

ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE



**A CIVIL WAR  
CHRISTMAS**

**AN AMERICAN MUSICAL  
CELEBRATION**

A Collaboration with Staged! **S!**  
We Grow Artists.

by Paula Vogel  
original music  
by Daryl Waters  
directed  
by Paul Angelo  
music direction  
by Andrew Bray

music arranged  
by Okaidja Afroso, James Beaton, Darrell Grant,  
Brian Adrian Koch, Mark & LaRhonda Steele,  
Edna Vázquez, Holcombe Waller

**NOV 22 - DEC 23**

BONNI LACROUTE  
WILLAKINZIG ESTATE    David & Christine  
Vernier    ROBERT & MERCEDES  
EDERHOLZ FOUNDATION

**Time & Place:** Christmas – The United States of America

This play runs approximately 2 hours with one 15-minute intermission.

# Study Guide

Spoilers ahead!

Study guide prepared by Maddie Odegaard, Marketing & PR Department Intern

# Cast

---

Ayanna Berkshire <sup>^</sup>	Mrs. Keckley & Ensemble
Val Landrum <sup>^</sup>	John Wilkes Booth, Chester Saunders & Ensemble
Susannah Mars <sup>^</sup>	Mary Todd Lincoln & Ensemble
John San Nicolas <sup>^</sup>	Mary Surratt, Moses Levy & Ensemble
Vin Shambry <sup>^</sup>	Decatur Bronson, John Surratt & Ensemble
Seth Rue	Willy Mack, Louis Weichmann & Ensemble
Jimmy Garcia	Ward Hill Lamon, James Wormley & Ensemble
Amy Hakanson	Ensemble
Crystal Ann Muñoz	Rose & Ensemble
Laila Murphy	John Hay, Anna Surratt & Ensemble
Ted Rooney	Abraham Lincoln, Walt Whitman & Ensemble
Kai Tomizawa	Raz & Ensemble
Blake Stone	George Keckley & Ensemble
Miya Zolkoske	Jessa & Ensemble
Andrea Whittle	Hannah & Ensemble

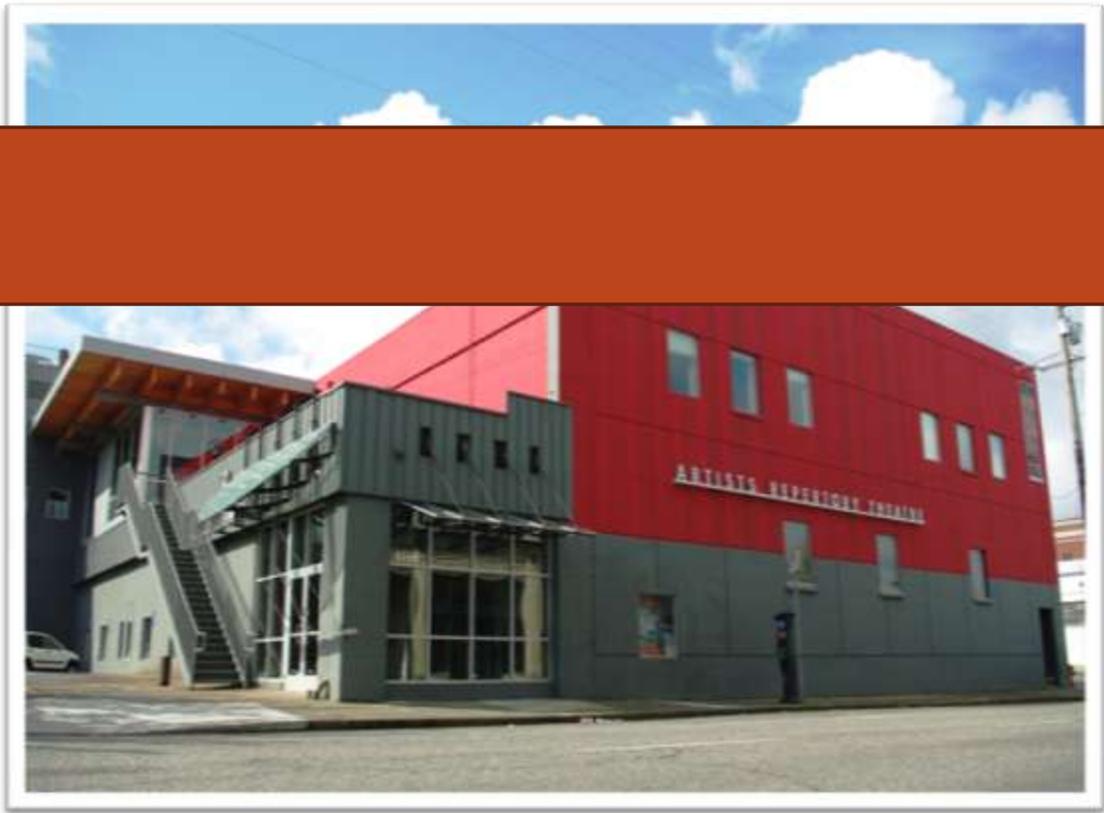
<sup>^</sup>Artists Rep Resident Artist

# Creative Team

---

Scenic Designer	Tim Stapleton
Lighting Designer	Peter West
Costume Designer	Bobby Brewer-Wallin <sup>^</sup>
Wig & Hair Designer	Lauren Noyes
Dance & Movement Choreographer	Kristen Mun
Voice & Text Director	Mary McDonald-Lewis <sup>^</sup>
Props Master	Emily Wilken
Dramaturg	Luan Schooler
Stage Manager	Jamie Lynne Simmons
Assistant Stage Managers	Karen Hill & Michelle Jazuk <sup>^</sup>
Assistant Music Director	Steven Cantor
Assistant Scenic Director	Samie Pfeifer
Production Assistants	Amanda Kishlock & Karen Hill
Dresser	Lauren Noyes
Wardrobe	Will Bailey
Costumer	Clare Hungate-Hawk

<sup>^</sup>Artists Rep Resident Artist



Portland's premiere mid-size regional theatre company is led by Artistic Director Dámaso Rodríguez and Managing Director Sarah Horton. Founded in 1982, Artists Repertory Theatre is the longest-running professional theatre company in Portland.

Artists Rep's mission is to engage diverse audiences in fresh, thought-provoking and intimate theatre. We are committed to world-class acting, directing, design and stagecraft that support new playwriting and aspire to embody great literature, moving audiences to truly feel — to experience — storytelling in a way that only the best live theatre can.



## { Show Description }

Set during a time when the country is divided by conflicting ideologies and convictions following a contentious presidential election, Vogel's sweeping, music-rich story plays out one frigid Christmas Eve on the banks of the Potomac River. Amid the hubbub of holiday preparations, an array of abolitionists and assassins, slaves and freemen, Union and Confederate soldiers, along with President Lincoln and Mary Todd, all pursue their paths to liberation. Propelled by traditional American songs, marches and spirituals — all revitalized for this production by luminary Portland musicians — A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS is a lively reminder for people of all beliefs about humanity's potential for compassion, reconciliation and hope.

---

---

*Hot off the press!*

---

*"To create a holiday entertainment grounded in historical fact, Ms. Vogel weaves a complex tapestry of plotlines that include numerous celebrated figures along with several fictional or composite characters." - The New York Times*

*"Move over Scrooge and make room for Abraham Lincoln." – Variety*

*"An ambitious, sweeping work." – Variety*

*"This is classy theater, told with elegance; it embraces our differences, celebrates this country's storied past, and weaves a holiday musical celebration that simply should not be missed." - Stark*

Insider

# About the Playwright

Paula Vogel has written HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE (Pulitzer Prize, New York Drama Critics Award, Obie Award, Lucille Lortel, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle and many more.) Other plays include A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS, THE LONG CHRISTMAS RIDE HOME, THE MINEOLA TWINS, HOT 'N' THROBBIN, THE BALTIMORE WALTZ, DESDEMONA, AND BABY MAKES SEVEN, and THE OLDEST PROFESSION.



Her plays have been produced by Second Stage, New York Theatre Workshop, the Vineyard Theatre, Roundabout, and Circle Repertory Company. Her plays have been produced regionally all over the country at the Center Stage, Intiman, Trinity Repertory, Woolly Mammoth, Huntington Theatre, Magic Theatre, The Goodman Theatre, American Repertory Theatre, Dallas Theatre Berkeley Repertory, and Alley Theatres to name a few. Harrogate Theatre and the Donmar Theatre have produced her work in England

Her plays have been produced in Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand as well as translated and produced in Italy, Germany, Taiwan, South Africa, Australia, Romania, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Poland Slovenia, Canada, Portugal, France, Greece, Japanese, Norway, Finland, Iceland, Peru, Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Brazil and other countries.

John Simon once remarked that Paula Vogel had more awards than a “black sofa collects lint.” Some of these include Induction into the Theatre Hall of Fame, Thornton Wilder Award, Lifetime Achievement from the Dramatists Guild, the William Inge Award, the Elliott Norton Award, two Obies, a Susan Smith Blackburn Award, the PEN/Laura Pels Award, a TCG residency award, a Guggenheim, a Pew Charitable Trust Award, and fellowships and residencies at Sundance Theatre Lab, Hedgebrook, The Rockefeller Center’s Bellagio Center, Yaddo, MacDowell, and the Bunting.

But she is particularly proud of her Thirtini Award from 13P, and honored by three Awards in her name: the Paula Vogel Award for playwrights given by The Vineyard Theatre, the Paula Vogel Award from the American College Theatre Festival, and the Paula Vogel mentorship program, curated by Quiara Hudes and Young Playwrights of Philadelphia.



# Note from Playwright Paula Vogel

I have always wanted to see an American Christmas Carol. It's bothered me that each season we watch Victorian London history rather than our own. I feel that there is a communal healing and outreach we need to do with our own history; although the poverty that underlies Dickens is something that has also been a burden (and continues to be a moral burden) here – to me our refusal to witness the sin of slavery is our Marley's ghost.

So: of course the piece functions as Dickensian in structure (although more like Nicholas Nickleby in structure than Christmas Carol; the multi-plotting of A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS is very much in line with melodrama and 19th Century structure.)

I wanted to focus on the citizens of Washington DC, the African American community, the merchants and seamstresses, and of course, the remarkable Elizabeth Keckley. The Lincolns, I thought, might be interesting as secondary characters to Bronson. And Decatur Bronson is a composite character of two merit of honor soldiers in the Civil War. (RAGTIME, too, by Doctorow was very much a model; and believe it or not, there are as many characters on the cutting room floor as in the play now)

I loved growing up in DC, and I think of the city as the protagonist of the play. I loved thinking that Walt Whitman would watch Lincoln ride to the Summer Cottage, that actors and spies passed each other by, and that the city itself that I knew was formed by an enormous tide of refugees fleeing slavery, so much so that there was no room at the inn in that bitter winter of 1864.

As for the piece itself, it came in a flash: the Christmas carols and the Civil War ballads, all following a single star. I knew all the ballads and spirituals well as a child, and our outings in my childhood consisted of packing a picnic basket and heading out to another battlefield in Maryland or Virginia, or the consecrated ground of Gettysburg. (And I am the child of a catholic from New Orleans and a Jewish father from New York, so the War Between the States has always seemed personal to me).

I have been heavy of heart as I wrote it in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and the population of New Orleans, abandoned by our government and roofless; I have thought that we continue to fight the civil war in our politics. But on this particular Christmas Eve, the divide has become much more dangerous that it was in 2006.

I hope we can wrest some peace, some wish for community, this Christmas. And as Americans I hope we celebrate what we share in common.

Peace,

Paula



# About the Director

Paul Angelo makes his Artists Rep debut as a director with *A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS*. As an actor, he has been seen here previously in *ITHAKA* by Andrea Stolowitz. He serves as the associate artistic director of Staged! musical theatre and as a director in residence with defunkt theatre.



A resident of Portland since 2005, he has directed five musicals for Staged!. *LES MISERABLES*, which received two Portland Area Musical Theatre Awards (PAMTA) including Outstanding Ensemble; *BIG RIVER*, also awarded two PAMTAs; the Portland Premiere of Jason Robert Brown's '13,' which earned four PAMTA nominations including Outstanding Direction. Also, Jason Robert Brown's *PARADE*, nominated for five PAMTAs, including Outstanding Direction and awarded Outstanding Ensemble, and *DOGFIGHT* by Pasek and Paul, received four PAMTA nominations including Outstanding Direction.

Other Portland directing credits include *THE HOMECOMING* by Harold Pinter, *LET A HUNDRED FLOWERS BLOOM* by David Zellnik, *BLASTED* by Sarah Kane (defunkt theatre), *HAMLET* by William Shakespeare, *EQUIVOCATION* by Bill Cain and *COYOTE ON FENCE* by Bruce Graham (Post5 Theatre), *ROMEO AND JULIET* (Portland Actors Conservatory) and *RUTHLESS! THE MUSICAL* (Stumptown Stages). Paul will direct *THAT PRETTY, PRETTY OR THE RAPE PLAY* by Sheila Callaghan for defunkt theatre in Spring 2017. Paul is a proud member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC). Training: BFA: Musical Theatre, SUNY Fredonia. MFA: performance, Alabama Shakespeare Festival.

# The people inspiring the show

The play, although inspired by real people and real events in history, is in a world of its own. Some characters were created for the sake of the play, but others were entirely real. That's why this section of the study guide will give you background on the real life people that made this show possible.



**William Mack Lee (1835-1932):** Born into slavery, William was owned by Robert E. Lee. He is said to have greatly admired his master. When the war broke out, he served as his master's servant and cook. After the war, he became an ordained minister. He was often praised for his work with the Confederates.



**Robert E. Lee (1807-1870):** Being born the son of a Revolutionary War officer, he is best known for leading the Confederates in the Civil War. After the war, he did lose some of his rights, but he was not formally punished. He went on to become president of a small college.



**Ely Samuel Parker (1828-1895):** Ely was a Seneca Indian who became a Union lieutenant colonel alongside Ulysses S. Grant. After the war, he continued to work closely with Grant. When Grant became president, Ely became the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. After leaving the political realm, he invested in the stock market, but eventually lost his fortune.



**Ulysses S. Grant (1822-1885):** Grant became the 18<sup>th</sup> president of the United States, after leading the Union in the Civil War. He served two terms and attempted a third, but he was unsuccessful. After his presidency, he went on a world tour with his family. He spent most of his savings, so after that, he embarked on several business ventures.



**Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865):** Commonly known as being the 16<sup>th</sup> president of the United States, after previously being a lawyer in Illinois. Five days after the Confederates surrendered, he was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth while attending a play.



**Mary Todd Lincoln (1818-1882):** Born into a large, wealthy family, Mary went on to withstand many challenges in life. She had to grieve for her three sons that did not reach adulthood, as well as witness her husband's assassination. She was also involuntarily institutionalized 10 years later because of a psychiatric disease.



**John Nicolay (1832-1901):** German-born Nicolay eventually ended up in Illinois, where he served as an editor and eventually held political power. Lincoln appointed him to be his private secretary and he later became the US consulate in Paris. He went on to hold other various political positions and worked with John Hay to write an official biography on Lincoln.



**John Hay (1838-1905):** Hay was a statesman that eventually became the president's private secretary alongside Nicolay. His highest position was the secretary of state under William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt. Aside from his political side, he was also a poet and author.



**Elizabeth Hobbs Keckley (1818-1907):** Lizzie was born into slavery, but she became a successful seamstress, civil activist and author. She moved to Washington D.C. in 1860 when she bought her and her son's freedom. Her clients were generally those of political power, including Mary Todd Lincoln.



**James Wormley (1819-1884):** Although not a shopkeeper, Wormley owned and operated a hotel in Washington D.C. He was born a free black citizen. He also assisted in setting up the first public elementary school for black children.



**Ward Hill Lamon (1828-1893):** Lamon was a close friend of Lincoln and also served as his body guard. He was in Richmond when Lincoln was assassinated, but is known to have advised him not to go out that night and to especially avoid the theater. He went on to write books about Lincoln.



**Mary Surratt (c. 1820-1865):** Surratt owned a boarding house and her family were confederate sympathizers. Many people who were involved in the assassination of the president stayed at her boarding house, including her son. She was involved herself, although the extent is relatively unknown. She was arrested for her actions and was eventually executed.



**John Wilkes Booth (1838-1865):** Booth was an American stage actor and came from a prominent family of actors. Obviously he is best known for being the assassin of Lincoln. He was provoked by the surrendering of the Confederates. He escaped the scene, but was found several days later and was shot by a Union soldier.



**John Surratt, Jr. (1844-1916):** John also plotted to kill Lincoln, but was not directly involved with Booth's actions. He successfully fled the country after assassination occurred. He eventually landed in Europe, where he was in the military. He was exposed when someone recognized him, but he then escaped. He was returned to the United States to go on trial, but was found to be not guilty.



**Louis J. Weichmann (1842-1902):** Weichmann also plotted to kill Lincoln, but was not found to be directly involved. He later opened a business school, but was often criticized for his involvement in the assassination.



**Decatur Bronson:** This character is not based off a single person, but rather a compilation of two historical former slaves. James Bronson and Decatur Dorsey were both Union Army soldiers and received the Medal of Honor, which is the highest honor.



**Lewis Thornton Powell (1844-1865):** Better known by the name of Payne, he also was involved in the plot to kill Lincoln. He went on to injure Seward and was eventually found and executed. Before that, he was a Confederate soldier and was wounded at Gettysburg.



**William Tecumseh Sherman (1820-1891):** Sherman was a general in the Union Army. He was also a soldier, businessman, educator, and author. He went on to serve as Commanding General of the Army during Grant's presidency.



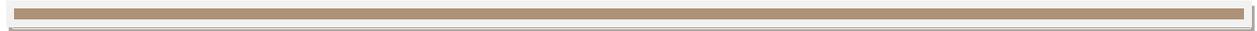
**Edwin McMasters Stanton (1814-1869):** Sherman was a lawyer and politician. During the Civil War, he was the Secretary of War. He organized the search for John Wilkes Booth after he assassinated Lincoln.



**Walt Whitman (1819-1892):** Walt was a highly regarded American poet, essayist and journalist. During the Civil War, he visited his wounded brother and was moved to volunteer as a nurse and meet with wounded Union soldiers.

**Armistead Burwell:** Burwell was a minister, teacher, and slave-owner. He is the possible father to Elizabeth Keckley who wrote that Burwell was abusive.

**Philip Reid (c. 1820-1892):** Reid was born into slavery and grew to be a craftsman and artisan who played a leading role in casting the Statue of Freedom sculpture atop the US Capitol Building in DC.



# History of Christmas in America

## Fast facts!

- ❖ Christmas was not widely celebrated in American until the middle of the 19th century.
- ❖ Christmas was increasingly celebrated to create a feeling of unity in the midst of a grueling war.
- ❖ Christmas came after other national uniting holidays, such as 4<sup>th</sup> of July, but proved to be the most effective in encouraging a sense of community.
- ❖ Christmas trees originated as a German custom, but Americans began adopting the custom around 1850.
- ❖ Many rejected the holiday, as it was not mentioned in the Bible.
- ❖ Christmas was not officially a national holiday until 1870, 5 years after A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS takes place!
- ❖ Lincoln, Mary, and Tad would often bring gifts to soldiers in a sort of Christmas-like fashion.
- ❖ In 1863, Lincoln commissioned his former campaign artist to illustrate Santa Claus providing gifts to the soldiers. This image was potentially the first time Santa was drawn as a plump fellow, rather than the svelte Father Christmas that was usually utilized.



Information courtesy of [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/max-benavidez/lincolns-christmas-messag\\_b\\_798719.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/max-benavidez/lincolns-christmas-messag_b_798719.html),  
<http://www.historytoday.com/penne-restad/christmas-19th-century-america> &  
[http://65.media.tumblr.com/tumblr\\_lwl809GBRg1qbyk5qo1\\_500.jpg](http://65.media.tumblr.com/tumblr_lwl809GBRg1qbyk5qo1_500.jpg)

The music of Artists Rep's production of A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS is built on Daryl Waters' original score of the play. Local musicians were commissioned to make new arrangements of many of the songs, and the result is a new score that merges their work with Daryl Waters'.

SONG TITLE	COMPOSER/LYRICIST	ARRANGER
All Quiet Along the Potomac	J.H. Hewitt / Lamar Fontaine	Daryl Waters
Silent Night	Franz Xaver Gruber / Joseph Mohr	Daryl Waters
I Heard the Bells On Christmas Day	John Baptiste Calkin / Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	James Beaton
Take No Prisoners	Daryl Waters	Darrell Grant
Follow the Drinking Gourd	Lee Hays	Darrell Grant
Rise Up Shepherd and Follow	Traditional Spiritual	Mark & LaRhonda Steele
I'm A-Gone Away to Shiloh	Secessionist Folksong	Brian Adrian Koch
Marching Through Georgia	Henry Clay Work	Brian Adrian Koch
God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen	Traditional	James Beaton
Sew the Collar, Finish the Hem	Daryl Waters	Holcombe Waller
What Child Is This?	William Chatterton Dix	Holcombe Waller
Maryland, my Maryland	James Ryder Randall	Daryl Waters
Questo é Amore		Edna Vázquez
The Holly & The Ivy	Traditional	Edna Vázquez
O Tannenbaum/O Christmas Tree	Ernst Anschütz	Daryl Waters
Ding Dong Merrily on High	George Ratcliffe Woodward	Daryl Waters
We'll Build Us a Temple of Freedom (Lincoln & Liberty)	Jesse Hutchinson	Holcombe Waller
The Yellow Rose of Texas	Traditional	Edna Vázquez
Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming/ Yellow Rose of Texas	Michael Praetorius / Traditional	Holcombe Waller
Balm in Gilead	Traditional Spiritual	Mark & LaRhonda Steele
Mourner's Kaddish	Traditional	Daryl Waters
An African Village		Okaidja Afroso
Children Go Where I Send Thee	Traditional Spiritual	Okaidja Afroso
Ain't That A-Rockin' All Night	Traditional Spiritual	Darrell Grant

## Discussion Questions

What does “for the hope of peace is sweeter than peace itself” mean to you? Do you agree this that statement?

Discuss symbolism within the piece. For example, what does the Christmas Tree represent?

Does learning about the historical figures in more definite terms through the study guide influence your perceptions of the characters in the CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS?

Can you think of any other historical figure from a similar era that would have fit nicely into the context of the story?

How does your family celebrate the holiday season? Can you relate to any of the families or situations in this piece?



# Organizations & Resources

- **Show Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) – Portland**  
<http://surjpdx.org/>
- **Office of Equity and Human Rights, City of Portland**  
**Black Male Achievement program**  
<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/oehr/66514?>
- **Urban League of Portland**  
<https://ulpdx.org/>
- **Immigrant & Refugee Community (IRCO)**  
<https://www.irc.org/>
- **NAACP - Portland**  
<http://www.portlandnaacp1120.org/>
- **Resolutions Northwest**  
<https://resolutionsnorthwest.org/>
- **Black Lives Matter – Portland**  
<http://blmpdx.tumblr.com/>
- **Race Talks – Portland**  
<http://racetalkspdx.com/>
- **Latino Network**  
<https://www.latnet.org/>
- **Basic Rights Oregon**  
<http://www.basicrights.org/>

# Recommended Reading

## **Albina Community Plan: The History of Portland's African American Community 1805-1993**

[https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1794/5816/Portland\\_Albina\\_African\\_American\\_History.pdf?sequence=1](https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1794/5816/Portland_Albina_African_American_History.pdf?sequence=1)

## **150 Years After Fort Sumpter: Why We're Still Fighting the Civil War**

By David Von Drehle, Time Magazine, April 7, 2011

<http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2063869,00.html>

## **Did the Civil War Ever End?**

By Ted Widmer, New York Times, June 4, 2015

<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/06/04/did-the-american-civil-war-ever-end/>

## **Looking Back In Order to Move Forward An Often Untold History Affecting Oregon's Past, Present and Future Timeline of Oregon and U.S. Racial, Immigration and Education History**

Compiled by Elaine Rector as part of Coaching for Educational Equity

<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/412697>

## **A Letter to My Son**

Adapted from Between The World And Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates

By Ta-Nehisi Coates, Atlantic Magazine, July 4, 2015

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/07/tanehisi-coates-between-the-world-and-me/397619/>

## **What Does It Mean to Be White? Developing White Racial Literacy**

By Robin DiAngelo PhD, Seattle Times, August 11, 2014

<http://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/guest-what-does-it-mean-to-be-white/>

## **What Whiteness Means in the Trump Era**

By Nell Irvin Painter, New York Times, November 12, 2016

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/13/opinion/what-whiteness-means-in-the-trump-era.html>