**Worksheet C: Analysis of “The Shackles Broken – By The Genius of Freedom”**

Some thoughts on each assigned section.

*For all groups, keep in mind that the lithograph has been made and released at the time that what will become the Civil Rights Act of 1875, authored originally by Senator Charles Sumner, is being debated in Congress. The Act focused on elimination of barriers to equal access to public transportation, public accommodations and to prevent exclusion from jury service.*

1. Abraham Lincoln Statue with text beneath statue stating “I shall not attempt to retract or modify the Emancipation Proclamation, nor shall I return to slavery any person who is free by the terms of that Proclamation or by any act of Congress. Abraham Lincoln, From the Annual Message, December 8, 1863.”
   1. *Lincoln stands before the Capitol dome (symbol of federal U.S. government) holding arrows of democracy in his hand. His genius was to be willing to accept a war that, at its heart, was about the equality of all Americans. Rather than the compromises that had characterized the issue of slavery from the beginning, the artist has also chosen to highlight his statement that he would never* ***return*** *to slavery any person who had been freed, thus emphasizing the permanence and forward direction of treatment of former slaves. The actions of the KKK, the segregation in transportation and general businesses, the Black Codes/Jim Crow… all threatened to return freed Americans to, for all intents and purposes, slavery but by another name. At the time of the making of the lithograph, Sumner’s Civil Rights Act was being debated in Congress to eliminate some of those barriers to full civil equality.*
   2. *Lincoln paid a physical, not just mental and emotional, price for his support of equality for black Americans.*
2. Bottom left picture of black American on horseback with text “Of those who were slaves at the beginning of the rebellion full one hundred thousand are now in the U.S. services” *and* the image that spans the top of the picture of the black Americans on horseback. Note word “Army” near top right of bottom left picture.
   1. *This image reminds the viewer that black Americans were actively engaged in the battle to preserve the Union and eliminate slavery. They are not passive recipients of the largesse of white Americans, but rather have fought alongside whites to break their own shackles and earn their civil rights.*
   2. *Black Americans gave their lives in the War even though they were not granted full citizenship rights by the country. Now they are asking for recognition of citizenship not as a handout but rather as a right earned.*
3. Bottom right picture of black Americans on naval vessel with text “So far as tested, it is difficult to say they are not as good soldiers as any. A. Lincoln, Dce 1863” *and* the image that spans the top of the picture of black Americans charging in battle. Note word “Navy” near top left of bottom right picture.
   1. *See response to Group 2. Also, note that Elliott himself served in the British Navy. While not involved in the Civil War, the object of this lithograph did share in the military service heritage that is being highlighted in the images for Groups 2 and 3.*
4. Charles Sumner statue holding document entitled “Bill of Civil Rights” with text stating, “Equality of Rights is the First of Rights, Charles Sumner.”
   1. *Sumner stands before Boston’s Faneuil Hall, a symbolic meetinghouse and public space in Boston in a city that claims the nickname “Cradle of Liberty” from the Revolutionary Period (specifically from an anti-British speech given at Faneuil Hall in 1761 by James Otis). Boston was also a leading city in the abolition movement, home of The Liberator newspaper, many active abolitionists, and the 54th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry (one of the first all-black infantry regiments to fight in the Civil War). Sumner’s genius was to recognize the core equality of all Americans. He had particular pedigree in that he stood up for abolition in Congress, which earned him a brutal caning by Congressman Preston Brooks (D-SC, who served in the seat ultimately held by Elliott). Few whites could point to physical scars on their body over the issue of slavery as could Sumner as a result of this beating. Sumner was the author of what was to become the Civil Rights Act of 1875 that Elliott supported in his famous speech immortalized in this lithograph.*
   2. *Sumner paid a physical, not just mental and emotional, price for his support of equality for black Americans.*
5. Focus on text in the lithograph. Note words on document including “Liberty, Jury, Equality and Ballot.” The text arching across the top of lithograph states, “In that dire extremity the members of the race which I have the honor in part to represent – the race which pleads for justice at your hands today, forgetful of their inhuman and brutalized servitude in the South – their degradation and ostracism at the North – flew willingly and gallantly to the support of the national government. Their sufferings, assistant privations and trials in the swamps and in the rice-fields, their valor on the land and on the sea is a part of the ever glorious record which makes up the history of a nation persevered. Hon. R. B. Elliott’s speech, page 7.”
   1. *The key terms identify the tools at the hands of the former slaves to take their place as citizens including access to the judicial process (denied by Black Codes and Jim Crow) and to the political process (again threatened by Black Codes and Jim Crow) along with the core principles of Liberty and Equality.*
   2. *Elliott presages Booker T. Washington in that he reminds all that black Americans supported the common cause with whites, experiencing significant suffering, as did the white soldiers in the Civil War, in the process. He emphasizes the role of black Americans in allowing the nation to persevere.*

Each group:

1. Narrative: Identify the key visual elements/clues that help the viewer focus on the main message of the assigned portion of the lithograph. Group Five – identify the key words (bold them) on which to focus.
2. Analysis: Connecting to background knowledge, what is the key take-away message for your assigned portion of the lithograph?
3. Making Connections: Thinking about your definition of genius, do you see any elements of that trait highlighted by the artist or author in your assigned image/text? How could the image/text be used to illustrate genius? Explain.
4. What other comments or observations can you share?
5. What questions do you have about your assigned portion of the lithograph?