

# The Racialization of U.S. Political Economy A Timeline

### THE RACIALIZATION OF U.S. POLITICAL ECONOMY

The racialization of the U.S. political economy (meaning almost all aspects of private and public life are permeated by issues of race), has taken different forms; depending upon time period—one can identify at least five: (i) *Genocidal racism* (targeted at Native Americans). (ii) *Dominative racism* (e.g. slavery, targeted at African Americans). (iii) *Juridical racism* (e.g. Jim Crow, targeted at all racial minorities). (iv) *Aversive racism* (e.g. residential segregation, targeted at all racial minorities). (v) *Institutional racism* (e.g. "colorblind" racism, targeted at all racial minorities). Today, the dominant forms of racism that hold sway in United States in the post-Civil Rights era (1964 to the



present) are aversive racism at the interpersonal level and institutional racism (e.g. colorblind racism) at the societal level—even though racist discrimination in public life is supposedly illegal (unlike in the case of the first three forms that were not only legal but brutally enforced). It is important to observe that in these various incarnations that the racialization of U.S. political economy has been manifest, law has always been used to legitimate these incarnations (and this holds true even today in the post-Civil Rights era). That is, from the perspective of race, law



To get a sense of how *aversive racism* is expressed in daily life today observe which skin color makes you "uncomfortable" when talking to a person in public (but not in private), or when sitting in a cafeteria, or when riding an elevator, or when sitting next to a person on a bus, or when keeping a door open for someone, or when introducing someone to your parents, and so on.

It is not possible to grab other people's lands without violating the **Natural Law of Prior Claim** and that in turn requires some form of *genocidal racism* (and the degree to which it is implemented will depend upon population ratios between the inhabitants and the invading foreign squatters). Simply put, the United States could not have been founded without genocidal racism!

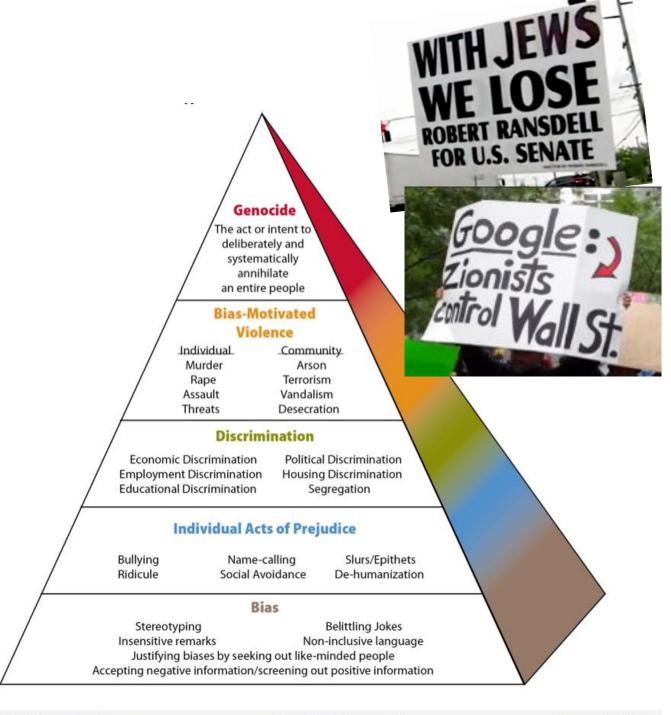


"Race continues to play a defining role in one's life trajectory and outcomes. A complex system of racial bias and inequities is at play, deeply rooted in our country's history, culture and institutions. This system of racialization — which routinely confers advantage and disadvantage based on skin color and other characteristics — must be clearly understood, directly challenged and fundamentally transformed. If our nation is to live up to its democratic ideals — that all people are created equal and treated fairly — then racial equity and inclusion must be at the forefront of how we shape our institutions, policies and culture."

The Annie E. Casey Foundation, United States. Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide, 2014, p. 2.

It should also be pointed out, however, that race is not the only source of pseudo-consciousness among the Euro-American masses, other contentious sources can also be brought into play, either in tandem with race or sometimes as alternatives; for example, issues such as: universal gun-ownership; capital punishment; abortion; and religion (usually involving misinterpretations of Biblical teachings).

There is another form of racism that has developed as an adjunct to the dominant forms; its called *internalized racism* (a form of self-loathing or self-hatred among the racially oppressed themselves where they have internalized the racism or ethnicism of the racist/ethnicist majority as a consequence of the power of the mass media against a backdrop of a long history of racial/ethnicist oppression.)

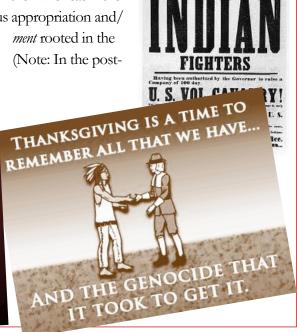


### RACE AND LAW

The *racialization of U.S. political economy* has been legitimated through law from the very beginning of the founding of United States as a European colonial intrusion in the Americas—the drivers of this legislation have been, depending upon time period, surplus appropriation and/

or the congenital sense of *entitle*ideology of Anglo-whiteness.
Civil Rights era—1964 to the
present—the gimmick that conservatives have relied upon to
maintain the status quo, a *racial- ized* society in which the ideology
of anglo-whiteness dominates,
has been *colorblind racism* based
on the notion of
"colorblindness," a euphemistically-dubbed bogus concept
which essentially argues that you





One of the foundational elements of a modern democracy is the establishment of the *rule under law* (or "rule of law;" or as inscribed on the main portico of the U.S. Supreme Court building "equal justice under law;" or quoting John Adams "a government of laws, and not of men." However, when law is inherently unjust because it unfairly targets a particular

group of people not for anything they have done but for simply who they are by dint of birth, (not to mention such other factors as under- or no representation in the legislature or the justice system) then clearly democracy has not been established. Consequently, law must be resisted "by any means necessary" (to quote Malcom X) until it is abrogated. This is the circumstance that has faced racial minorities in United States for *much* of its history ever since the first European colonists set up a permanent settlement in Jamestown, Virginia on May 14, 1607. And



even today, in the post-Civil Rights era, one can discern a distinct absence of the principle of "rule under law" given how the justice system treats racial minorities (as evidenced by police brutality, differential prison sentences, and so on). In mentioning police brutality, it is especially important to direct your attention to the long and sordid U.S. history of the brutal murders of people in public, by violent Euro-American mobs hell bent on blood-thirsty rampages, from the late 1700s to the 1960s. (In fact, the lynchings at times served as mass entertainment for EuroAmericans.) Needless to

say, many of those murdered (but not all) were members of racial minorities—in the U.S. South, it was very often Af-rican Americans. It should also be noted that at election time this form of terrorism was used in support of the re-



turn to power in the South of the former slave-holding class—at that time represented by the Democratic Party— following the period of *Reconstruction* (the brief post-Civil War interregnum, 1873-1877, when there was a meaningful effort made, under the direction of the selfnamed "Radical Republicans" in Congress, to return to the freed en-

slaved African Americans their human/civil rights—as their birthright as human beings and as citizens of the United States). Once back in power, they quickly constructed the

semi-fascist political economic system that came to be known as **Jim Crow,** and which would later necessitate the launch of the civil rights movement in the 1950s.

COME to 10th and A Streets at 7:30

Come to 10th and A Streets at 7:30

Monday evening and express your opinion on the Chinese question.

SHALL WE HAVE

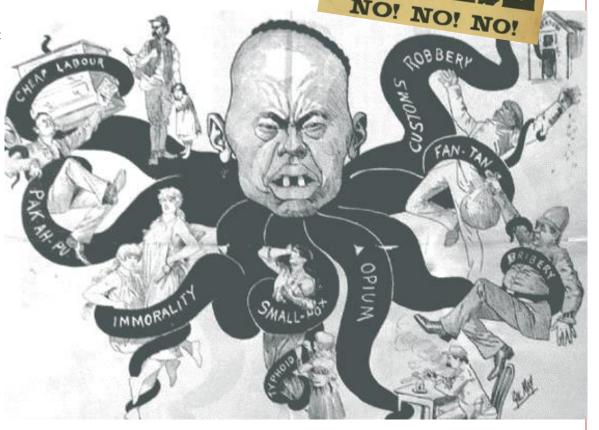
cannot vanquish racial discrimination by invoking race since there is no such

thing as institutionalized racism in the post -Civil Rights era.)

A brief chronology of relevant *determinative* legislation and court decisions would include:

Around 1660/1661 (exact year un-known): The Virginia House of Burgesses moves to legislatively recognize the legality of enslaving Africans in the newly established colony.

**1662**: Virginia legislatively adopts the doctrine of *Partus* 



**sequitur ventrem** (from Roman civil law) establishing the rule that if a mother was an enslaved person then so were all her children.

**1680-1682**: Virginia adopts the "slaved codes" (rules governing the conduct of the enslaved) that would be the template for slave codes to come in other states.

**1790**: The *Naturalization Act* is passed by the First Congress restricting U.S. citizenship to only "white persons"; hence, everyone else was excluded.

1793: *Fugitive Slave Act* passed by Congress (mandated the capture and return of escaped slaves from anywhere in the country) in support of the "Fugitive Slave Clause" of the U.S. Constitution.

**1823**: The infamous *Johnson v. M'Intosh* [McIntosh] case is decided by the Supreme Court in which it establishes the bogus principle of "Doctrine of Discovery" (which held that all Native American lands belonged to the Federal government as the representative of the European colonists who had "discovered" these lands—regardless of the fact that the original inhabitants, Native Americans, were still living there.)

**1830**: *Indian [Native American] Removal Act* passed by Congress—leads to the infamous ethnic cleansing of 1838-39 known as the "Trail of Tears."

1850: California legislates the *Indenture*Act (euphemistically titled An Act for the Government and Protection of the Indian) that allows for the semienslavement of Native American children for a period up to the age of eighteen.

**1850**: *Fugitive Slave Act* adopted by Congress (it strengthened the original 1793 Act).



Hypodescent here refers to what is also known as the "one drop rule" whereby any person with colored ancestry (Africans, Native Americans, etc.) was designated as colored—even if she/he could by physical looks pass for white.

The "Doctrine of Discovery" was an arrogant concept that held that all Native American lands belonged to the Federal government as the representative of the European colonists who had "discovered" these lands—regardless of the fact that the original inhabitants, Native Americans, were still living there.

In presenting this chronology, it is necessary to highlight the special role of the U.S. Supreme Court in legitimating not only the surplus appropriation activities of the capitalist class but the racialization of the U.S. political system. This, perhaps, is not surprising because while the Court likes to project itself as an institution above politics, it is very much a political institution given the modality of its composition—nominations (or to be correct "appointments," as Congress very rarely fails to confirm the nominations) to the Court is the prerogative of the president. (This is one of the reasons why voting in a U.S. presidential election can have a very meaningful impact long into the future—sadly, many among the lower classes appear to unaware of this fact.) Yes, it is true that the Court has also been responsible, at certain moments in its history, in the effort to de-legitimate institutional racism (as well as support the class struggle to expand authentic democracy),





but the record here has usually been of one step forward, two steps back. Here is an example: the appointment by the conservative president George H. W. Bush in 1991 of the relatively unknown and inexperienced African American by the name of Clarence Thomas—to replace a fellow African American (that brilliant intel-





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Civilian Exclusion

NO.

lectual and indefatigable champion of civil rights, Justice Thurgood Marshall, who was retiring from the Court)—amidst a scandalous charge against Thomas of sexual-harassment that grew out of a *leaked* FBI report on him, and who, most tellingly, had at one time worked for that giant U.S. agrobusiness with pernicious tentacles all across the planet called *Monsanto*, has been a tremendous boon to both the bourgeoisie and those conservatives opposed to civil rights for racial minorities and other marginalized groups. To date, his record

**1851**: Congress adopts the *Appropriation Bill for Indian [Native American] Affairs* that mandates the transfer of Native Americans to reservations on an unprecedented scale.

**1854**: California Supreme Court decides *The People of the State of California v. George W. Hall,* an appealed murder case, ruling that Chinese Americans and Immigrants could not testify against Euro-Americans. (This case involved the murder of a Chinese American by Euro-American—the decision would effectively legitimate Euro-American race riots targeting Asian Americans.)

**1857**: Supreme Court issues its *Dred Scott v. Sandford* decision which rules that African Americans were not U.S. citizens.

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has been, with rarest of exceptions, full and complete support of their interests; saying that it is a most shameful record would be a gross understatement. In almost every case he has ever sat on that involves a plaintiff petitioning for redress in matters of civil/human rights (and authentic democracy in general) you will find that his vote in the case is against the plaintiff. Without a doubt, he has firmly secured himself a seat in that pantheon of misguided right-wing African American luminaries (others include Ward Connerly, Stanley Crouch, Alan Keyes, Colin Powell, Condoleeza Rice, Shelby Steele, and so on) who while personally reaping the benefits accruing from the legacy of the struggles of countless people in the Civil Rights Movement, hypocritically turned their backs on carrying that struggle forward. And as if that has not been enough, they have actively championed (probably unknowingly

through their ignorance of the difference between structural or institutional racism and interpersonal aversive racism—if not racial/ethnic "self-hate," a universal byproduct of a long history of marginalization and oppression confronting any group of people, and/or simply crass Uncle Tomist opportunism) the maintenance of institutional racism and a deeper level of surplus appropriation by the bourgeoisie.

**1862**: Congress passes the *Homestead Act* that further dispossessed Native Americans of their lands to allow settlement (at almost no cost) to outsiders—

at about 160 acres (65 hectares) a piece.

**1870**: The *Naturalization Act* updates the exclusionary provisions of previous legislation to now also include African Americans, besides Euro-Americans, but all others are excluded.

**1871**: *Indian [Native American] Appropriation Act* passed by Congress

that strips the Native Americans of claims to any form of sovereignty that required signing treaties with them; henceforth they were no longer an "independent nation, tribe, or power," but mere wards of the Federal government.

**1876**: The Court issues its decision in *United States v. Reese* stating that the 15th Amendment that had granted voting rights to all males in United States regardless of their color, or whether they had been former slaves, etc. did not automatically confer the right to vote. Through this judicial skullduggery, the Court opened the sluice-gates of racially-motivated voter-suppression of minority voters that would only be closed via the 1965 *Voting Rights Act*.

1879: A federally-funded off-reservation boarding school is established in Pennsylvania by the "Indian fighter" Captain Henry Richard Pratt in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, known as the United States Indian Training and Industrial School, that would be the model for many other similar schools established for Native American children and to which Congress would mandate compulsory attendance—very often, understandably, against the most trenchant and heart-wrenching wishes of their parents. The primary purpose of the schools was to forcibly "civilize" the Native Americans; in the words of Pratt "kill the Indian, save the man" (implying the complete erasure of their entire culture: language, religion, child-rearing practices, clothing, cuisine, and so on).

**1882**: The *Chinese Exclusion Act* is adopted by Congress prohibiting Chinese immigration and retained Chinese exclusion from U.S. citizenship for those who were already living in United States.



1896: In its *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision, the Court agrees with the plaintiff that racial segregation was permissible under Jim Crow; it rationalized its decision on the basis of the bogus doctrine of "separate but equal" that would eventually be shown to be a constitutionally false doctrine in the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* case. (In practice, of course, social amenities and services, including schools, hospitals, etc., were never equal but they were certainly separate.)

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**1923**: In *United States v. Thind* the Supreme Court defines who a "white" person is and proceeds to overturn the lower court's ruling that Bhagat Singh Thind, an East Asian from India, could be classified as "white" for naturalization purposes.

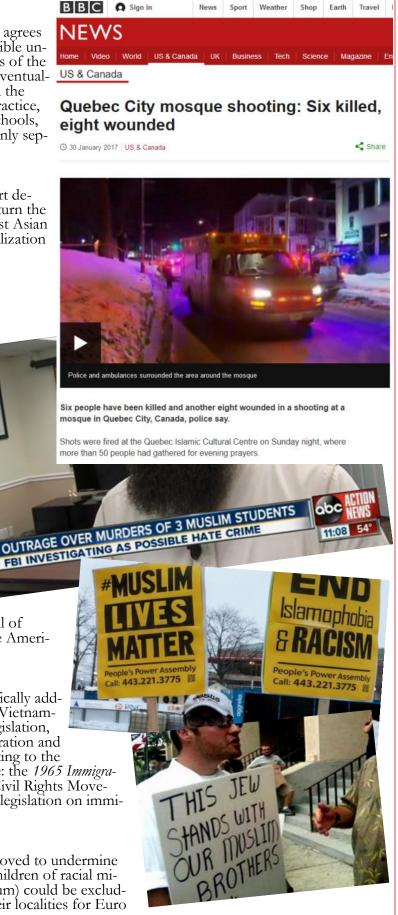
**1924:** Virginia passes the *Racial Integrity Act* that creates only two racial classifications: "white" and "colored" and establishes the principle of *hypodescent*; it would be a template for similar legislation adopted by other states.

1924: Indian [Native American] Citizenship Act is passed graciously and magnanimously giving citizenship and voting rights to all Native Americans in the land of their birth! (The 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that had granted citizenship to all born in the United States had left out Native Americans on grounds that they were citizens of tribal nations. Some decades later, in another similar gesture, Congress would pass the 1968 Indi-

an Civil Rights Act that would extend many of the Bill of Rights provisions of the U.S. Constitution to Native Americans.)

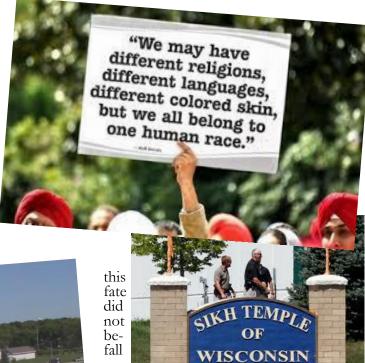
1924: The *Immigration Act* is legislated that specifically added Arabs and other Asians (East Indians, Japanese, Vietnamese, etc.) to the exclusionary provisions of earlier legislation, such as the *Immigration Act of 1917*, regarding immigration and citizenship—that is they were barred from immigrating to the United States or being eligible for citizenship. (Note: the 1965 *Immigration and Nationality Act*, adopted in the wake of the Civil Rights Movement, swept away all *race-based* restrictions of earlier legislation on immigration and citizenship.)

1927: In *Gong Lum v. Rice*, the Supreme Court moved to undermine the intent of the 14th Amendment by stating that children of racial minorities (in this case a Chinese American, Martha Lum) could be excluded on racial grounds from schools designated by their localities for Euro -Americans.



1934: As in an earlier effort (the 1922 Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill), the U.S. Senate fails to pass the Wagner-Constigan Anti-Lynching Bill because of opposition from some conservative Senators (the murder by lynch-mobs of persons of color, and some Euro-Americans too, would continue without fear of prosecution).

1944: The Supreme Court issues its decision in *Korematsu v. United States* siding with the government in its blatantly racist and unconstitutional strategy of rounding up thousands of Japanese American citizens and immigrants and imprisoning them in concentration camps—popularly supported by the Euro-American citizenry, especially on the West Coast—during the Second World War; note, however, that



Italian Americans or German Americans whose ancestral countries were also at war with United States. (Question to ponder: who among the masses would have opposed a decision, if it had been made, to simply murder the Japanese Americans after they had been rounded up?)



1974: The Supreme Court decides the *Milliken v. Bradley* case; its decision begins the process of *reversing* the intent of the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* case to desegregate public schooling, by stating that the creation of segregated school districts was legal so long as the intent was not deliberate segregation. The decision reflected the ongoing process of Euro-American flight from inner cities to what were effectively white suburbs, in part to escape school integration efforts in the cities.

**1978**: The Supreme Court, in its decision in the *University of California Regents v. Bakke* sides with the Euro-American plaintiff

Alan P. Bakke that he was a victim of an affirmative action policy aimed at encouraging the enrollment of historically discriminated applicants. (In other words, Bakke argued that he was a victim of something called "reverse discrimination" and the Court tragically agreed with him, even though reverse discrimination can only apply in circumstances where there is at least relative equality of power among those involved.)

**1977**: The Supreme Court, in its *Village of Arlington Heights v. Metropolitan Housing Development Corp.* decision sides with the village in preventing the construction of an apartment complex in an area zoned for single-family houses that would have allowed families of different races/ethnicities to move in. The Court based its decision on the argument that an intention to racially discriminate had not been proven in the decision to maintain the zoning.



1987: In *McCleskey v. Kemp* decision the Supreme Court rules that in the absence of proof of intention to discriminate, demonstration by means of bona fide research that there was a severe racial bias (against racial minorities) in who got the death-penalty in murder cases was irrelevant! (Obviously, the Court in its eternal wisdom failed to recognize that those who engage in racial discrimination of any kind, overtly or subconsciously, do not always announce their intention to discrimi-

nate. The Court, however, would recognize this fact in a different case, involving residential segregation, in its 2015 Texas Department of Housing v. Inclusive Communities Project, Inc. decision—not surprisingly, among the dissenting Justices was Clarence Thomas.)

1988: The Supreme Court in Wards Cove Packing Co. v. Atonio sides with the packing company stating that the company was not guilty of discriminating against minority workers (in this instance mainly Alaskan Native Americans) because it was not intentional; its how the labor market worked.

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**1988**: The decision in *Patterson v. McLean Credit Union* case is issued by the Supreme Court in favor of the employer, the credit union, whom the petitioner, Brenda Patterson, had accused of racial harassment, lack of promotion, and eventually her firing from her job. The Court's outrageous reasoning was that even if an employer engages in discriminatory conduct there is no remedy for it under existing law because an employee could choose to terminate her employment and find a job elsewhere.

1989: In the *City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.* the Supreme Court's decision overturns the city's affirmative action policy of attempting to increase the representation of businesses owned by racial minorities within the total universe of businesses awarded contracts by the city (over fifty percent of whose population comprised African Americans) by setting aside a percentage of the awards for that purpose. Its spurious reasoning

MUSLIMS KILLED
BY A LONE GUNNER?
NO BREAKING
NEWS HERE!
MAIN STREAM
WEDIA

#CHAPELHILL SHOOTING

was that "To accept Richmond's claim that past societal discrimination alone can serve as the basis for rigid racial preferences would be to open the door to competing claims for "remedial relief" for every disadvantaged group. The dream of a Nation of equal citizens in a society where race is irrelevant to personal opportunity and achievement would be lost in a mosaic of shifting preferences based on inherently unmeasurable claims of past wrongs." In other words, the Court recycled the myth of building a colorblind society *by ignoring race* in a circumstance where affirmative action for Euro-Americans has always been (and continues to be) the rule ever since European colonial settlement began in United States.

**2005**: The U.S. Senate issues an apology for not passing anti-lynching laws (e.g. the 1922 *Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill*) when it had the opportunity to do so in the 1920s and 30s (however, quite a few of the conservatives were unwilling to avail themselves of even this most modest of opportunities decades later, after all, words are cheap, to indicate their abhorrence of racism).

2006: Supreme Court decides the combined cases of *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle* School District No. 1, and Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education in support of Euro-American conservative opposition to *voluntary* (repeat, *voluntary*) school desegregation/integration initiatives in public schools.

case, siding with those conservatives intending to weaken the 1965 Voting Rights Act.



### RACE and CAPITALISM

From the perspective of capitalism, there are at least three functions that the racialization of U.S. political economy serves *today*. (1) *Scapegoating of racial/ethnic minorities*: Helps to maintain political and economic stability by using racial/ethnic minorities as scapegoats for the severe problems that the activities of the capitalist classes as a whole produce: an out of control

CRESTWOOD

income gap; mass unemployment, falling standards of living, environmental destruction, scarcity of resources, etc. Racism, expressed through the ideology/practices of whiteness—*in the post-Civil Rights era, also known as* **colorblind racism**—helps to deflect resistance and rebellion away from the capitalist class and the capitalist system. Note that, today, this function has gained increasing importance in the face of the ever-increasing pauperi-

zation of the masses resulting from the enormous income/wealth gap between the masses and the bourgeoisie engineered through the manipulation of procedural democracy by the latter. (2) *Direct exploitation of minorities:* through measures such as enslavement and dispossession of their lands (in the past), low wages, atrocious working conditions, etc. (3) *Fragmentation of the lower* 

Important: The foregoing, should not imply, however, that capitalism always requires racism to thrive; rather where it exists or where there is a potential for it to emerge the capitalist class will take advantage of it.

Racism, by means of the ideology of the Other, creates an "us" versus "them" mentality, whereas genuine progress toward the creation of a democratic society is only possible under conditions of cooperation and mutual respect among the lower classes (who together form the majority).

To elaborate on scapegoating: note, first, that colorblind racism also masquerades as true democracy by calling for an assault on "big government." However, this is a perversion of democracy. As already mentioned, authentic democracy is not possible without the "humanization" of capitalism and that of course requires regulatory governmental intrusion (in other words "big government") into the business of surplus appropriation because at the heart of authentic democracy is "redistributive justice" (which is manifest through some form of progressive taxation and public wages—two sides of the same coin). Now, even though some degree of redistributive justice is absolutely essential from the perspective of political stability in a capitalist democracy, much in the same way that profit maximization is a constant rule in all entrepreneurial activities at the level individual enterprises, minimization of public wages is a constant objective of the bourgeoisie at the level of society as a whole. For the lower classes, the reverse is true—they want to maximize public wages (as well as personal wages of course)—hence the potential for class-struggle. The strategy of the bourgeoisie in the United States has been to call upon the long history of the racialization of U.S. political economy to hijack the class struggle (or its potential); and depending upon the time period, it has called into play different forms of this racialization. In the

classes (divide and rule): Historically, and up to the present, racism has been one of the most important tools used in United States by the bourgeoisie to purchase the allegiance of the Euro-American lower classes by allowing them to exchange their whiteness for a few privileges.

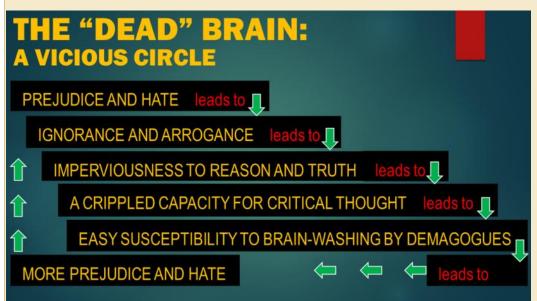
current period, it has taken the form of colorblind racism where any serious effort at implementing the gains of the civil rights movement (e.g. residential desegregation, affirmative action policies, etc.) is perceived by the majority among the Euro-American lower classes as "big government" intruding in behalf of people of color. In other words, by siding with the bourgeoisie in its surplusappropriation-driven permanent assault on "big government," the Euro-American lower classes are unwittingly assisting the bourgeoisie in weakening authentic democracy—which of course is not only against their objective interests but makes them even more inclined to be racist as they look for scapegoats among people of color for this outcome. (Consider: in United States the economy is controlled almost exclusively by Euro-Americans, not people of color.) It is not a coincidence that, today, as the income gap between the bourgeoisie and the lower classes has reached historically unprecedented heights, the intensity of colorblind racism (one expression of which is to vehemently deny being racist, but while all the time bending to racist-proclivities) has

The concept of objective interests (versus subjective interests) is an extremely important concept for explaining the race-class nexus. All human beings, both individually and collectively (as specific groups

grown among Euro-Americans.

or as **societies** as a whole), have *objective* interests and *subjective* interests. Now, the difference between the two is that the first (objective) set of interests are those that an *independent* observer can objectively identify. Subjective interests, on the other hand, are interests that are unique to specific individuals or groups and which only they can point to them—that is, an objective observer would have to be told about them. To make this difference clearer some examples are in order. From a biological point of view, an objective interest that all human beings have is access to adequate nutritionally rich food. Another objective interest is access to decent affordable shelter; another objective interest is access to adequate affordable health care; and so on. On the other hand, what particular kinds of foods (e.g. bread versus rice or meat versus fish or mangoes versus apples, etc.), or what kind of housing (e.g. apartments versus houses), are subjective interests. Some more examples: in modern societies, access to affordable quality schooling is an objective interest; whereas access to public versus private schooling or access to a boarding school versus a day school are subjective interests. From the perspective of who is teaching this course, your objective interests in this class are matters like: fairness (that is, not biased in terms of raced, gender, class, ethnicity, etc.); excellent mastery of subject matter; ability to communicate effectively; a passion for teaching; a well-organized syllabus; punctuality; and flexibility when circumstances call for it. Your subjective interests, on the other hand, are being concerned about things like the gender of the teacher or ethnicity or race or religion; whether the teacher is disabled or not, or whether the teacher wears a suit versus casual dress, or whether the teacher is fat or thin, or whether the teacher's personality is one of a smiley happy-go-lucky person or not; and so on. In capitalist societies, the objective interests of the masses (that is the working classes) primarily concerns undermining the class warfare of the capitalist classes waged against them—by demanding such things as decent wages, safe working conditions, universal

access to affordable health care, a pollution-free environment, a robust social safety net, fair tax policies, and so on (all of which undermine the key objective interest of the capitalist class, namely surplus appropriation). On the basis of the foregoing, you should now be able to distinguish between objective interests versus subjective interests. At the same time, you should also be in a position to think of situations where you are hurting your objective interests by confusing your subjective interests with your objective interests. From the perspective of capitalist democracies, this concept in my view is of great importance in helping us analyze the political behavior of the masses; especially behavior that does not further their objective interests but, on the contrary, undermines them. That is, the penchant for self-oppression that one witnesses time and time again among the masses (that is the working classes—like yourselves) can only be explained by a lack of political consciousness that allows them to be manipulated by



the **bourgeoisie** into "objectifying" their subjective interests and "subjectifying" their objective interests. Here are some examples of such behavior: being obsessed with banning abortion than being concerned about access to a robust social safety-net; being more concerned about owning guns (here in the U.S.) than access to decent affordable housing or decent well-paying permanent jobs; being more concerned about the race or ethnicity of fellow citizens than about the unconscionably spiraling in-

come inequality brought about by the **class warfare** of the rich that undermines the overall quality of life of all; being more incensed with the very poor accessing the **social safety net** (e.g. food stamps—here in the U.S.) than being concerned with the lower-than-the cost-of-living minimum wage levels; being more concerned with the political status of one's country in the world (jingoism) rather than being concerned about the absence of the **rule of law** and other similar democratic protections; and so on.

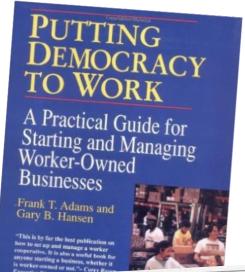
Note: There are some who argue that the distinction between objective interests versus subjective interests is an illusory distinction; it doesn't really exist. One person's subjective interest can be another person's objective interest and vice versa. In some unique circumstances, this may be so. For example, it is possible that for someone on hunger strike access to food may no longer be an objective interest; whereas for the vast majority of people it is. In short, with the exception of such unique circumstances, this concept does have heuristic value; that is, for our purposes in this course it has meaningful analytical usefulness.

Yes. It is absolutely true. Not all Euro-Americans are racist; some (dubbed by racists as "race-traitors") are even actively engaged in anti-racist activities—which in irony of ironies, is not always welcome by many people of color because of their own racist/ethnicist inclinations (see below)—however, it is also absolutely true that they are a minority among Euro-Americans.

From the perspective of today's electoral politics, the racial project that is at play is what is sometimes referred to as the **White Southern Strategy**; it was created in response to the African American struggles against Jim Crow; that is the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 60s.

### CONCLUSION

The foregoing material raises a number of important questions that require answers.



(a) If racism still continues to color the political economy of United States to a significant extent, then how does one explain the fact that the United States, until recently, took in more immigrants who are people of color from all over the world than probably any other country on the planet? At least four reasons immediately come to mind: First, the United States is still a democracy (deeply flawed it may be) and therefore at the Federal level at least there is some effort not to allow racism to color immigration policies. Second, internationally, the United States has to demonstrate that it is a truly democratic country as it attempts to meet its obligations (with respect to refugees for example). Third, the U.S. bourgeoisie is always in need of labor--both cheap unskilled labor and highly skilled labor, depending upon the economic sector in-

volved. *Fourth,* in countries where the United States has been engaged in armed conflict it has felt morally and politically obligated to accept as refugees those who have collaborated with them at great risk to their lives.

# (b) Can capitalism exist without a capitalist class in the conventional sense of a bourgeoisie?

Theoretically, the answer is yes; it would involve workers replacing the role of the bourgeoisie as managers/financiers/owners of capitalist enterprises. In fact, versions of such enterprises do exist today in the form of *cooperatives*. However, it is important to be clear that cooperatives that



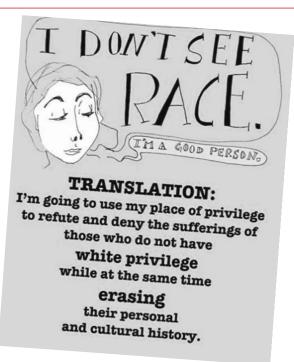
Today, more than ever before, as globalization continues to be ratcheted upwards by transnational monopoly conglomerates there is a global competition for highly skilled labor, irrespective of its origins. Consequently, many of the best and the brightest from nations with large higher education systems (e.g. India, China, etc.) but with inadequate economic opportunities have been able to immigrate to Western countries, particularly the United States and Canada. (Consider, where would U.S. information technology be today without the hundreds of thousands of immigrants from around the world who work in U.S. "Silicon Valleys.") Of course, this does not mean

In a worker-owned capitalist system, any large entrepreneurial project that requires considerable labor, expertise, and capital (e.g. building a railway) can be undertaken on the basis of a number of cooperatives from various relevant sectors coming together to form a "super-cooperative" for that specific project.

can truly replace the bourgeoisie would have to be responsible for *everything*, including **surplus appropriation**, on the basis of a democratic decision-making process within each cooperative. Reminder: Whatever the merits of capitalism as a system of economic production, at the most fundamental level, it is about UNSUSTAINABLE exploitation (of human beings, of the environment, and so on)—it is NOT about doing good, regardless of what capitalists will tell you. (In case you have forgotten: capitalism is not about philanthropy—nor is it primarily about creating jobs (there would be no unemploy—



It should be noted that a worker-owned capitalist system will not necessarily lead to an egalitarian society (remember, we are still talking about capitalism here in which inequality is baked in), because there would be rich cooperatives and poor cooperatives—depending upon the economic sector involved and depending upon prevailing economic conditions. However, in one sense it would be an egalitarian system, but only at the level of each specific cooperative. That is, within each cooperative all would be equal in terms of both decision-making and surplus appropriation.



ment, if that was the case)--it is simply about making money, for the sake of making money, in whatever way possible.) One solution that societies have found to the inherently exploitative/destructive tendencies of capitalism is to regulate it so that it does not completely destroy society. (Such regulation is part of what we call procedural democracy.) Note, however, that from the perspective of capitalism itself, it is possible, up to a point, to engage in capitalist entrepreneurial activity that at the same time does as much as possible to minimize the exploitative/destructive consequences of that activity. This kind of capitalism is usually referred to as "socially responsible capitalism" or sometimes "ethical capitalism."

### (c) What would a multi-racial but non-racialized political economy in a capitalist democracy look like, if one were possible?

It would be like any other capitalist system but with a racially homogenous population in which class would take center stage (in other

words, there would still be the rich and the poor but they would be proportionally divided across different racial/ethnic groups). There appears to be a deep illusion among many people of color burdened by both interpersonal and structural racism that all their economic woes would end if racism disappeared. This is far from the truth. While the barrier of race would not be there from the perspective of upward socio-economic mobility, the class factor would still be there. Yes, economic opportunities would increase, but in order to take advantage of them they would have to cease all those behavioral practices that lead to self-oppression.

(d) How does one explain the fact some individuals among the bourgeoisie appear to be betraying their own objective interests; does it mean they are also suffering from pseudoconsciousness?

The First R

How Children Learn

Race and Racism

Debra Van Ausdale & Joe R. Feagin

Many racist whites believe that if the United States was bereft of people of color their lives would be that much better. However, they forget that ethnicism can replace racism quite as easily in a capitalist society. The Nazis demonstrated this fact in a horrendously dramatic way. In United States, if there were no people of color their role would be performed by EuroAmerican ethnics (such as the Greeks, the Irish, the Italians, the Jews, the Polish, the Spanish, and so on.)

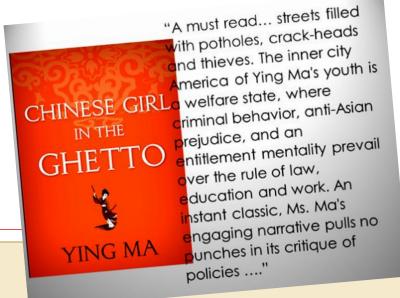
All major social change in any society (such as, to take the U.S. example, that which ensued in the wake of the War of Independence; the Civil War; Reconstruction; the suffragette movement; the labor movement; the civil rights movement; the feminist movement; and so on) is, in the final analysis, an outcome of being at the right place at the right time—or, to put it differently, an outcome of a **conjuncture of fortuitously propitious historical factors.** 

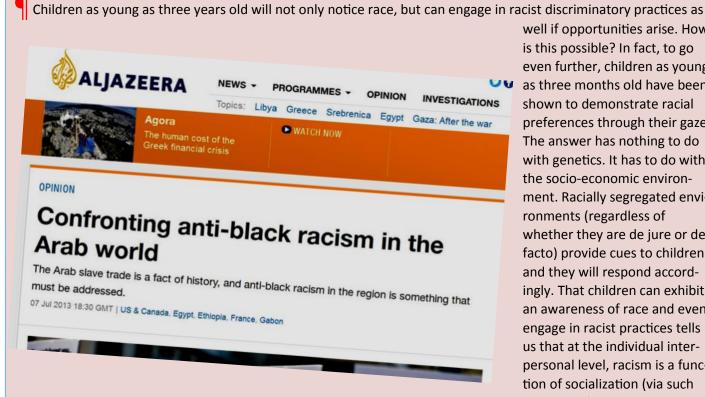
A good illustrative example here is that of billionaires forming philanthropies to give away almost all their loot—not even leaving it to their heirs (except for a tiny fraction of it perhaps). The answer is no. Without in the least bit impugning their

good intentions—after all, who among us would be willing to give away billions if we had some—what they are simply doing is putting a small band aid on an economic system that exploits millions of people and from which they themselves have profited mightily. The band aid helps in the effort to humanize capitalism, it does not destroy it or for that matter even weaken it. (An analogy one can use here is that of some individual slave owners deciding to free their slaves just around the time when the grim reaper appears on the horizon)

Most people living outside United States will be surprised to learn that sustained interpersonal interactions between racial groups usually occur for the first time at the college level or at work—that

is if they occur at all (in colleges there is quite often internal segregation).





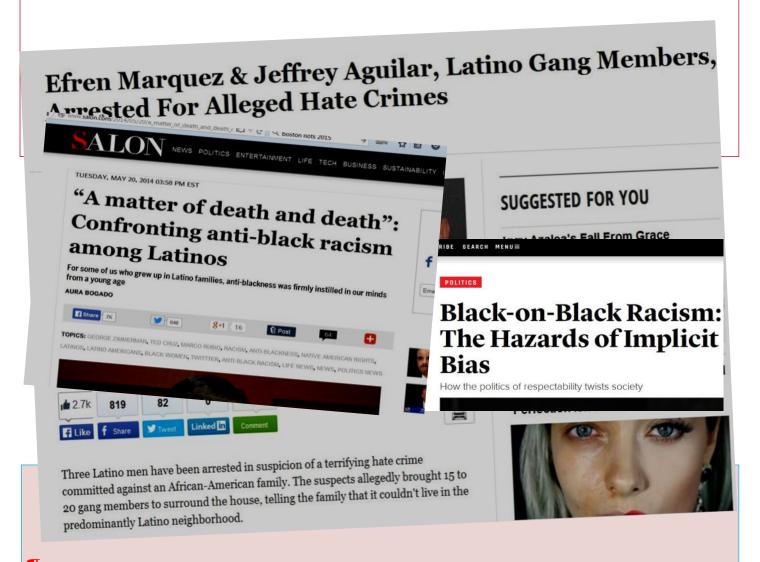
well if opportunities arise. How is this possible? In fact, to go even further, children as young as three months old have been shown to demonstrate racial preferences through their gaze. The answer has nothing to do with genetics. It has to do with the socio-economic environment. Racially segregated environments (regardless of whether they are de jure or de facto) provide cues to children and they will respond accordingly. That children can exhibit an awareness of race and even engage in racist practices tells us that at the individual interpersonal level, racism is a function of socialization (via such agencies of socialization as the

family, media, school, church, peer group, etc.) against the backdrop of institutionalized racism—of which, in the

**(e)** From the perspective of a capitalist entrepreneur, a person's skin color is of absolutely no relevance. The goal of profit maximization requires paying attention to only one color: green (in the case of United States). In other words, the criteria would be to hire the most competent person willing to work for the lowest wages. While this may be true at the level of individual enterprises, from the perspective of the capitalist system as a whole this is not necessarily so—color, meaning racist discrimination, does have its uses. Still, there is a question that emerges here:

Why do some individual enterprises—including even transnational corporations—engage in racist discriminatory practices when it is not only against the law (in the case of United States), but it is not in their economic interest to do so?

Two reasons quickly come to mind: first, the individual officers of the corporation themselves, as members of society, are not immune from being socialized into absorbing racist stereotypes via such agencies of **socialization** as the family, peers, the mass media, entertainment, and so on. Second, in the interest of maintaining good relations with the majority of their workers (Euro-Americans) they may find it necessary to give in to racist practices.



It has also been suggested by some that racism (or ethnicism) can also provide *psychic* benefits to the lower classes in a capitalist society. In the case of United States, for example, it provides an opportunity for the Euro-American lower classes to wake up every day and thank the Lord that they were born white—thereby making class-based oppression that much more bearable.

(f) Given what appears to be such a vicious dialectical cycle of oppression involving, on one hand, incredible plutocratic power of the bourgeoisie to corruptly dominate the political system, and on the other, a deep level of self-oppressive pseudo-consciousness among significantly large sections of the lower classes (hence, worthy of the label the ignorantsia), does it, therefore, imply that meaningful social change for the better in terms of authentic democracy is out of the question in today's age of globalized monopoly capitalism and which, note, is backed by an equally globalized military industrial complex?



The short answer is "yes" and "no." Yes, because there is a severe limit to what can be achieved under the rules of the capitalist system as it is presently constituted. No, because we still live in a democracy—even if highly flawed—and the possibility of change is always there; but it would require the presence of a social movement able to take advantage (if and when an opportunity arises) of serendipitous factors with the potential to create a socio-economic and political "climate" for change.

**(g)** When people engage in racist practices they do not stop and think and say to themselves, "hey, racism benefits the capitalist system so let me be racist." They simply

proceed with their racist discriminatory practices (assuming, of course, that they have the power to do so). The question here then is

It is important to point out here that it is not only along the binary racial fault line of Euro-Americans versus people of color that residential racial segregation is manifest, but it is also manifest along racial lines among people of color themselves. As already indicated, racism among people of color themselves against each other can be as severe as the racism of the dominant group (Euro-Americans) against all people of color. After all, racism—or its equivalent, ethnicism—is rampant today in most places many of these groups originally came from and it does influence how these groups behave in United States. For example, the racism of the Arabs against other peoples of color is legendary; the same is true of the Chinese, the Japanese, the South Asians, and so on. (Consider: as the South Asian population has increased in United States, the East Indians have begun to import their inhuman caste system.) In fact, here, going by considerable anecdotal evidence, one can legitimately conjecture that for the vast majority among the different groups there would be no resistance if they themselves were declared "honorary whites" and brought into the Euro-American racist "club" while other groups continued to face racial discrimination. What is more, despite the racism they face from Euro-Americans, many of them would have no problem in discriminating against other people of color in favor of Euro-Americans—and this applies to both African Americans and Native Americans too (that is groups that have suffered the most from the racism of the Euro-Americans). Yes. It is true, that in some cases "classism" can also be a factor; but it does not account for all the internal racism among people of color. Note, however, that, for obvious reasons, the internal racism among people of color can only exist in the form of interpersonal racism; it cannot take the form of institutional racism.

this: Which comes first: racism at the interpersonal individual level or institutionalized racism at the societal level—which, when it first appears, requires its legitimation through law?

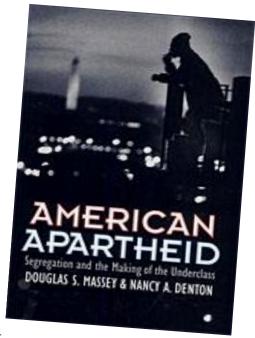
The answer is both: each feeds off the other. Remember that systems of oppression are also systems of privilege and, unfortunately, human beings are more than willing to participate in these systems *as a group* if they have the power to do so; and this power does not have to be backed *explicitly* by law—as is, generally, the case today in post-Civil Rights era United States. (Power can come from simply being in the majority against the backdrop of historically-determined ongoing institutional privileges.)

### (h) How can racism be both: a source of privilege as well as oppression for the Euro-American lower classes?

Simple. It is a source of oppression because by engaging in racist practices (including siding, as a consequence of pseudo-consciousness, with the bourgeoisie in its strategy of dividing and ruling the lower classes) it ends up, receiv-

ing much lower public wages than it would otherwise receive. On the other hand, it is a source of privilege because it receives unfairly a much, much higher proportion of the current (lower) public wage. Here is an analogy: imagine that a group from among the lower classes,

comprising both Euro-Americans and people of color, were unjustly in prison; however, whatever few privileges available in that prison would be restricted largely (not entirely) to the Euro-American prisoners.



### Press Releases

If there is one aspect of society that Euro-Americans will do everything in their power to ensure that it remains racially segregated then it is residential neighborhoods They have nightmares of people of color—especially from the lower classes—moving into their neighborhoods in

significant numbers; and in a very perverse way it is for legitimate reasons. Having condemned large sections of people of color to poverty through structural racism over the centuries—which includes residential segregation—they know that if large numbers of people of color from the lower classes were to move into their neighborhoods then they will bring with them the kinds of ills that are endemic to all poverty-stricken peoples

Lacking in Workplace

January 8, 2015

If Image in the two-way arts & life music topics programs listen international economy must read contact us foods ills

Survey Says We R Rude; How About U?

Survey Shows Workplace Etiquette and Ethics

Page 24 of 40

all over the world (regardless of race/ethnicity): such as, crime, drugs, violence, etc.

### (i) Can racism ever be eliminated in a multi-racial capitalist democracy?

Compare here the fate of the

The short answer is, No. That does not mean, however, that all those programs/workshops that aim to cultivate sensitivity to diversity in schools and workplaces are a complete exercise in futility. At the level of interpersonal individual interactions in public spaces anti-racist programs (if undertaken with integrity) can help to ameliorate—though not entirely eliminate—racism *among individuals*—even if at the end of the school or work day they all go back to their racially segregated residential neighborhoods.

## (j) If racism cannot be eliminated, then what about class-based pseudo-consciousness among the lower classes? Can that be eliminated in a capitalist democracy? The short answer is, in theory, yes.

However, it would be an extremely uphill battle. One is dealing here with not simply the absence of knowledge and information literacy among the masses but a deeply self-oppressive mindset that, for example, interprets democratic freedoms (such as freedom of speech) *not* as tools to challenge the State in its anti-democratic activities domestically and globally, but as devices to allow them to engage in the disparagement and denigration of others to the point where even one's self-esteem is constructed on the basis of gratuitous insults and a general absence of common manners in daily interactions, rather than on the basis of meaningfully positive self-achievements. Moreover, for the intelligentsia to mount a concerted effort of *consciousness-raising* to overcome the daily brainwashing the masses receive cradle to grave from the corporate media, as well as from the politicians, the clergy, etc. would require access to logistics (money and time) that do not really exist.

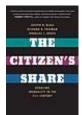
short-lived "Occupy Wall Street" DEFINITION OF STUPIDITY NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER Knowing the FACTS; Seeing the FACTS; Hearing the FACTS; SWAY Smelling the FACTS; Learning the FACTS; but PULL OF IRRATIONAL BEHAVIOR still believing the ORI BRAFMAN AND ROM BRAFMAN movement in the U.S. s that lead us to disregard facts or logic and behave in ngly irrational ways." -New York Tin

The problem of residential segregation, although first created by Euro-Americans at the time when a massive urbanization of African Americans was underway in the early 1900s, today is a scourge that afflicts almost all groups in United States. That is, even African Americans themselves will engage in efforts to prevent members of other racial groups to move into their neighborhoods and the same behavior can be seen among Latino/as, Asians, etc.

### MATERIALS FOR FURTHER INFOR-MATION

If you would like to explore further the themes/issues presented in this flowchart, you are encouraged to consult some of the materials listed below (which are alphabetized within these seven broad but interrelated categories: 1. Class/Class-Warfare/Capitalism; 2. Race/Racism; 3. Race and Law; 4. Capitalism/Militarism; 5. Other Topics; 6. Recommended Films/Documentaries; and 7. Recommended Websites.)

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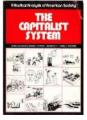
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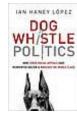
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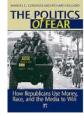
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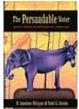


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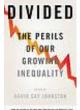
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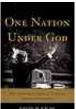
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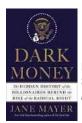
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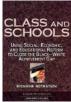
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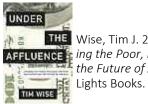
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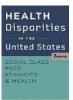
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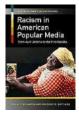
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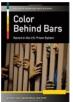
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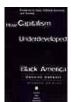


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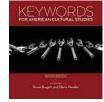


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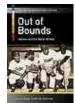


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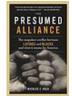
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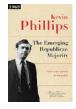
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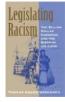
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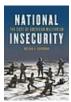
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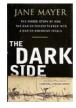
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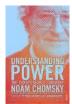
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### 6. Recommended Films/Documentaries

(Note: links take you to descriptions at Amazon.com)



**5 Broken Cameras** 



500 Nations



Citizen Four



**Control Room** 



<u>Glory</u>



The Great Debaters



Aftershock: Beyond the Civil War



<u>Crude</u>



The Grey Zone



American Outrage



The Corporation



The <u>Harvest</u>



**Amistad** 



Empire in Africa



<u>Heist</u>



<u>Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State</u>



**End of the Line** 



Hidden Colors 3



Beyond Brown: Pursuing the Promise



Fog of War



Hidden Colors 4



**Black in Latin America** 



For Queen and Country



Hotel Rwanda



Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee



<u>Flow</u>



**Inequality for All** 



Capitalism: A Love Story



Food, Inc.



<u>Inside Job</u>



Ishi: The Last Yahi



**Missing** 



Rosewood



The Journey of August King



The Mission



Schindler's List



King Leopold's Ghost



Mugabe and the White Afri-



Sicko



**Lincoln** 



Nazis: A Warning from Histo-





Little Rock Central: 50 Years



Occupation 101



Something the Lord Made



The Long Walk Home



**Outfoxed** 



<u>Spellbound</u>



<u>Lumumba</u>



Places in the Heart



Too Big to Fail



**Manufactured Landscapes** 



**Rabbit Proof Fence** 



**Thousand Pieces of Gold** 



**Manufacturing Consent** 



-11

**Reconstruction: The Second** Civil War



**Unfinished Business** 



Memory of the Camps



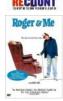
Recount



**Untold History of the United States** 



Miss Evers' Boys



Roger and Me



We Shall Remain



When the Levees Broke



When the Moors Ruled in Europe



Where to Invade Next



Which Way Home



Why We Fight



You've Been Trumped

### 6. Recommended Websites



Al-Jazeera America: http:// america.aljazeera.com



Alternet: http://www.alternet.org



Americans for Tax Fairness: http:// www.americansfortaxfairness.org



Amnesty International: https:// www.amnesty.org



Avaaz: https://avaaz.org



BBC: http://www.bbc.com





B Corporation: http:// www.bcorporation.net





www.blackpast.org



Center on Budget and Policy Prioriand Policy ties: http://www.cbpp.org



Center for Public Integrity: https:// www.publicintegrity.org



Center for Science in the Public In-Public Interest terest: http://www.cspinet.org

Columbia Journalism Review. Columbia Journalism Review: http://www.cjr.org

COLORLINES Colorlines: http://



Corp Watch: http:// www.corpwatch.org





Democracy Now: http:// www.democracynow.org

DOLLARS&SENSE PEARLY Dollars and Sense: http://

www.dollarsandsense.org





End Racism (Runnymede Trust): http://www.end-racism.org



Equality Trust: <a href="https://">https://</a> www.equalitytrust.org.uk



FACT CHECK.ORG Factcheck: http://www.factcheck.org



Free Rice: <a href="http://freerice.com">http://freerice.com</a>



Global Witness: https:// www.globalwitness.org



Greenbuzz: http://greenbuzzz.com



Human Rights Watch: https:// www.hrw.org



www.greenpeace.org



Hatewatch by the SPLC: https:// www.splcenter.org



Jacobin Magazine: https:// www.jacobinmag.com



Living on Earth: <a href="http://loe.org/">http://loe.org/</a> index.html







www.motherjones.com



Monthly Review: http:// monthlyreview.org



The Nation: http:// www.thenation.com



National Priorities Project: https:// www.nationalpriorities.org



NPR (National Public Radio): http:// www.npr.org



New Left Review: https:// newleftreview.org



Occupy.com: http:// www.occupy.com



On Point: http://onpoint.wbur.org



On the Media: http:// www.wnyc.org/shows/otm



Open Secrets.org: <a href="http://">http://</a> www.opensecrets.org





Oxfam: https://www.oxfam.org



Pew Research Center: <a href="http://">http://</a>



Politifact: <a href="http://www.politifact.com">http://www.politifact.com</a>



Prison Activist Resource Center: <a href="https://">https://</a> www.prisonactivist.org



Propublica: https://www.propublica.org



Race, Racism, and the Law: http:// racism.org



Race Issues section of the Guardian: http://www.theguardian.com/world/



Reveal (Center for Investigative Refrom The Center for Investigative Reporting porting): https://www.revealnews.org



The World's Resources Share: http://www.sharing.org



State of Nature: <a href="http://">http://</a> www.stateofnature.org



Transparency International: <a href="http://">http://</a> www.transparency.org



World Socialist Web Site World Socialist Website: http:// www.wsws.org



WWF: www.worldwildlife.org

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