



David and Frances Brain
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CIVIC LEAD SERIES

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Welcome!

Our session will begin shortly...



"Politics of Race"

Presented by:

Dr. Tom Sutton

Whites, Blacks,
and the struggle for
voice, power, and change



Getting at definitions of politics and race

Politics: the peaceful processes, people, and institutions involved in making decisions about governance

Key element: gaining power to influence decision-making

Institutional elements of U.S. politics:

- Constitutional democracy
 - Democratic selection of office holders
 - Majority rule
 - Defined and implicit powers of government
 - Federalism (differentiation of powers of federal and state governments)
 - Protection of rights and liberties
 - When political process fails, people act through public demonstration (protected rights of speech, assembly, petitioning the government)



Defining race in the U.S.

Race: a socially constructed definition of a group of people by social powers, usually determined by elements such as physical features, geographic origin, and/or cultural attributes.

U.S.: race definitions codified by the U.S. Census that are chosen by census-takers

Examples:

- 2020: 6 categories: White, Black or African-American, Asian, American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, or some other race (Hispanic is included as an ethnicity, not a race) (multiple category choice allowed since 2000)
- 1890 (first Census using the term 'race'): White, Black, Mulatto, Quadroon, Octoroon, Chinese, Japanese, Indian
- 1790 (not racial categories): Free White Males; Free White Females; other Free Persons; Slaves

Instructions to 1930 Census Takers on Counting People by Race

PERSONAL DESCRIPTION

149. Column 11. Sex.—Write "M" for male and "F" for female, as indicated in the notes at the bottom of the schedule.

150. Column 12. Color or race.—Write "W" for white; "Neg" for Negro; "Mex" for Mexican; "In" for Indian; "Ch" for Chinese; "Jp" for Japanese; "Fil" for Filipino; "Hin" for Hindu; and "Kor" for Korean. For a person of any other race, write the race in full.

151. Negroes.—A person of mixed white and Negro blood should be returned as a Negro, no matter how small the percentage of Negro blood. Both black and mulatto persons are to be returned as Negroes, without distinction. A person of mixed Indian and Negro blood should be returned a Negro, unless the Indian blood predominates and the status as an Indian is generally accepted in the community.

152. Indians.—A person of mixed white and Indian blood should be returned as Indian, except where the percentage of Indian blood is very small, or where he is regarded as a white person by those in the community where he lives. (See par. 151 for mixed Indian and Negro.)

153. For a person reported as Indian in column 12, report is to be made in column 19 as to whether "full blood" or "mixed blood," and in column 20 the name of the tribe is to be reported. For Indians, columns 19 and 20 are thus to be used to indicate the degree of Indian blood and the tribe, instead of the birth-place of father and mother.

How does race intersect with politics?



- Social fabric
 - Group identities, stereotypes
 - Group interests, needs, goals
 - Power dynamics: which groups control power centers
 - Political processes:
 - Political parties
 - interest groups
 - Campaign \$\$
 - elected offices
 - Leadership roles
- Economic power (corporations, business interest groups, unions, individual wealth)
- Socio-political values (constitutional authority, liberty/freedom, protection of rights & liberties, equity of opportunity & treatment, rights of property & commerce)
- Justice??

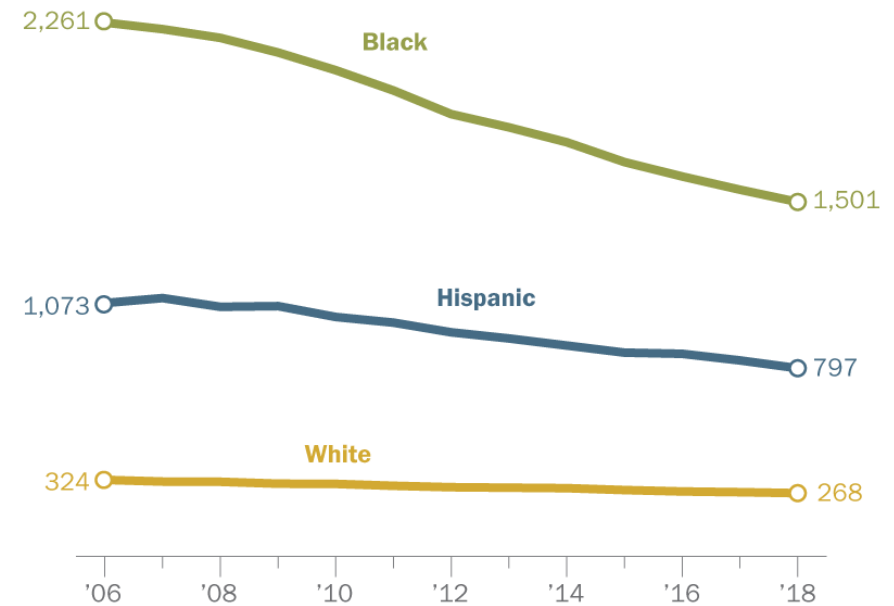
Disparities and Segregation Persist

- Roughly one third of Blacks live in 21 'hyper-segregated' cities (from 40 cities in 1970)
[Cleveland ranks among the top five in hyper-segregation]
- Household wealth disparity (2016):
Whites = \$171,000 Blacks = \$17,150
- 80% of Black and Hispanic students attend K-12 schools that are at least 50% students of color
- School desegregation orders: 2012=approx. 1,200 districts
- Bachelors & advanced degrees: Whites = 32% Blacks = 19%
- Registered voters (2018): Whites = 71% Blacks = 63.7%
- Non-elderly uninsured (pre-post Affordable Care Act):

Year:	2010	2018	Difference
Blacks:	19.9%	13.1%	-6.8 % points
Whites:	11.5%	7.5%	-4 % points

Imprisonment rates have declined across racial and ethnic groups – especially among black Americans

Prisoners per 100,000 adults ages 18 and older in each group



Notes: Blacks and whites include those who report being only one race and are non-Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Prisoners are those sentenced to more than a year in state or federal prison.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Why the persistent inequities?

- Jim Crow laws (1877-1965); *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896)
- Black Codes (Ohio)
- KKK terrorism (Tulsa, Rosewood, etc.)
- Deed covenants
- New Deal discrimination (public housing; welfare; SSA; federalism)
- The G.I. Bill
- Redlining
- The Interstate highway system
- School desegregation, white flight (and black middle class flight)
- De-industrialization (1970s-90s)
- Criminalization of Black males (War on Drugs; Three Strikes; Police use-of-force abuse)

Black progress, often overlooked

- Reconstruction (1865-1877): education, land ownership, voting, holding office (local, congress, Senate)
- Rise of the Black middle class and intellectuals: Black banks, insurance, entrepreneurs (Madame CJ Walker), inventors (Garret Morgan), Harlem Renaissance, political organizations (NAACP/W.E.B. DuBois)
- Heroism in battle (French honoring Black soldiers after WWI; Tuskegee Airmen)
- Great Migration (1910 – 1970) – roughly seven million Blacks moved from the South to northern cities
- Civil Rights Movement – 1964 Civil Rights Act; 1965 Voting Rights Act; 1968 Fair Housing Act; EEOC; Civil Rights Commission
- School desegregation * Gaining political office (Carl & Louis Stokes)
- Affirmative Action * Breaking barriers in sports, entertainment, business

162 Black members of Congress since 1870

- **1870-1887:** 17 Blacks serve in Congress; two in the Senate
- **1887-1901:** 5 Blacks serve in Congress; 1901-1929: no Blacks elected to Congress

1929 – 1970: 13 Blacks serve in Congress (all from northern states)

Senator Edward Brooke (R-MA): first Black Senator since Reconstruction

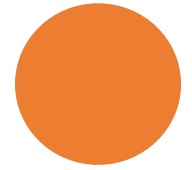
- Congressman Oscar De Priest (R-IL) (1928-1935)
- Congressman Adam Clayton Powell (D-NY) (1945-1969)
- Congressman Augustus 'Gus' Hawkins (D-CA) (1963-1991)
- Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm (D-NY) – first African-American to run for President (1969-1983)

1970-2019: 127 Blacks serve in Congress (currently 3 in Senate, 54 in the House)

Congresswoman Barbara Jordan (D-TX) (1973-1979)

Senator Carol Mosely Braun (D-IL) (1993-1999) first Black female member of the Senate

Senator Barack Obama (D-IL) (2005-2008) – first Black President (2009-2017)



Today's issues

- K-12 education adequacy & equity (the structural inequities of property taxes)
- The wealth and wage gap (Roland Fryer, Harvard economist)
- Socio-economic discrimination
- Implicit bias
- Police use of force; racial inequities in law enforcement
- Public safety in urban neighborhoods
- Access to healthcare
- Full consideration for professional advancement and equal treatment (STEM fields, medicine, law, business)
- Access to affordable, quality higher education (and degree completion)
- Reparations (Charles Ogletree, Harvard Law School; Nicole Hannah Jones, NYTimes)

Politics since 2016

- Narrow election of Donald Trump in 2016 (by 87,000 votes across Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin) – feeding off fear, frustration, and reality-show stardom
- Rise of white supremacist groups: Charlottesville, Pittsburgh (893 terrorist incidents in U.S. since 2014; 57% by right-wing groups, 25% by left-wing groups)
- Economic growth, wage gains, tax cuts, trade tariffs, and efforts to gut the ACA
- House gains Democratic majority and voices of Progressives in 2018 ('the Squad')
- James Clyburn (D-SC), the 'kingmaker' propelling Joe Biden to the nomination
- \$2 trillion COVID-19 crisis funding; skyrocketing unemployment and sudden GDP plunge
- Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd: the tipping point towards national awareness of police killings, Black fears, and systemic racism

Discussion

A few starter questions:

- * What issue/s are you most concerned about?
- * What can you as an individual do about this issue?
- * What do you think should be done to address issues of racism and inequity in the U.S.?

What are YOUR questions?
(please share through the Chatbox)

8 Lessons for Talking About Race, Racism, and Racial Justice



1. Lead with shared values:
Justice, Opportunity, Community, Equity.
2. Use values as a bridge, not a bypass.
3. Know the counter narratives.
4. Talk about the systemic obstacles to equal opportunity and equal justice.
5. Be rigorously solution-oriented and forward-looking.
6. Consider audience and goals.
7. Be explicit about the different causes of racial vs. socioeconomic disparities.
8. Describe how racial bias and discrimination hold us all back.

References

NJ.com: <https://www.nj.com/mercer/2015/05/which-us-cities-have-become-the-most-hyper-segrega.html>

KFF (Kaiser Family Foundation): <https://www.kff.org/disparities-policy/issue-brief/changes-in-health-coverage-by-race-and-ethnicity-since-the-aca-2010-2018/>

Pew Research Center: <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/05/12/black-voter-turnout-fell-in-2016-even-as-a-record-number-of-americans-cast-ballots/ft-17-05-10-voter-turnout/>

Brookings Institute: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/02/27/examining-the-black-white-wealth-gap/>

U.S. Census Bureau: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045219>

College Consensus: <https://www.collegeconsensus.com/racial-gap-education/>

U.S. News: <https://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/data-mine/2015/01/28/us-education-still-separate-and-unequal>

EdWeek: <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2018/05/02/there-are-wild-swings-in-school-desegregation.html>

Recommended Reading

Alexander, Michelle. 2010. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*.

Baldwin, James. 1963. *The Fire Next Time*.

Coates, Ta Nehisi. 2015. *Between the World and Me*.

Rothstein, Richard. 2017. *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*.

Wilkerson, Isabel. 2011. *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*.

Wilson, William Julius. 2009. *More than Just Race: Being Black and Poor in the Inner City*.

Black Online Media

- Black PRWire: <https://www.blackprwire.com/index.php>
- Black Information Network: <https://www.iheart.com/live/black-information-network-8666/> (99.1 FM)
- Blavity: <https://blavity.com/>
- The Grio: <https://thegrio.com/>
- The Root: <https://www.theroot.com/>
- Cision – listing of top 11 Black News Sites: <https://mediablog.prnewswire.com/2018/02/14/top-african-american-news-sites/>