This study focuses on the economic and community development of African Americans in Muncie, Indiana following emancipation, specifically 1870-1920. The following thesis uses primary and secondary sources to explore the advancement of African Americans within the city of Muncie; a city located in Delaware County, Indiana. It explores the economic choices that African Americans were pursuing shortly after slavery and demonstrates the overall community growth of African Americans in Muncie during the rising industrial era that transformed this area.

The economic change from agrarian to industrial in Muncie helped to create pockets of opportunity for many migrants. This thesis explores the influence of African American migration into Muncie, while also pointing out the type of economic and social choices that African Americans were selecting due to their newly found freedoms; a progression from mainly manual labor to specialized types of employment and business ownership. It discusses some of the factors found within Muncie that allowed for African Americans to establish their livelihood, and be a part of the growth of the Muncie community overall.