

Understanding the Impact of Systemic Racism on Black Families

Beginning with the Beginning

- Known family members sent to differing plantations
 - Destroy social cohesion among slaves
 - Create total dependence on planters

Slave Codes/Family Codes (SC, 1712)

- No groups of five!
 - Minimize plots for insurrection
 - Minimize formation of trust among slaves
- Marriage, circumcision, birth certificates illegal
 - Undermines familial formation
 - Racial devaluation becomes normative

Bottom Line

- Black family formation undermined by:
 - lack of due process (bondage)
 - slave wages!

The Age of Plessy

- Post slavery aesthetic mocking begins
Charles Carroll, *The Negro A Beast*, 1900
- Post slavery lack of human endowment begins
Thomas Dixon, *The Leopard's Spots*, 1902
- Post slavery criminalization begins
Robert Shufeldt, *The Negro: A Menace to American Civilization*,
1907
- Post slavery declaration of “war” begins
D. W. Griffith, *Birth of a Nation*, 1915

The Bottom Line

- Black family formation undermined by:
 - lack of due process (criminal [in]justice)
 - paltry wages

Brown...but still Black

- Busing begins and ends
- Black students return to “black” schools
- State legislatures fund “white” schools more per pupil than “black” schools
- South Carolina’s Minimally Adequate Public Education

The Tale of the Tape

- Nationally
- Black students lag behind white counterparts in reading and math from 2.5 to 3.9 years from the mid-late 80's consistently for the past few decades. (The Brookings Institute)
- South Carolina,
- White students 3.2 times more likely to be enrolled in AP courses
- Black students 3 times more likely to be suspended
- Black students make up 34% of students in state but 59% of suspensions and 58% of expulsions
- (ProPublica)

The Bottom Line

- Black family formation undermined by:
 - lack of due process
 - “minimal” formal education

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The War on Drugs

- Incentives for local police for increased drug arrests
- Concentrated efforts in black community
- From 1980-2000 the number of people incarcerated rose from 300,000 to over 2 million!
- 500,000 serving time for drug offenses today compared to 41,000 in 1980...1100% increase
- (Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*)

Bottom Line

- Black family formation undermined by:
 - Lack of due process
 - Limited economic opportunities

Summation

- The Two-Fold Challenge
acute racial prejudice as well as
hegemonic labor creation!
morality as well as economics!