



Race, Poverty and Insecurity

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MSNBC and The Nation

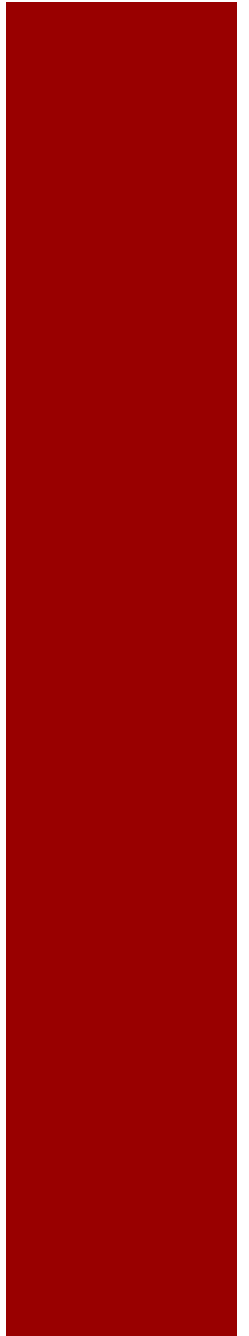
Critical issues facing communities



- The Miner's Canary
- Environmental injustice
- Housing
- Employment
- Living wages
- Affordable and available health care
- Education
- Basic Civil Rights
- Criminal injustice

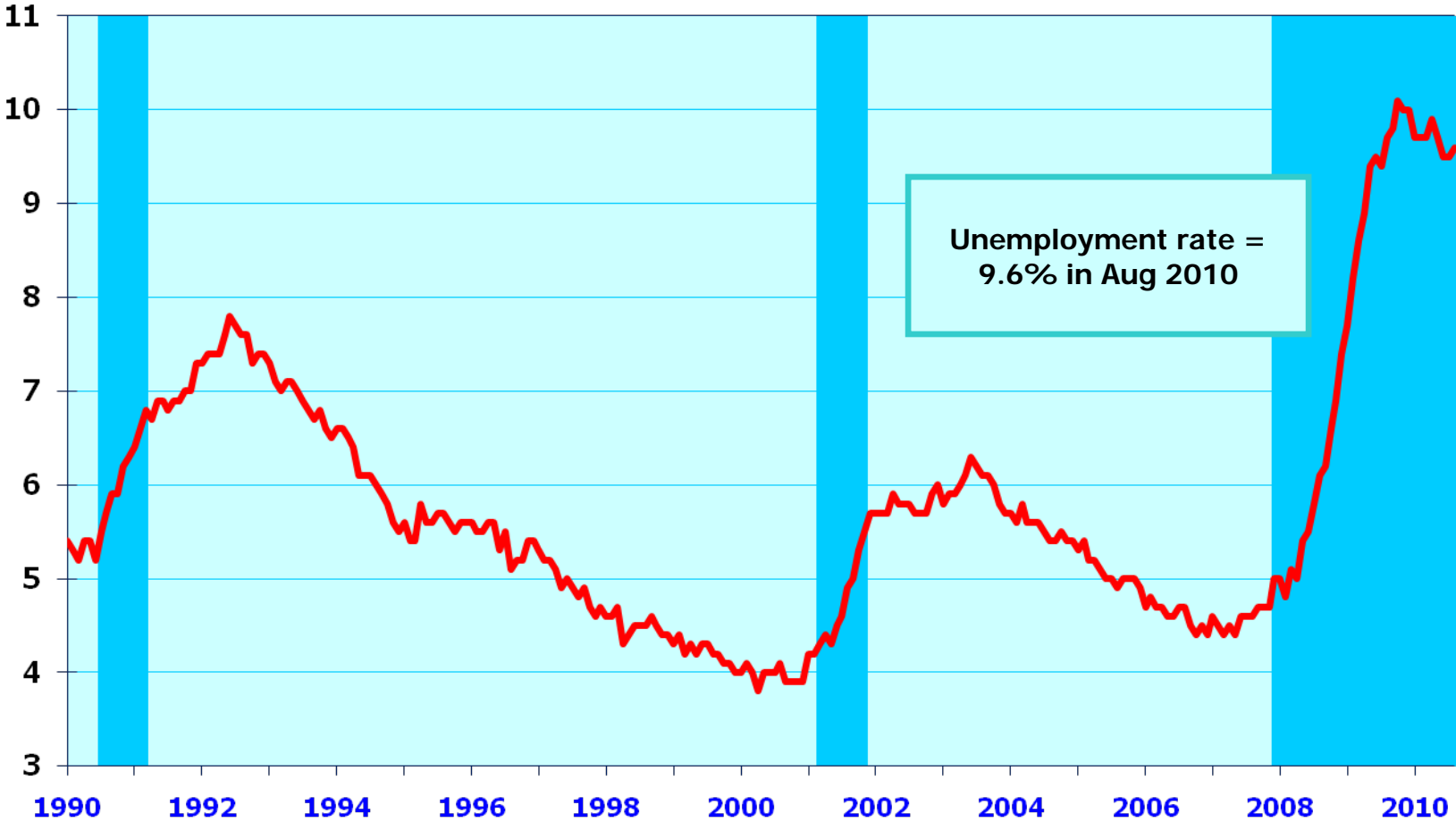
Make no mistake

Times are tough.



Civilian unemployment rate 1990-2010

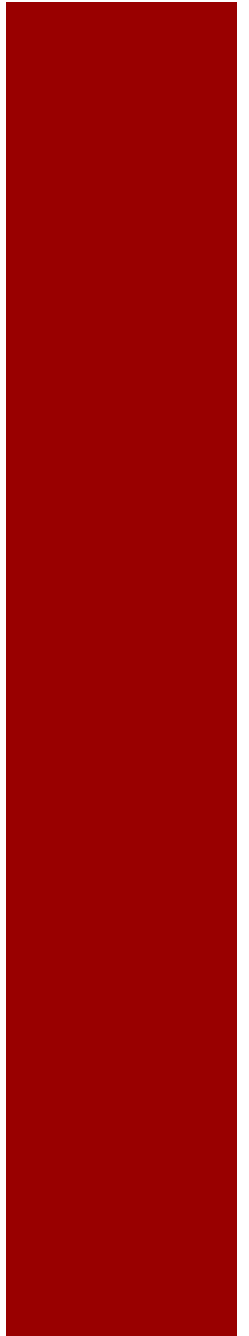
Seasonally adjusted, percent



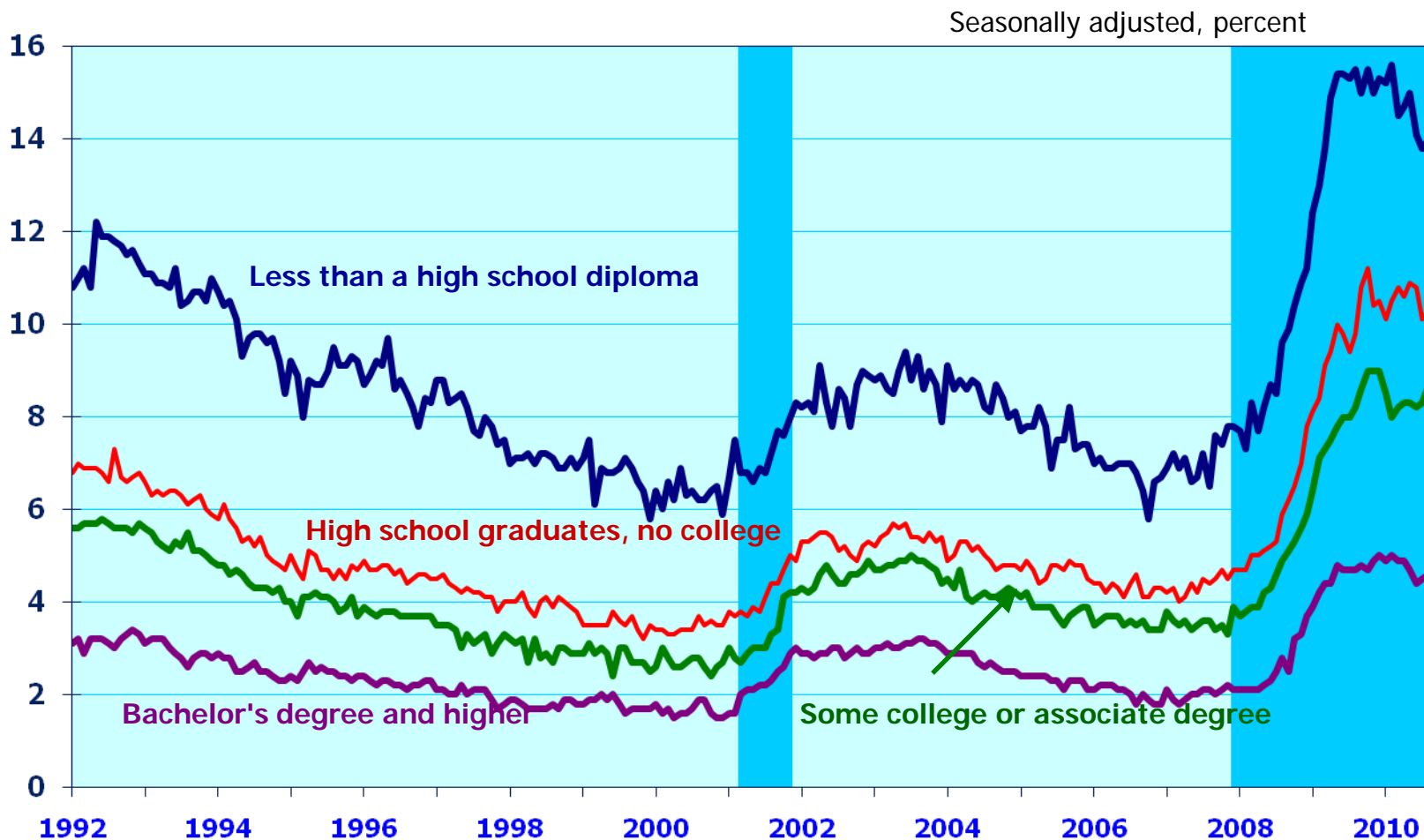
Note: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER). NBER has not yet determined an endpoint for the recession that began in December 2007.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, September 3, 2010.

But they are tougher
for some than for
others.



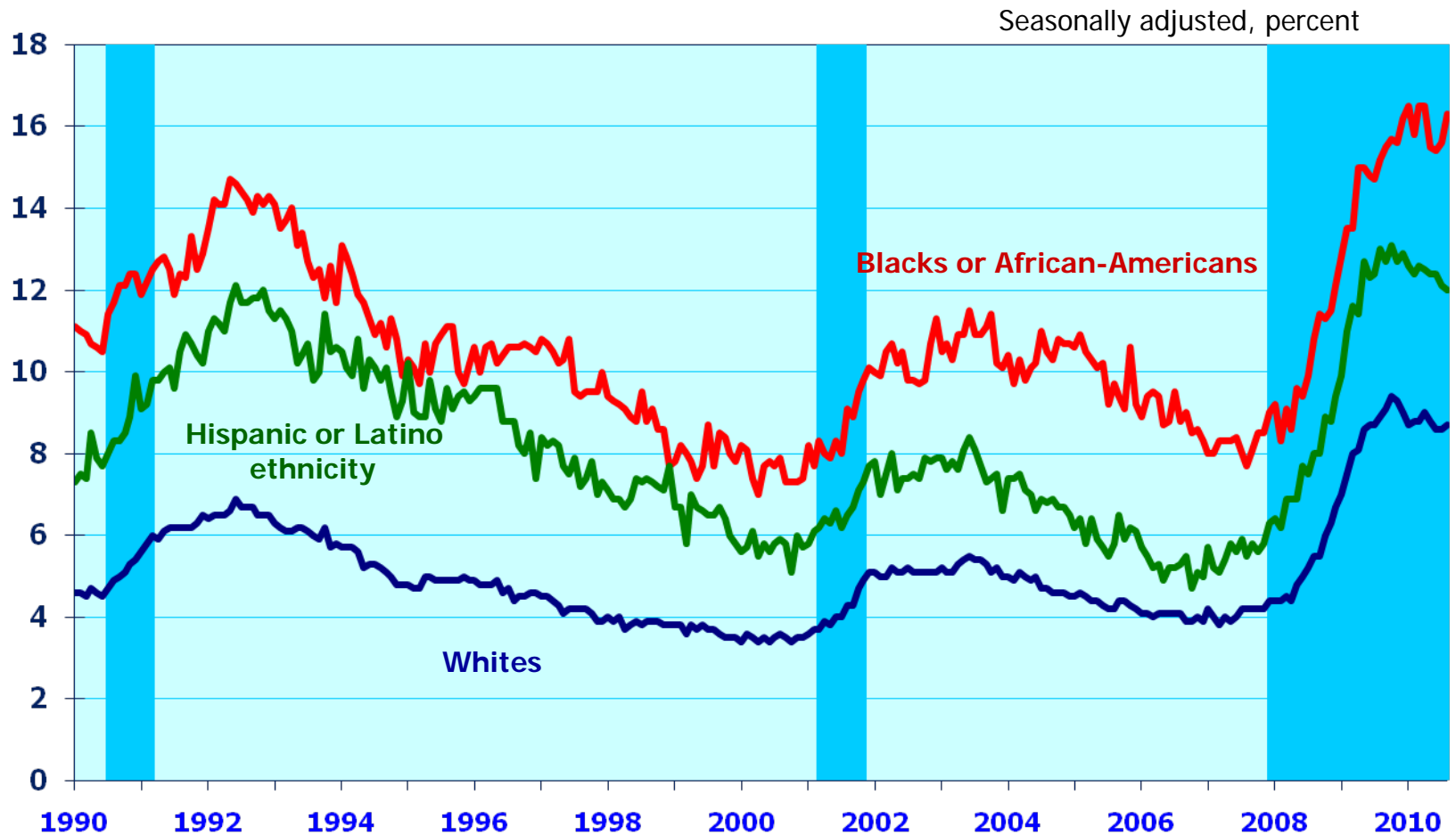
Unemployment rates for persons 25 years and older by educational attainment 1992-2010



Note: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER). NBER has not yet determined an endpoint for the recession that began in December 2007.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, September 3, 2010.

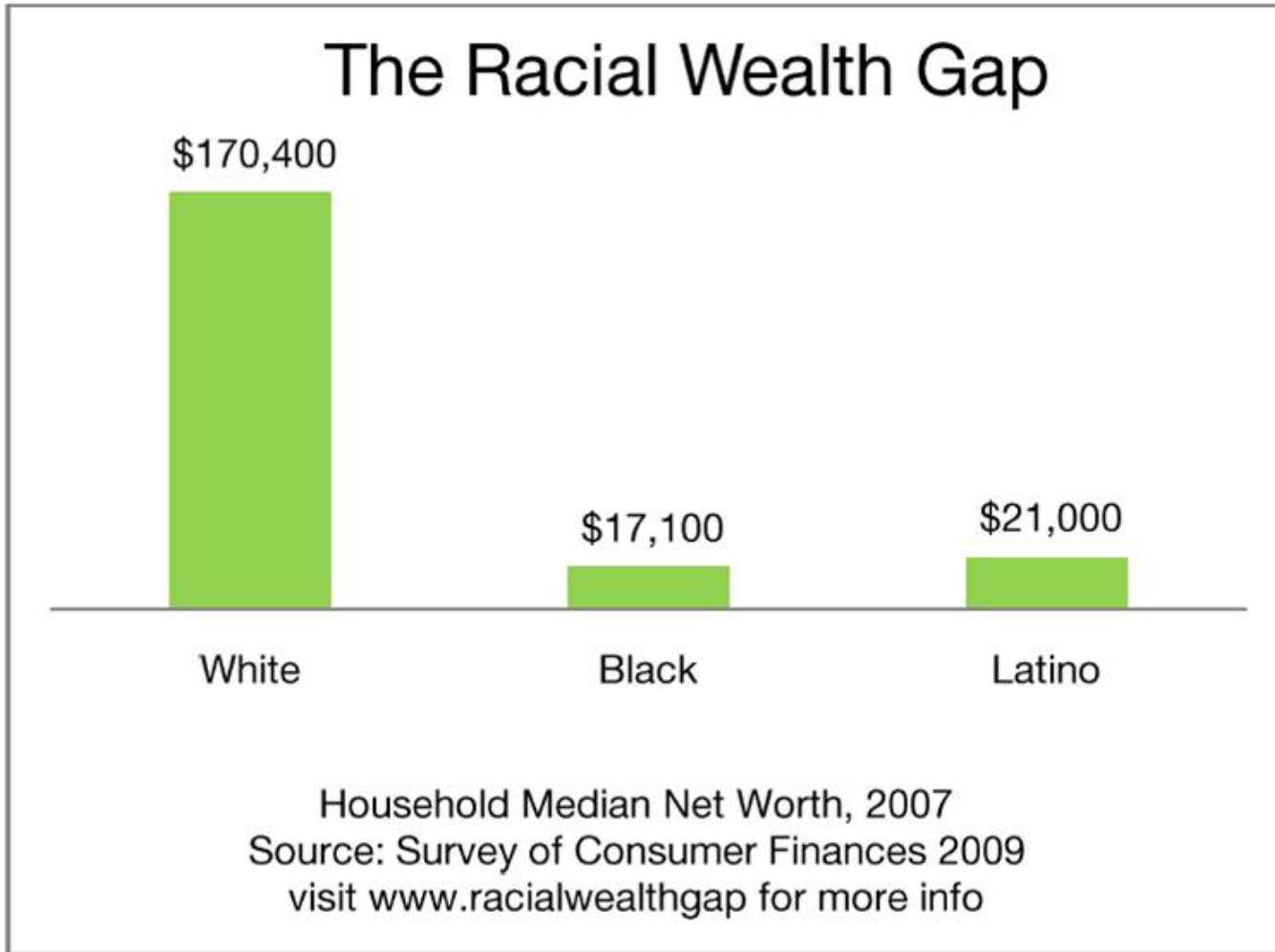
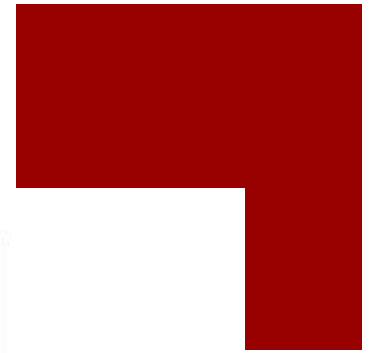
Unemployment rates for whites, blacks or African Americans, and persons of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity 1990-2010



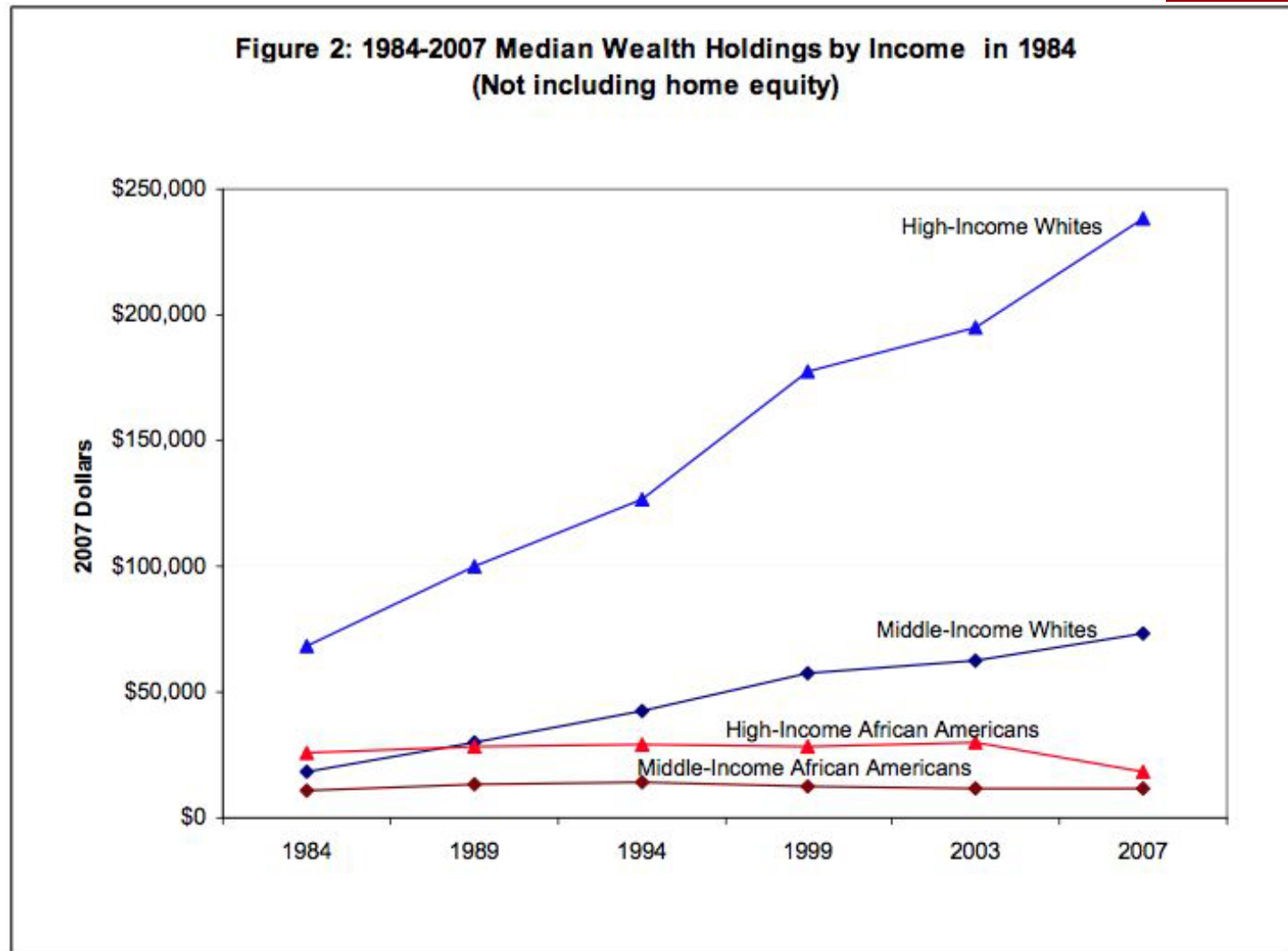
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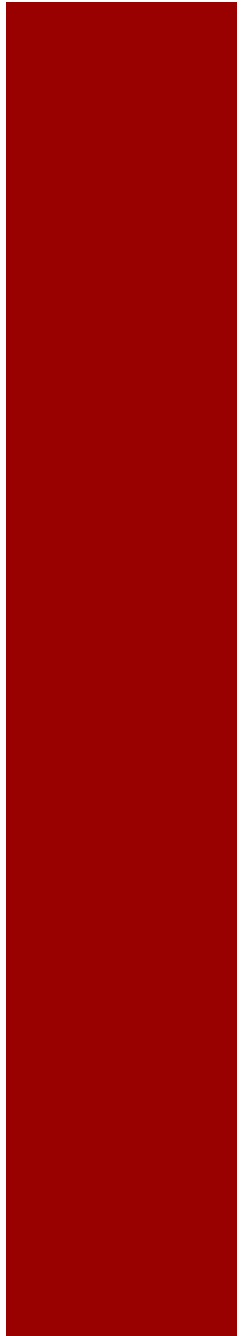
Wealth Gap



Wealth inequality has grown



Everyone has
problems



Between me and the other world there is ever an unasked question: unasked by some through feelings of delicacy; by others through the difficulty of rightly framing it. All, nevertheless, flutter round it...How does it feel to be a problem?

-W.E.B. Du Bois, 1903



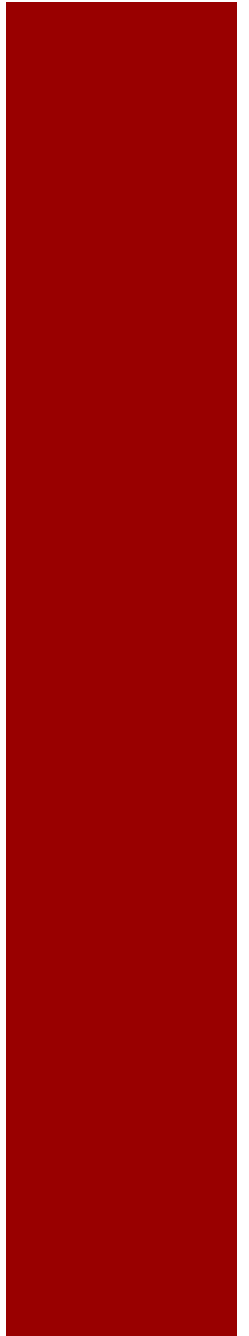
Racism and Poverty Undermine our Basic Social Contract

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all persons are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness

- Race, Poverty and Health (Life)
- Race, Poverty and Incarceration (Liberty)
- Race, Poverty and Property Rights (Pursuit of Happiness)



Race, Poverty and Health





 **BAMA-GARE**

Coming soon to a clinic near you

Threat of a black Doctor in Chief?

•
Even Cosby Show was
based in this angst.

You lie!

HCR becomes the terrain
for racial/immigration
anxieties

When we panic about
racial rhetoric we miss the
real race story.

Racial Health Disparities

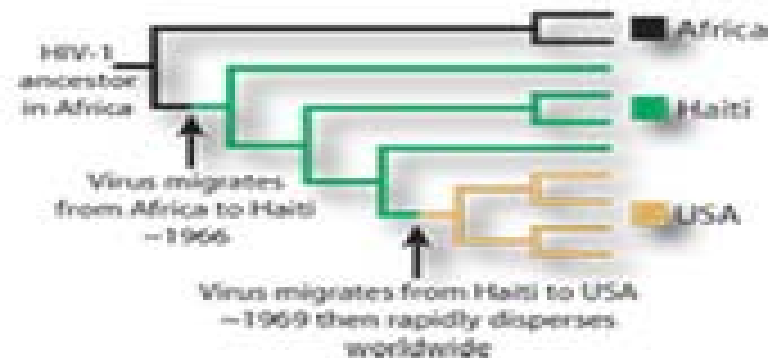


- Mainstream media took the racial and “crazy” bait.
- Racism in health care reform became a matter of hand wringing about racist depictions of the President.
- Obscures meaningful discussion about racism in American health and health care.

Race and Health

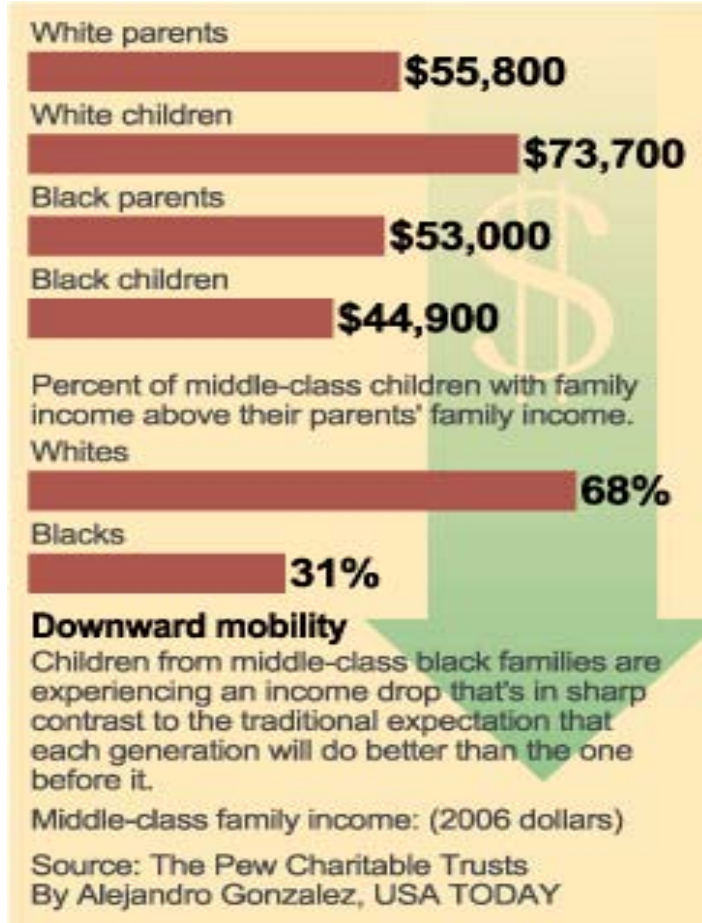
Joint Constructions

"Haiti first" model probability = 99.8%



- Race and health are historically linked in their social constructions.
- Race, ethnic identity and immigration status are linked in popular imaginations of health.
- Some populations are considered dirty, diseased, infectious, dangerous, unsanitary.
- Science is often employed in making these claims
- The implications of health-race linkages can be seen in political choices
- Infectious disease promotion:
 - Slave health subsystem
 - Jim Crow
 - Immigration policy

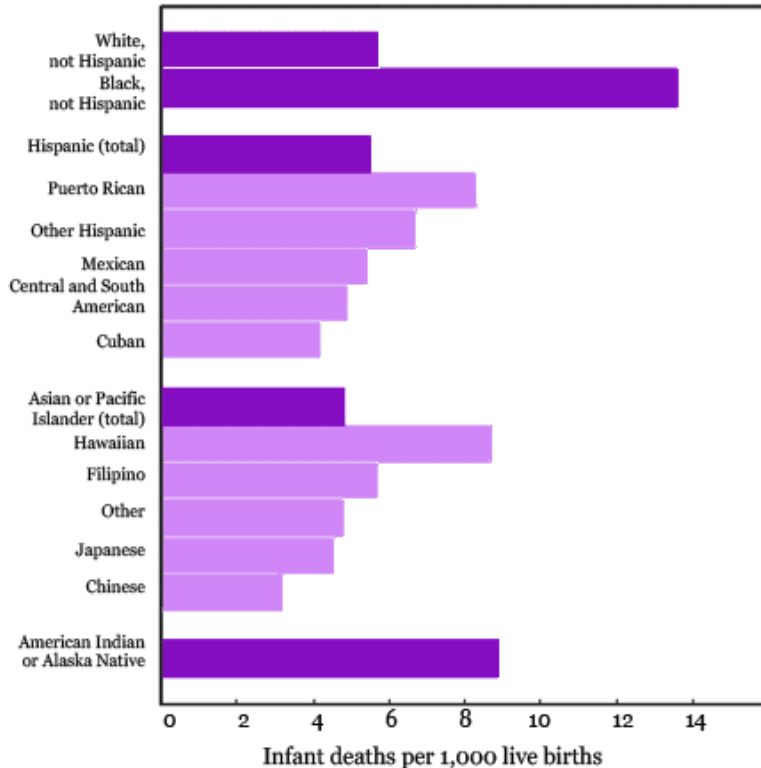
Black Middle Class



- Evidence against solely class based solutions:
- WEALTH: Income and education gaps have narrowed, but median black household still has 1/10 the net worth of median white household.
 - 68% of black middle class households have \$0 net financial assets and live paycheck to paycheck
- EDUCATION RETURNS: Are smaller for African Americans and particularly for African American women
- SEGREGATION: Neighborhoods determine a great deal about outcomes. Food availability, pollution, crime, public schools

Black Middle Class Health

Infant mortality rates in the U.S., by race and Hispanic origin of mother, 2000-2002.



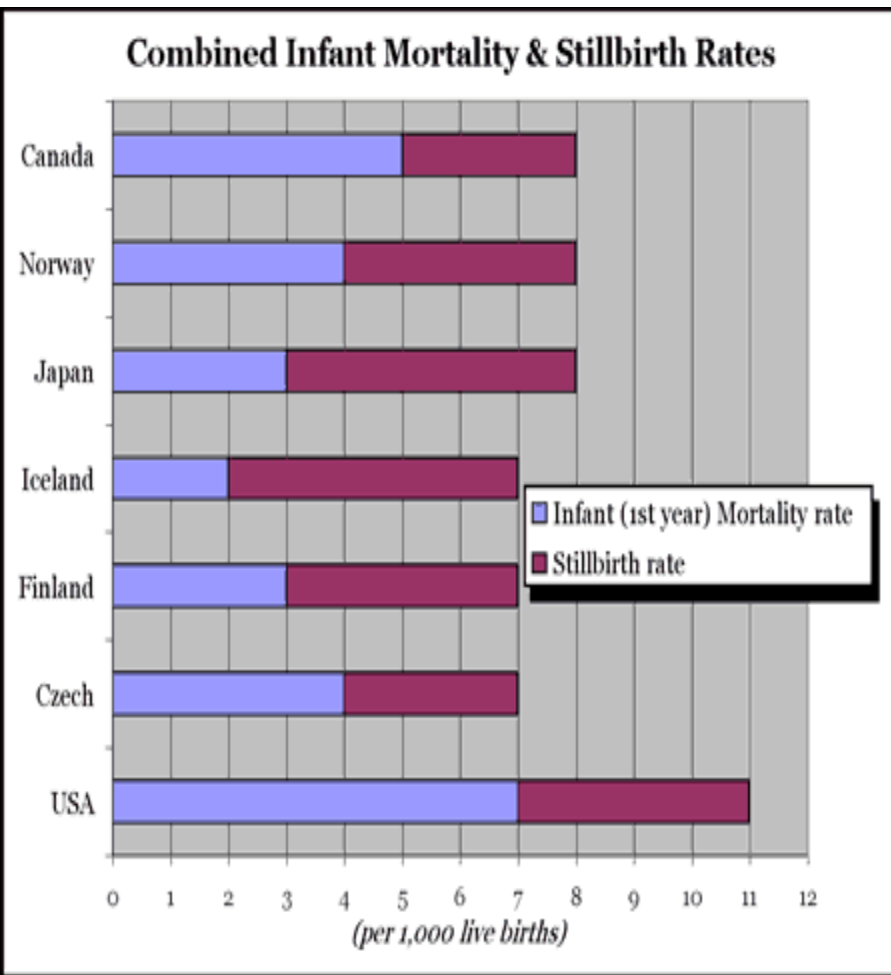
■ It's class

- For multiple indicators of health status, difference between SES categories within each racial group is larger than difference between races.

■ It's race

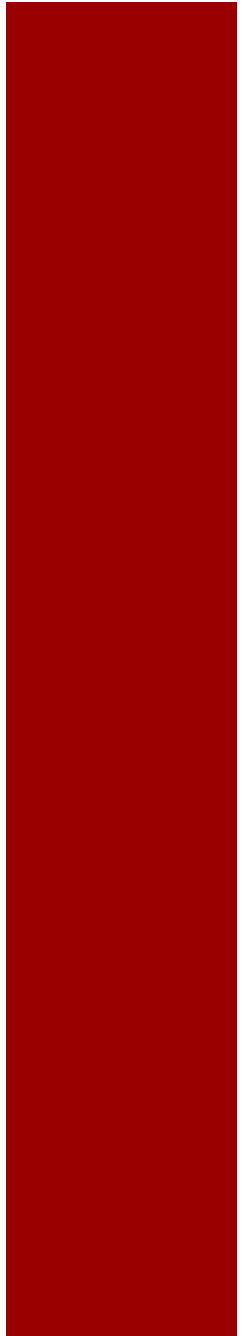
- But, highest SES black groups often fall below lowest SES white groups on health indicators
- For example, highly educated black women have higher infant mortality rate than less educated white women.

There is no single explanation



- So what should we do with a complicated set of factors?
- Give up, heck inequality is part of life and everyone has to die of something at some point.
- Use race neutral solutions: universal health care and rigorous monitoring of quality of care standards
- Make things worse for whites in order to close the gap.
- Use race conscious policies directed at health.
- Use race conscious politics directed at systems beyond health.

Race, Poverty and Incarceration

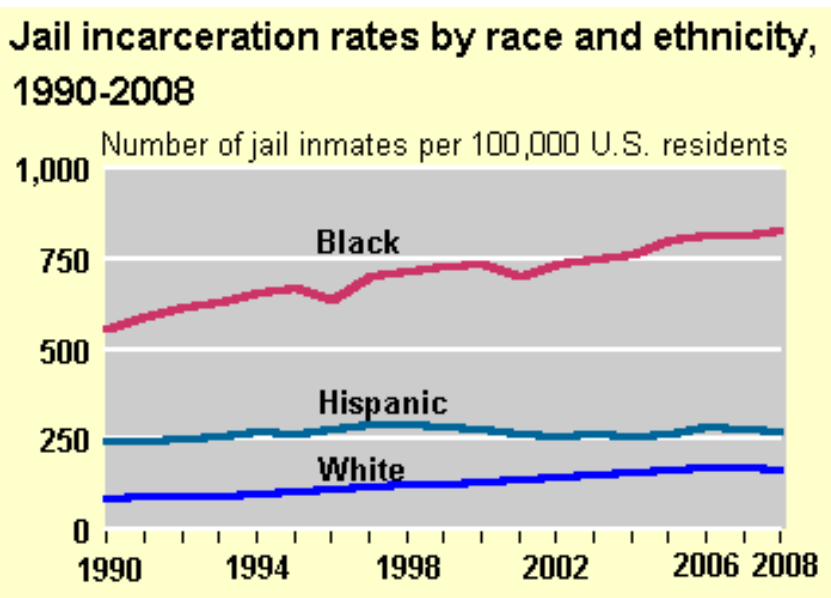


Social Construction and Racialization of Crime

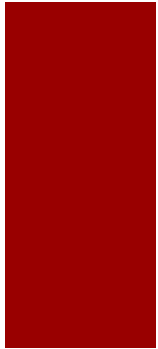
- America leads world in incarceration
 - 2.3 million held in jails & prisons
 - 846,000 African American men
 - Black women fastest growth in new incarcerations.
 - Latino(a) individuals vastly overrepresented in many states.
- Despite being a minority of incarcerated population, crime and punishment are racialized in public thought.
- Race and crime are social constructs.
- Assumptions of who deserves punishment and how they should be punished.



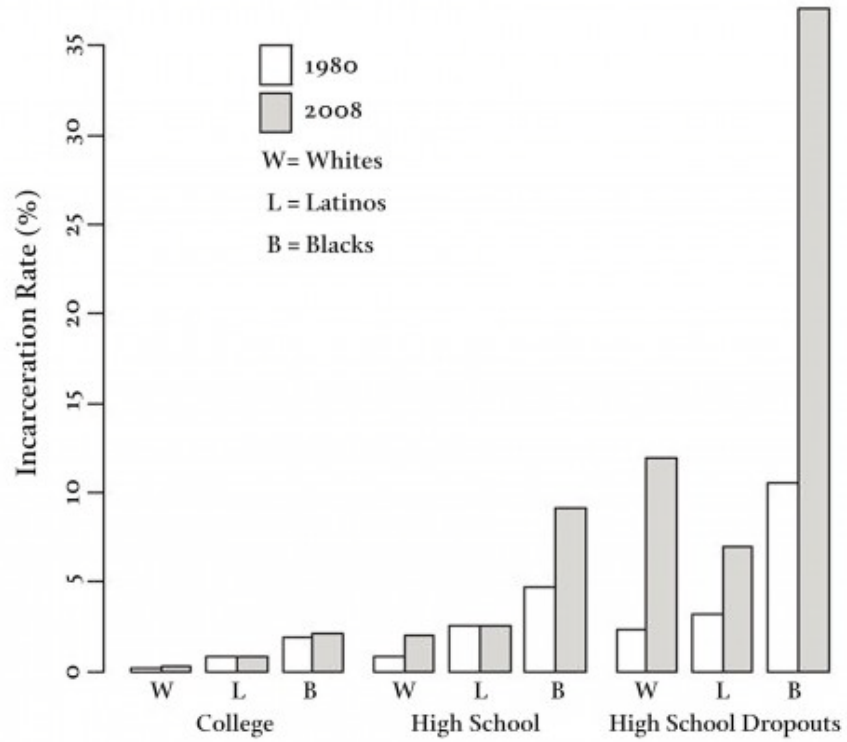
Incarceration



- In some states up to 10% of black adults are incarcerated.
- In many states black men are incarcerated at rates 15 times greater than those of white men, and black women at rates 25 times greater than those of white women.
- Latino(a) men and women incarcerated at up to 10 times the rate of white men and women.
- Black and Hispanic youth under age eighteen are incarcerated in adult facilities at rates up to 25 times greater than those of white youth.

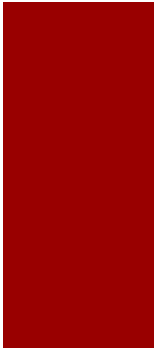


Incarceration and Literacy

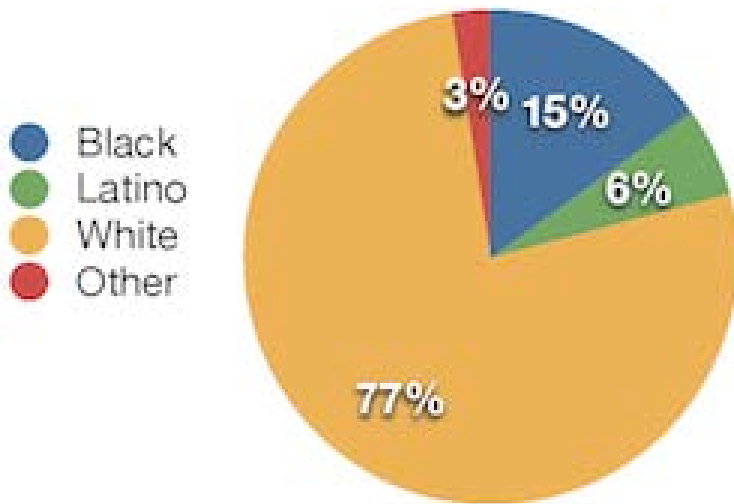


"Zero-tolerance" policies criminalize minor infractions of school rules, while high-stakes testing programs encourage educators to push out low-performing students to improve their schools' overall test scores.

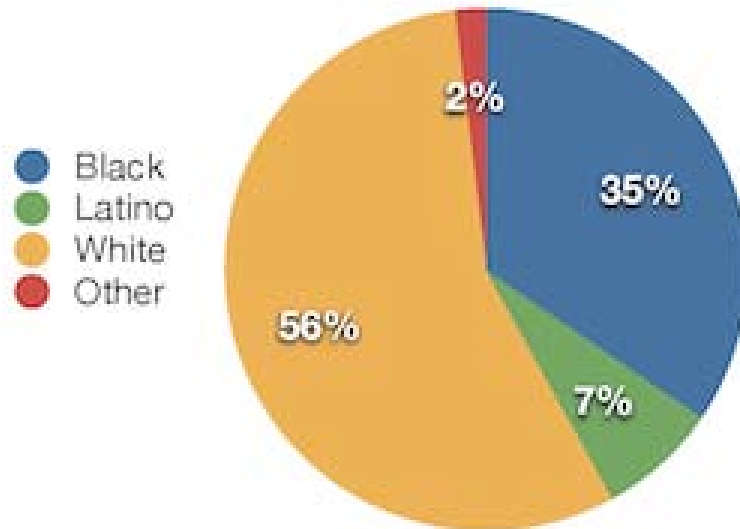
The Death Penalty



Race of Victim Since 1976



Race of Defendant Since 1976



Prisons by Choice



- Many of the acts for which people are incarcerated became crimes in the past 15 years.
- A Democratic president oversaw the expansion of incarceration in the U.S.
- From arrest to prosecution to sentencing offenders of color receive different treatment.

Incarceration and Shame



- Shaming during sentencing
- Shaming during incarceration
- Status shaming
- Continuing Dehumanization
 - Housing
 - Employment
 - Education
 - Voting

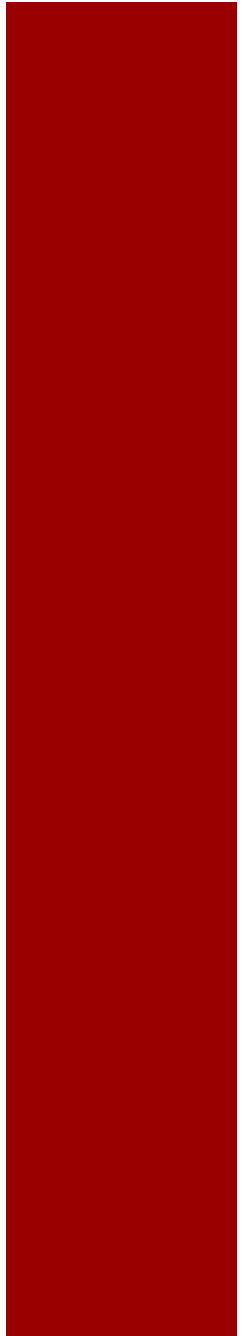
Silence on Pathology of Privileged

Necessary and
Sufficient
Conditions

Bad behavior only
= bad outcomes
for those who live
at the margins.



Race, Class and Property



Neighborhoods signal citizenship



Citizens live in communities, not just in houses.

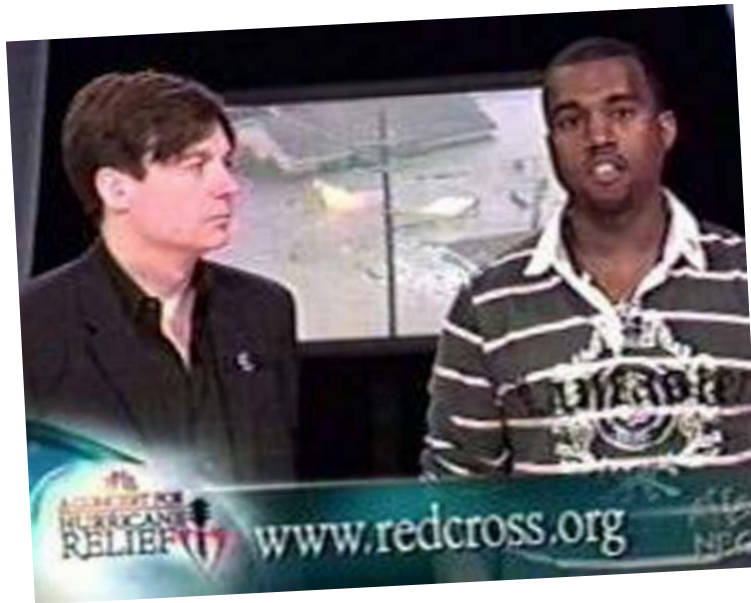
- Mobility
- Trust and safety
- Social connection
- Opportunity: education and work
- Sustainability
- Integration by race, income, family status, faith traditions.

Neighborhoods= Pursuit of Happiness

- Neighborhoods affect health
- Violence/Safety
- Educational opportunities
- Quality of available food.
- Access to doctors, clinics, and well-stocked pharmacies
- Environmental hazards that contribute to asthma and other illness
- Likelihood of being policed.



Race, Class and Place: Case of Hurricane Katrina.



Hurricane Katrina is racialized in public imagination.

Those who suffer are portrayed as different.

Reduces public will to change structures.



Racial Attitudes and Katrina Disaster Study 2005, Dawson, Harris-Lacewell, Cohen

National Survey 1252 Americans

White: 703

Black: 482

Half were previously interviewed in 2004

Experimental Conditions

Race/Status



- More than 100,000 ***Americans*** were displaced from their homes as a result of the Katrina disaster.



- More than 100,000 ***refugees*** were displaced from their homes as a result of the Katrina disaster.

Experimental Conditions

Race/Status



- More than 100,000 **Americans** were displaced from their homes as a result of the Katrina disaster.



- More than 100,000 **refugees** were displaced from their homes as a result of the Katrina disaster



CHOOSE ONE

The federal government should spend whatever is necessary to rebuild the city and to restore refugees to their homes.

Although this is a great tragedy the federal government must not commit too many funds to rebuilding until we know how we will pay for it.

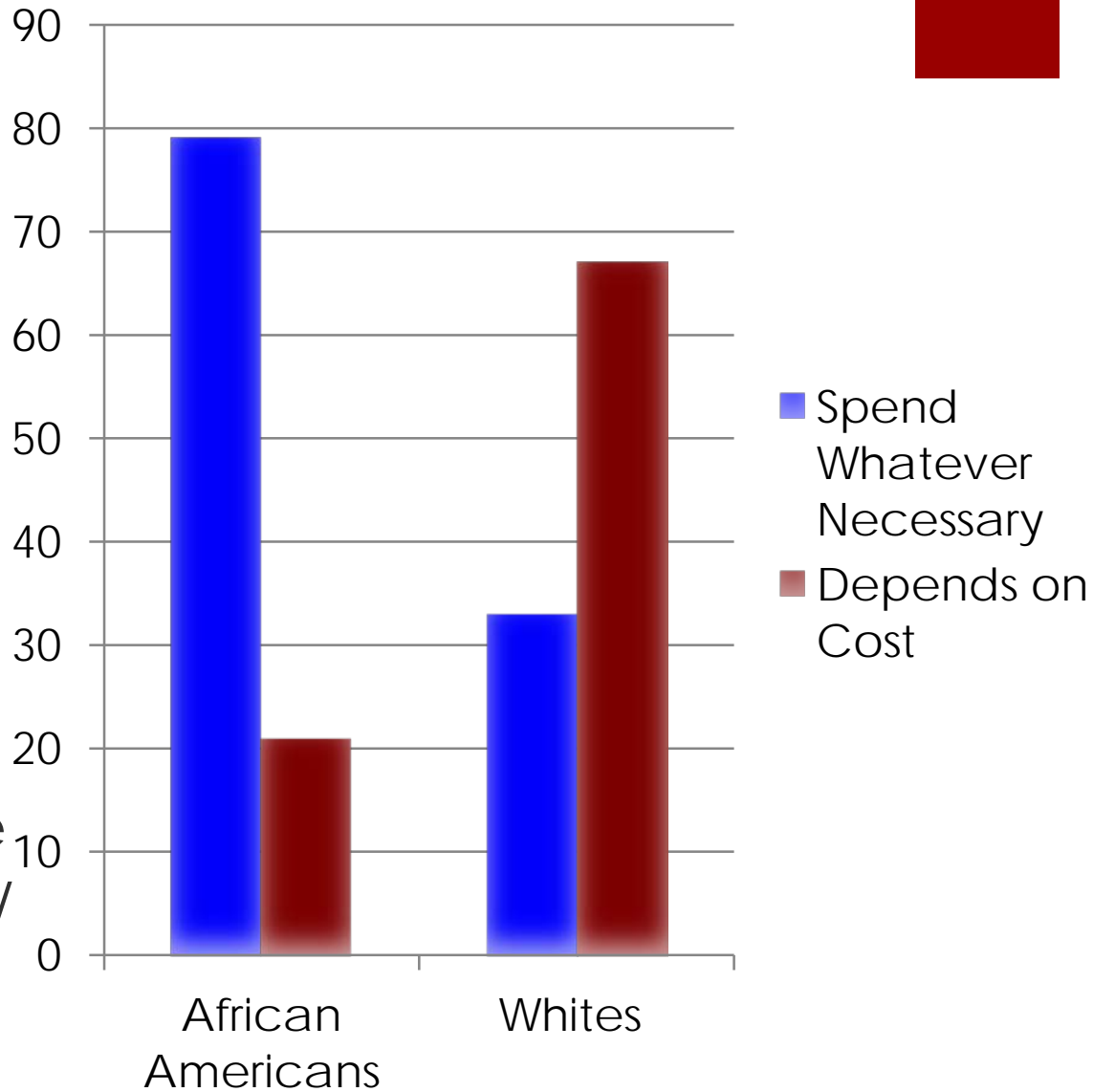
Results

Overall

79% of blacks say we should spend whatever is necessary

33% of whites say we should spend whatever is necessary

White respondents are statistically significantly less likely to support "spending whatever is necessary" when the framing is BLACK + REFUGEE



Real Effects



“Not to sound racist but because we want to make things more understandable for our younger child we would like to house white children”

“I would love to house a single mom with one child, not racist but white only”

“Provider would provide room and board for \$400, prefers 2 white females”

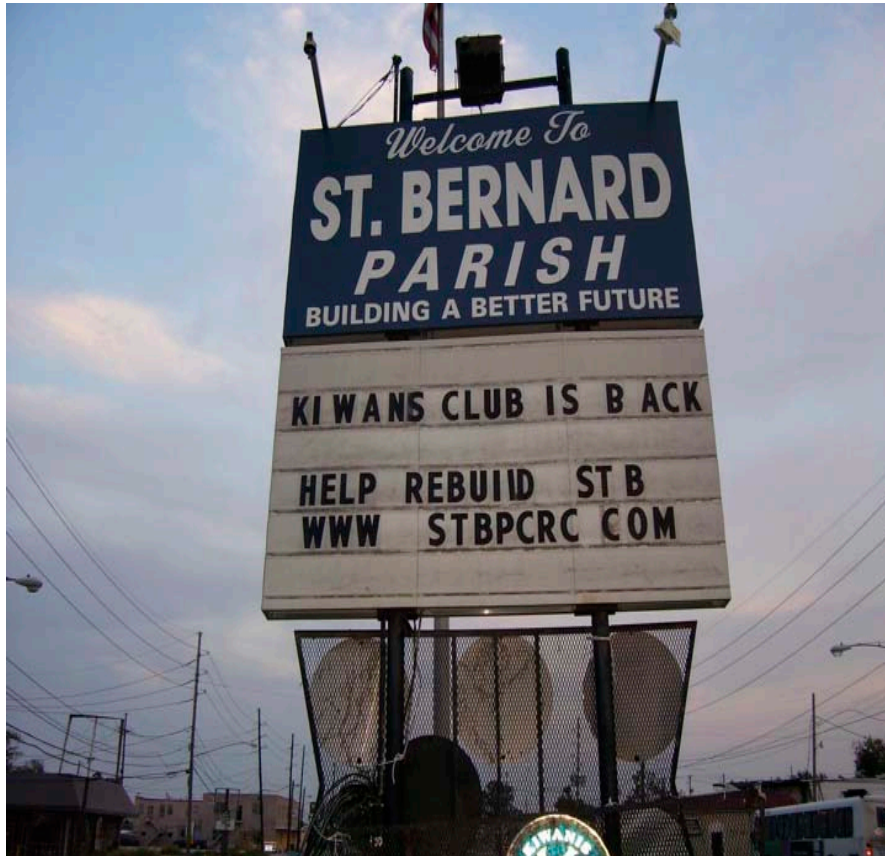
“Prefer white Catholic family,
children welcome”

“Room available to single white mother with child or younger to middle aged white couple”

St. Bernard Parish

Ordinance SBPC #670-09-06: No person or entity shall rent, lease loan, or otherwise allow occupancy or use of any single family residence located in an R-1 zone by any person or group of persons, other than a family member(s) related by blood within the first, second or third direct ascending or descending generation(s), without first obtaining a permissive use permit from the St. Bernard Parish Council.

St. Bernard Parish

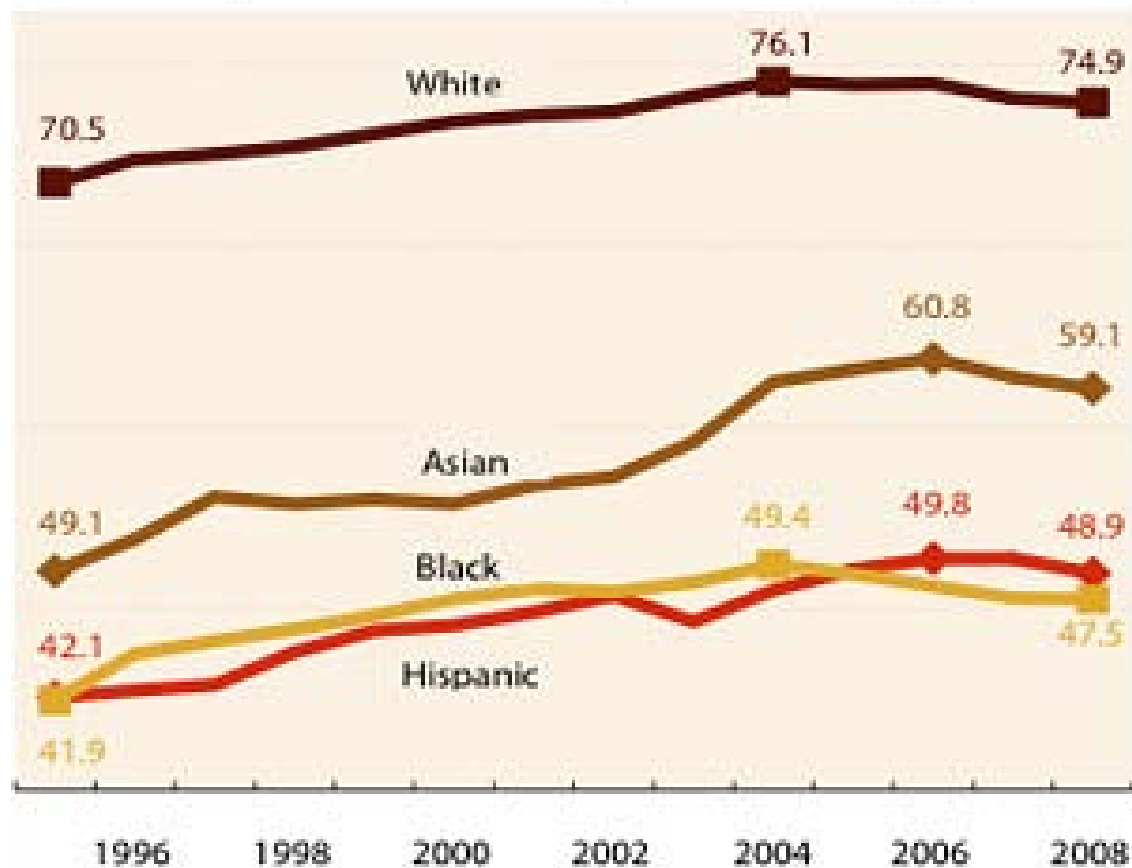


- The most recent estimates from United States Census Data indicate that whites own nearly 93% of St. Bernard Parish owner-occupied housing
- We're not changing the demographics, all we're doing is saying we want to maintain the demographics..."
 - St. Bernard Councilman Craig Taffaro, September 28, 2006
- Six years later the fight continues.

Not an isolated problem

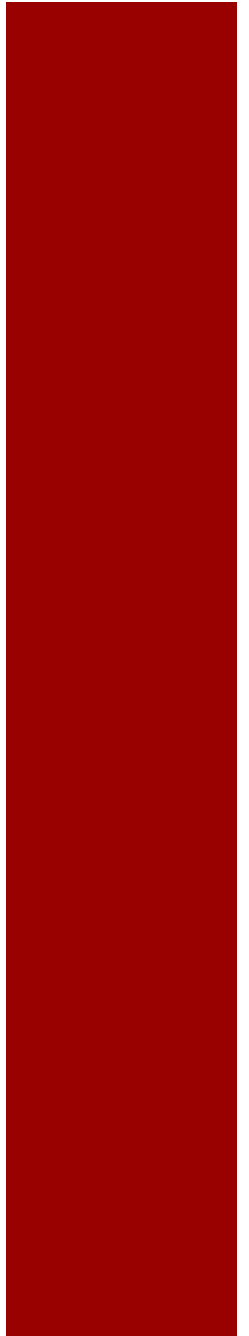


**Homeownership Rates,
by Race & Ethnicity, 1995-2008 (%)**



Source: Pew Hispanic Center

Rewriting the Social Contract





To live in a democracy is to have the right to govern, not simply to be governed. To rule, not just to be ruled. To be heard, not silenced. To lose without fearing that winners take all.

These inequalities affect us all



- Race and class inequality limit the possibilities for effective political mobilization and policy intervention.
- How do we re-imagine political mobilization around issues of incarceration in post-racial era?
- How do we work effectively for economic justice during a recession?

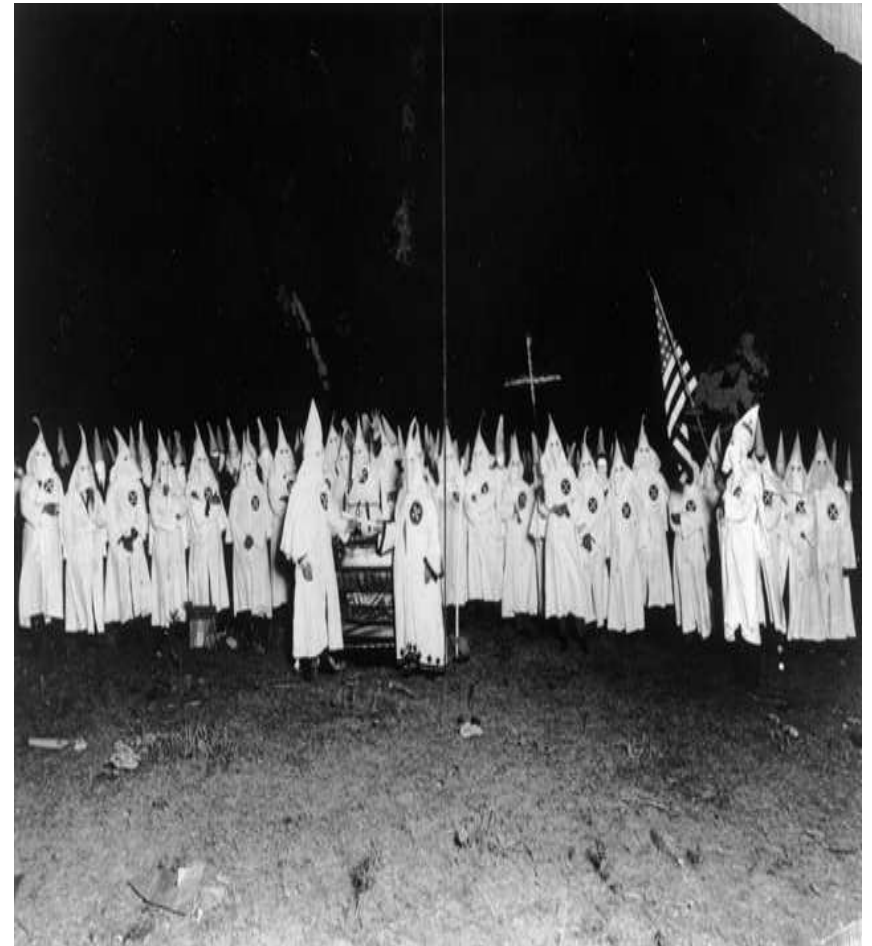
The “Defending Stupak” Problem



- Limited space for discussing progressive politics.
- Often forced into defensive position.
- Progressives often find ourselves defending status quo that we don't really want to defend.
- Public Education and Race is a key example.
- But beware “take to the streets” assumption

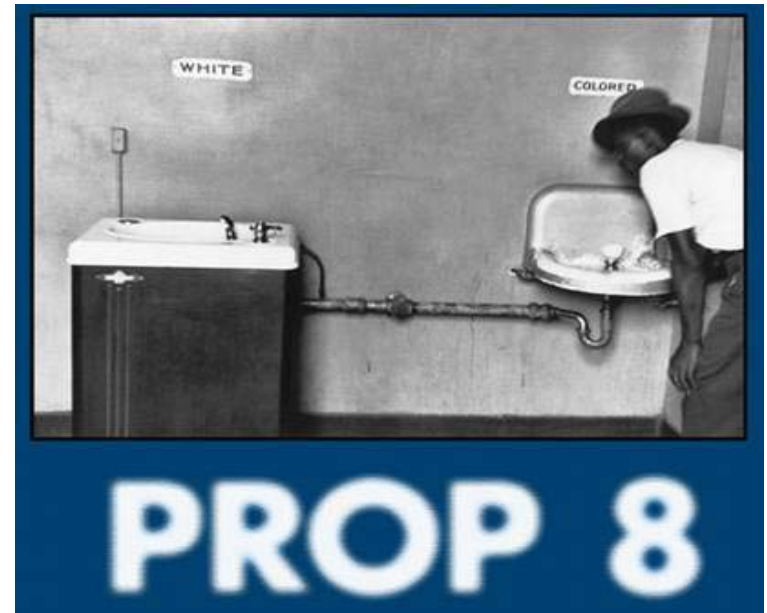
Limits of Community Organizing

- Civil societies with large amounts of social capital, can be intolerant and tyrannical to subordinate groups.
- Just because people are organized does not mean that it is good for democracy.
- KKK was a community organization pressuring the government!



Sustaining Mobilization for Good

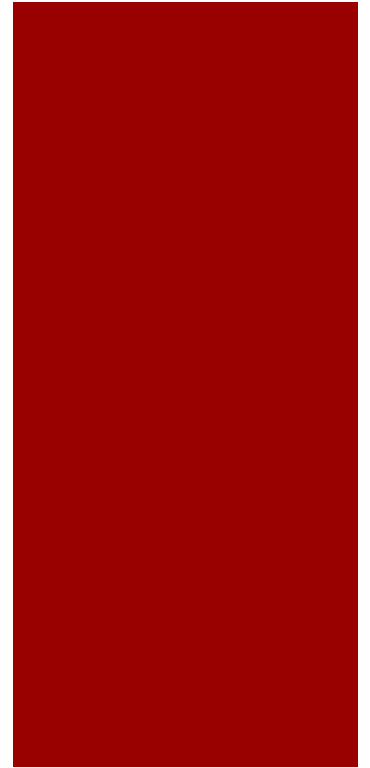
- Capitulation to the powerful is the norm and **sustained mobilization** of the marginal is rare.
- Democracy requires activation of the communities with less power to check tyranny of majority.



Do we need “Category 5” Levees?



- Shelter
- Quality education
- Food
- Living wages
- Stable ecosystems
- Access to transportation
- Sustainable resources
- Equity for all residents
- Equal citizenship



Cowardly New World?

Disruptions of status quo provide opportunities for change.

What will we do with our opportunity?

What are we to do with this brave new world that we had the audacity to create?

Thank you

