

Our Origin Story



IN THE BEGINNING

- 1607 First permanent English colony in Virginia.
- 1613 John Rolfe marries Pocahontas in the colony of Virginia.
- 1619 First Africans kidnapped and brought to the colonies.
- 1637 New England colonists massacre 500 Native Americans in Pequot War, the first massacre of indigenous people by English colonists

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▣ Between 1607 and 1682, there were about 92,000 immigrants from Europe. More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of them were chattel bond laborers (Birth, Battalora).

1607 to 1682

During this period, evidence of racial acceptance and cooperation, if not equality.

- ▣ Many Africans married to European laborers and these unions seem to have been accepted.
- ▣ Records from one county show that $\frac{1}{4}$ of all children born to European women servants were mixed (1660's).
- ▣ Even reports of African landowner “flogging” a white messenger.

But there ARE disparities

- 1640 John Punch, an African, runs away from his servitude with a Dutchman and a Scot.
- They are caught.
- The colony of Virginia records that as punishment the Dutchman and the Scot are given 4 increased years of servitude.
- John Punch is sentenced to perpetual servitude.

1662

Virginia enacts law stating that if an “Englishman” begets a child of a “Negro woman,” the child will take on the woman’s status, e.g., that of a slave; this law makes slavery hereditary.

1676 Bacon's Rebellion

A populist rebellion that organized poor people -- white frontiersmen, slaves, indentured servants, and a tribe of Indians -- against the colony (government) of Virginia.



1691

Virginia House of Burgesses defines “white man” as a man with no African or Indian blood whatsoever.... except for the male descendants of John Rolfe and Pocahontas who shall also be considered white men.

The Shift

1705 Virginia law passed requiring masters to provide white servants whose indentured time was up 50 acres of land, 30 shillings, 10 bushels of corn and a musket.

1776

The Declaration of Independence is signed, stating that “all men are created equal . . . with certain inalienable rights . . . Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness” while excluding Africans, Native Americans, and all women.

Accumulated Advantages & Disadvantages

- ▣ **1785 Land Ordinance Act-** 640 acres offered at \$1 per acre to white people
- ▣ **1790 Naturalization Act-** specified that only free white immigrants are eligible for naturalized citizenship. First generation immigrants from Asia, the Caribbean, Central and South American and Africa are expressly denied civil rights, the right to vote, and the right to own land. This Act is not completely wiped off the books until the McCarran Walter Act of 1952.

Accumulated Advantages & Disadvantages

- ▣ **1850 Foreign Miners Tax** in California requires Chinese and Latin American gold miners to pay a special tax on their holdings not required of European American miners.
- ▣ **1862 Homestead Act** allots 160 acres of western (i.e. Indian) land to “anyone” who could pay \$1.25 an acre and cultivate it for 5 years; within 10 years, 85,000,000 acres of Indian lands had been sold to European homesteaders. The last person received land under the Homestead Act in 1988.

Accumulated Advantages & Disadvantages

- ▣ 1933 New Deal legislation for “Relief, Recovery and Reform” made 37 available \$120 billion (worth \$1 trillion today) in loans – 98% went to white people. Also created jobs programs (e.g., FERA, CCC, PWA, WPA) designed to put people to work and eradicate unemployment.
- ▣ 1934 The Federal Housing Act manuals and practices codify the channeling of funds to white neighborhoods, pushing them out of cities and creating the suburbs.

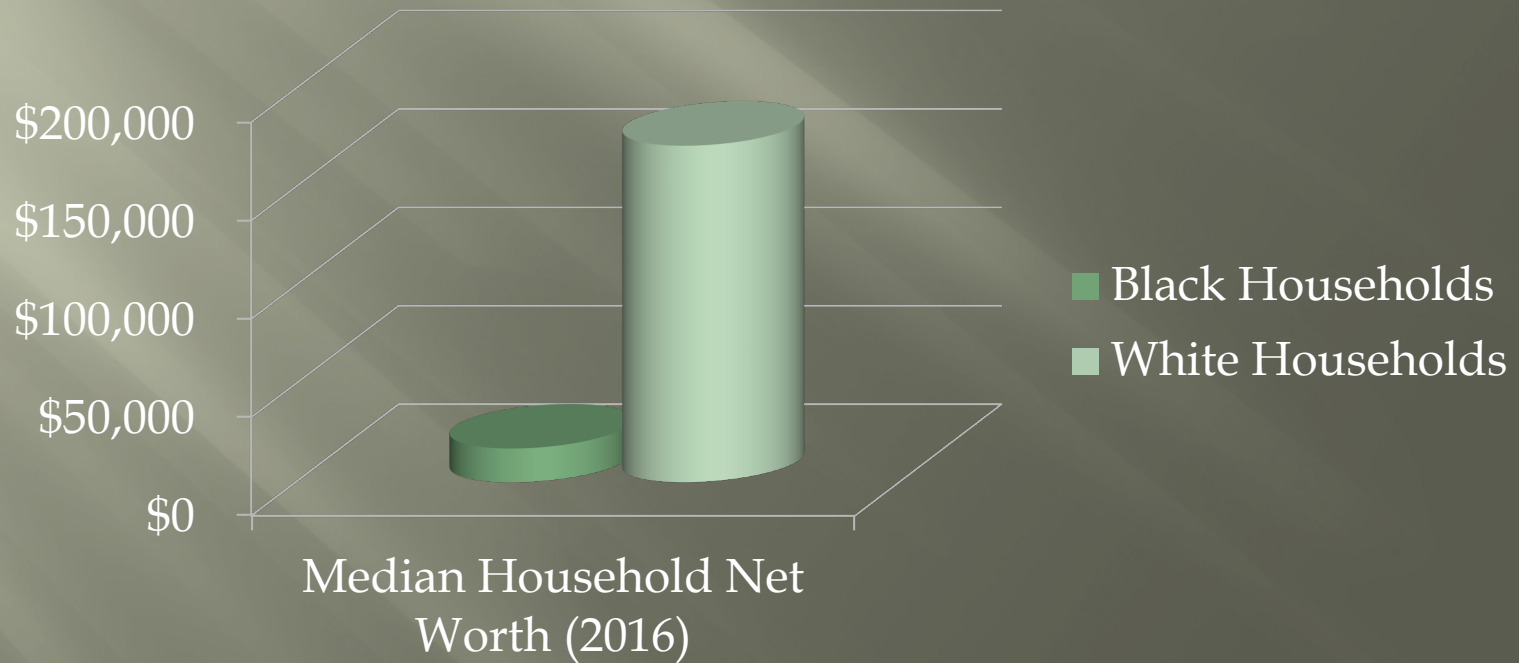
Accumulated Advantages & Disadvantages

- ▣ 1935 The Social Security Act- New Deal programs would not have survived the Southern voting block unless they were designed in a way that preserved racial patterns. SSA did not extend coverage to farm or domestic workers, disproportionately excluding blacks and other people of color from its benefits.
- ▣ **1935 The Fair Labor Standards Act** of the same year also did not cover agricultural or domestic workers.

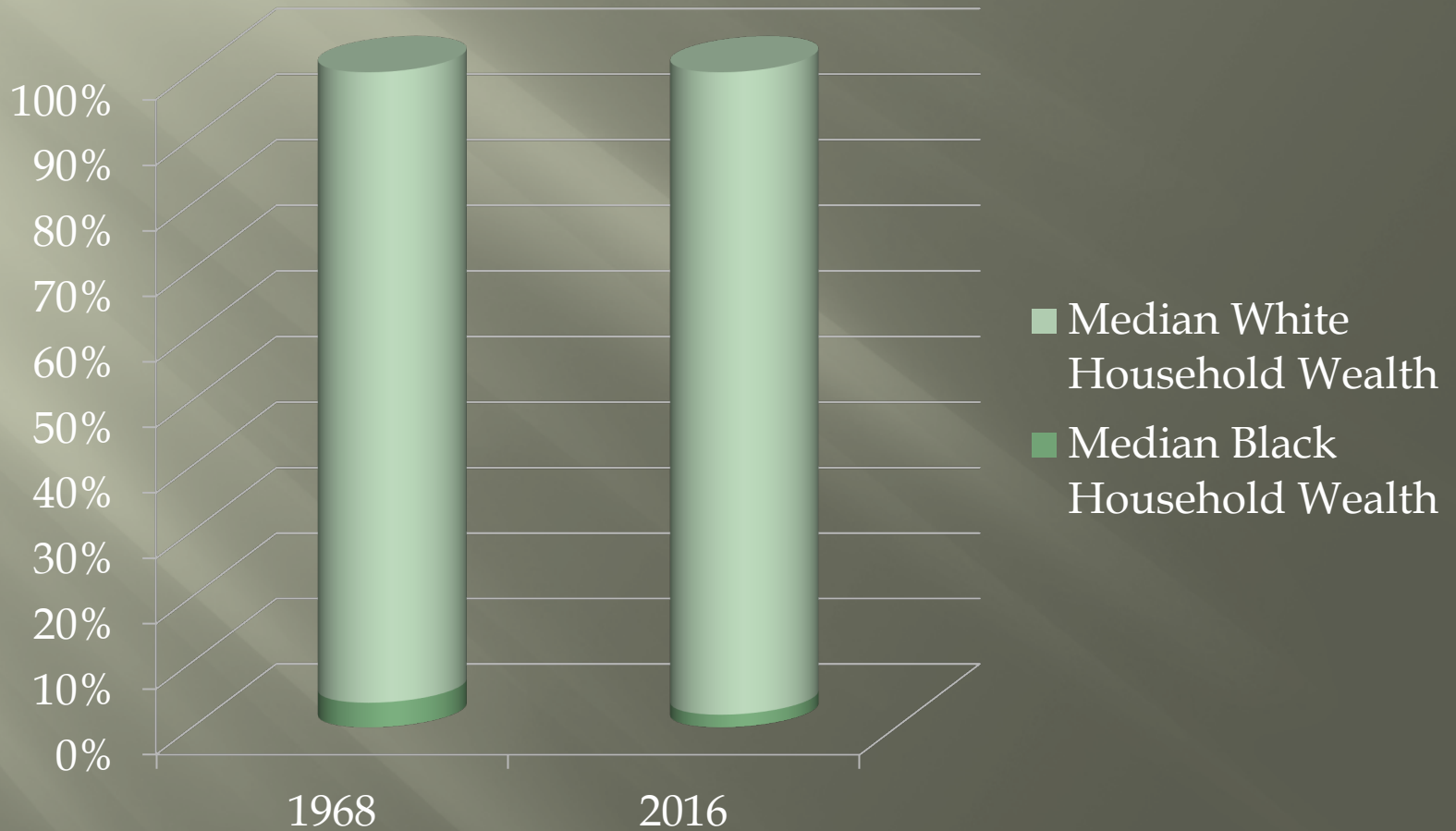
Accumulated Advantages & Disadvantages

- ▣ 1944 The GI Bill- \$95 billion of opportunities went mainly to returning white soldiers. 2,255,00 veterans took advantage of the GI Bill
- ▣ **2009 The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act** (the Stimulus): \$840 billion for schools, municipalities, infrastructure development, energy, etc. A race neutral act that has disproportionately benefited white people because of who is able to meet qualifying criteria.

NET WORTH (Forbes, 6/5/2020)



Percentage of Black Net Worth Over Time



WHY are people poor?

Impact of Racial Inequality

“if four key racial gaps for Blacks- wages, education, housing, and investment- were closed 20 years ago, **\$16 trillion** could have been added to the U.S. economy” - Citi, Closing the Racial Inequality Gap (9/24/2020)

If those four gaps were closed today, \$5 trillion would be added to our GDP over the next five years.

MAKING THE ASK

1. What are you asking for and why? What problem are you trying to solve?
2. How might this brief peek into a new analysis change that?
3. Would a better understanding/ deeper analysis help?
4. How can your ask now also inform?

“If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mind, then let us work together.” - Lillah Watson