

Melungeon Research :: Getting Started

Melungeon - Meaning of the Word Theories

French word **mélange**, meaning mixture.

Old English word **malengin** meaning guile, deceit, or ill intent.

Luso-African word **malungu** (or **malungo**), from Angola meaning shipmate, derived from the Kimbundu word ma'luno, meaning "companion" or "friend". The word Melungo and Mulungo have been found in numerous Portuguese records. It is said to be a derogatory word that Africans used towards people of Portuguese and white ancestry. It could be assumed the word was brought to America through people of African ancestry. Or, perhaps it's a connection to the Africans captured at the Malange plateau in the Angolan highlands by the Portuguese and brought to America.

Persian/Arabic word **mal un jinn** meaning "damned souls", a term used by Turks for Muslims who had been captured and enslaved aboard Spanish galleons.

Melungeon Origin Theories

- Spanish Moors
- Lost Colony
- Spanish Shipwreck
- Portuguese
- Black Dutch
- Powhatan Indians
- Lumbee Indians
- Carthaginians
- Sephardi (Iberian) Jews

Melungeon Surnames

Collins, Gibson, Bunch, Goins, Goodman, Hurd, Minor, Mullins, Riddle*, Sizemore*

The list of Melungeon surnames varies by researcher. There is no standardized list of family names, but those listed above are generally agreed upon, and there are others, depending on where you look.

* the Riddle and Sizemore families are the only two that have been proven to contain Native American DNA.

Melungeon Reading and Resources

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melungeon>

<http://melungeon.org/>

<http://jackgoins.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.jogg.info/pages/72/files/Estes.pdf>

Need to Know

Melungeons are listed in records of census, taxes, courts, property transactions, legal and school documents, by a wide variety of ethnic descriptions: white, black, negro, native american, free person of color, other free, mulatto, etc. Even then, no one really seemed to know what they were.

* As always, remember that **any** information regarding the Melungeons is up for debate, and nothing should be taken as absolute fact.