



FREEDMEN REPARATIONS FUND TRUST

Established for Reparative Justice, Economic Redress, and Land Sovereignty

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THE COPPER UNDERTONE OBSERVATION

Institutional Research Dossier on U.S. Freedmen, Early American Color Language, and AI-Assisted Colorimetry

Field	Value
Report Type	Exploratory institutional research dossier
Issued By	Freedmen Reparations Fund Trust
Research Conducted By	Arthur Watkins Jr.
Date	August 29, 2026
Public Contact	https://www.freedmennation.org/contact-us

INSTITUTIONAL STATUS STATEMENT

Rule	Statement
Verification Rule	The Copper Undertone Observation is not part of Freedmen Status Verification. FRFT verification remains documentary, genealogy-based, and records-led.
Research Role	The observation is presented as a colorimetric, cultural, and archival research question requiring academic review and controlled testing.
Use Limitation	This dossier must not be used to accept, reject, rank, label, or exclude any person by appearance.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Status Snapshot	AI Role
Institutional Position: Research use only - not a legal, medical, tribal, racial, citizenship, or FRFT status-verification determination.	Pattern discovery and comparison only - not authority.
Evidence Standard	Academic Invitation
Calibrated colorimetry + genealogy + archival review.	Designed for universities, color science, history, genealogy, dermatology, computer vision, and cosmetic research.

The Freedmen Reparations Fund Trust (FRFT) has conducted an exploratory AI-assisted visual review known internally as the Copper Undertone Observation. The observation began as a pattern-noticing project: repeated image comparisons suggested that some documented U.S. Freedmen families and communities present recurring warm red-brown or copper-like skin reflectance under daylight, studio light, and family-photo conditions.

FRFT now frames this as a research hypothesis that deserves university-level review across color science, history, genealogy, archival studies, dermatology, computer vision, consumer-product research, and research ethics. The hypothesis is not a legal, medical, racial, tribal, citizenship, or status-verification conclusion.

The historical anchor for the inquiry is early American language. Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary recorded early usage of American in relation to aboriginal or copper-colored people encountered by Europeans, and defined copper as a pale red color tinged with yellow. Those definitions do not prove modern ancestry; they establish that copper-colored was a recognized early American descriptor.

The research question is narrow and testable: can a recurring copper-like colorimetric pattern in documented U.S. Freedmen families be measured, replicated, and historically contextualized under controlled conditions?

What This Dossier Does	What This Dossier Does Not Do
Invites controlled colorimetry and historical review.	It does not verify legal status, race, tribe, ancestry, or citizenship from appearance.
Separates image observation from records-based verification.	It does not replace genealogy, primary records, or family reconstruction.
Documents a preliminary method and research pathway.	It does not rank people by skin tone or create eligibility criteria.

Working Undertone Swatch Language

Illustrative swatches for research notation only. Actual testing requires calibrated measurement.

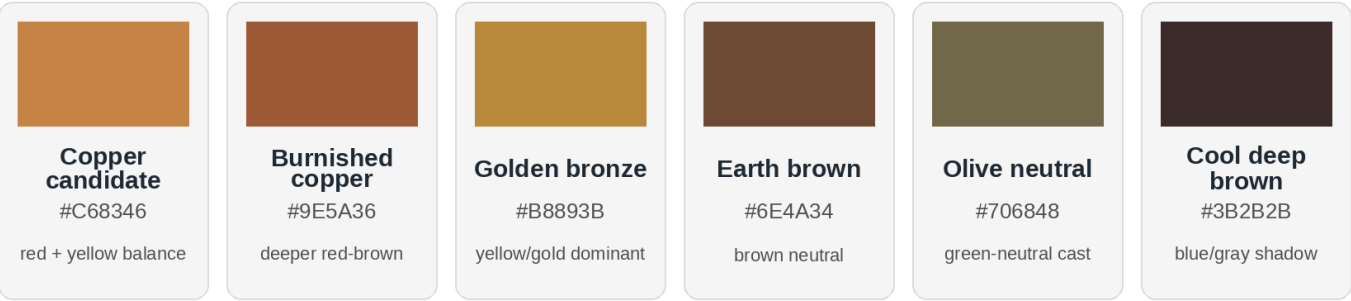


Figure 1. Working color families used to explain image-color behavior. These are visual research categories, not identity labels.

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1. PURPOSE AND NON-VERIFICATION RULE

The purpose of the Copper Undertone Observation is to document a possible visual-color pattern observed across some U.S. Freedmen Successors and to invite rigorous study. It is not designed to replace established genealogical verification. It proposes that skin colorimetry, historic color language, and archival continuity may be studied together as part of a larger inquiry into U.S. Freedmen identity and early American classification.

FRFT uses the term Copper Undertone as a working research label for a warm red-brown/copper-like reflectance that appears underneath different depths of brown skin. This is not the same as saying that all people with warm skin tones are U.S. Freedmen, and it is not the same as saying that all U.S. Freedmen must show this tone.

Permitted Research Use	Prohibited Use
Generate a hypothesis for university testing.	Approve, deny, or rank FRFT Status Verification.
Describe color behavior under controlled lighting.	Determine ancestry, tribe, race, nationality, or citizenship from appearance.
Develop beauty-supply and digital-imaging research questions.	Make employment, school, benefits, health, or legal decisions.
Connect visual observations back to records for further study.	Replace primary records, genealogy, DNA, or archival analysis.

FRFT's research goal is documentation, cultural analysis, and a university-ready invitation - not exclusion.

2. HISTORICAL LANGUAGE AND EARLY AMERICAN RECORDS

FRFT grounds this research in early American language and the record problem. Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary is significant because it records how early American English used color and national terms. Webster defined American as a native of America and noted that the word was originally applied to aboriginal or copper-colored people encountered here by Europeans. In the same dictionary, copper was described as a pale red color tinged with yellow.

This does not prove any modern person's ancestry. It establishes that copper-colored was a recognized descriptor in early American vocabulary and gives a historical reason to study copper color language carefully.

The early American record is not simple. Colonial law and practice involved Europeans, Native Americans, Africans, free people of color, mixed-status families, and enslaved people. Records from New England, the Caribbean, the South, and Spanish borderlands show that Native captivity, African enslavement, and mixed classifications were historically entangled. That is exactly why the archive must govern and why visual observation cannot stand alone.

Historical Anchor	Research Significance
Webster's 1828 language	Shows copper-colored as an early American descriptor but does not establish modern ancestry.
Early 1600s presence in colonial records	Places African, Indigenous, European, enslaved, free, and mixed-status peoples into a complex American record.
U.S. Freedmen documentation	Requires family reconstruction and primary records; visual observations are secondary research leads.

3. WHY SKIN MATTERS AND WHY IT IS NOT ENOUGH

Skin matters because it is the body's largest organ and the visible biological surface on which color, environment, family inheritance, health, cosmetics, lighting, and perception meet. That visibility has always made skin politically charged and scientifically easy to misuse.

FRFT's phrase that 'the evidence is in our skin' is therefore presented as a cultural research thesis, not a legal conclusion. It means visible clues may point researchers back to records, families, and early American descriptors. It does not mean appearance alone proves Indigenous status, Freedmen status, tribal status, race, citizenship, or legal rights.

The correct institutional approach is twofold: acknowledge that skin color can be measured objectively, and refuse to let visual appearance replace consent, documentation, standardized method, and ethics review.

Evidence Hierarchy for FRFT Research Integrity

The Copper Undertone Observation is research context only; it is not the basis of status verification.

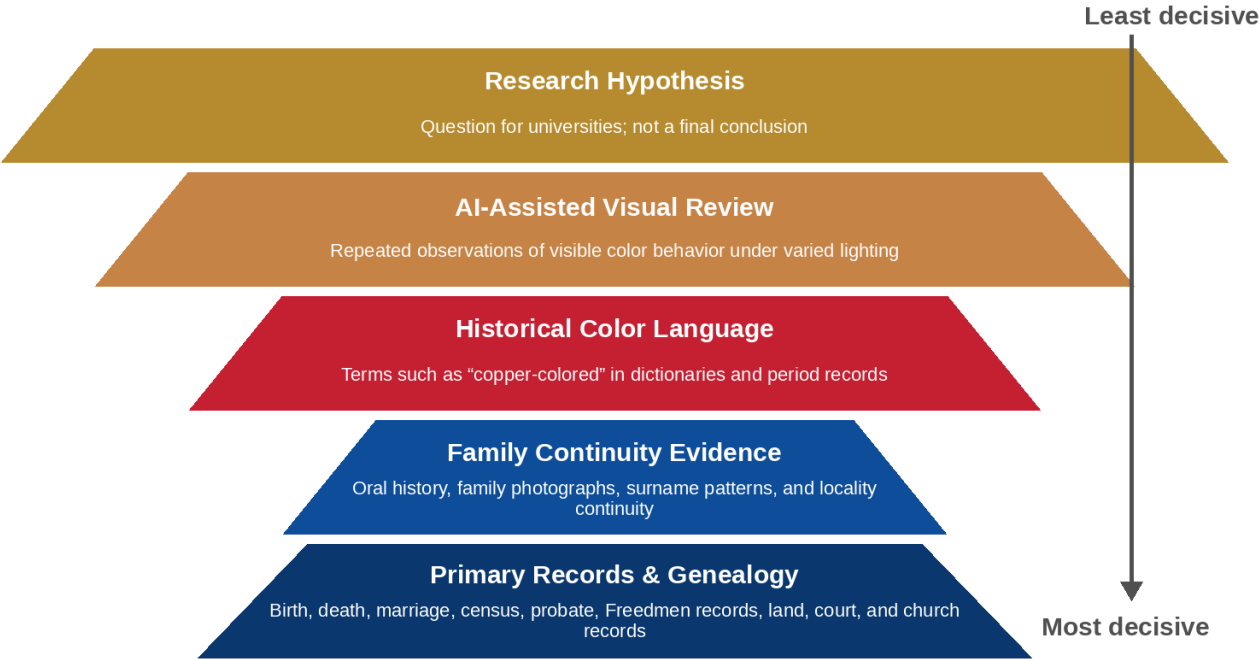


Figure 2. Evidence hierarchy. Records and consented, calibrated measurement outrank casual image observation.

4. AI-ASSISTED DISCOVERY AND METHOD LIMITS

FRFT used AI as a repeated visual-assistance tool to compare photographs, lighting conditions, and apparent color warmth. The purpose was not to ask AI to determine ancestry. The purpose was to ask whether a recurring color phenomenon kept appearing when images were compared against an internal reference sample.

The AI-assisted process produced two findings. First, a recurring warm red-brown/copper-like visual pattern appeared in selected U.S. Freedmen-oriented examples. Second, the same person could produce different preliminary readings depending on lighting, makeup, background, hair styling, camera processing, image compression, and white balance. This second finding is just as important as the first: it proves the need for calibrated methodology.

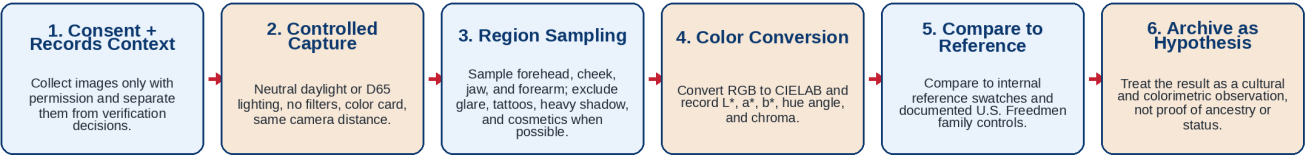
False Positive / False Negative Risk	Control Required
Yellow indoor light can make skin appear warmer.	Use neutral daylight or D65-equivalent lighting.
Blue/cool shade can flatten red tones.	Use color card and white-balance correction.
Makeup and foundation can add red or yellow.	Capture no-makeup or documented-makeup controls.
Social-media compression alters color.	Use RAW or high-quality original images.
Colored clothing or backgrounds can reflect onto skin.	Use neutral clothing/background for protocol images.

5. PROPOSED SCIENTIFIC METHOD AND PHOTO PROTOCOL

The proposed FRFT method moves from casual observation to color science. Human skin color can be measured objectively using systems such as CIELAB, where L* measures lightness, a* measures red-green, and b* measures yellow-blue. A true study would determine whether a copper candidate zone is measurable after calibration.

Proposed Copper Undertone Observation Workflow

Designed as color research only; documentary genealogy remains the status standard.



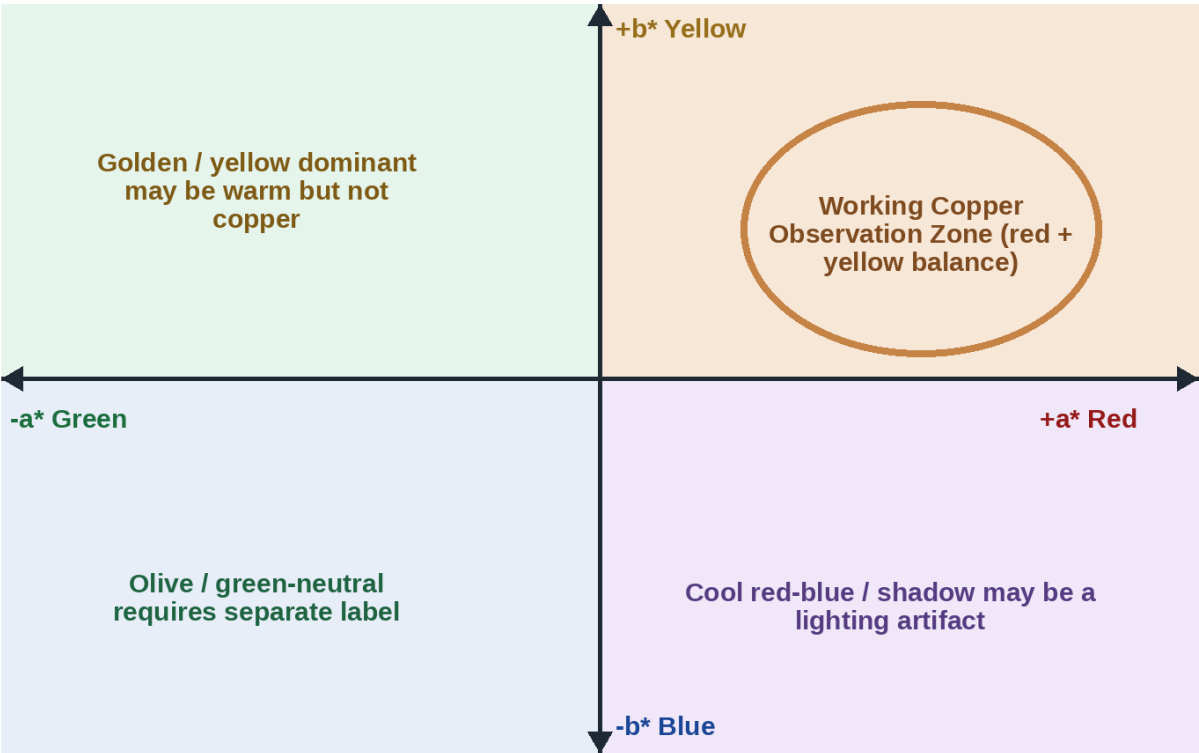
Integrity rule: a visual color observation may generate a research lead, but it cannot verify, deny, rank, or replace the documentary proof required for Verified Freedmen status.

Figure 3. Proposed controlled research sequence from consent to calibrated colorimetry.

Protocol principle: the image itself is never the conclusion. Every color observation must be tied to consent, calibration, repeat sampling, and a separate documentary record.

Colorimetric Model: Red/Green vs. Yellow/Blue

CIELAB-style working diagram. Copper candidate = positive red (a*) and positive yellow (b*) after calibration.



Note: This diagram is for image-color research. It does not determine ancestry, status, citizenship, or legal identity.

Figure 4. Conceptual CIELAB model. The working copper question must be converted into measurable L^* , a^* , b^* , chroma, and hue-angle values.

Protocol Field	Required Standard	Reason
Consent	Written consent for research use.	Protects privacy and prevents misuse.
Lighting	Neutral daylight or D65-equivalent white light.	Reduces yellow/blue cast.
Calibration	ColorChecker or calibrated gray card.	Allows white-balance correction.
Image Format	RAW preferred; high-quality JPEG second.	Preserves color data.
Sampling Areas	Forehead, cheek, jawline, forearm; avoid glare.	Reduces local distortion.
Replicates	At least 3 lighting conditions and 3 body regions.	Tests stability of reading.
Output	Median RGB, HSV, $L^*a^*b^*$, hue angle, chroma.	Creates auditable record.

6. COMPLETE PRELIMINARY TEST RESULTS - AGGREGATED FINDINGS

The complete preliminary result is reported by category rather than by individual. Many images reviewed during discovery were social-media screenshots, public figures, public events, or informal examples. FRFT does not publish a person's identity as a status conclusion based on a photograph.

The strongest result is methodological: the Copper Undertone Observation became visible enough to justify a formal study, but inconsistent enough to require calibrated measurement. The current outcome is a university-ready pilot hypothesis, not a finished scientific conclusion.

Preliminary AI-Assisted Observation Summary

Results are aggregated by category. No person's status is verified or denied by this observation.

Category	Observation	Working Result
 U.S. Freedmen reference sample	Recurring red-copper/burnished warmth in natural light; used as internal reference baseline.	Reference Positive
 U.S. family reunion / control groups	Frequent continuity of warm red-brown/copper reflectance across age groups; requires formal calibration.	Pattern Noted
 Individual U.S. portraits	Mixed: lighting, makeup, camera processing, and indoor shadows changed readings; the same person can appear different.	Calibration Needed
 Continental African comparison sets	Observed golden, olive, earthy, tawny, or deep neutral patterns in many samples; generally not the same as the reference baseline.	Distinct Comparison
 Caribbean / Latin America comparison sets	Some images show copper-like warmth, but legal and genealogical jurisdiction is not U.S. Freedmen status.	Separate Category
 Historical American / Aboriginal language	Webster-era "copper-colored" language supports the existence of an early American color descriptor, not a modern visual status test.	Lexical Evidence

Interpretive caution: this matrix records a research observation. It is not a genetic, medical, legal, or genealogical determination.

Figure 5. Aggregated discovery-result categories used during the AI-assisted pilot review.

Interpretive note: 'Reference-positive' means visually aligned with the internal FRFT reference sample during pilot review. It does not mean legal status, ancestry, citizenship, or tribal identity is verified by appearance.

Preliminary Category	Visual Pattern Observed	Institutional Interpretation
Internal U.S. Freedmen reference sample	Repeated warm red-brown/copper-like reflectance in natural light.	Reference-positive for pilot design; not a universal Freedmen definition.
U.S. family/community examples	Some multi-generation groups showed repeated warm copper-like reflectance.	Potential research cohort requiring consent and documentation.
Continental African comparison examples	Many examples appeared golden, olive, tawny, cool, or deep neutral under available photos.	Comparison pool only; no ancestry conclusion from appearance.
Caribbean/Latin American examples	Some images showed copper-like warmth, others did not.	Not U.S. Freedmen status under FRFT; useful for separating jurisdiction from color observation.
Known African-parent example	A copper-like visual read appeared possible under one lighting condition but did not establish Freedmen status.	Confirms that appearance alone is not enough.
Low-light / makeup / edited images	Results changed by lighting, cosmetics, filters, and compression.	Reason to require calibrated protocols.

7. REFERENCE SAMPLE, BEAUTY SUPPLY, AND COLOR-MATCHING IMPLICATIONS

FRFT's internal reference sample is a U.S. Freedmen community-style image set that repeatedly displayed warm brown skin with reddish-copper reflectance under natural light. This sample is treated as a visual baseline for research design, not a universal definition of Freedmen appearance.

The reference sample matters because it helps define what is being observed: not simply dark skin, not simply warm skin, and not merely a tan, but a possible red-yellow/copper-like reflectance. It also exposes how non-standard images can fail: the same person may appear different in dark rooms, under green/yellow lighting, or after heavy color grading.

The beauty-supply industry already recognizes that shade depth and undertone are different. Two people can have similar skin depth while needing different undertone balances: red, olive, golden, neutral, or copper. FRFT's community observation is that some U.S. Freedmen consumers experience mismatch when products match depth but miss the red-copper balance underneath.

This creates a practical university-industry research pathway. A controlled study could compare foundation undertone labels with measured CIELAB values from consented participants and test whether a copper-aware undertone family is under-represented in product lines.

Research Area	Potential Study
Cosmetics	Does current foundation labeling undercount copper-balanced brown undertones?
Photography	How do camera profiles and white balance flatten or exaggerate copper-red reflectance?
Computer Vision	Can AI measure color without inferring identity or ancestry?
Consumer Protection	Can more accurate undertone mapping reduce product mismatch for brown-skinned consumers?

8. AMERICAN ABORIGINE THESIS - SCHOLARLY FRAMING

FRFT's American Aborigine thesis should be presented as an interdisciplinary research question, not as a settled scientific conclusion. The thesis arises from three observed facts: early American language used copper-colored descriptors; U.S. Freedmen families are documented through a complex colonial and post-emancipation record; and some U.S. Freedmen-oriented photographs appear to show recurring copper-like color behavior.

The strongest version of the thesis does not overclaim. It asks whether documented U.S. Freedmen families show a repeatable colorimetric cluster distinct from selected comparison groups, and whether the archival records of those families show early American, Native, free colored, enslaved, or mixed-status classifications.

The phrase 'the evidence is in our skin' should be understood as a call to investigate. It is not a substitute for documents. It points universities toward a study of skin colorimetry, early American classification, and genealogical records.

9. CROSS-POPULATION AFRICA COMPARISON - FRFT PILOT OBSERVATION

During the AI-assisted discovery phase, FRFT deliberately broadened the visual comparison beyond U.S. Freedmen-oriented material. The exploratory review included photographs representing populations from multiple countries and regions in Africa. FRFT's purpose was to challenge the working Copper Undertone hypothesis by asking whether the same recurring copper-like visual pattern would also appear across the African comparison material.

Within the non-standardized photographs reviewed during this pilot, FRFT recorded a wide range of visible color behavior, including golden, olive, neutral, tawny, reddish-brown, and deep-brown presentations. At the population-comparison level, FRFT did not observe the same recurring copper-like pattern that prompted the hypothesis within its U.S. reference material. This statement reports what FRFT observed in its exploratory image set; it is not a scientific finding that copper coloration is absent from African populations.

The Africa comparison has important limitations. The images were not randomly sampled, participants were not recruited under a research protocol, illumination and cameras were not standardized, and no spectrophotometer or calibrated colorimeter was used. Published pigmentation research also documents substantial variation within African populations. Accordingly, the correct next step is a prospective, consented, calibrated study rather than a universal claim from photographs.

Comparison Track	FRFT Pilot Observation	Research Interpretation
U.S. Freedmen-oriented reference material	Recurring warm red-brown/copper-like reflectance was repeatedly noted in selected material.	Working reference-positive observation requiring calibrated replication.
Multiple African country/region comparison material	FRFT did not observe the same recurring population-level pattern in the exploratory image set.	Pilot contrast only; does not establish biological absence or ancestry.
Known African-parent / individual examples	Some photographs could appear copper-like under particular lighting.	Demonstrates why appearance alone cannot establish group identity.
Controlled future cohort	Not yet completed.	Required to test whether measured CIELAB distributions differ statistically.

10. HLA POPULATION STRUCTURE - INDEPENDENT GENETIC RESEARCH TRACK

FRFT also identifies HLA population structure as a separate research track. Human leukocyte antigen (HLA) loci are highly polymorphic, and published studies demonstrate meaningful differences in allele and haplotype frequencies among African populations, African-American populations, and other U.S. population groups. Recent high-resolution work comparing Eastern

and Southern African populations with U.S. populations concluded that U.S. HLA data cannot simply stand in for African population data.

Earlier HLA studies of African-American cohorts likewise documented extensive allele and haplotype diversity and effects consistent with population history and admixture. These findings support a limited but important proposition for this dossier: African and U.S. African-American/Freedmen-descended populations should not be treated as genetically interchangeable research populations merely because modern racial labels group them together.

HLA evidence does not presently prove, cause, or validate the Copper Undertone Observation. FRFT therefore treats HLA and calibrated skin colorimetry as independent variables. A university study could ask whether documentary genealogy, measured skin-color coordinates, and HLA frequency data show any statistically meaningful association. No such association is asserted here without consented genetic sampling, appropriate controls, institutional review, and population-genetic analysis.

Evidence Stream	What It Can Establish	What It Cannot Establish Alone
HLA allele/haplotype frequencies	Population-frequency structure, diversity, and genetic-distance questions.	Freedmen status, tribal citizenship, or a copper phenotype.
Calibrated colorimetry	Measured L*, a*, b*, hue angle, chroma, and reflectance behavior.	Ancestry or legal identity.
Documentary genealogy	Family continuity through primary records and historical jurisdictions.	A biological mechanism for skin color.
Integrated research design	Can test whether independent variables correlate in a consented cohort.	Should not presume a correlation before measurement.

11. SLAVERY-ERA COPPER DESCRIPTORS AND RECLASSIFICATION INQUIRY

FRFT's archival review also examined slavery-era runaway, escape, jail, and capture notices. These records provide direct historical evidence that 'copper,' 'copper colour,' 'copper colored,' 'light copper complexion,' and 'dark copper colour' were used to describe enslaved or detained people in the United States. Examples located in archival or university collections include Rachael Davis in Maryland (1845), Lewis Owens in Maryland (1850), Jordan in North Carolina (1859), Stephen in a Tennessee-related notice (1853), Hudson/Reuben/Ben in North Carolina (1843), and other notices describing enslaved people as copper colored or copper complexioned.

These advertisements matter because they establish that copper complexion language was part of the documentary vocabulary of American slavery. They do not, by themselves, establish that every copper-described enslaved person was Indigenous or that copper complexion proves a single ancestry. Indeed, some notices themselves assign other racial labels or parentage while simultaneously using copper as a complexion descriptor.

Separate historical scholarship establishes that Indigenous people were enslaved in colonial North America and that racial classification systems could erase or alter Indigenous identity. Virginia provides especially strong documentary examples: statutes legally distinguished 'colored' persons and Indians using ancestry fractions, while twentieth-century state officials later altered or pressured the alteration of Indian classifications to 'colored.' The Library of Virginia describes records in which Indian designations were overwritten or replaced, and the National Park Service documents the impact of Virginia's Racial Integrity regime on Indigenous identity.

FRFT therefore advances a narrower reclassification hypothesis for academic testing: some families who appear in later records as colored, mulatto, Negro, Black, or Freedmen may have earlier records containing Indian, Native, American, tribal, or copper-complexion descriptors. The hypothesis must be tested person by person and family by family. Complexion alone is not proof; the evidentiary chain requires names, dates, locations, kinship, legal status, and linked primary records.

Archival Evidence Chain	Required Documentary Test
Early Indian / Native / American or tribal designation	Identify the original record and jurisdiction.
Copper / copper-colored complexion language	Preserve exact wording, date, newspaper, jail notice, or archival citation.
Enslaved, captive, free, or ambiguous legal status	Determine the legal category actually used in the source.
Later colored / mulatto / Negro / Black classification	Link the same person or family through names, locality, kinship, and chronology.
Freedmen / emancipation-era record	Test continuity through census, Freedmen records, military, probate, land, church, and vital records.
Modern Successor line	Use documentary genealogy; do not infer the line from appearance.

12. UNIVERSITY RESEARCH PATHWAYS AND ETHICS

This research has multiple academic entry points. It can interest African American Studies, Indigenous Studies, history departments, genealogy programs, anthropology, color science, computer vision, dermatology, public health, and business/cosmetic research. The university value is not that a photo proves identity. The value is that FRFT has identified a recurring community observation and is inviting institutions to test it properly.

Field	Research Question
History	How did early American records use labels such as copper-colored, colored, Indian, Negro, mulatto, and free?
Genealogy	Do documented U.S. Freedmen families show patterns that correlate with local colonial classifications?

Field	Research Question
Color Science	Can a copper candidate zone be reproduced through calibrated CIELAB or spectrophotometry?
Computer Vision	Can AI assist color measurement without inferring identity or ancestry?
Dermatology	How do lighting, physiology, melanin, erythema, makeup, and camera settings affect measured skin color?
Business/Cosmetics	Do existing beauty products under-serve copper-balancing undertones among U.S. Freedmen consumers?

All research involving human skin color must be ethically guarded. Minimum rules: consent, privacy, no public shaming, no status decisions from appearance, no ranking by skin tone, and no replacement of records.

Ethical Guardrail	Institutional Requirement
Consent and privacy	No identifiable research image should be published without explicit permission.
No appearance-based eligibility	Research may describe color behavior; it may not certify, deny, or erase people.
Community governance	FRFT and U.S. Freedmen community review should shape research questions and publication controls.
Data separation	Genealogy file numbers should be stored separately from images and measurement files.

13. RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

Step	Action	Output
1	Build a consented U.S. Freedmen sample cohort with genealogy file numbers stored separately from image files.	Secure data inventory
2	Photograph participants under standardized neutral light with calibration cards.	Calibrated image set
3	Collect comparison images only with consent and clear jurisdictional labels.	Comparison dataset
4	Run RGB-to-CIELAB measurements and record L*, a*, b*, hue angle, and chroma.	Colorimetry table
5	Publish a preprint or white paper with limitations and no status determinations.	University-ready paper
6	Develop a beauty-supply pilot around copper-aware undertone matching.	Consumer product research

APPENDIX A - WORKING DEFINITIONS

Term	Working Definition
Freedmen Copper Undertone	FRFT working term for red-yellow/copper-like reflectance observed in some documented U.S. Freedmen-oriented samples; not a status criterion.
American Aborigine	Historical language used here to reference early American dictionary/classification language; not a substitute for modern tribal citizenship.
Colorimetry	Objective measurement of color values using standardized systems.
CIELAB	Color space with L* lightness, a* red-green, and b* yellow-blue coordinates.
Copper Candidate Zone	A working color zone where calibrated measurements show red and yellow balance consistent with copper-like reflectance.
Status Verification	FRFT documentary genealogy process; not dependent on skin, phenotype, or appearance.

APPENDIX B - SUGGESTED DATA SHEET

Field	Example / Rule
Participant code	Use research codes; do not publish names in dataset.
Lineage file reference	Store separately from image files.
Image conditions	Indoor/outdoor, time, light type, flash, camera model.
Calibration status	Color card present / no card / corrected / uncorrected.
Sample regions	Forehead, cheek, jawline, forearm; record pixel coordinates.
Color values	Median RGB, HSV, L*a*b*, hue angle, chroma.
Result category	Copper candidate / golden / olive / neutral / inconclusive.
Reviewer notes	Lighting, makeup, filter, glare, obstruction, compression warnings.

APPENDIX C - REFERENCES

- [1] Noah Webster, American Dictionary of the English Language (1828), entry 'American.' Early usage notes American in relation to aboriginal or copper-colored people encountered by Europeans.
- [2] Noah Webster, American Dictionary of the English Language (1828), entry 'Copper.' Defines copper as a pale red color tinged with yellow.
- [3] Merriam-Webster Dictionary, entry 'Coppery.' Provides modern color-language reference to reddish or brownish-orange color.
- [4] Johns Hopkins Medicine, 'Anatomy of the Skin.' Identifies skin as the body's largest organ and summarizes its functions.
- [5] National Park Service, '400 Years of African American History.' Discusses the 1619 landing at Point Comfort and early African presence in English-occupied North America.

- [6] National Park Service, 'Slavery and Law in 17th Century Massachusetts.' Discusses the 1641 Body of Liberties and enslavement of Africans, Native Americans, and mixed-race people.
- [7] Library of Congress, summary of research on Indian slaves from Guiana in seventeenth-century Barbados.
- [8] New England Quarterly / PMC, 'Why shall wee have peace to bee made slaves': Indian Surrenderers During and After King Philip's War. Discusses Native captives and the fear of transportation to Barbados.
- [9] 'A survey of skin tone assessment in prospective research,' npj Digital Medicine / PMC. Discusses visual scales, cameras, colorimeters, spectrophotometers, lighting, white balance, and calibration concerns.
- [10] Commission Internationale de l'Eclairage (CIE), 'Measurement of Human Skin Colour.' Framework for standardized measurement of human skin color.
- [11] Seo et al., 'Better understanding of digital photography for skin color measurement: with a special emphasis on light characteristics,' Skin Research and Technology / PubMed.
- [12] 'Research Techniques Made Simple: Cutaneous Colorimetry: A Reliable Technique for Objective Skin Color Measurement,' Journal of Investigative Dermatology / PubMed.
- [13] 'Digital Photography Guide for Dermatologists With Special Considerations for Diverse Populations,' JAMA Dermatology / PubMed.
- [14] Archives of Maryland, Rachael Davis (escaped 1845). Archival biography transcribes a runaway advertisement describing Davis as having a copper complexion.
- [15] U.S. National Park Service, Monocacy National Battlefield, 'Lewis Owens.' Reproduces an 1850 runaway advertisement describing Owens as copper colour.
- [16] Digital Library on American Slavery / UNC Greensboro, North Carolina Runaway Slave Notices. Multiple notices use copper complexion language, including Jordan (1859), Hudson/Reuben/Ben (1843), Bob (1858), Solomon (1828), and Dick Sidbury (1853).
- [17] Rutherford County / Tennessee primary-source teaching set, runaway notice for Stephen (1853), described as light copper complexion.
- [18] Smithsonian Libraries and Archives, Indian Slavery in Colonial America, ed. Alan Gallay (2009). Documents Indigenous enslavement across colonial North America.
- [19] Library of Congress, Almon Wheeler Lauber, Indian Slavery in Colonial Times within the Present Limits of the United States (1913).
- [20] Library of Virginia, 'Records of a Paper Genocide' and educational materials on Walter Plecker and racial classification. Documents alteration and suppression of Virginia Indian classifications in official records.
- [21] U.S. National Park Service, 'The Racial Integrity Act, 1924: An Attack on Indigenous Identity.' Documents Virginia's reclassification practices affecting Native people.
- [22] Virginia General Assembly (1866), law defining colored persons and Indians by ancestry fractions; transcription via Encyclopedia Virginia.
- [23] Tu et al. (2007), HLA-A, -B, -C, -DRB1 allele and haplotype frequencies in an African American population, Tissue Antigens. Compares African-American HLA data with African and European populations.
- [24] Just et al. (1997), African-American HLA class II allele and haplotype diversity, Tissue Antigens. Documents extensive HLA diversity and admixture effects in an African-American cohort.
- [25] High resolution class I HLA-A, -B, and -C diversity in Eastern and Southern African populations, Scientific Reports (2025). Finds that U.S. population HLA data cannot represent African population HLA data.

Reference policy: These sources support historical language, early American archival context, skin as a measurable organ, and colorimetry methodology. They do not independently prove FRFT's Copper Undertone hypothesis. They support why the question is serious enough for controlled academic study.

FINAL INSTITUTIONAL NOTE

The Copper Undertone Observation began as an AI-assisted pattern discovery project conducted by the Freedmen Reparations Fund Trust through Arthur Watkins Jr. The project now requires a controlled university research protocol. Its importance is not that it replaces records. Its importance is that it raises a question about how U.S. Freedmen color, early American historical language, beauty-supply undertone practice, and archival erasure may intersect.

FRFT's final position in this dossier is clear: the Copper Undertone is not part of Status Verification. Verified Freedmen status must continue to rest on documentation. The Copper Undertone Observation is a cultural, historical, and colorimetric research lead that deserves academic attention, community consent, and scientific discipline.

Prepared / Conducted by	Arthur Watkins Jr. Freedmen Reparations Fund Trust Website: Freedmennation.org For more information: https://www.freedmennation.org/contact-us
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Freedmennation.org

Research Use Only

This dossier is not a legal, medical, racial, tribal, citizenship, or status-verification determination. It is an institutional research invitation requiring consented data, controlled colorimetry, and academic review.

SUPPORT THIS RESEARCH

The Copper Undertone Observation is an institutional research initiative of the Freedmen Reparations Fund Trust. Public support helps FRFT continue archival research, documentation, research design, publication, and university engagement.

RESEARCH SUPPORT - NOT STATUS VERIFICATION

Donations do not affect, purchase, accelerate, or determine Freedmen Status Verification. The Copper Undertone Observation remains separate from FRFT's documentary verification process.

Ways to Support

Cash App	\$Freedmenlegalfund
Website	Freedmennation.org
Research Information	Freedmennation.org/contact-us

Why Support Matters

- Expand archival and historical-source review.
- Develop controlled colorimetry and photography protocols.
- Prepare research materials suitable for university collaboration.
- Support publication, documentation, and community research infrastructure.



[Freedmennation.org](https://freedmennation.org)