

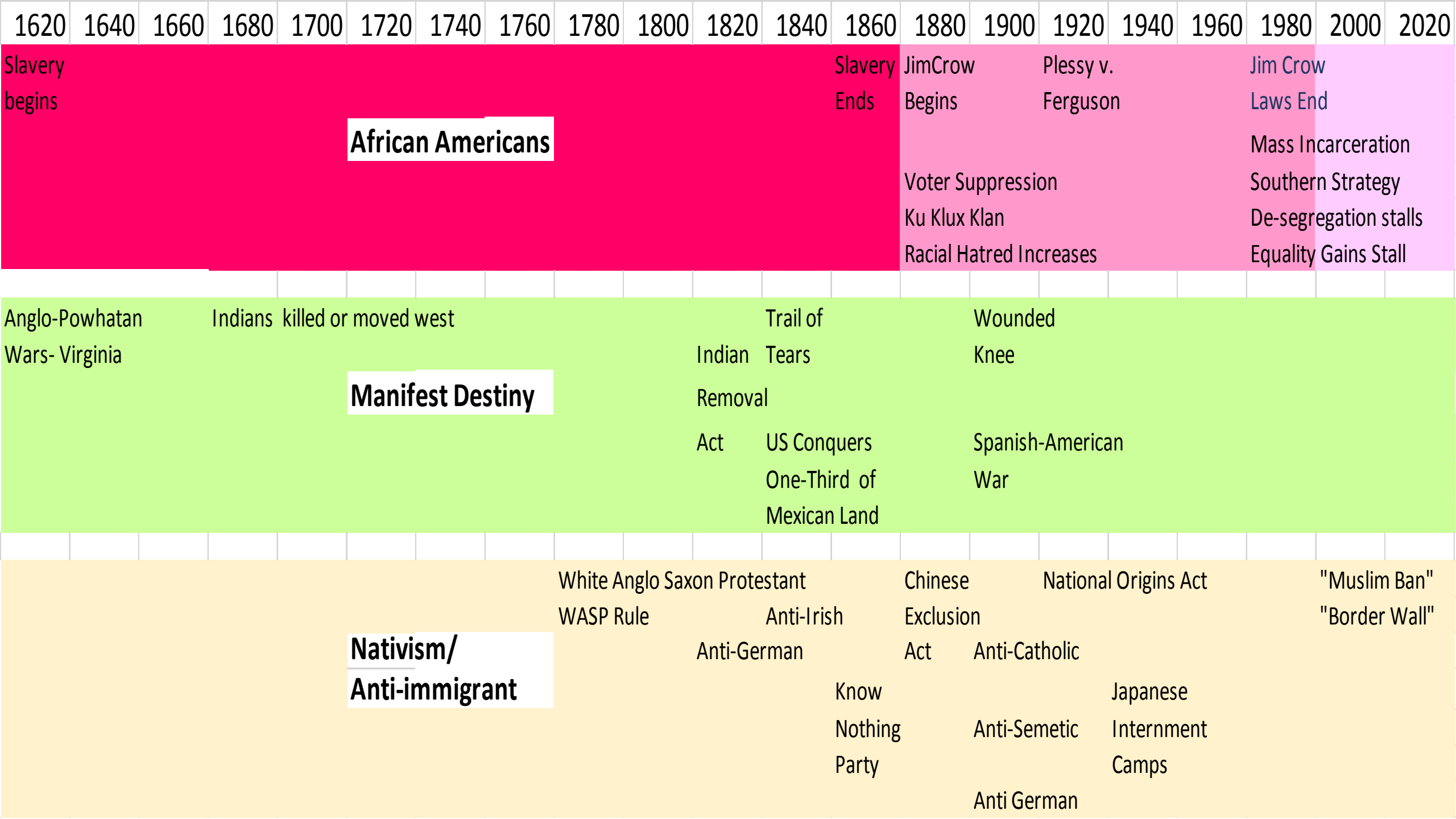
Dismantling the Deep Structures of Racial and Economic Inequality

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WMU Martin Luther King Day Teach-In
Bernhard Center
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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



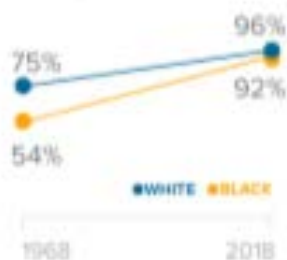
Source: WDIworld (2017) See wdi2018.wid.world for data series and notes.

In 2016, 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.

Gaps have narrowed ++

High school graduation rate

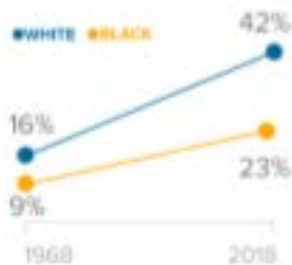
Adults ages 25–29



Gaps have widened +

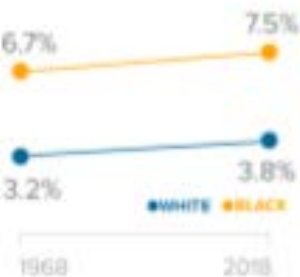
College graduation rate

Adults ages 25–29



Gaps have widened +

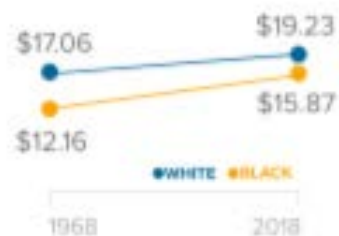
Unemployment rate



Gaps have narrowed ++

Hourly wage

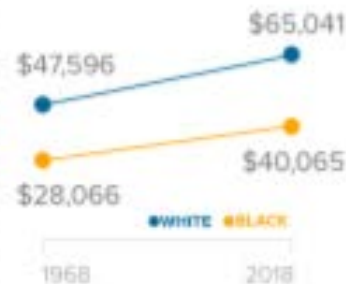
Median, 2016 dollars



Absolute gap + Relative gap ++

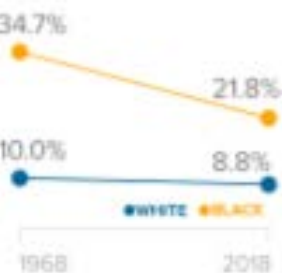
Household income

Median, 2016 dollars



Gaps have narrowed ++

Poverty rate



Absolute gap + Relative gap ++

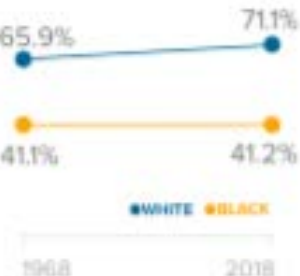
Household wealth

Median, 2016 dollars



Gaps have widened +

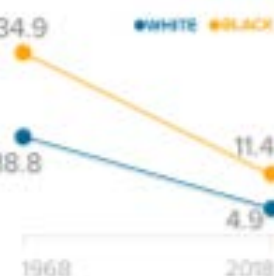
Homeownership rate



Absolute gap ++ Relative gap +

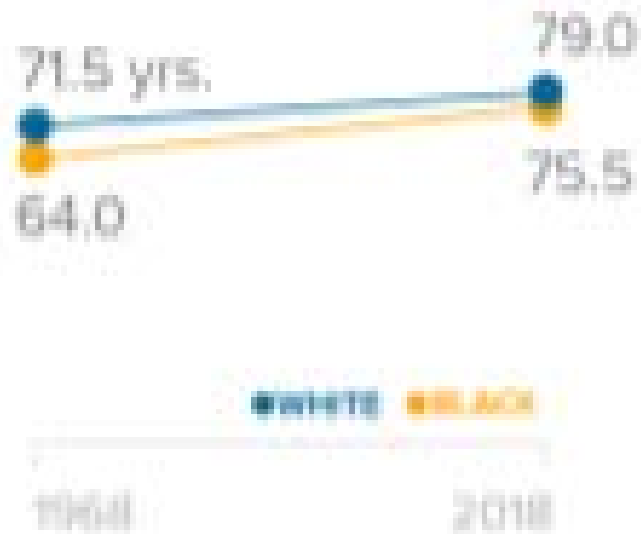
Infant mortality rate

Per 1,000 births



Life expectancy at birth

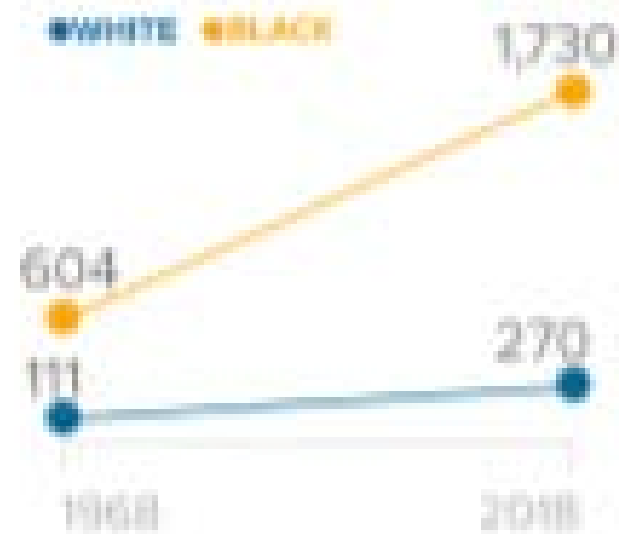
Life expectancy at birth



Incarcerated population

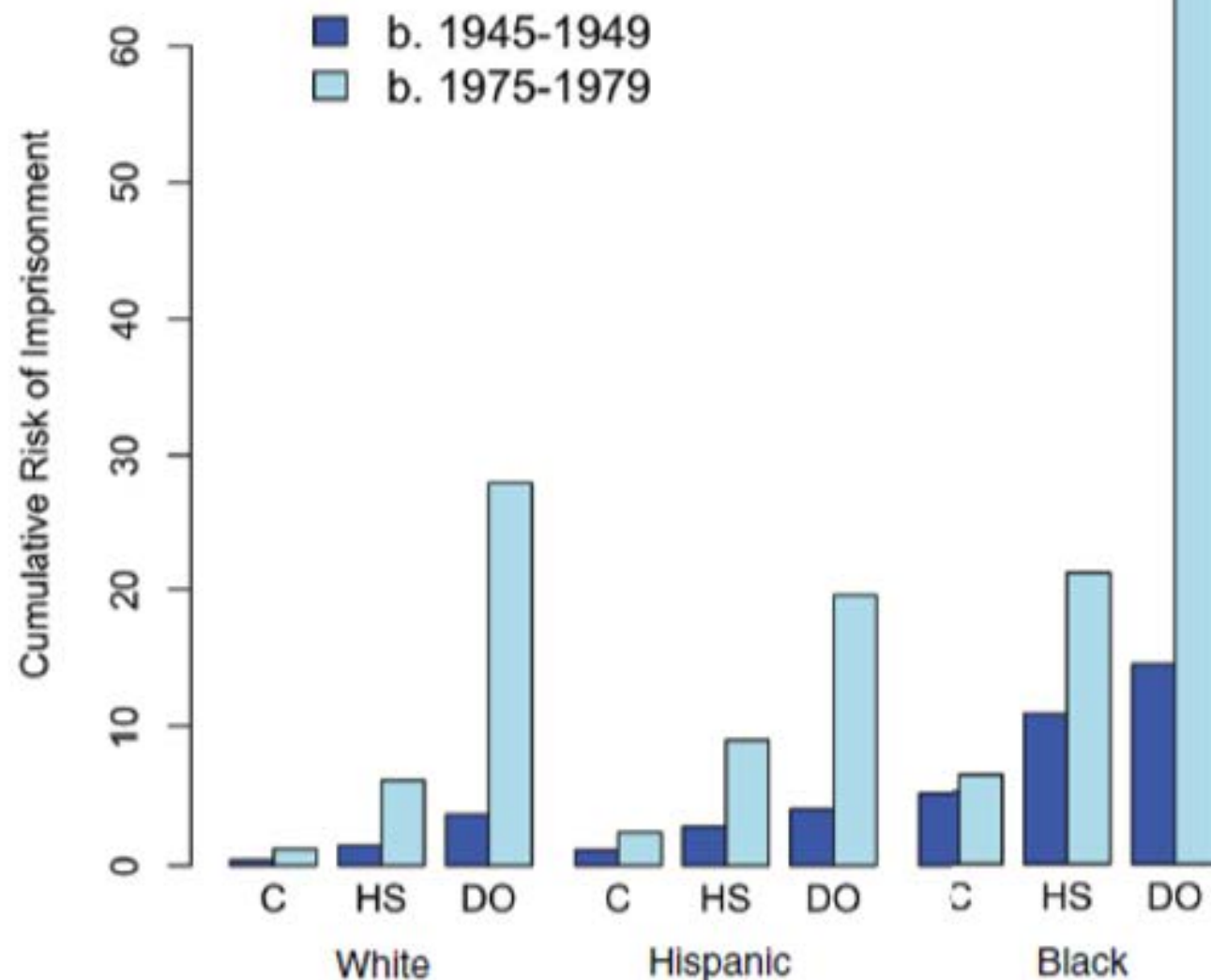
Incarcerated population

Per 100,000



Economic
Policy
Institute

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.



The Rise in Incarceration in the United States
 National Research Council, 2014

FIGURE 2-16 Cumulative risks of imprisonment by 1979 for men born in 1945-1949 and by 2009 for men born in 1975-1979, by race and education.

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

Percentile	Men	Women
5 th	72.8	78.0
10 th	74.5	81.7
25 th	77.8	82.8
50 th	82.9	84.7
75 th	84.1	88.2
90 th	87.3	88.9
95 th	89.0	89.2
	M	F
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