Deep Structures of Inequality in America

• 1619 to 2019:
  • 400 years since the first slaves were brought to this country
  • Slavery lasted for 246 (62%) of those 400 years until 1865
  • Jim Crow lasted another 100 years
• Slavery plus Jim Crow = 346 years 87% of our history
Dramatic Rise in Income Inequality in the US

In 2014, 12% of national income was received by the top 1% in Western Europe, compared to 20% in the United States. In 1980, 10% of national income was received by the top 1% in Western Europe, compared to 11% in the United States.

Life expectancy at birth

- 1968: White: 71.5 yrs., Black: 64.0 yrs.
- 2018: White: 79.0 yrs., Black: 75.5 yrs.

Incarcerated population

- Per 100,000
- 1968: White: 604, Black: 111
- 2018: White: 270, Black: 1,730

Source: Adapted from Table 1 in Janelle Jones, John Schmitt, and Valerie Wilson, *50 Years After the Kerner Commission: African Americans Are Better Off in Many Ways but Are Still Disadvantaged by Racial Inequality*, Economic Policy Institute, February 2018. Values are for 1968 and 2018 or closest year for which data are available.

NOTES: C = at least some college; HS = completed high school or general equivalency diploma (GED); DO = no high school diploma or GED.

SOURCE: Data from Pettit et al. (2009, Table 37).
Life Expectancy in Kalamazoo County

Black-White Gap at Birth

- **Kalamazoo: 5.4 years gap** - black-white gap in life expectancy at birth
- **US: 3.6 years** - black-white gap in life expectancy at birth

**White Life Expectancy: 78.8 Years**
- Equal to 52nd in world ranking
  - 51 Bahrain
  - **52 Kalamazoo (white)**
  - 52 Chile
  - 53 Cyprus

**Black Life Expectancy: 73.3 Years**
- Equal to 132nd in world ranking
  - 131 Vietnam
  - **132 Kalamazoo (black)**
  - 133 Bangladesh
  - 134 Nicaragua

* Source: National Center for Health Statistics

Gap at Age 40 by Income Percentile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentile</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>78.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>74.5</td>
<td>81.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25th</td>
<td>77.8</td>
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<td>88.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95th</td>
<td>89.0</td>
<td>89.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 5th to 95th percentile gap | 15.21 | 11.2 |
| 10th to 90th percentile gap | 12.79 | 7.22 |
| 25th to 75th percentile gap | 6.49 | 5.41 |

* Source: Raj Chetty, The Health Inequality Project
Action Agenda

• Get Woke –
  • Awareness
  • Moral Indignation

• Get informed –
  • not just about statistics documenting inequities
  • not just anecdotes...
  • ... but about how systemic inequality is structured

• Take action
  • Organize
  • Vote
  • Make it your business to be a champion for equity in the spirit of Dr. King