publish the Haitian Papers. Despite Saunders' overt praise for Christophe's leadership, Christophe was angered by the fact that Saunders did not gain his permission before writing the document. As a result, Christophe disapproved Saunders as his royal advisor and Saunders returned to the US. Even so, Saunders remained true to his own promise, but it was not until shortly before Christophe's death in 1820 that the two men finally healed their relationship.
6 Saunders, Address Delivered at Bristol Church, Saunders, Memoir; Horton and Horton, In Hope of Liberty, 193; Winch, Gentlemen of Color, 212.
7 Miller, Search for a Black Nationality, 75; Winch, Gentlemen of Color, 213.
8 Miller, Search for A Black Nationality, 77–8; Dixon, African America, 35; Alexander, African or American, 40–1.
9 Daily National Journal, December 25, 1824; Fehrenbacher and McAlle, Slaveholding Republic, 114.
10 Dewey, Correspondence, 18, 7; Dixon, African America, 35; Miller, Search for A Black Nationality, 77–8; Alexander, African or American, 40–1.
11 Dewey, Correspondence, 7.
12 Niles' Weekly Register, August 14, 1824; Horton and Horton, In Hope of Liberty, 193; Winch, Gentlemen of Color, 214–16; Fanning, "Roots of Early Black Nationalism," 75.
13 Haitian Emigration Society of Philadelphia, Information for the Free People of Color; 4; Winch, Gentlemen of Color, 217.
14 Dewey, Correspondence, 9, 9–10; 30; Haitian Emigration Society, Address of the Board of Managers, 5, 7; Bash, "Malatte Machaveli," 225; Miller, Search for A Black Nationality, 77; Dixon, African America, 36; Alexander, African or American, 41–3.
Miller, "Search for a Black Nationality," 78.

Daily National Intelligencer, July 24, 1824. The only hesitation among black activists in Richmond was on the issue of religion: they determined that they could not offer a full endorsement of emigration until they received assurance from Jonathan Granville that they would be allowed to worship freely.

17 Harris, "Remarks on Hayti," 11; Fanning, "Roots of Early Black Nationalism," 75.

18 National Advocate, July 28, 1824.

19 Maryland Gazette and State Register, August 26, 1824.

20 Daily National Journal, September 11, 1824. For other examples of reports about emigration, see Maryland Gazette and State Register, October 21, 1824 and January 13, 1825; The Mississippi State Gazette, February 5, 1825.

21 Miller, "Search for a Black Nationality," 80. Emphasis is theirs.

22 Dixon, African American, 34, 40; Alexander, African or American, 63-

23 Miller, "Search for a Black Nationality," 80-1; Bau, "Mulatto Machiavelli," 326-7; Alexander, African or American, 43. For more on Peter Williams, Jr.'s reverse migration efforts, see Weekly Anglo-African, January 12, 1861; Miller, "Search for a Black Nationality," 168.

24 Raleigh Register, and North Carolina State Gazette, May 27, 1825.

25 United States Gazette, April 18, 1825; Winch, Philadelphia's Black Elite, 57; Horton and Horton, In Hope of Liberty, 194.

26 Genius of Universal Emigration, August 1825; Dixon, African American, 31.

27 Freeman's Journal, October 12, 1827, July 13, 1827.

28 Ibid., July 13, 1827, October 31, 1827.


31 For more about the black leadership's rejection of emigration and colonization, see chapters 3, 4, and 6 in Alexander, African or American.

32 Colored American, March 11, 1837; March 22, 1838.

33 Fehrenbacher and McAfie, Slaveholding Republic, 112-16. For more on the United States government's early policies towards Haiti, see Logan, Diplomatic Relations, Matthewson, "Slavery and Diplomacy"; Matthewson, "George Washington's Policy".

34 Colored American, July 1, 1837, November 10, 1838; and February 2, 1839.

35 Ibid., March 18, 1837; February 2, 1839.

36 Ibid., February 2, 1839. Emphasis is theirs.

37 Fehrenbacher and McAfie, Slaveholding Republic, 117.

38 Although it was deeply contentious, the "gag rule" was one of the stipulations in the Pinckney Resolutions, which were passed in the House of Representatives in May of 1836. The gag rule explicitly stated that all petitions opposing slavery would be automatically tabled, and could not be read or discussed in Congress. In effect, the gag rule silenced all opposition to slavery in the halls of Congress.

39 Legarde, Writings of Hugh Swinton Legarde, 322, 327; Fehrenbacher and McAfie, Slaveholding Republic, 117.

40 The Liberator, January 4, 1839.

41 Smith, Lecture on the Haytiian Revolutions, 27.

42 Impartial Citizen, August 15, 1849.

43 North Star, January 5, 1849; October 5, 1849.

44 Ibid., June 13, 1850.

45 North American and United States Gazette, July 20, 1852.

46 The Liberator, August 6, 1852.

47 Frederick Douglass' Paper, March 16, 1855; November 23, 1855.

48 Minutes and Proceedings of the General Convention, 2-3; Ripley et al., Black Abolitionist Papers, 5: 302; Miller, Search for a Black Nationality, 114, 161-2; Dixon, African America, 90-4, 96. James Holly was from Washington, DC, and was descended from three generations of free people. While still a relatively young man, Holly became deeply committed to abolition and racial justice and dedicated his life to racial advancement. For more on Holly's early life, see Dixon, African America, 67-9.


50 Holt, Vindication.