(Brief) Timeline of Black History
Pre-20th Century

- Slavery (1619-1865)
  - Gradual Abolition in the North
    - PA (1780), NY (1799), NJ (1804)
  - Naturalization Act of 1790
  - Haitian Revolution (1791)
  - Eli Whitney’s Cotton Gin (1793)
  - Fugitive Slave Act (1793)
- 13th Amendment (1865)
  - “Punishment for a Crime”
- Removal of Federal Troops (1877)
- Plessy v. Ferguson (1894)
(Brief) Timeline of Black History
20th Century

- National Housing Act of 1934
  - Established the Federal Housing Commission
- Brown v. Board (1954)
- Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Voting Rights Act of 1965
- Fair Housing Act (1968)
Modern-Day Systematic Racism – It’s Very Real

- Modern systematic racism has its roots in slavery, and, subsequently, sharecropping.
- White farmers in the 20th century perpetuated the ghosts of slavery by continuously keeping their mainly black workers in debt.
- Later, subjugation of blacks were continued by racist housing policies and a corrupt, permissive government that allowed these and other prejudiced policies to continue (Coates, 2014).
- This resulted in African Americans to continuously be worse off than their white counterparts.
Modern-Day Systematic Racism – It’s Very Real
Modern-Day Systematic Racism – It’s Very Real

- Many WWII veterans did not have access to the GI Bill because they had to interact with white Veterans Administration employees (Coates, 2014).
- Similarly, Chicago was one of the worst places for blacks to move, although it was in the North.
- White flight.
- North Lawndale, once a thriving, diverse community, is now destitute.
- From 1955 - 1970, 4% of whites and 62% of blacks across America had been raised in poor neighborhoods. Even today, it is the same (Coates, 2014).
What Has Been Proposed, Now and in the Past?

- John Conyers, Jr., during each session of Congress since 1989, has proposed a commission to “examine the effects of slavery” (Michelson, 575).
- In the 18th century, Quakers made membership to their church contingent on compensating one’s former slaves (Coates, 2014).
- Many Founding Fathers favored the idea of total separation of the races, and shipping them off back to Africa en masse.
How Much Would We Pay? And Some Examples

- In Boris Bittker’s book, *The Case for Black Reparations*, he figured a rough ‘price tag’ could be set for reparations by multiplying the number of African Americans in the population by the difference in black and white per capita income.
- This price tag, in 1974 dollars, would be around $34 million (Coates, 2014).
- Successful example: Israel being paid by Germany for reparations for the Holocaust, at the cost of $715 million (Honig, 565).
Moral Implications of Reparations

- Slavery was “the most horrific experience that blacks have endured in America,” and, “the immediate victims of the experience most clearly deserve reparations” (Boxill, Section 5).
- The United States kept blacks in poverty, and continued the tradition with their children (Boxill, Section 6).
- Therefore, “the payment of reparations would represent America’s maturation out of the childhood myth of its innocence into a wisdom worthy of its founders” (Coates, 2014).
This all sounds pretty straightforward...so why don’t we give reparations?
The Transfer Problem

- In William Darity, Jr.’s book, *Reparations for African-Americans as a Transfer Problem: A Cautionary Tale*, he introduces the transfer problem that shows in order to achieve the desired effects from reparations, a payment strategy must be carefully and cautiously formulated.
Economic view of reparations

- There are arguments for both why the U.S. could pay for reparations and why the U.S. could not.
- Why they can?
  - Over the past 18 years the U.S. has fought in two wars. Together the costs came out to be $2.5 trillion.
- Why they can’t?
  - Who would pay for them and why?
This all sounds pretty straightforward...so why don’t we give reparations?
Conclusion

- America must stop pretending that systematic racism does not exist.
- Even today, as of 2011, Wells Fargo employees were allegedly overheard as calling their black clients “mud people” and their subprime products (what first initiated the Great Recession) as “ghetto loans” (Coates, 2014).
- Hundreds of years of generational servitude, combined with Jim Crow and a prejudiced government, made African-Americans worse off overall, and deprived them of most of the pleasures enjoyed by being an enfranchised American.
Works Cited


